

Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/March 1983



Whatever Happened to the Resurrection?

Theological translation

Thank you for the article "Feed the Lambs, Not the Giraffes" (November, 1982). I found it especially refreshing. This is the kind of thing I was not taught in seminary preaching classes, which seemed to assume that a young minister's first pastorate would be in the midst of trained theologians. A related issue that came to my mind while reading the article is the failure to address the present widespread Biblical illiteracy of our people. It was C. S. Lewis who suggested that in addition to Greek and Hebrew translations, seminarians should study "theological translation" to enable them to extract the meat from a Barthian passage and feed it to the lambs.—United Methodist Church, Washington.

I loved "Feed the Lambs, Not the Giraffes," by Morris Chalfant. As an academician who seeks clarity, I say Amen to his comments. D. Elton Trueblood, in his book *Philosophy of Religion*, makes this astute observation: "Very early in my academic life I realized that shallow waters are often muddied to make them look deep."—Presbyterian Church (UPUSA), Missouri.

Although I don't always agree theologically with every article, I do appreciate much that I find in the various issues of MINISTRY. The November issue was particularly helpful and stimulating. If I were to select one article above another from that month's offerings, it would be "Feed the Lambs, Not the Giraffes." Keep up the quality tone of articles.—Free Methodist Church, New York.

Americanizing the gospel

I really enjoy MINISTRY, even when I disagree! Such is the case with the well-done article "Let the Church Grow" (November, 1982). Someone needs to respond to the "homogenous group" concept. Personally I feel that this is an Americanization of the gospel. The church-growth experts of today would really have been confused with the New Testament church composed of

slaves, freemen, Greeks, Jews, Romans, et cetera, all together in one church. At that point there was only one body with differing ministries for the building up of the whole body—not particular groups within that body. Homogenous groups are what clubs and fraternities are built on. The church is different. As Christians, we don't come together because of our similarities to one another, but because of Christ's work for all of us on the cross. Corinth had some homogenous groups (see 1 Cor. 1:10-17). But Paul called them babes and told them they were walking as mere men. We also walk as mere men when we take our eyes off Christ and fasten them instead on the fact that we are single, elderly, married, rich, poor, teen-agers, et cetera.

Now, to face reality. I've experienced the factors mentioned in the article. I've seen certain types of people refusing to fellowship with other types or gravitating to those with an income level similar to their own. The things in the article make sense on a human level, and they are part of church growth. But until I die or Jesus comes, I will keep on saying that such attitudes are a problem of the flesh. As ministers we need to consider how to kill the flesh instead of turning it into a principle of church growth.—Sonrise Church, Oklahoma.

Helping others grow

During my forty-one years of ministry I consistently added to my library year after year. Thus I read with interest the November article "Equipping the Minister's Workshop." Like the author, I found my library to be a great asset to my ministry. But when I retired and no longer needed such a vast storehouse of material, I determined to give most of it to young preachers who could ill afford to spend much money for books. Many of my books were no longer in print and would be of inestimable value to young men. A large number of books I gave to various educational institutions.

When I entered the ministry in 1936 I had three uncles who were ministers. Did any of the three send a single book to their fledgling nephew? Not one. I

resolved that I would not keep my large library after retirement, but give it to others who could profit from it. I don't care to impress people with my library; I know it is doing others more good than it would be doing sitting on my shelves gathering dust and being used very sparingly.—Lutheran Church, California.

Give the positive, too

I especially appreciated Evangelist Charles G. Finney's article "How to Preach So as to Convert Nobody" (November, 1982). I think he covered the subject well with his forty-two rules. However, why not follow up with one of his great messages on how actually to convert individuals? It would be helpful to receive the positive side, as well as the negative.—United Methodist Church, Florida.

Every person, at least every pastor, should read "How to Preach So as to Convert Nobody."—Yuba City, California.

If you're receiving MINISTRY bi-monthly without having paid for a subscription, it's not a mistake. Since 1928, MINISTRY has been published for Seventh-day Adventist ministers, but 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. We want to share with you our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help to you too.

We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use. Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy; requests should be on church letterhead.

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A Magazine for Clergy/March 1983/Volume 56/Number 3



COVER: RELIGIOUS
NEWS SERVICE

Whatever Happened to the Resurrection?/4. Steven P. Vitrano. The resurrection points us to a world in which sorrow, death, wars, discrimination, unemployment, and all that sin has brought about will be no more. Not only at Easter but continually we need to keep the message of the resurrection before us.

Make the Bible Live!/6. Gordon Chilvers.

Guardians of the Whole Man/8. John S. C. Hsuen, medical doctor and ordained minister, argues that God's plan of total well-being for the human race includes more than the spiritual. In fact, we cannot have complete spiritual health if we neglect the physical.

Discovering Spiritual Gifts/11. Roy C. Naden. Much emphasis has been given recently to the concept of spiritual gifts in the church, but few instruments exist by which members can objectively discover what gifts they have. Here's a complete package for the pastor to use in leading his church into this exciting area.

The Grand Climax/15. Hans K. LaRondelle. This concluding article in the series This We Believe examines the blessed hope of the Second Coming and a new earth of righteousness.

Customers Wanted—No Experience Required/18. William L. Poteet.

The Gospel at Sinai/20. Steve Daily. Is it correct to view the Old Testament as a system of salvation based on man's work, and the New Testament as a system of salvation based on God's grace? No, says the author.

Praise God!/24. Larry G. Herr. The final psalm teaches valuable lessons for today in our worship and praise.

More Than Just an Empty Tomb/27. B. Russell Holt.

A Woman's Touch/28. Cherry B. Habenicht.

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Whatever happened to the resurrection?

Without the cross there would be no resurrection, but without the resurrection the cross would only memorialize a wasteful martyrdom. □ by Steven P. Vitrano



In recent months I have heard a great deal about the cross of Christ. I have been told again and again of its all-sufficiency for my salvation. Now, I have no question about its all-sufficiency for accomplishing what God intended, but the word *salvation* in that context must not be *overloaded*. The cross has not yet bestowed immortality upon me (see 1 Cor. 15:53), nor ushered in that "new heavens, and . . . new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13). I see death and dying in me, and all around me, prejudice, discrimination, greed, little children with bloated bellies

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starving to death, the wanton debauchery of our sensate culture, and corruption without and within the church. And my soul cries out, "How long, O Lord, how long?" The work of salvation is finished? Not yet! Not yet! The key victory may have been won at the cross, and it surely was, but that doesn't keep the children from starving or the incurably ill from suffering, or "saved" people from being mean and devious and divisive and hypocritical. The assurance of salvation notwithstanding, the reality of sin's presence and curse still hurts and stabs at the heart of every loving Christian. Something in me vibrates in fundamental harmony with what the apostle Paul wrote in Romans 8:22, 23: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now; and not

The empty cross is a symbol of the risen Lord. I cherish the empty cross. If it is Christ on the cross who saved me, it is the risen Christ who saves me.

only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, grown inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”*

It may seem offensive to say, and yet it must be said: An inordinate preoccupation with the cross is a distortion of the gospel. The true Christian cross is not a crucifix on which Jesus still hangs. The true Christian cross is empty. He is not there; He is risen! The empty cross is a symbol of the risen Lord. I cherish the empty cross! If it is Christ on the cross who saved me, it is the risen Christ who saves me.

However much meditation and reflection upon the cross engender love (and it does), love alone will not produce obedience, will not overcome sinning. Love is the only true motivation acceptable to God, let there be no mistake about that, but motivation alone is not enough, because obedience does not follow motivation automatically. “I can do all things in him who strengthens [“indynamites”; *endunamonti*] me” (Phil. 4:13). The key to victorious living is in Him. “For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (chap. 2:13). Faith takes us not only to the cross but *through* the cross to the living Lord, to whom all power in heaven and on earth has been given and against whom the gates of hell shall not prevail! And from His throne of grace, that power is made available to me so that I do all things in Him.

“Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:14-16). “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, . . . let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the



cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God” (chap. 12:1, 2).

Christ lives today and is seated at the right hand of God. This is good news! This is also the gospel. Do you stumble and fall? Are you discouraged? Look to Jesus, not just to the cross, but to Jesus, who is alive and sits at the right hand of God. “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life” (Rom. 5:10).

If there is a danger of making the doctrine of salvation too anthropocentric, there is also the danger of making it too theocentric. The Biblical doctrine of salvation is neither, it is Christocentric. And because it is Christocentric it is incarnational. In Christ, God loves (1 John 4:8, 9), gives (John 3:16); redeems (Gal. 4:4, 5), forgives (Col. 1:13, 14; 1 John 1:9), justifies (Rom. 3:23, 24), sanctifies (Heb. 10:8-10), saves (Titus 3:4-7), empowers (1 Peter 1:3-5; Phil. 4:13), perfects (Jude 24; Heb. 13:20, 21). In Christ, man believes (John 3:16; Heb. 11:6), confesses (1 John 1:9; Rom. 10:8-10), yields (chap. 6:13), strives (Phil. 1:27), fights (1 Tim. 6:11, 12; 1 Cor. 9:24-27), works (Rom. 2:13; James

1:22; 2:14-17), overcomes (1 John 5:4, 5; Rev. 21:7), conquers (Rom. 8:35-39). Even as an inordinate emphasis upon the human or the divine distorts one’s Christology, just so an inordinate emphasis upon the human or the divine distorts one’s soteriology.

Without the cross there would be no resurrection, but without the resurrection the cross would only memorialize a wasteful martyrdom. Without the cross there would be no priestly ministry of Christ in heaven, but without Christ’s priestly ministry, salvation at the cross would be only forensic. Without the cross there would be no second coming of Christ, but without Christ’s second coming all of the above would only inform a Stoic mysticism or a hollow Christian Gnosticism.

Christians do not have immortal souls that will go to heaven when they die. The only way they become immortal is when the Lord returns and immortality is bestowed upon the resurrected and translated saints (1 Cor. 15:51-55). This is why Christians look up, as well as back. They are most interested in the work of a living Lord, because therein is their hope of a coming Lord. “Now when these things begin to take place, look up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near” (Luke 21:28).

The cross, the throne of grace, the return of Jesus—three points of reference in the gospel that are all-sufficient in their context and all made effectual because He lives. Because he lives, I too shall live forever and forever and forever in a world in which righteousness dwells—no more inflation, no more deficits, no more unemployment, no more terrorism, no more war, no more oppression, no more dehumanizing discrimination, no more death, no more sorrow, no more crying. Saved at last, saved at last, saved at last! Hallelujah!

* All Scripture references are quoted from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

Make the Bible Live!

Because ministers are good preachers and good speakers, it is often assumed they are good readers. Not so! Some of the mistakes we all make in the public reading of the Bible can be avoided. □ by Gordon Chilvers



Here read Revelation, chapter five, and made each sentence pregnant with new meaning. The Bible became alive." These words describe Dr. Mander's public reading of the Bible at Heath Street Baptist church. Can this glowing testimony be given of our public Bible reading? Not often. Good public reading of the Bible

is as memorable as it is rare. Young ministers-to-be receive detailed instruction in sermon preparation, but little training in public Bible reading. Authors write many books on preaching, and some on public praying, but scarcely one on public reading. Yet to read Scripture aloud effectively is an ability that all preachers need to acquire, for some of the work of explaining its meaning is already accomplished when a passage is read with understanding and skill, conveying the message and mood of the Word to the listener. The ability to do this is innate with few, if any; it must be learned.

Both reader and listener face special difficulties as the Bible is read publicly.

First, public reading is often spoiled by the adoption of a clerical voice. The resultant drone or drawl makes for neither interesting nor fresh reading. Attitude can militate against effective reading when the reader conveys one message in the words and an altogether different one in his attitude.

Second, the difficulty in the words themselves. The Bible contains a number of words that are not familiar to the hearer (and sometimes to the reader) because they are words that do not normally occur in everyday speech and reading. This is particularly true of the King James Version, of course, but applies as well even to modern translations. The King James Version has rightly earned a permanent place in worship services. Its language is dignified

and reverent, but its Elizabethan phrases may hamper hearers who are strangers to its style. The Bible also contains theological words that are seldom used outside the pulpit or theological discussion, such as *justification*, *sanctification*, and *mediation*. Some words are used in a different sense today from the sense in which they were used in the seventeenth century of the Authorized Version. *Carriages* (Acts 21:15), for example, refers to *what* is carried and not to what carries it. *Careful* (Luke 10:41) means "anxious," not "exercising caution."

Also, the Bible contains such obsolete words as *goodman* (Matt. 20:11), meaning the husband or male head of the household; *governor* (James 3:4), the pilot or steersman of a ship. Sometimes, we shall misunderstand a sentence unless we know the changed meaning of a word. Exodus 13:18 says: "The children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt." Here harnessed means *equipped for battle*; the Jews did not have to do the work of horses! In Joshua 22:22 the second occurrence of the word *he* is confusing. Retained, it gives a false sense. (See the Revised Standard Version or another recent translation of the Bible.)

Occasionally, sentence construction pulls up the listener abruptly. In Genesis 43:25, he will hear: "They made ready the present against Joseph came at noon." How strange this sounds to modern ears! It is not a misprint.

Third, the listener's difficulties. Inattentive listening is a common fault today. The flood of words that continually deluges the ears of modern man

dulls our hearing perception. So many distracting voices abound that we unconsciously attempt to ignore them. Then, too, a few people attend worship services without expecting to gain any specific benefit. Present because they feel they ought to come, they are "dull of hearing," and become impervious to public reading of the Word.

What steps can we take to overcome these difficulties?

We ourselves must understand a passage before we can read it intelligently. Study the passage in depth; read it in the original Hebrew or Greek if possible to help clarify the sense for yourself. Consult various versions to see how they have rendered the passage; this will often give insights into nuances of meaning. Commentaries can help clear away remaining mists; the meaning of unfamiliar words can be learned from a Bible dictionary. Read the passage slowly several times during the week before reading it publicly, to gain a familiarity with it and to give it an opportunity to speak to you before you try to read it in such a way that it will speak to others. Once we understand the passage, we can give sense to what we are saying and help make it intelligible to our hearers by a careful use of such things as inflection of voice, pauses, intonation, accent, and rate of speaking. Here are several examples:

At Christmas, some listeners, especially younger ones, have heard Matthew 2:13 ("Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt") and have thought the angel told Joseph to take a small insect with him,

Gordon Chilvers writes from Norwich, England.



nly a careful study of each passage can reveal which words should be emphasized. Place the stress on the most significant of the words that will best bring out its meaning.

instead of being commanded to leave his country speedily! A slight pause after the comma will help avoid this misunderstanding.

