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“Yet ______ was not a statist. He said he was against any attempt ‘to smuggle fascism into America through the back door’. On many issues he was a liberal...He did not make anti-Semitic jokes, like Woodrow Wilson and his wife or Franklin Roosevelt. To a very wide spectrum of educated American opinion, he was the leading American public man...” (Page 243)

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FJ — 10
One of the greatest joys of being a Christian is leading an unsaved person to Christ. Yet evangelizing is one of the most difficult responsibilities for some Christians to execute. In this issue we look at evangelism—why we don’t do it, and why we should, and how we can be more effective in our witness for Christ.

How many times has an opportunity to witness been easily excused away? “Each excuse I had ever had was destroyed, literally demolished,” says Norman Geisler in his article “Excuses.” He gives an account of why he was not witnessing and what happened to change his ways.

C. Sumner Wemp outlines the steps for personal evangelism and Elmer Towns tells why evangelism is as hot as ever but the old methods are cooling off.

Giving invitations to a child to accept Christ must be done correctly and sensitively, as the child’s eternal destiny is at stake. Jean Beck gives hints for making salvation clear and meaningful to a young child. Fundamentalism Today looks at repentance and its role in salvation.

While Scripture memorization enriches the believer’s life, it also provides an easy tool for personal evangelism. Allen McClellan writes on how to use memorized Scripture in witnessing for Christ. In an interview, evangelist Del Fehsenfeld talks about revival and evangelism and answers some complaints about evangelists.

Personal evangelism is often an area of our Christian life that causes us to feel weak, insufficient, and unprepared. We can tap the power of God and overcome these feelings, but we must be willing to do as He commands. Sharing the gospel is not always easy but it is always rewarding.

Religious freedom, parental rights, and the mandates of government have become conflicting issues in Nebraska and Tennessee. The news section reports on seven fathers being jailed for sending their children to a Christian school and a mother jailed for wanting to see that her child was not forced to read humanistic literature. These parents are sacrificing so