In most copies of the Bible, no comma is inserted in the first sentence of John 14:24—"He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." The two *nots* in one clause will turn the passage into nonsense unless you make a slight pause after the phrase "He that loveth me not." At other times a comma may have to be disregarded. Unless you do so after the word *saints* in Ephesians 4:12, you will distort the sense of the passage, making the text list three purposes for spiritual gifts rather than two. (See the Revised Standard Version.) You could make Jesus a notorious sinner when reading Luke 23:32, however, if you don't observe the comma. "There were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death." Without a perceptible pause before and after the word *malefactors*, your hearers will receive the implication that Jesus was in the same class as the other two, and thus a criminal.

Knowing how to pronounce the words in a selected passage is essential. It is a good rule to pronounce Old Testament names as if they were English. New Testament names are pronounced according to Greek accents, usually stressing the third syllable from the end: Melita, not Melita. Certainty of pronunciation is necessary, because one can meet strange names in the Bible: Ecclesiastes, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Obadiah, Philemon, Melchizedek, Belteshazzar, Merodach-baladan, Kerenhappuch, Chedorlaomer, and Maher-shalal-hashbaz. A complication arises when pronouncing dictionaries and Bibles disagree on pronunciation. *Sinai* can be pronounced with two or three syllables, although people who have lived in Israel, or know Hebrew, use only two syllables. Here, consistency is the main rule.

Since public reading must be interpretative reading, be careful to communicate the emotion or feeling appropriate to the passage you read. Bible passages may take such literary forms as narrative,

declaration, conversation, poetry, and theological argument. The text can be noble, dynamic, exalting, or didactic. Your reading should convey these characteristics. Other Bible passages were written with intense feeling: love or hate, joy or sorrow, words said in anger or in mockery. Some are grave, reverential, less emotional. When you read a passage with the tone of voice appropriate to its mood, a nearly deaf person at the back of the room ought to be able to know what sort of passage was read, even though he heard only a few words. He should know whether it came from Judges, John, or Psalms.

The theatrical approach suggests ostentation, pretense, and vulgarity, and should be avoided, but stilted, feeble reading is little better. A dramatic (not theatrical) approach will make the reading living and real.

Isaiah 32:2 speaks of "rivers of water in a dry place," "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Your hearers ought to be able to sense the dry land, feel the parched throat and burning feet, and know the welcome shade. Read the passage vividly, with the same freshness as if your hearers were listening to it for the first time.

In part, reading dramatically means emphasizing certain words and phrases. Without such emphasis, the passage will be flat and monotonous. But which words are to be emphasized?

A wrong emphasis distorts the meaning of any passage. I once heard a person read: "I *was* glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord" (Ps. 122:1). But surely the psalmist was not implying that public worship later became objectionable to him!

No arbitrary rules can be given regarding which words should receive emphasis. Usually a pronoun is not emphasized, but at least once in the Bible it is the most important word in the sentence. After Nathan had heard King David's response to his parable, he said: "*Thou* art the man" (2 Sam. 12:7). The pronoun certainly is the word to emphasize here.

It is normally unusual to stress the verb

to be, since it is not often the most significant part of the sentence. But you will find exceptions: "I am Alpha and Omega, . . . which is, and which *was*, and which *is to come*" (Rev. 1:8).

Only a careful study of each passage can reveal which words should be emphasized. Place the stress on the most significant words in a sentence or the words that will best bring out its meaning. When people had differences of opinion on what to call Zacharias' son, "they made signs to his *father*, how *he* would have him called" (Luke 1:62). Where words or ideas are contrasted in a sentence, emphasis ought to be placed on the contrasts: "What *God* hath cleansed, that call not *thou* common" (Acts 10:15). When a name and its meaning are given, stress is placed on the word corresponding to the name: "Thou shalt call his name *JESUS*: for he shall *save* his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

In Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, a pronoun is not written unless it is to be emphasized. This advantage is lacking in English. When a pronoun is inserted in the Hebrew Old Testament or the Greek New Testament, it advises us to emphasize it. Matthew 5:22 has such a stress: "But I [myself] say unto you . . ."

Adequate criticism, properly conducted, can improve your public Bible reading. Have someone who is capable of listening critically evaluate your public reading and offer worthwhile comments. The preacher who has a professor of speech in his congregation should make good use of his expertise. Sometimes your wife can be your most constructive critic. If you have none of these advantages, a faithful tape recorder can help you to hear how your reading sounds to others.

Reading the Bible aloud effectively requires both study and regular practice. Yet it is such a valued skill that all efforts to succeed are worthwhile. Good reading will reward both reader and listener with a richer, more intelligent understanding and appreciation of God's message. Make the Bible live for you and your congregation!

Guardians of the whole man

The spiritual health is very closely related to physical well-being. If this is so, those who have the responsibility of caring for people's spiritual health need to be concerned as well about physical health—both their own and their congregation's. Indeed, we can never be "whole" in a Biblical sense until we have total health—body, mind, and soul. □ John S.C. Hsuen



As guardians of the spiritual well-being of their congregations, many of the clergy feel little responsibility to guard the physical well-being either of their congregations or even of themselves. Some quote this text of Scripture (although totally out of context) in defense of their attitude: "Though our outward man perish,

yet the inward man is renewed day by day" (2 Cor. 4:16). I hope to convince you in this article that there is a vital relationship between physical health and spiritual well-being.

In the New Testament, the total well-being of an individual is expressed as being "whole." Jesus often asked those He was preparing to heal: "Wilt thou be made whole?" He was referring to the total well-being of the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of one's life. Most of us think that sanctification has to do only with the spiritual nature, but this is not the Biblical view. Paul wrote: "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto

the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23). Total sanctification, then, includes all three of the components of man—body, mind, and soul. John, in his Epistle, recognizes the importance of health in these words, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health" (3 John 2).

The vital link between the spiritual nature and physical health can be readily illustrated. It is through the fine nerves of the brain that we communicate with God. Indeed, spiritual sensitivity is one of the higher functions of the brain. This brain with which we develop and maintain our relationship with God is housed in the physical body and depends on the support system of the body for its survival and normal function. Obviously, then, any impairment of the body functions will ultimately affect the brain. A serious shortage of nutrient, for example, or a crucially decreased oxygen supply may result in the total derangement of the brain's functions, including its spiritual faculty.

But we don't have to go to this extreme to see the effect of the body on the mind. We are all aware of alcohol's impairment of the higher faculties of the

mind, such as judgment, self-control, decision-making, and discernment.

"This doesn't apply to me," you may say, "because I don't drink. I don't abuse my system with drugs."

Intemperate living, however, even on a less overt scale, will result in a lowering of general health and will have its effect upon the mind. For example, if you have had to stay up very late some night and get less than your usual amount of sleep, you know what happens the next day. You find yourself not only tired physically but also less alert mentally. You aren't your usual self. You become easily upset; things that normally don't bother you are now intolerable. You find you aren't as patient as usual. Your attention span is shortened. And if you are honest, you'll admit that you are having to try ever so much harder to exercise the Christian graces. All these effects have resulted from the mere lack of needed rest!

To be in good health is not merely to be free from disease. It is to maintain the body at its optimal condition. With all the support systems working at their best, we can expect excellence in the physical functions of the brain with

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Jesus often asked those He was preparing to heal: "Wilt thou be made whole?" He was referring to the total well-being of the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of one's life.

which our spiritual faculty is so closely connected. Without health, no one can as distinctly understand or as completely fulfill his obligations to himself, to his fellow beings, or to his Creator.

What obligations do we have to our Creator in the context of physical well-being? First of all, we belong to Him by creation. The Bible clearly teaches that man was made for God's glory. In honoring God, man fulfills the very purpose of his creation.

Second, we belong to God by redemption. Paul says: "Know ye not . . . ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). We are stewards of God's creation, held accountable to Him for what we do with our bodies. If we fail to take good care of the body He has given us, we may find that we are unable to fulfill the purpose that He has for us. By intemperate living, we may also burn out sooner than we should, thus cutting short the service that we could have otherwise rendered. Living intemperately does not necessarily mean that we indulge in certain obvious health-destroying habits. Intemperate living includes such "respectable" practices as overworking, depriving ourselves of needed rest, not taking time to eat, and not having time to exercise regularly. Because of the work that we are doing as ministers of the gospel, it is easy to excuse ourselves for these infractions. There is so much to be done, so many needs to be met, so many members of the parish to be visited, so many meetings to attend. We are left with very little time for anything else. And because we are doing the "work of God," we almost feel a degree of pride that we are making these "sacrifices" for the cause of God. But I seriously doubt that the Lord requires this type of sacrificial service, which results not only in a less-effective ministry but in a shorter one.

The laws that govern our physical health are as much God's laws as are the Ten Commandments that govern our morality. Both have their origin in God.

When God made man of the dust of the ground, He put into every cell and fiber of our physical being the laws that govern the well-being of our bodies. We call these the laws of health. Doctors have not invented these laws. Doctors have merely discovered them through a study of the human body and its functions. Just as the maker of an automobile knows how that car should be maintained to keep it in the best condition for its function, so the Maker of our body knows how it may be best maintained, and He has given us this information in the laws of health. We frown at those who break the moral laws, yet how few of us feel the same way when we break the laws that govern our physical health!

Good health is not an arbitrary blessing from God in spite of what we think and often say. Neither are poor health and sickness willful punishments from Him. Galatians 6:7 clearly states the immutable law of cause and effect: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Just because one is a Christian and a minister, just because one claims to be a child of God, he is not exempt from the ill health and pain that result from breaking the laws of health. On the other hand, one may profess no religious faith and yet enjoy good health as a result of obedience to the laws of his physical well-being. Remember the words of God to Israel in Exodus 15:26: "If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the Lord that healeth thee." In the truest sense, to obey His commandments and to keep all His statutes includes the laws that govern our physical health. When the children of Israel obeyed God's physical laws, the result was recorded in Psalm 105:37: "There was not one feeble person among their tribes."

Dr. Paul Dudley White, personal physician to the late President Dwight

Eisenhower, gave the reasons for much of modern man's unhealthfulness in just six words: "Exercise too little; eat too much." Exercise and diet have a profound impact on physical health, and thus on spiritual well-being.

When God made man, He gave him the work of a gardener so that he might benefit from the physical exercise of caring for the soil and plants. Exercise gives strength to the body and promotes its proper functions. Inactivity invites weakness and disease. Maybe you have noticed (we doctors do so all the time) that if a limb is broken and placed in a cast for a number of weeks, it is appreciably thinner and weaker than the normal one when the cast comes off. Inactivity, necessary for the bone to heal, has caused the limb to atrophy. What is true of a single limb is also true of the entire body. Inactivity is a fruitful cause of disease.

As Dr. White points out, modern man exercises all too little. It seems we almost deliberately try to avoid any kind of exertion. We would rather go by car than walk, even though the distance is only two blocks! Instead of climbing the stairs, we stand on the escalator and let it carry us! I was amused at a sign in a bus in Canada: "Please move to the back. If you are an average Canadian, this is all the exercise you will do for the day." Medical statistics show that the incidence of coronary disease is significantly higher among bus drivers than bus conductors; among post office clerks than the postmen who deliver mail from door to door. The driver and the clerk have relatively little exercise compared to the bus conductor, who must move about even within the small area of the bus, and the postman, who necessarily does much walking in his job.

The benefits of exercise are many. We breathe deeper and faster, resulting in a more efficient exchange of gases through our lungs. The heart beats faster, which quickens the circulation of the blood, thus delivering a fresh supply of oxygen to all parts of the body. Regular exercise strengthens the blood vessels that supply oxygen to the heart muscles. These

The laws that govern our physical health are as much God's laws as are the Ten Commandments that govern our morality. Both have their origin in God.

vessels are capable of enlarging to allow a greater flow of blood in times of greater demand. With a lack of exercise, the blood vessels to the heart muscles become weak and less able to stretch. They are unable to meet oxygen needs in times of stress adequately. If this oxygen lack becomes critical, a heart attack follows.

Exercise also promotes the activity of the muscles and movement of the joints. The total result of exercise is to improve the function of every organ of the body. Mental faculties will function at their best; the powers of the muscles will be strengthened; digestion will improve. Exercise is one of the antidotes for emotional stress. It also promotes good sleep and helps prevent arthritis, overweight, and early aging.

How to get regular exercise when your schedule is already so hectic—that's the question, isn't it? Here are some simple yet practical suggestions:

1. Plan for it. Take the time. Nothing gets done if you wait until you have the time. You must *take* time for exercise and plan for it.

2. Look for opportunities to exercise. Walk instead of driving, if the distance is not too great. Climb the stairs instead of taking the elevator.

3. If possible, exercise by doing constructive work such as gardening or cutting wood. In addition to the physical exercise you receive, you will also have the mental satisfaction of seeing the results of your work.

4. Walking and jogging are two forms of exercise that are accessible to almost anyone without investing in expensive equipment. All you need is a pair of good jogging shoes. Hongkong Adventist Hospital sponsors a running clinic that now has 1,400 members!

The second health principle that Dr. White points out has to do with our food habits. There are a number of common food habits that are detrimental to good health—eating a very small breakfast or no breakfast at all; eating between meals; eating a heavy late-evening meal; eating too much meat and too little vegetables and fruits; a large sugar intake. What

specifically is the problem with these practices?

1. Eating a small breakfast or no breakfast at all: Normal fasting blood sugar early in the morning ranges from 90 to 95 mg per 100 ml of blood. When blood-sugar levels drop below 90 mg, one begins to feel lethargic. When the level comes down to 70 mg, the person feels hungry and tired. If the level drops further, to 65 mg, there is a craving for sweets, and if further still, a feeling of increasing fatigue and exhaustion, with such symptoms as headache, weakness, wobbliness, palpitation of the heart, nausea, and vomiting. The brain needs energy from blood sugar. A below-normal blood-sugar level will interfere with the functions of the brain. Thinking slows down and becomes confused. Nerves become tense. One becomes irritable and grouchy, moody, depressed, and generally uncooperative. In extreme cases, a person may even become unconscious.

Here is how this habit of little or no breakfast aggravates the problem of blood-sugar levels. Most people drink a cup of coffee with sugar for breakfast or they eat no breakfast at all, and go off to work. By midmorning they begin to experience the discomfort of lowered blood sugar, so they eat a snack, usually some sort of dessert with high sugar content. This quickly shoots up the blood sugar, only to drop it shortly, because although refined sugar gives quick energy, the effect is not sustained, as with normal food composed of starch, protein, and fat. People who eat a skimpy breakfast tend to be fitful and inefficient at work, and because of a frequent intake of high-calorie snacks, they are also prone to be overweight.

Physiologically, breakfast should be the *largest* meal of the day. A good meal at breakfast is an ideal way to provide the energy and strength needed for the day and its activities.

2. Eating between meals. After the regular meal is taken, the stomach should be allowed to rest for at least four or five hours. Not a particle of food should be introduced into the stomach

until the next meal. The actual amount eaten between meals may be small. However, the stomach will still go through its entire cycle of digestive process. Thus the stomach has barely done its work when more food is ingested, and it has to start the digestive process all over again. The result? The appetite is impaired at regular mealtime, and we eat less of the nourishing foods we need. Digestion is weakened. The snacks usually eaten between meals are high in calories, which encourages obesity. The stomach, being overworked, is prone to many disorders.

3. A heavy late-evening meal. When one eats a heavy late meal, sleep is often disturbed by bad dreams, and one wakes up in the morning unrefreshed and with little relish for breakfast. Eating a heavy evening meal is also one of the causes of undue weight gain. Usually after the evening meal, people have little exercise. They will probably read the newspaper, watch television, and go to bed. The food that is eaten, not being utilized for energy, is converted into fat and stored. A heavy meal in the evening puts a strain on the digestive system. While the body is resting, the stomach continues to work through most of the night. This adds insult to an already weakened digestive system. Ideally, the last meal of the day should be the lightest, and it should be eaten at least four to five hours before bedtime.

4. Too much meat and too little vegetables and fruits. Most people tend to have this imbalance in their diet. Fully grown adults require appreciably smaller amounts of protein. Meat and dairy products have a high cholesterol content, which contributes to the hardening of the arteries. But we need the vitamins and minerals and fibers that are present in vegetables and fruits. A word on fiber: Many diseases of modern man are a result of lack of food fibers. The typical diet of the affluent has too much meat and processed food items and is lacking in the whole grains, vegetables, and fruits that are sources of food fiber. Incidents of constipation, hemorrhoids,

(Continued on page 13)

Discovering spiritual gifts

Christians are often not aware of the particular gifts bestowed on them by the Holy Spirit. Now a carefully designed test will help them identify these gifts. □ by Roy C. Naden



Finishing the work!" The phrase has a highly motivating ring about it! It's why we're here. It's our commission. It's the whole point of the Advent Movement.

Humanly speaking, however, the idea of Adventism reaching every person in the world hovers somewhere between the improbable and the impossible. Listening to some of my statistician colleagues compare our church's growth with world population growth (under 200,000 baptisms per year versus 76 million births per year) can only lead to the conclusion that the Lord will have to provide a miracle if our fervent dream is to become reality. But that miraculous bestowment is not in the future, but in the present! Not something to be asked for, but something to be thankful for. Not something withheld, but something already freely given. God will finish His work through the employment of the spiritual gifts bestowed, according to His selection, on every member of the church. As the Holy Spirit bestows these

gifts, each Christian's life overflows in acts of personal ministry through which the world will be illumined by God's love.

In the past decade or so a number of concerned Christians have given the church a new awareness of the New Testament doctrine of spiritual gifts. The works of McGavran and Wagner¹ have been monumental. Pasadena's Fuller Theological Seminary continues to be a center of healthy ferment. The special series offered by Basic Youth Conflict's speaker Bill Gothard² has had widespread influence. Several Adventist ministers have developed excellent materials.³ We are in debt to all who have focused the spotlight on the dynamic that sent the gospel to the entire Roman world during the first century.

What methodology should be used to introduce the concept of spiritual gifts in a congregational setting? The following approach has proved to be successful:

1. Each member should become aware of the New Testament's statement on spiritual gifts.
2. Members should be aided in recognizing areas of personal giftedness.

Roy C. Naden, Ed.D., is associate professor of religious education at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

An awareness of the gifts the Holy Spirit has bestowed and of the guidance He promises will inevitably lead to both nurture and outreach.

3. The entire congregation should be led to respond to the Spirit's plans for personal service through the use of gifts already received.

The members of a congregation become highly motivated when they read in the Word that the Holy Spirit expect all to work in the same way or even at the same task! This is the explicit teaching of 1 Corinthians 12: can the eye do the work of the ear, or the ear act for the nose? Exposure to the subject of spiritual gifts usually leads to an immediate desire to discover areas of giftedness. Several men have attempted to make the search simple. Houts was probably the first to publish his, and Waggoner's *Modified Houts Questionnaire* has received widespread distribution. The Church of the Nazarene and Christian Reformed Home Missions have also published instruments. Unfortunately, none of the six or seven tests currently published appears to have been developed empirically. Thus there is no evidence of statistical validity and reliability.⁴ This always leaves one with the tantalizing question: Do the items really measure the gifts they purport to measure? For example does a "leadership" item actually measure the gift of leadership or could it really be measuring the "wisdom" gift?

Frustration over the lack of statistical data on any published test led to the empirical development of what is called the *Spiritual Gifts Inventory*, or SGI, based on definitions drawn from New Testament precedents.⁵ This instrument contains 57 items⁶ and can be completed in approximately 15 minutes. Thus it is well suited for use in the worship hour without infringing on the time for the message. To use an inventory to identify areas in which there is a high probability of giftedness is an exciting exercise! (The so-called "sign" gifts such as healings, miracles, tongues, are not included in the SGI. Those gifted in such ways hardly need an inventory to confirm the fact!)

A detailed study of the meaning of one's gifts should quickly follow the completion of an inventory such as the SGI, otherwise false expectations or shattered hopes can overtake the believer. For this reason a series of group study guides have been released by the Institute of Church Ministry at Andrews University.

The first three of these seven guides deal with the New Testament teaching of spiritual gifts, and each booklet contains Bible readings and a series of questions that form the basis of the group discussion. The last four booklets deal with each of the nineteen gifts listed in the SGI. The gifts are studied both from the gift chapters (1 Corinthians 12, 13, 14; Romans 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4) and other relevant New Testament passages. Of particular interest is any usage of the original Greek words that illustrate how the gift operates in a Christian's personal service for the Lord. In each of these last four sessions the group discussions focus on the practices of how each gift might best be used under the Spirit's guidance.

Some of the questions discussed in the study guides include: What is the relationship between a spiritual gift and a natural talent? When does a Christian receive his or her spiritual gift? Under what circumstances is the gift given? Is there only one way and one time? What is the function of the gift of prophecy in the local congregation? What is the relationship between the gift of prophecy and the Spirit of Prophecy identified in Revelation 12:17; 19:10? Do the gifts named in the New Testament constitute a comprehensive list or a representative list?

In the factor analysis, we discovered what theologians have long suspected, that gifts tend to cluster. That is, some gifts are closely related to others. In certain cases they may even hold common elements. For example, the gift of exhortation is part of the prophecy factor, so naturally these two often cluster. Similarly teaching and knowledge cluster and pastoring and evangelism cluster.⁷

Based on this finding it seems logical for the members of a congregation to meet in small groups of from 8 to 12 people, in which all the members of a group have a gift, or gifts, common to a specific cluster. In this way they would have common giftedness, and therefore common questions and interests. Through the computer analysis of our data we have been able to establish several major clusters. The details of these major clusters are given in the *Spiritual Gifts Manual*.

An awareness of the gifts the Holy Spirit has bestowed, and of the guidance He promises will inevitably lead to both nurture and outreach. We are not waiting for the Holy Spirit. He is waiting for us! If we thoughtfully and prayerfully lead our congregations into study and ministry as described in the New Testament, the long awaited experience of a second Pentecost will quickly become reality.

¹ Donald Anderson McGavran, *Back to Basics in Church Growth* (Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House, 1981); C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Glendale, Calif.: Regal Books, 1979).

² William Gothard, *Additional Insights on Understanding Spiritual Gifts* (Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, 1981).

³ Thomas Ludowici's D.Min. project report included an excellent discussion of the theme and a spiritual gifts test. William Liversidge has conducted scores of seminars across America on this topic; Bruce Johnston has used a well-prepared set of materials in the Northwest, and Dr. B. G. Stutsman, a westcoast layman, has also conducted successful seminars on spiritual gifts.

⁴ If any of these tests has been developed empirically, the publishers have failed to note this in the published materials. There is no reference in recent years in the better-known religious journals documenting the empirical development of a spiritual-gifts test.

⁵ I am grateful to my colleague, Dr. Robert Cruise, who directed the factor analysis of the data, and Bill Cash, who supervised the entry of the data of 2,000 subjects into the computer.

⁶ Originally the inventory contained 133 items, seven per gift. These were gradually reduced to that point where reliability and validity could be maintained with a comparatively low number of questions per factor.

⁷ There seems to be great significance for the future of evangelism in this finding. Further research is now being conducted on this interrelatedness.

Spiritual gifts resource material

■ **Spiritual Gifts Inventory.** This 12-page, research-validated booklet identifies areas of probable giftedness. It is based on two years of empirical research, involving more than 2,000 subjects from churches across America. Every member of your congregation can take the test in 15 minutes. ■ **Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts.** A set of seven study guides designed specifically for small-group study. The guides are based exclusively on the New Testament and include an in-depth examination of each of the nineteen gifts included in the Spiritual Gifts Inventory. ■ **Spiritual Gifts Manual.** A comprehensive guide for the minister detailing procedures for total membership involvement in study and ministry. ■ **Audio Cassette.** Stimulating ten-minute introductions to each of the seven small-group study sessions. Bulk prices available, but cassette may be duplicated locally.

**Institute of Church Ministry
Andrews University
Berrien Springs, MI 49104**

Please send me the following materials for Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts:

Item	Quantity	Total
Spiritual Gifts Inventory. One for each adult in congregation.		
Pack of 25 (49¢ per member)	_____	\$12.25
Pack of 50 (47¢ per member)	_____	\$23.50
Pack of 100 (45¢ per member)	_____	\$45.00
Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts. Set of seven study booklets, one set for each member of a study group.		
Pack of 25 sets (\$3.85 per member)	_____	\$ 96.25
Pack of 50 sets (\$3.71 per member)	_____	\$185.50
Pack of 100 sets (\$3.57 per member)	_____	\$357.00
Spiritual Gifts Manual. Including a free poster to advertise the program. \$5.95.		
Audio Cassette. Seven group-session introductions. Bulk prices available on request; may be duplicated locally. \$3.45.		
Pastor's Introductory Kit. Includes <i>Spiritual Gifts Manual</i> , <i>Spiritual Gifts Inventory</i> , and set of seven <i>Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts</i> study booklets. \$10.40.		
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Guardians

(Continued from page 10)

appendicitis, and cancers of the bowel are significantly higher statistically among the economically favored.

Too much sugar is also taken in one form or another. This has a harmful effect on the system: tooth caries, excessive weight gain, and impairment of the appetite for normal food. Excessive sugar intake also causes sluggish and inefficient action of the white blood cells—the defense system of the body—making the body more susceptible to infections. High intake of sugar also increases the triglyceride level in the blood, which together with cholesterol can cause hardening of the arteries.

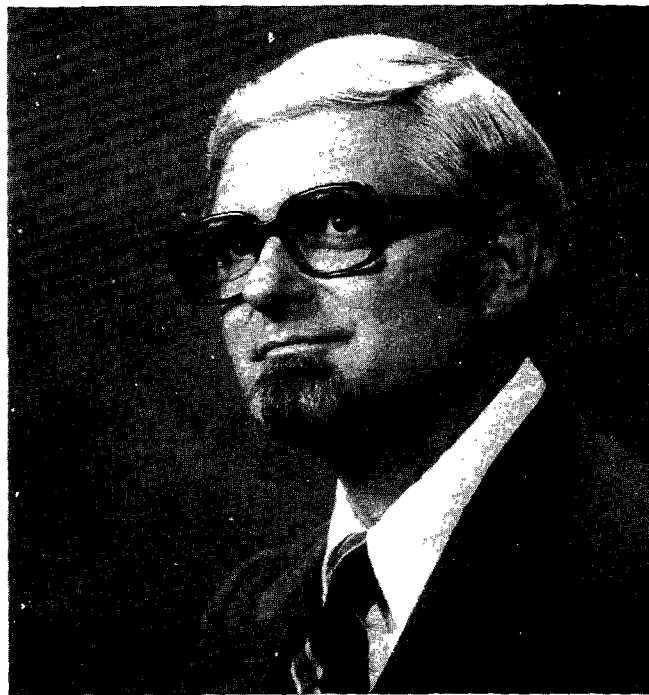
There are three basic rules of good eating.

1. Few varieties. One should not have a great variety of foods at one meal, as this encourages overeating and can cause indigestion.

2. Have foods as natural as possible. In nature, the Creator has given man foods with all the essential nutrients packed in the right proportions. As much as possible, shun processed and refined foods, and foods with preservatives and additives. Learn to enjoy whole grains. For example, choose whole-wheat brown bread instead of white bread; brown rice instead of polished white rice.

3. Simply prepared. If we could learn to prepare food in a simple and healthful manner, it would be more palatable as well as more wholesome because of its simplicity. The less interference from us, the better. Avoid a lot of seasoning and complicated cooking procedures.

As members of the clergy, we may feel that the physical is outside our area of responsibility. But, like our Master, we need to seek to make men whole. The relationship between body and mind is very close, and one cannot be truly whole who is not whole in body, mind, and spirit. Health, then, is an integral part of religion and an important part of ministry.



Peter Wagner wants to talk to you

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The grand climax

We expect from heaven our Saviour Jesus Christ, who will change our body of humiliation and make it conform to his own body of glory; and we believe that, in that day, the dead who are in Christ, coming out from their tombs at his voice, and the faithful then living on the earth, all transformed through his power, will be taken up together into the clouds to meet him, and that thus we shall always be with our Saviour. —Confession of the Evangelical Free Church of Geneva, 1848, Art. xiii.

This We Believe □ 13

by Hans K. LaRondelle



artin Buber once objected to the Christian faith: "We still live in an unredeemed world!" When Christ exclaimed on His agonizing cross, "It is finished!" He did not mean to suggest that God's plan of salvation for man and the world was completed or ended, but that His earthly mission for which He was sent by the

Father was fully accomplished (cf. John 4:34; 6:38; 17:4). Referring to the well-known prophecy regarding the Servant of the Lord in Isaiah 53, Christ had expressed the purpose of His mission in unmistakable terms: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).^{*} He understood

His divine mission on earth wholly in the light of Isaiah 53 (see also Luke 22:37; Matt. 26:28). His foreordained mission was to present Himself to God as the substitutionary atoning sacrifice on behalf of Israel and the Gentiles. Christ knew, furthermore, that He would be greatly exalted after His humiliation (Isa. 52:13). His high calling was to be ordained as the new Melchizedek, a priest-king at the right hand of God (Ps. 110:1, 4; Acts 2:33-36). Prophecy had outlined the Messianic way—the way to the throne is through suffering (see also

Psalms 22; Luke 24:25-27).

Then why has not mankind already been redeemed from sin and death, since Christ has been exalted as king of the world (Acts 2:33-36)? His present reign as a priest-king in God's heavenly sanctuary is distinct from His rule as a king-judge in the last judgment (Matt. 25:31-46). The purpose of His work of priestly intercession and reconciliation is not to end human history immediately by a day of reckoning, but rather to extend God's day of mercy in order to lead sinners to repentance and to a

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Paul taught that the second advent of Christ and the believers' resurrection from the dead (or their translation into glory) would take place virtually at the same time.

saving faith in Christ the Messiah (2 Peter 3:9). Christ had expressed this universal effectiveness of His cross and ascension by stating, "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (John 12:32). The nature of Christ's present kingship is beautifully presented to the Hebrew people in the apostolic appeal: "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Heb. 4:16). "Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them" (chap. 7:25).

Christ and the New Testament authors value individual redemption from sin and guilt by personal faith in their Saviour as having priority over collective redemption from sickness, persecution, and death. This is the supreme significance of Christ's first advent exemplified in lowliness and suffering unto death. However, Scripture knows of no either/or dilemma. The kingdom of God will be established by Christ in universal and cosmic glory. Paradise will be restored worldwide. The apostle Peter assures that "he must remain in heaven until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets" (Acts 3:21; cf. 1 Cor. 15:25).

This remarkable "must" regarding Jesus' heavenly ministry according to God's will is founded on Christ's own announcement, "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned" (John 16:7-11).

Evidently, the nature of Christ's present priesthood is to conquer through

God's Spirit all His enemies by opening their eyes to the work of Christ for them at the cross and by drawing their hearts to Christ's lordship and salvation. Paul summarized it pointedly, "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet" (1 Cor. 15:25). For this purpose Jesus ascended to the Father's throne: to prepare a place in God's kingdom for all believers. But then His second advent to the world becomes the absolutely necessary finishing touch for His work of salvation. Jesus' promise is unassailable: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am" (John 14:3).

Christ never suggested that His death or resurrection would usher in paradise or the immediate glorious redemption of this world. On the contrary, He emphatically warned His disciples of a time of trouble and savage persecution for themselves (John 16:2-4, 32, 33; Matt. 24:9-14). He even stated, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matt. 10:34; cf. Luke 12:51; Mark 13:12, 13). Strange words from the lips of One whose Messianic goal was to be the universal Prince of Peace!

"Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this" (Isa. 9:7).

Two conclusions can be derived from this consideration: (1) in God's plan of salvation the Messiah must ascend to heaven to draw all men to Himself and then return in glory to the world in order to bring universal peace and redemption; (2) the tension between Christ's first and second coming can be properly appreciated only from the perspective that redemption from the guilt and power of sin must precede redemption from the very presence of sin and death.

In the final analysis Christ's ultimate goal, for which He had to suffer so much,

was to erect on earth the glorious kingdom of God: "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). His first coming is the pledge and unshakable guarantee of His second coming.

Christ in you: the hope of glory

The apostles of Christ and the other New Testament writers considered the expectation of Christ's return in glorious splendor as the "blessed hope" of the church (Titus 2:13; Heb. 9:28). It was their conviction that all the apocalyptic prophecies of the Old Testament would be dramatically fulfilled then (2 Peter 3:13, referring to Isaiah 65:17). The apostolic church did not entertain this belief as an abstract teaching of orthodoxy, but rather preached the Advent hope as the major motivation for holy Christian living, for abiding in Christ, and for maintaining readiness for His second coming (1 John 2:28). "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure" (chap. 3:3). "So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him" (2 Peter 3:14). "Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

No one has formulated the dynamic correlation of the Second Coming in glory and the spiritual presence of Christ in such a concise, intriguing way as Paul. He wrote to the church: "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27).

The apostle apparently detects an unbreakable connection between Christ living in the hearts of the believers and His bestowal of future glory on them, between their sanctification and their glorification. He seems to make "Christ in you"—the indwelling Christ of Romans 8:10 and Ephesians 3:17—the believer's deepest sense of assurance of his final salvation. Paul points out the same connection in a different way: "And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give

Christ's second coming, therefore, means the great divide, or final separation, of God's true children from the wicked, the hypocrites, and the self-complacent ones.

life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you" (Rom. 8:11). "Christ in you"—this is not only the necessary fruit of God's justification by His grace (Gal. 2:20; 4:19) but also the indubitable certainty of the Christian's coming glorification (2 Tim. 4:7-9). Paul taught that the second advent of Christ and the believers' resurrection from the dead (or their translation into glory) would take place virtually at the same time: "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever" (1 Thess. 4:16, 17).

This hope was to the apostle such an overwhelming reality that it inspired him to bear any burden or suffering, no matter how severe, for the sake of Christ. His bold testimony has stood as a beacon light for countless martyrs to come. "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

Purposes of the Second Coming

The unambiguous assurances of the New Testament that Christ will return in divine glory to our world have far-reaching implications for the Christian's total future expectations. Three main purposes of His second coming stand out: (1) to bring about the resurrection of the dead; (2) to judge the living and the dead; (3) to take the faithful ones to His Father's house.

It is not enough to believe in the resurrection of the dead. The Christian believes that the promised resurrection (Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) will become a reality by the power of the voice of Christ (1 Thess. 4:16). Christ informed the grieving Martha, who believed in a resurrection "at the last day" (John 11:24): "I am the resurrection and the life" (verse 25). True, Christ brings spiritual resurrection or rebirth now in

all who believe in Him (chap. 5:25), but He will not bring about their physical resurrection by His voice until the future: "'Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out—those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned'" (verses 28, 29).

Christ alone holds the keys of death and the grave, because He is the resurrected one in whom is life original, unborrowed, underived (Rev. 1:18; John 14:6). The fact that God characterized Himself as "'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob'" (Ex. 3:16) does not suggest that these patriarchs possessed immortal souls, but implies the promise that they will be resurrected from the dead in order to live eternally. Christ said, "'They are God's children, since they are children of the resurrection'" (Luke 20:36, cf. verses 37, 38).

The Second Advent is also the day of judgment for the world. Both the living righteous and the living wicked will then receive their respective rewards. No soul is judged or rewarded at the moment of death, for the Second Advent does not occur for each individual at death. God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:31, R.S.V.; cf. chap. 10:42).† Christ Himself repeatedly announced that He, as the apocalyptic Son of man of Daniel 7:13, 14, was the appointed judge of Israel and the Gentiles in the last judgment (Matt. 7:21-23; 16:27; 25:31-46; 26:63, 64; John 5:22). No one can escape this final confrontation with Christ, because "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Cor. 5:10), "who will judge the living and the dead" (2 Tim. 4:1). This judgment will reveal *who* is a true follower of Christ. Man's deeds will be regarded as the evidence of what each person really is in relation to Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). Even man's secret thoughts will be judged "on that day" (Rom. 2:16, R.S.V.). God will hold each one

responsible for his or her basic character (chap. 14:12; Gal. 6:7, 8).

Christ's second coming, therefore, means the great divide, or final separation, of God's true children from the wicked, the hypocrites, and the self-complacent ones. Jesus said that when He comes with great power and glory, "he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens" (Mark 13:27; cf. Matt. 25:31-46). This separation will affect even family and marriage bonds (Luke 17:32-36). While the true believers are ushered into Christ's presence, the impenitent ones, those who have persistently resisted and rejected the incessant drawings of God's love, will receive the outcome of their own choices (Rom. 2:5-8). Paul spells it out more fully: "This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power" (2 Thess. 1:7-10).

And finally, Jesus will come again to take His people to His Father's house (John 14:3). Christ called the end of the world a "harvest" time (Matt. 13:39; cf. Rev. 14:14-20). Paul assures us that at Christ's coming the believers will all be united and "caught up . . . in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so we shall always be with the Lord" (1 Thess. 4:17, R.S.V.; cf. verse 15).

It takes the angels of God to bring all the saints who ever lived together into Christ's glorious presence (Matt. 24:31). Only then will Christ's high priestly ministry be fulfilled: "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory" (John 17:24).

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Customers wanted— no experience required

With dozens of other churches to choose from, why should anyone choose your church? Is it location, architecture, program, pastor, or denominational identity? Or is there something more? □ by William L. Poteet



during the height of the oil crisis a few years ago, U.S. Federal marshals arrested Glenn Heller, a Boston gas-station owner, for violating price regulations by charging a then-unheard-of \$1.42 a gallon. Now, with gas prices decontrolled, his Beacon Hill Gulf station offers unleaded gas at \$1.69 per gallon during the

daytime, and charges go up to a whopping \$2.59 between midnight and 8:00 A.M.! Before the current gas surplus caused prices everywhere to slide a little, he was charging a top rate of \$3.99 a gallon!

Customers pay dearly for other services as well. Drivers who run out of gas must pay a \$15 deposit for a gas can and a \$3-an-hour rental fee. Motorists pay \$1 just to use the air pump!

Yet despite stiff prices, Heller sells about three thousand gallons of gasoline a week—half of it at night when other stations are closed. He is clearly capi-

talizing on a captive market.

On the other hand, a service station in our town recently put up a sign: "Customers Wanted—No Experience Required!" It charges \$1.29 a gallon for gasoline, and the air is free.

Why would someone stop at Heller's Beacon Hill Gulf and pay such outrageous prices when there must be dozens of other nearby stations like the one in our town, looking for customers and offering their products at a fair price? Two reasons come immediately to mind: need and availability.

In a sense your church is like a filling station. With dozens of others to choose from, why should anyone choose your church? Location, architecture, program, pastor, even denominational identity, often have less to do with the

choice than we think. People looking for a church, like motorists looking for gas, respond to felt needs.

Robert Schuller's formula for church growth is simply "Find a hurt and heal it." The tremendous response to Dr. James Dobson's "Focus on the Family" film series attests to the truthfulness of that concept. People are looking not for entertainment or new programs, but for satisfaction, solutions, and answers.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells of a man who has unexpected company arrive at midnight. The rules of Eastern hospitality require the host to provide a simple but satisfying snack, but he has no bread in the house. There is no Seven-Eleven store on the corner, no basement freezer full of food. To supply a single slice of bread, he would have to grind the grain

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As every angler knows, to “go fishin’” includes the expectation of success. You haven’t really fished in the proper sense of the word unless you have caught something.

into flour, make the dough, build a fire, and bake the loaf—a time-consuming operation, and it is now in the wee hours of the morning.

Suddenly the host remembers the neighbor next door. With a larger family, he doubtless keeps a supply of bread on hand. Excusing himself, he slips away from his guest and knocks, rather tentatively, at his neighbor’s door. No response. He knocks louder and calls his neighbor’s name. Finally the man awakens, but when he learns his friend’s plight, he responds from within, “I can’t help you, for my family is asleep all around me here on the floor, and if I get up I’ll awaken them.”

The host grows desperate, and refusing to be quiet or go away, persists until the neighbor gets up and gives him the bread, not because of their friendship (now strained to the breaking point), but because of his persistence and need.

In your town are people who are as desperate as the host in Jesus’ parable. The “bread” they seek may be the solution to a marital difficulty, answers to the perplexing issues of parenting, help in coping in a complex world or a sense of belonging, of being needed and wanted. They come knocking with a myriad of problems.

They will find answers; their sense of frustration will drive them to that. The answers they find will not always be the right ones or from the best sources, but they will find answers nonetheless, from a friendly bartender, a fellow worker or neighbor, or perhaps a member of a cult—someone, anyone who will listen understandingly and respond. To the person in need, the rightness or wrongness of the counsel they receive is not as important as its availability.

Availability to meet human needs involves far more than just being in the right place at the right time. It goes to the very heart of the church’s evangelistic mission.

Church growth strategist C. Peter Wagner, of Fuller Seminary’s School of World Mission, gives three major definitions of evangelism: evangelism of presence, proclamation, and persuasion.

Presence evangelism focuses on being a force for good in the community, on witnessing by lending a helping hand, by “helping people in context.” According to this definition, the very fact that a church exists in the community is a witness to the world. The inadequacy of this view is illustrated by a poll of mainline clergy conducted by the National Council of Churches. Less than 40 percent of the ministers questioned believed the church’s basic evangelistic mission is to bring people to Christ.

The words of Nazarene missiologist Paul Orjala ought to serve as a warning to the church at this point: “The chief reason many churches no longer practice evangelism is that they no longer believe that people are lost and need the Saviour. The *uniqueness of Christ*—‘none other name’ (Acts 4:12)—has been traded off for *religious pluralism*. The *universality of God’s offer of salvation* through Christ has been replaced by *universalism*.”—*Get Ready to Grow* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1978), p. 42.

Proclamation evangelism involves proclaiming the gospel in such a way that it is heard and understood. This concept of evangelism operates under the assumption that once the gospel has been declared (and comprehended), the evangelistic task has been completed, whether or not people come to trust in Christ as Saviour as a result of the effort.

Joe Bayly’s *The Gospel Blimp*, with its “gospel firebombs,” is a classic satirical statement about the pitfalls inherent in proclamation evangelism. Sometimes, however, even the ludicrous works. A Methodist layman launched thirty thousand whiskey bottles stuffed with gospel tracts. More than six hundred responses resulted from this “Jim Beam” evangelistic strategy, and one church was established! But the average American is exposed to 1,600 advertising messages a day, and since our minds tend to filter out most of them, trapping only a minuscule minority, the gospel message fights an uphill battle for survival.

Persuasion evangelism, the third of

Wagner’s options, operates on the premise that evangelism is not complete until disciples are made, until men and women are committed to Christ and to the body of Christ. Perhaps the most definitive statement of the goal of evangelism from this perspective is that written by the Anglican Archbishops’ Committee in 1918: “To evangelize is so to present Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their Saviour, and serve Him as their King in the fellowship of His church.”

My son and I enjoy fishing. Many an afternoon we’ve dutifully carried our fishing gear through the pasture and over numerous fences to the edge of a stock pond where we know there are catfish. We’ve baited our hooks with everything from nightcrawlers to “stink bait” and waited patiently for a nibble. Sometimes we leave empty-handed, and we still are glad we went. But as every angler knows, to “go fishin’” includes the expectation of success. You haven’t really fished in the proper sense of the word unless you have caught something. Neither do those who have become fishers of men for the Lord.

The end result of presence evangelism is compassion. Proclamation evangelism aims at communication. But the goal of persuasion evangelism is conversion and commitment. To be content with less is to miss the point of the Great Commission. We are to call men and women to decision and to discipleship.

What about your congregation? Is your church content simply to “be there” helping people? By proclaiming the gospel in such a way that it is heard and understood, does your congregation feel it has fulfilled its responsibility under God? Or does your church recognize its evangelistic task as that of bringing men and women to Christ, making disciples, perfecting them in the faith, and bringing them to be responsible, reproducing members of the body of Christ? Does the church under your care tell a needy world: “Customers Wanted—No Experience Required”?

The gospel at Sinai

Ever since sin entered the world, man's natural tendency has been to try to strike a bargain with God that will better his own situation. But this understanding of "covenant" is far from what God was trying to communicate at Sinai. □ by Steve Daily



urrent popular trends in Christian theology represent an unprecedented break from traditional patterns of historical Christian thought. During the past twenty-five years intense theological experimentation has produced a new pluralism, causing bewilderment and confusion. "Theologies of secu-

larity, process, liberation, hope, play, and story have emerged like the overlapping burst of a fireworks display."¹

In many ways, these developments have severed Christianity from its traditional roots, producing new belief systems, which seem almost detached from any meaningful historical perspective. Some observers believe modern Christianity has so neglected the Biblical themes of law and justice, and so minimized the concept of propositional truth, that the Ten Commandments have been reduced to virtual irrelevancy in our contemporary culture.² The revolution in ethics and theology resulting from the "honest to God" movement of the '60s produced a new gospel that

emphasized commitment to social causes and a new morality that proclaimed the death of a traditional theism.

So, on the one hand, a new morality and Christian activism have overshadowed traditional notions of repentance, faith, and dependence on a personal God. But on the other hand, we see a revival of right-wing Christianity in America, often characterized by dogmatic moralism and Biblical literalism, that advocates a gospel of patriotism, prosperity, and positive thinking. Such a stance can reduce religion to a self-serving form of pop psychology that is blind to the inequities of social injustice and oppression.

In the context of these theological extremes, the Exodus-Sinaitic event can offer current theology a more balanced gospel, one which demands both a radical faith in God and a radical commitment to humanity.

The religion of the Bible is essentially covenant religion. God's covenant with His chosen people is an extremely important theme in the Old Testament, and while it may be claiming too much to accept Walter Eichrodt's view³ that this is the central theme of the Old Testament, one cannot afford to minimize the significance of the Sinaitic covenant experience which immediately followed the Exodus deliverance in Israel's history.

Seventh-day Adventists, with many other Christians, have traditionally spoken of two covenants in Scripture, the old and the new. The old covenant has been identified with the way God related to mankind in Old Testament times; the new covenant has usually been applied to God's method of relating to humanity through the work of Jesus Christ. It is not uncommon for Christians to refer to the old covenant as one of works, which

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The Ten Commandments do not represent a mutual agreement, but the magnanimous, unconditional declaration of a benevolent Deliverer who requires a loyal response from His subjects.

Israel failed to fulfill, and the new covenant as one of grace, which the Christian enters through faith in Christ. Dispensationalists take this view to its logical conclusion by arguing that the Old Testament promises to Israel were part of an unconditional covenant of righteousness by works, which provided a completely different method of salvation than that experienced by Christians after the cross.⁴

This tendency to identify the covenant at Sinai with a system of salvation based on works has, no doubt, been partially the result of misconceptions concerning the actual meaning of the word covenant—*berith*—in Mosaic times compared with its modern meaning. Today we use the term to refer to a mutual agreement or to a contract between two or more parties. According to this definition, a covenant is an arrangement whereby one lives up to his part of a bargain in order to gain some advantage. Ever since sin entered the world, man's natural tendency has been to try to strike a bargain with God that will better his own situation. But this understanding of the word *covenant* is far from the Biblical concept that God was trying to communicate to Moses at Sinai.

The word *berith* appears 286 times⁵ in the Old Testament, but our understanding of the word in ancient literature has been greatly increased in recent decades by the work of various Old Testament scholars. George E. Mendenhall⁶ was the first to show the parallels between the Sinaitic covenant and the Hittite suzerainty treaties of the Ancient Near East. These treaties were unilaterally imposed, without negotiation, on conquered peoples by victorious Hittite kings.⁷ In return for the conquering sovereign's protection, the people would swear by public acclamation their absolute allegiance to the king and his policies.⁸ This treaty was between two parties who were totally unequal; they differed significantly from the parity treaties often negotiated between rulers or nations of equal standing. The ten commandments given by God to Moses

bear a striking resemblance to the ancient suzerainty treaties. (See Deuteronomy 5; Exodus 20; Joshua 24.) They do not represent a mutual agreement, but the magnanimous, unconditional declaration of a benevolent Deliverer who requires a loyal response from the subjects He has saved. The Sinaitic covenant does not begin with the words, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:3). It begins a verse earlier with the words, "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt" (verse 2)—a God who rescued you when you were helpless, who saved you when you were lost, who freed you when you were slaves. In this light, the ten points that follow can rightly be understood as statements of fact that naturally grow out of the Exodus deliverance rather than as arbitrary, negative commands.

Because they had been freed from bondage by the mighty hand of divine deliverance, the Israelites' response to these ten principles was to be a natural expression of gratitude resulting from internalizing God's love in their hearts. God acts in the covenant for Israel, not because of some fixed agreement, but because of their special love relationship. The Hebrew word *chesed*, usually translated "loving kindness" or "mercy," is the Old Testament term that describes God's fidelity to the covenant, or His covenant love.⁹ It is a symbol of God's willingness to make Himself vulnerable by entering into relationship with man, an idea that was completely foreign to a non-Israelite concept of deity.

Another Hebrew word, *tsadeqah*, is also important to a proper understanding of the relational nature of the Sinaitic covenant. This is the word that normally describes Israel's loyalty, faithfulness or righteousness in relationship to the covenant. As Von Rad has demonstrated, the righteousness of Israel in Old Testament times came not by obedience to some external standard of law, but was a relational concept which was, above all else, an internalized commitment to justice, love, and loyalty to God.¹⁰ Law keeping for its own sake is not the

absolute goal, according to the Old Testament. Rather, faithfulness to the covenant is the goal of life and the purpose of law, and when this faithfulness is achieved one experiences wholeness or *shalom*, the peace of the unbroken covenant. When we understand this relational concept of covenant, it becomes much easier to see the Ten Commandments as universal principles rather than specific commands, which condemned certain types of behavior in ancient times but which have lost their relevance for today.

The covenant responsibility encompassed Israel's entire life, by defining her relation to God and neighbor, and the quality of her existence.¹¹ While the first table of the covenant law dealt with transcendent reality and the true meaning of worship, the second dealt with human social responsibilities. It is this second table that has historically been neglected in the Christian tradition. The fine print concerning the second table indicates that when God checked to see whether Israel was meeting her covenant commitment, He looked first at how she was treating the poor, widows, orphans, and resident aliens in her midst (see Deuteronomy 10).

The tragedy of Sinai is not that Israel pledged to keep the law and then failed to do so. The tragedy is that they pledged to do what they were incapable of doing and failed to recognize their misconception. (See Ex. 19:8; 24:7.) They saw the smoke and the fire and distorted God's intention. They frustrated God's attempt to communicate His love at Sinai and thus failed to comprehend the magnitude of divine grace. The real message of Sinai was that God has done for us human beings what we can never do for ourselves. "I have delivered you when you were helpless," He declares. God did not give Israel a covenant of righteousness by works at Sinai, nor was He responsible for the legalism that dominated their subsequent history. Edward Heppenstall had observed: "The Sinai covenant is simply an extension of the everlasting covenant of grace given to Abraham (Genesis 17). God's method

The "new covenant" is a reinstitution of the "everlasting covenant." It is not meant to nullify the Exodus-Sinaitic covenant, but to restore it to its original purpose.

and purpose for the salvation of the race and the fulfillment of His will are the same in both the Old and New Testaments.¹²

The wilderness in which the Israelites found themselves after God's great salvation act at the Red Sea provided the perfect opportunity to demonstrate a radical trust and dependence upon God. Had they moved forward in faith and experience the full blessings of their covenant relationship, as God intended, they could have fulfilled the unique function for which they were originally chosen. First, Israel could have become a special "possession" (Ex. 19:5, R.S.V.)^{*} a unique community distinct from all other peoples. God called the Israelites to be an alternative faith community, not just a reflector of the dominant culture. He instructed them to develop an egalitarian society and a political structure which would have set them apart from all other nations. Instead, they desired to be like their heathen neighbors and cried out to God for a king. This rebellion against radical trust led to sociological changes that countered the economics of equality that God had instituted at Sinai, replacing it with an economics of aristocracy and poverty. The system of political justice which God had designed was transformed into oppression.¹³ Thus, one result of Israel's failure to respond to the gospel covenant at Sinai and to demonstrate a true radical faith, was the emergence of a system of social injustice that plagued the nation throughout the rest of its history.

Second, it was God's intention through the Sinaitic covenant to create a people who would make a spiritual impact on the world. It was never His desire for a nationalistic pride and spiritual arrogance to lead to exclusiveness and isolation. This was the result of Israel's refusal to really trust God with the radical kind of faith that the covenant demanded. God called Israel to be a "kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6) who would minister to all nations, sharing the good news of a loving, saving God who liberates the captives and the oppressed. But Israel withdrew from

serving humanity, choosing instead to serve herself. Thus an evangelistic impotence was a second result of Israel's failure to respond with a radical faith to the gospel covenant at Sinai.

It was also God's purpose that Israel be a "holy nation" (*Ibid.*), reflecting the holiness of the covenant God¹⁴ and thereby testifying to His transforming power and uniqueness in comparison to all other gods of the ancient world. But Israel failed here, as well. Instead of looking back to Sinai as a faith covenant, which redefined her understanding of community, world, and God in a relational context of love and justice, Israel emphasized a letter-of-the-law obedience. By elevating the law above human beings, God's chosen people caused the "law of liberty" to become a "yoke of bondage."¹⁵

The prophets were the first to recognize Israel's distortion of the covenant and to rebuke her for the resulting spiritual and social ills. Those who accept the popular misconception that the prophets were great religious individualists or "free spirits" who functioned independently of the established religious forms of their day, fail to understand the prophets' concern for and commitment to the covenant of God and the community of faith. The most influential prophets of the Old Testament were those who could actually weep, as Jesus Himself would later weep, over the broken covenant in Israel. They could see the social injustice, exploitation, and self-serving idolatry practiced by the people—especially the rich—and promoted by their kings. So they entered into solidarity with the poor who grieved and the oppressed who mourned. They despised the institutionalized religion of royal manipulation whereby all radical faith in the community was crushed, while the outward forms of religion were magnified to serve the purposes of the political and religious establishment. As they anticipated the inevitable judgments that would accompany such a course, their tears were a public expression of Israel's deepest fears. The prophetic condemnation of Israel's cove-

nant-breaking should never be separated from the prophetic grief (Jer. 4:19), the call for public grieving (Amos 5:16; Jer. 9:10; 31:15), and the message that God Himself is grieving (Jer. 31:20).

The covenant that God reestablished at Sinai was in no way inadequate or merely temporary in its provisions for Israel. But it became inadequate when Israel distorted it and destroyed its true meaning. The message of the prophets was that its failure was due, not to its defective nature, but to Israel's two-fold iniquity—unfaithfulness to God, and its inevitable result, unfaithfulness to humanity. Where faith in God is absent, sin against one's fellow man is always present. The prophetic testimony on these two points is overwhelming (see Isa. 2:8; Hosea 8:1-5; Jer. 7:30, 31; Amos 5:1-13; 6:4-8; Isa. 10:1-3; Jer. 5:1, 27-29).

Regarding the sin of social injustice, Ronald Sider states, "The explosive message of the prophets is that God destroyed Israel because of mistreatment of the poor! . . . Economic exploitation sent the chosen people into captivity."¹⁶ This fact cannot be overstressed in a prosperous and materialistic nation like America, where we hoard so much of the world's wealth. But neither can we afford to forget that the root sin of Israel's oppression and injustice was the rejection of a radical faith commitment to God's grace as revealed in the Exodus-Sinaitic covenant.

God's covenant was not a written code of law on stone; its essence was to know God and to be known by Him in an intimate faith relationship. The Old Testament prophets use the word *know* (*yada*) 177 times in their writings. This same word, often used to describe the act of sexual intimacy between human beings, indicates that the covenant relationship demands an experimental intimacy between God and man that far surpasses the simple observance of laws or commandments. It is in this context that Jeremiah gives the words of the Lord: "The new covenant that I will make with the people of Israel will be this: I will put my law within them and

The tragedy of Sinai is not that Israel pledged to keep the law and then failed to do so, but that they pledged to do what they were incapable of doing.

write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. None of them will have to teach his fellow countryman to know the Lord, because all will know me, from the least to the greatest. I will forgive their sins and I will no longer remember their wrongs" (Jer. 31:33-34, T.E.V.).

This "new covenant" to which Jeremiah refers is a reinstitution of the "everlasting covenant."¹⁷ It is not meant to nullify or minimize the Exodus-Sinaitic covenant, but to restore it to its original purpose. The "new covenant" is not new from God's standpoint, but is new in contrast to what the people of Israel had come to understand the Sinaitic covenant to be. The "old covenant" (verse 32) does not describe a former, inadequate attempt on the part of God to enter into relationship with His people, but to the gross distortion by the Israelites of the Sinaitic covenant. Therefore, Jeremiah calls His people to repentance. To experience the "new covenant" is to know God intimately, and as a result of this relationship, to restore social justice to the poor, needy, and oppressed (see Jer. 22:16).

There is only one covenant that God offers to the human race in Scripture, and that is the "everlasting covenant" (*berith olam*), a phrase that occurs fifteen times in the Old Testament. Five of these references appear in the prophetic writings, and stress the unalterable nature of the divine covenant with man.¹⁸ God's method of salvation is indeed the same yesterday, today, and forever. It is true that Scripture speaks of an Adamic covenant (Hosea 6:7), a Noahic covenant (Gen. 9:9), an Abrahamic covenant (chap. 12:1-4), a Sinaitic covenant, and a Davidic covenant (2 Sam. 23:5). But all of these covenants are actually various expressions of the "everlasting covenant" of grace as it was applied in every age under differing circumstances.

When we speak of the old covenant, we need to recognize that it resulted, not by God's plan, but by man's misinterpretation of God's original plan. The new covenant is God's continued effort

to reestablish the everlasting covenant in its unperverted form. Rather than speaking of two covenants, we should speak in terms of two different attitudes toward God. Not two dispensations, but two different approaches to religion. The old covenant is Adam and Eve sewing together fig leaves to cover their nakedness; the new covenant is God Himself providing a covering for their nakedness. The old covenant is Cain working diligently to provide His own self-made sacrifice without blood; the new covenant is Abel claiming the blood of the lamb in faith as God commanded. The old covenant is sinful man at the Tower of Babel doubting the promise of God and seeking to save himself; the new covenant is Noah finding grace in the eyes of the Lord. The old covenant is Abram doubting the promise of God by taking Hagar, his bond servant; the new covenant is Abraham trusting God to perform that which He had promised.

Today, the Exodus-Sinaitic covenant warns us against the extreme of a social gospel detached from an intimate faith relationship with God, or the opposite extreme of claiming Exodus, resurrection, and salvation, without Sinai, Pentecost, or a significant involvement in the irradiation of human oppression and injustice.¹⁹ The Sinaitic covenant, understood in its proper Biblical context, is an experiential relationship with God based on the good news of His salvation. Therefore, as Walter Harrelson has pointed out, the Ten Commandments are in reality a document that proclaims eternal principles of human rights and responsibilities.²⁰ Such principles are not the covenant itself, but the fruits that naturally grow out of an internalized covenant relationship. They are the path that guides us to the goal of eternal peace in response to Jesus' words, "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15).

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

¹ Lonnie Kliever, *The Shattered Spectrum: A Survey of Contemporary Theology* (Atlanta: John

Knox Press, 1981), p. 1.

² Walter Harrelson, *The Ten Commandments and Human Rights* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), pp. 5, 6.

³ Eichrodt, in his *Theology of the Old Testament*, fails to recognize the various complex strands of significant theological themes in the Old Testament. While his work is important, recent scholarship recognizes that his efforts to subordinate all Old Testament material to the covenant theme, and specifically the Sinaitic covenant, force the text to fit a theory rather than the evidence. See D. J. McCarthy, *Old Testament Covenant* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1972) pp. 4-6.

⁴ "Dispensationalism," reprinted from *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 372:93, October-December, 1936. (A publication of Dallas Theological Seminary.)

⁵ G. E. Mendenhall, "Covenant," *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 1, p. 714.

⁶ George E. Mendenhall, *Law and Covenant in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, Pittsburgh: The Biblical Colloquium, 1955.

⁷ Delbert R. Hillers, *Covenant: The History of a Biblical Idea* (London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), pp. 49, 50.

⁸ D. J. McCarthy, *Treaty and Covenant* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1978), p. 253.

⁹ Edmond Jacob, *Theology of the Old Testament* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), pp. 103-107. See also, J. Kenneth Kuntz, *The People of Ancient Israel* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 276.

¹⁰ For a full discussion of the word righteousness as it related to Israel's covenant relationship with God, see chapter one of Gerhard Von Rad's *Old Testament Theology*, volume 1.

¹¹ B. S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical Theological Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 367.

¹² Edward Heppenstall, "The Law and the Covenant at Sinai," *Andrews University Seminary Studies*, vol. 2, 1964, p. 20. For further discussion of the relationship between the Sinai covenant and the Abrahamic covenant see, Walter Kaiser, Jr., *Toward an Old Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), p. 101f.

¹³ Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 32-43. See also, *The Land* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), pp. 28-37.

¹⁴ Childs, p. 367.

¹⁵ James Londis, *God's Finger Wrote Freedom* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1970), p. 15.

¹⁶ Ronald Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 1977), p. 62 (59-72). See also, Conrad Boerma, *The Rich the Poor and the Bible* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), pp. 31-48. R. B. Scott, *The Relevance of the Prophets* (New York: Macmillan, 1978), pp. 171-192.

¹⁷ Ralph Klein, *Israel in Exile* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), pp. 66, 134.

¹⁸ Jakob Jocz, *The Covenant* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1968), pp. 57, 58. See Isa. 55:3, 61:8; Jer. 32:40; Ezek. 16:60, 37:26.

¹⁹ Bruce Birch, Larry Rasmussen, *The Predicament of the Prosperous* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978), pp. 134, 135. See also Birch, *Singing the Lord's Song* (United Methodist Church, Global Ministries, 1981), pp. 124-129.

²⁰ Harrelson, p. 192.

Praise God!

Psalm 150, the "praise" psalm, includes references to many musical instruments of antiquity. Is this simply a catalog of these instruments, or did the psalmist mention them for a reason? □ by Larry G. Herr



o one can read Psalm 150 without experiencing the exuberance of praise. The psalm begins and ends with the Hebrew word *haleluyah*, meaning "praise Yahweh," usually translated "praise the Lord" (verses 1, 6).^{*} With a single exception, every line begins with the word "praise" (the one exception still contains the

word). The mention of musical instruments as fitting vehicles for praising God is as natural today as it was in antiquity. It conjures up a picture of great music profoundly and joyfully rendered on a variety of instruments.

But is this psalm concerned only with praising the Lord in as many ways as possible, or is there a broader message? Can we discern movement and direction in the way the psalm sets forth its commands to praise? Or is each line an independent entity having little to do specifically with adjacent lines? Is the psalmist simply searching his mind for a catalog of musical instruments, or did he choose specific instruments and mention them in a particular order for a purpose? If so, what was his purpose? Certainly, praise to God apart from any additional purpose is perfectly proper, but Psalm 150 may also give us a more unified and coherent look into the scope and purpose of praise.

Verse one tells us that we are to praise God in two places: in His sanctuary and in His mighty firmament. The Israelite understood this to include both the earthly microcosm of the tabernacle, or temple, where religious services of praise were regularly conducted, and also every place spanned by God's creation, the macrocosm ("his mighty firmament"). For us today it means that our praise to God should occur not only in our

corporate church services but wherever we are in the world as well. Praise does not end at the church doors.

Thus the first verse of the psalm introduces us not only to the idea of praise but also to an interesting social idea: praise to God transcends the religious sphere of life and enters into every aspect of existence. Praise to God is not only proper, but desired, in places other than those uniquely set apart for worship.

The second verse tells *why* we are to praise Him: because of "his mighty deeds" and "exceeding greatness" ("his mighty deeds" were His past miraculous acts in history).

In verses 3-5 the theme of the psalm is amplified by reference to several musical instruments and practices well known by Old Testament worshipers. These verses do not contain simply a blind catalog of musical instruments. There is a method to the psalmist's order of terms.

The instruments mentioned in Psalm 150 were in vogue almost three thousand years ago and thus were very different than anything we know today, although our Bible translations use terms we understand today. Most modern Western instruments with which we are acquainted have been developed since the close of the Renaissance, a mere four hundred years ago. Earlier instruments looked, and would have sounded, exotic to us, so much so that on the rare occasions when they are played today, we must *develop* a taste for them before their sound is pleasing. Many of these ancient instruments are pictured in

ancient art, especially in Egypt, and some have even been found in excavations. Even the singing styles of those ancient times may not have been considered beautiful by our present ideas of what constitutes a pleasant musical sound. Like painting, sculpture, and literature, musical style is an ever-changing expression of human feeling. The instruments used to express those feelings change too. But we can be confident, nonetheless, that the emotions and values expressed by these ancient people in their music were similar to those that our modern music elicits in us.

Ancient musical instruments were not orchestral in nature. That is, they were not meant to be played in groups of more than a few players. Music then was softer than is ours today; even instruments considered by the ancients to have been loud were, by our standards, relatively quiet. Singers and their accompaniment probably performed in unison for the most part, or in harmonies that would be foreign to our ears; most assuredly there was no "harmony" as we know it today.

Melodies tended to be chantlike and performed in a vocal tone that may have been quite nasal, unlike any popular or classical styles of our modern western culture. If David himself were to sing for us, his tone would probably be so strange that we would have a difficult time appreciating it. Recently, an ancient song written around 1400 B.C. on a clay tablet and found at ancient Ugarit has been deciphered and performed. You may listen to the song on a recording

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entitled "Songs From Silence" (Bit Enki Records BTNK 101; see also *Biblical Archaeology Review*, Vol. VI, No. 5, pp. 14-25). Today's tastes would certainly not call the song beautiful.

However, the same emotion that David inspired in Saul by his music can be inspired in us by our modern music. Music is a statement of aesthetic and emotional symbols of values to which a specific culture is conditioned. It is on this level that the musical references in Psalm 150 are meaningful to us today.

The first instrument mentioned in verse three is illustrative of this point. The trumpet, or *shophar*, was made from a hollowed ram's horn. It was nothing like our modern trumpet made of brass, which has a maximum range of about three octaves. The *shophar* could muster only one or two notes and could not be played nearly as loudly as modern trumpets, even though it was the loudest of ancient instruments.

Because the *shophar* could not play melodies, it was used rhythmically to signal the parts of the worship service, the Sabbath hours, and the beginning of religious feasts, perhaps something like church bells are used today. It could also be used to signal alarms from the city's watchtowers (see Jer. 4:5). Different rhythms were used to signify the various festal occasions. Because of its unique use in the ordering of Temple worship, the *shophar* was considered the religious instrument *par excellence* in Biblical and post-Biblical Judaism and is still so considered today. There is thus a reason the *shophar* is mentioned first in the psalm.

Even though the lute (verse 3) is an antique instrument to most of us, the word evokes a far more modern instrument in our minds than the Bible writer envisioned. Actually both the "lute" (*nebel*) and the "harp" (*kinnor*) seem to have been similar instruments. Although no one can be certain, it appears that the *nebel* was very similar to the modern harp, perhaps occurring in several different sizes and shapes. Josephus mentions that it had about twelve strings (giving it a range of about an

octave or slightly more, although we do not know the tonal intervals involved), and that it was used heavily in worship to accompany singing by individuals or small groups (see also 2 Sam. 6:5; 1 Chron. 15:16).

The harp, or *kinnor*, was the instrument of David (1 Sam. 16:16) and was considered the noblest instrument of all. It probably was a lyre-type instrument, held in the hand and plucked like a miniature harp but with fewer strings. Just as the guitar is often considered a basic musical instrument today, so the *kinnor* seems to have been the basic musical instrument of Biblical times, especially among the aristocracy. It was a secular instrument, although it was used frequently in Temple services. Indeed, the Levites were especially known for their abilities on the *kinnor* during Temple services when, in New Testament times, never fewer than nine were used.

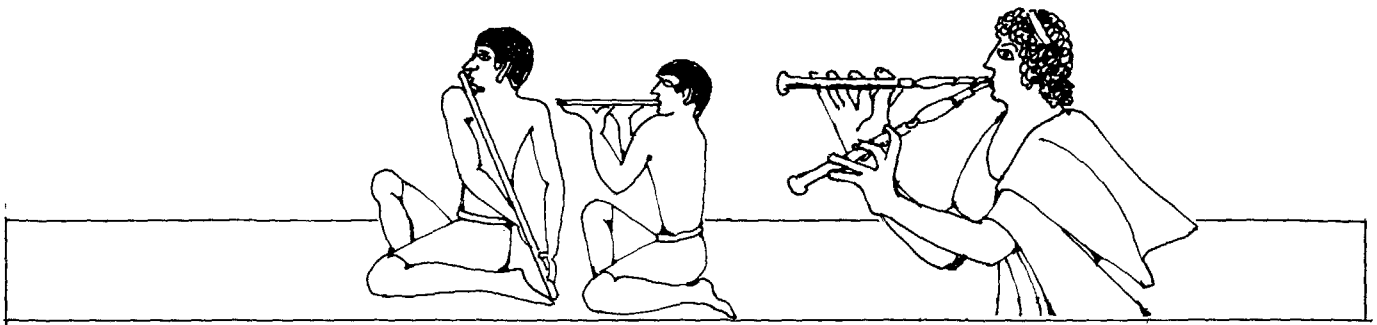
All the instruments mentioned in verse three are instruments considered by Biblical people to be fit for use in the Temple services. The *shophar* was used to provide order for the service, the *nebel* was used as an accompaniment for singing by individuals or small groups,

and the *kinnor* was probably used to accompany singing by individuals or by groups of singers, especially Levites, in which each singer played his own instrument.

In verse four, the timbrel, or *toph*, was apparently a type of hand drum played primarily by women in a manner somewhat like a modern tambourine to accentuate the beat of a tune. Miriam played a *toph* when she sang and danced after the Red Sea deliverance. It was usually considered a joyous instrument used in contexts of celebration and thus is perfectly at home in Psalm 150.

The frequent mention of the *toph* in connection with dancing (Psalm 149:3, Exodus 15:20, et cetera) accounts for its occurrence in the same line with the word "dance" (*machol*, which is, literally, "whirling dance"). While Seventh-day Adventists do not take part in modern dancing, there is much evidence that Biblical people danced, especially on religious occasions (2 Sam. 6:14; Ex. 15:20; Judges 11:34; Ps. 149:3, et cetera). Biblical religious dancing, however, had nothing in common with modern disco or even the waltz; it was not meant to be part of a purely social occasion. Instead, the dancer's mind

Praise the Lord!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty firmament!
Praise him for his mighty deeds;
praise him according to his exceeding greatness!
Praise him with trumpet sound;
praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with timbrel and dance;
praise him with strings and pipe!
Praise him with sounding cymbals;
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord! (Psalm 150, R. S. V.).



never left the elevated plateau of worship. There is no strong evidence, however, that even religious dances were ever performed in the Temple.

Today, Jews still "dance" in religious contexts. On a visit to the sacred open-air synagogue at the Western (or Wailing) Wall in Jerusalem, I once observed a group of men link hands in a circle and rotate with a somewhat spritely step between a walk and a trot while singing loudly a hymn of praise. Their thoughts were clearly centered on the sentiments of the hymn, and their circular movement, which was hardly a "dance" by our standards, emphasized its message for them. It is this kind of "dance" Psalm 150 has in mind.

The word "strings" (verse 4) probably refers to all the other stringed instruments known to Biblical people besides the *nebel* and *kinnor*. There were several of these, such as zithers (lute-like instruments with three strings and very small soundboxes) and other types of lyre-related instruments. Many of these, like the *toph*, were used to accompany dances.

The pipe (verse 4) was simply a flute made from a reed. It is one of the oldest instruments on earth (Gen. 4:21) and was widely used in antiquity. It is mentioned only rarely in the Bible, probably because it was primarily a secular instrument. Some ancient non-

Biblical texts even speak of it as an evil instrument because of its association with orgiastic celebrations connected with the wine harvest. Like instruments today, it apparently could be misused! Sometimes a misunderstanding has arisen caused by the King James Version translating this instrument as "organ." Actually, the original meaning of the English word "organ" was "pipe," and was meant as such by the K.J.V. translators, who lived at a time when large church organs were just being developed. Earlier organs were nothing more than a small series of pipes connected to a bellows and a small keyboard.

Note that all the instruments mentioned in verse four were basically secular in nature and were not used for Temple services. As in modern times, some instruments evoked ideas and emotions that made them relatively unfit for specific religious purposes. The important thing to notice about Psalm 150 is that it includes groups of instruments used both in the Temple service and outside it—both in sacred and secular contexts.

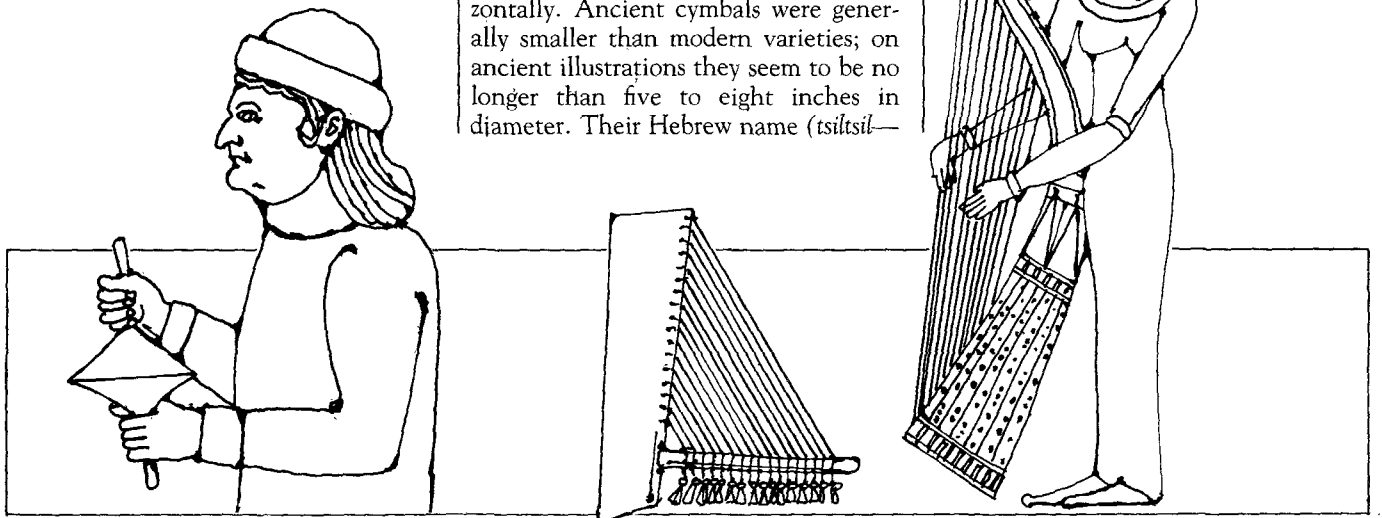
In verse five the same instrument, the cymbals, is mentioned twice in parallel lines perhaps to indicate a climax in the psalm or because of the dual nature of the instrument itself. Cymbals could, in turn, be played (struck together) in two ways, vertically as cymbals players in bands and orchestras do today, or horizontally. Ancient cymbals were generally smaller than modern varieties; on ancient illustrations they seem to be no longer than five to eight inches in diameter. Their Hebrew name (*tsiltsil*—

again a dual-sounding word) is onomatopoeic and may indicate how they sounded: their small size would have produced a mere tinkle compared with the crashing sound of large modern cymbals. They seem to have been played only by men and perhaps were restricted to priests; they thus were considered a sacred musical instrument. The loud sound of the cymbals accents the intensity of praise we owe to God.

What does this list of instruments say to us about praise to God? The answer is found in verse six: "Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!"

Praise Him both in religious services and in the day-to-day life outside the church. Praise to God cannot be localized to a building or a specific religious service. We are to praise God in a variety of ways, anytime and anywhere. Praise engulfs all levels of man's feelings, not simply the religious. Just as the musical instruments listed in Psalm 150 point toward a wide range of emotions and ideas, so praise to God should be reflected in the total range of our activities.

* The Scripture quotations in this article are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.



More than just an empty tomb

When those first-century disciples became convinced beyond all doubt of the resurrection, their focus was not on an empty tomb, but on the Christ who lived—both in heaven and in their hearts.

As the sun rises around the world on April 3, hundreds, probably thousands, of special services will celebrate the grand theme of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Later in the day pulpits everywhere will sound forth the wonderful news as sermons by the thousands attempt to display the riches of God's grace revealed by an empty tomb. And rightly so, for within the triumvirate of foundational verities that undergird the Christian's faith—Jesus' incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection—the capstone is the resurrection. The apostle Paul phrases it like this: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. . . . Your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:14-17).^{*} The empty tomb demonstrates the truthfulness of Jesus' claim to be the Son of God; it seals His promise to raise us to newness of life; it validates all that He came to accomplish.

But Jesus' resurrection involves more than just an empty tomb—as awesome and glorious as that fact alone undoubtedly is. His tomb had been empty since early that resurrection morning, yet His closest disciples spent the day in mourning, unable to believe that the One they loved actually lived again. That night they were still locked inside the confines of the upper room, anxious for their safety and discussing the strangely troubling rumors concerning their Lord's disappearance. The two who walked toward Emmaus could sadly say in the very presence of the Lord Himself, "We had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21).

The point is this: To know that the tomb is empty is not enough; we must know that Jesus lives! And even more, we must understand *why* He lives.

When the first-century disciples at last became convinced beyond all doubt of the resurrection, their focus was not on the empty tomb, but on the Christ who lived—in heaven and in their hearts.

The conviction that the very same Jesus they had known and touched and loved and remembered still lived and still loved them as intimately as before impelled them to carry the wonderful news everywhere.

It is this conviction that the celebration of Easter must reaffirm in us, their spiritual descendants. But for too many, the resurrection of Jesus marks His disappearance into the clouds of heaven, where we lose sight of Him. We understand that He has taken His place beside the Father's throne, but we aren't sure just what that means. Why does Jesus live today? What work engages His attention? What has He been doing ever since the resurrection?

The events of that final week in Jesus' life on earth were foreshadowed in the ritual God had given His Old Testament people. When Jesus cried out on the cross, "It is finished,"^{*} He was referring to the ceremonial system of sacrifices as given to Israel. He died at the moment the Passover lamb was to be killed; He rose on the day of the presentation before God of the first sheaf of ripe grain—Himself "the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (1 Cor. 15:20) in Him.

Likewise, as the apostle makes clear in the book of Hebrews, the postresurrection events in the life of Jesus have also been foreshadowed in the sanctuary ritual of the Old Testament. At the moment of His death an unseen hand tore the curtain separating the two rooms of the Jerusalem Temple from top to bottom, thus exposing to open gaze the place hitherto reserved for the high priest alone. The meaning is clear: Christ's sacrifice completed and fulfilled the purpose for which the object lesson existed. Says the apostle: "Now the point in what we are saying is this: we have such a high priest, one who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, a minister in the sanctuary and the true tent which is set

up not by man but by the Lord" (chap. 8:1, 2).

Since His resurrection Jesus has lived to minister as high priest of the sanctuary in heaven, the reality that the sanctuary on earth foreshadowed. On the cross He died as the sacrificial victim died; He rose to serve as priest, applying the merits of His own shed blood. "Consequently," says the apostle, "he is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them" (chap. 7:25).

Jesus has not risen from the dead to spend His time in majestic inactivity until the promised return. He is as actively engaged in our salvation today as when He healed and preached and died. This the disciples understood at last, and what power it gave their preaching of the gospel!

The individual sinner in the Old Testament system could not enter the sacred precincts of the Temple itself. The court was as far as he might come. Even the priests could go no farther than the first room, the holy place. Into the second, the Most Holy, where the symbol of God's presence dwelt, the high priest alone could enter, and he but once a year. But this side of the resurrection a different order prevails. "Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (chap. 4:14-16).

We dare not minimize the empty tomb; it is central to our faith. But resurrection means far more.—B.R.H.

^{*} Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

A woman's touch

Could Jesus heal her? Years of hopeless visits to doctors told her No. The isolation forced on her by ceremonial law said No. But a glimmer of hope kept her going. Until that fateful day.

The only woman Jesus ever called daughter is the topic of our article this month. Cherry Habenicht, the wife of a pastor in Downers Grove, Illinois, and the author of our monthly Prayers From the Parsonage, has clothed this faith-strengthening Biblical illustration with the garments of first-century Palestine. The added dimensions create a reality that touches the heart. May I suggest you share this story with your minister husband, who may find in it enrichment for a sermon on faith. If people ever needed their faith strengthened, surely today is the time.—Marie Spangler.

Veronica¹ rested a minute from her sweeping until the wave of dizziness passed. Her steps were slower these days. Some mornings she couldn't make it back home from the market without leaning against a building to catch her breath. At first she had not been unduly alarmed when her monthly flow continued, but now she had to admit that something was dreadfully wrong.

Her close friend, Rachel, listened sympathetically as Veronica confided her fears. "Eat grapes every day. Drink wine mixed with water, and your strength will return," advised Rachel. "Don't be afraid. It is like this sometimes for women."

Huldah, the midwife, prepared a draught of Persian onions cooked in wine and administered it with the summons "Arise out of your flow of blood!"² But the bleeding did not cease.

And so Veronica began the first of many visits to physicians. One kept her coming back for three years before he admitted there was nothing he could do. Another gave her regular doses of a nauseous mixture of rubber, alum, and garden crocuses. Finally he recommended a doctor in Damascus who sent her home with an amulet containing the ashes of an ostrich egg.

More than the embarrassment of submitting to the physicians' questions and examinations, more than the

inconvenience of extra bathing and laundry, Veronica felt the isolation of her malady: "And if a woman have an issue of her blood many days out of the time of her separation, or if it run beyond the time of her separation; all the days of the issue of her uncleanness shall be as the days of her separation: she shall be unclean. Every bed whereon she lieth all the days of her issue shall be unto her as the bed of her separation: and whatsoever she sitteth upon shall be unclean, as the uncleanness of her separation. And whosoever toucheth those things shall be unclean, and shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even" (Lev. 15:25-27).

Forever unclean! Often Veronica wept at the thought. True, she was not forced to live in a cave or declare her disease publicly such as the lepers were, but for the rest of her life she would be unfit, her freedom restricted by ceremonial law.

It was during a visit to Jerusalem (would not the capital have the most up-to-date physicians?) that the sense of uncleanness finally overwhelmed her. Since childhood she had imagined what it would be like to hear the stirring music, to smell the fragrant incense, to touch the smooth marble. In her condition, however, she was not allowed even to approach the Temple hill!

Gazing at the cold, forbidding structure, Veronica had not been able to pray. What did God care about women? He had pronounced curses on Eve and proclaimed taboos on all females.

It is strange, thought Veronica, but what was my greatest tragedy, the death of my husband,³ has become a comfort. At least he has been spared the life of a celibate. He never knew that he could not be a father. The memory of her beloved brought a smile to the woman's pale lips. Would he have remained faithful? Could he have watched his income dwindle and disappear because of

medical fees? Would he have accepted the care of an invalid wife? She believed he would have exhausted every resource for her, but she could not be sure.

Veronica returned to Caesarea⁴ and reconciled herself to a quiet life. No longer did hope rise at news of the latest medical experiments in Greece. She refused to discuss her condition and paid no attention to the advice of well-meaning friends.

Then came rumors about a young Galilean who healed the maimed, the blind, and the deaf as He traveled from town to town. This Jesus charged no fee and made no show. Perhaps Rachel would accompany her to Capernaum the next time Jesus was in Galilee. If she could hear Him speak, possibly even witness a healing, she would know whether there was any chance for her.

The two women arrived in Capernaum only to learn that Jesus had crossed to the other side of the sea. Rachel found a shady place where Veronica could wait while she asked questions. General opinion was, she learned, that Jesus would return to "his own city" (Matt. 9:1), but no one knew when.

That night a fearful storm churned the Sea of Galilee into angry waves. Capernaum had weathered many a tempest, but these howling winds seemed like blasts from devils' mouths. As lightning tore the heavens, Veronica wondered why she had not stayed at home and been safe rather than wait in a drafty inn for a miracle worker she had never seen. Then the storm ended abruptly, strangely.

The next day someone spotted Jesus' ship. People thronged Him to ask questions about His trip and to marvel that He'd survived the storm. His close friends had the most remarkable stories to tell: Jesus had stood up in the boat at the height of the storm and stilled the wind and waves with a word! He had stood fearless before raving madmen; He had cast out a legion of devils! No wonder the multitude crowded close so

that Veronica gave up trying to push through.

It was Rachel who convinced her to stay a couple more days and then brought the news that Jesus had walked to Levi Matthew's house, where He was now eating. After some inquiry, Veronica and Rachel found the tax collector's impressive home, only to learn that Jesus was now on His way to the home of Jairus, ruler of the synagogue.

"We must follow Him," urged the desperate woman. "Oh, Rachel! To be so near; yet always He eludes us. If I could but catch His eye or call out to Him!"

The crowd moves slowly as people seek Jesus' attention. Now and then He stops to look into a child's face, to heal a feverish man, to say a few words to a tired-looking mother.

"Excuse me, sir. Pardon, madam." The words become a chant as Veronica squeezes closer. People stare at her and stand their ground. A few let her pass, but more press in. "It is no use," protests her logic, but her fervent desire urges her forward.

She sees Him! Quickly Veronica kneels and stretches toward Him through the crowded mass of moving arms and legs. "If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole," she tells herself (verse 21). Straining forward, her fingers brush only the hem of His robe, but in an instant she knows she has been healed. Stifling a cry of joy, the grateful woman steps back into the crowd.

But Jesus' voice rises above the noise. "Who touched me?"

Veronica waits, her heart beating loudly. Surely someone will admit to having bumped against Jesus. There is an uneasy silence until a big man with a weathered face exclaims, "Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?" (Luke 8:45).

Jesus will not be distracted. "I perceive that virtue is gone out of me" (verse 46).

Now the crowd is waiting. Jairus fidgets, wishing Jesus would hurry. A look at the ruler's scowl, and all of Veronica's fears return. Jesus is an important teacher, and she—a worthless woman—has dared to interrupt Him. He is a rabbi, and she has defiled Him! According to law, He will have to enter the nearest house, bathe, wash His clothes, and stay until evening. For a wild moment she imagines the people turning on her.

Jesus turns and looks straight at her, but His gaze holds neither anger nor impatience. Instead, He seems to read her heart, to know her past. His direct look compels her to reveal herself. Trembling, she falls at His feet and tells everything.

Jesus, knowing how this woman's self-confidence has eroded after twelve years of misery and isolation, locates the reason for her healing: "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole" (Mark 5:34). She had every reason to have lost faith in people and in God, but her spiritual sensitivity remained strong enough to believe. In this same city Jesus had previously marveled at the Roman centurion and commented, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matt. 8:10). Now He acknowledges determined faith in one of His own people.

He does not stiffen and pull His robe together to avoid contact with the unclean woman. Before the ruler of the synagogue, He openly disregards scriptural blood taboos. He does not leave the crowd; neither does He tell the woman to go apart for seven days and then make expiation by the sacrifice of two pigeons. (See Lev. 15:28-30.) Instead, Jesus addresses her tenderly (She is the only woman whom He calls "daughter"): "Be

of good comfort . . . go in peace" (Luke 8:48).

Veronica had long borne the burdens of womanhood without knowing its joys. She had seemed cursed with a perpetual reminder of her womanhood while at the same time being denied the only positions society recognized as giving her value—wife, mother, or a "clean" woman. Now she is whole. Now she is blessed. Now she feels the sense of self-worth instilled by her Saviour. Never again will she be too modest to mention her issue of blood, if it means she can testify of her personal encounter with Jesus.

¹ Latin tradition has given her this name. In Greek tradition she is called Bernice.

² *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* cites this and other cures mentioned in this article as popular remedies for an issue of blood.

³ She "had spent all her living upon physicians" (Luke 8:43). This seems to indicate a certain previous wealth. In her culture, it would be unusual for a woman to be independently wealthy except by inheritance.

⁴ "About A.D. 320, Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea and a dependable historian, records that when he visited Caesarea Philippi, he heard that the woman healed of her issue of blood out of gratitude for her cure had erected two brazen figures at the gate of her house, one representing a woman bending on her knee in supplication—the other, fashioned in the likeness of Jesus, holding out His hand to help her."—Lockyer, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

Prayers from the parsonage

Thank You, Lord, for Marilyn.

We've shared so much in the short time we've known each other: good conversation, hard work, pleasant outings.

She gives freely. We'd only been introduced, yet she brought a present for Hans a few weeks after his birth. She spent most of one December day trying a new recipe for bread, and then gave me one of the two fancy loaves. When I needed a baby-sitter, she not only watched the children but fed them supper and invited me to eat when I came to pick them up.

She enjoys life. We stood quietly watching a shrew dart across the snow one afternoon when we took our chil-

dren hiking at a forest preserve. Both our families rode the train into Chicago to window-shop and view the Christmas decorations. She scouted the best sales and even picked up some bargains for me. Though managing on one income and coping with the unpredictable schedule of her pastor-husband, she never complains.

She understands. When I gave a party, she arrived with a plate of cookies, "Just in case you need extras." When Dick was on a two-week trip, and I was homebound with little ones, she coaxed me into getting away for a couple of hours. When I need to talk, she listens.

Marilyn proves to me that You exist, Lord, for divine love shines through her life. She is my friend, and I am blessed. Thank You, Lord, for Marilyn.

Cherry B. Habenicht

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Pie

For the past two years the First Christian church of Lincoln has led its denomination for the State of Nebraska in the number of new members added. And it has used pie to do it! Both the pie that is eaten and the pie that is an acronym for Persons Involved in Evangelism.

PIE, a fellowship group designed to raise the congregation's awareness of evangelistic opportunities, was formed at First Christian in 1976, when it was noted that 20 members had received training in evangelistic visiting, but there were only 22 known prospects for church membership! Today the prospect list numbers some 160 names.

The group meets once a month for ninety minutes to consider ways of relating each potential member to the church, to hear reports of contacts, to study more effective methods of evangelism, and to eat pie! More information on PIE and

other evangelism programs is available from the National Evangelistic Association of the Christian Church, 2323 Broadway, Lubbock, Texas 79401. (806) 762-8094.—Dr. Edward H. Kolbe.

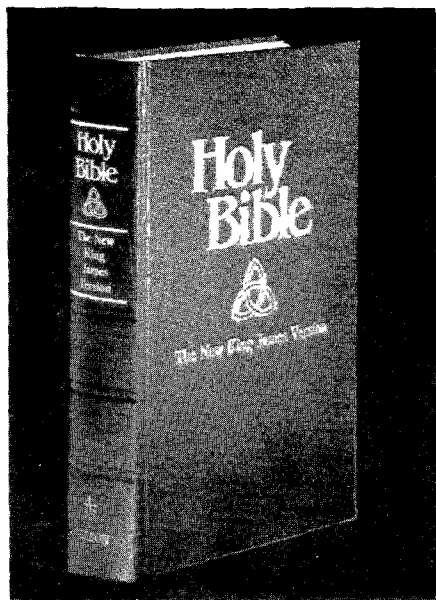
Annual giving

At the risk of tooting our own horn, we couldn't help noting (and passing on) the results of a survey showing the average annual contributions per member of various U.S. denominations. Published by *Money* magazine in 1982 and reported in *Life-Line*, the newsletter of Ministers Life, the ranking placed Seventh-day Adventists first, with \$2,400. Following in order were: Presbyterians (\$690), United Churches of Christ (\$510), Lutherans (\$480), Reform Jews (\$480), Methodists (\$435), Baptists (\$395), Episcopalians (\$295), Roman Catholics (\$275), and Unitarian Universalists (\$275).

You won't forget

Keep a few postcards in the glove compartment of your automobile. When you return to your car after making a significant visit, take time right then to write that person or family a brief message of thanks, gratitude, or encouragement. Drop the postcard in the next mailbox you see. No longer will you have to remember to write a note when you get back to your study. It will already be done while fresh in your mind.—John H. Schueltz, Evangelical Lutheran Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Recommended reading



The New King James Version: a new face for an old friend

The Holy Bible, New King James Version

Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1982. Various editions and prices. Reviewed by Timothy Manning, pastor, Long Memorial SDA church, Lima, Ohio.

The New King James Version of the Bible claims to be the first major revision of the K.J.V. since the 1769 edition, which is the "current" K.J.V. (Revision of the 1611 edition began almost immediately upon its publication.)

The N.K.J.V. claims to be "the same" as the "1611 world's favorite." Its purpose is "to preserve the 1611 King James for twentieth-century readers without violating the theological integrity, the majestic grandeur, and the lyrical cadence of the original." Several basic principles were adopted to achieve this goal.

1. Archaic verbs and pronouns were updated. *Sheweth* changed to *shows*, *hath* to *has*, et cetera. *Thee*, *thou*, and *thy* became *you* or *your*. But theological terms such as *atonement*, *justification*, and *sanctification*, which have special meaning for many Christians, have remained intact. (A notable exception is Romans 5:11. What *atonement* meant in 1611 is now best rendered by the word *reconciliation*.)

2. Punctuation was updated in accordance with today's accepted usage without changing the beauty or meaning of the text.

3. All pronouns referring to God were capitalized to show reverence for the Deity, even when the speaker may not have intended reverence—as in John 8:52.

4. The covenant name of God in the old K.J.V., usually translated "LORD" (using capital letters), is a "maintained tradition."

5. The true meanings of words were preserved according to "commonly understood usage."

6. A modern format was used: quotation marks added to make dialogue easier to follow, beginning-of-paragraph verse numbers printed in bold, subject heads inserted for topical units, and poetic structure used for lyrical passages. Some features of an old format remain: Christ's words are printed in red, oblique type in the New Testament indicates Old Testament quotations, and italics are used to indicate editor-supplied words.

7. Each phrase, verse, and chapter of the 1611 K.J.V. is retained with no deletions regardless of the textual evidence of older or better manuscripts. Footnotes contain the most common variant readings. Some notes read, "NU-Text omits . . ." or "M-Text omits . . ." NU-Text refers to the Critical Text published in Nestle-Aland and the United Bible Societies Text. M-Text refers to the Majority Text. The N.K.J.V. favors the M-Text, but will retain a reading of Stephanus or the Textus Receptus opposed by both the M-Text and the NU-Text. The reason, according to Robert L. Sanford, manager

of Nelson's Bible editorial department, is not "a belief [that] the Textus Receptus is the preferred text, nor . . . that recent discoveries in manuscript evidence are not worthy of attention. The Textus Receptus was chosen as the textual base for the New Testament for the sole reason that to have adopted another Greek base would have produced something other than a revision of the King James Bible." The Old Testament Text used is that of the 1967-1977 Stuttgart edition of *Biblia Hebraica*, with frequent comparisons being made with the Bomberg edition of 1524-1525. The Septuagint and Vulgate were also consulted. The extensive footnotes indicate textual variants in both the M-Text and NU-Text traditions. These should be useful to those who have few Greek or Hebrew language skills and who wish to compare the witness of the major textual variants. However, the footnotes make no evaluation of the readings, although they do clearly identify the source of readings that diverge from the traditional text. This last principle is no doubt the most controversial.

If Miles Smith and the other K.J.V. translators and editors of 1611 were preparing a version of the Bible today they might reject some of Nelson's operating principles. For they were not convinced that their text was absolutely correct. They recognized variant readings and included them in the marginal notes in thirteen places. But, then, this is basically what the editors and translators have done in the N.K.J.V., although more frequently.

The question still arises, How many changes can be made in a version and still have the edition carry the favored name King James? Though some will fault Nelson for its operating principles in the production of this version-edition, few will fault the execution of those principles. Nelson has done an excellent job in delivering what it promised.

Those of us who still memorize Bible texts in English and are imprinted with the K.J.V. will find an old friend in the N.K.J.V., familiar to the ear, while fresher to the eye.

Recommended reading

Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925

George M. Marsden, *Oxford University Press*, 1980, 320 pages, \$19.95/\$6.95. Reviewed by Ron Graybill, Ph.D. candidate, Johns Hopkins University.

George Marsden, a church historian at Calvin College in Michigan, has written a book that has established itself as the standard text on fundamentalism. The volume has been called "marvelous" and "superb" by reviewers, and deservedly so.

A major thesis in Marsden's book is that fundamentalism, which became an identifiable movement in the 1920s, is really much broader in its origins and concerns than had previously been thought. It was primarily a Northern phenomena based in the cities rather than a rural Southern one. Conservative Baptists and traditionalists among Presbyterians made the most obvious contributions to its leadership, but they were loosely allied with those who were battling "modernism" in many denominations. Unlike earlier students of fundamentalism who saw dispensational premillennialism as its taproot, Marsden points to fundamentalists who were not dispensationalists, and to roots nourished in nineteenth-century revivalism and the holiness movement.

What was most common among fundamentalists was a certain understanding of what truth was and how it was to be discovered. The philosophy they clung to is known as common-sense realism. Very popular in the nineteenth century, this school of thought teaches that truth is objective and fixed: it is out there (not in one's mind), it is real, and it can be known by common sense. Most twentieth-century philosophies have tended to be more subjective. It is not that ultimate reality necessarily resides in our minds, it is that it can only be known from our point of view.

These two conflicting ways of looking at truth come to blows over the Bible. Fundamentalists believe the Bible is free from whatever subjectivism most men

suffer, because God overruled the human element almost totally in the process of inspiration. Fundamentalists repeatedly denied that they held to a citational view of inspiration, but for practical purposes it made little difference, since their view insisted on an inerrancy so absolute that the Bible might as well have been dictated word for word by God.

This book is challenging reading, but it pours such a flood of light on current controversies in almost all conservative churches that all who will open its covers will be rewarded.

Speaking of Jesus: Finding the Words for Witness

Richard Lischer, *Fortress Press*, 1982, 144 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by William S. Bossert, pastor, Silverton, Oregon.

What makes this little book of such value is the rediscovery of what it is that the evangelist (lay or cleric) is called to expound. We may gloss over this by simply saying "share the gospel," and, of course, that's true. But the message of the book leads right to the gospel of Jesus that the Scriptures contain in narrative form. It is the story of God, immersed in the Scriptures, replayed and revitalized in the changed lives of real people today. The story is to be a giving of one's experience tailored to fit the needs of each person he encounters. Here is where the beauty and simplicity of the gospel transcends human need. It is on this point that Lischer pulls aside the curtain of misunderstanding and misguided methods. As a result, this book may realign your priorities and unsettle your operational platform.

Using Personal Computers in the Church

Kenneth Bedell, *Judson Press*, 1982, 109 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by Mic Thurber, pastor, San Diego, California.

The title of this book is misleading. The specific uses of the computer were generally mentioned in passing as illustrations on how they might be used. The book's focus seemed to be more a primer on what a computer can do in general, and in some cases, what it cannot do.

Instead of case studies, there should have been examples of actual programs available to handle various needs such as finances, budgets, and membership data. Although practical ideas were not broached in a specific manner, this book will serve as a good primer to understanding a computer system.

The People of God in Ministry

William K. McElwaney, *Abingdon*, 1981, 176 pages, \$6.95. Reviewed by David L. Anderson, pastor, Takoma Park, Maryland.

McElwaney gives a healthy and much-needed look at the relationship between the ordained minister and the laity. He also deals with the minister as a professional, with special emphasis on the "professional model." He looks at the ministry of all Christians and breaks it down into the following categories: listening, learning, loving, liberating, and leavening. These chapters will encourage church members in relation to their growth in the body of Christ, the church.

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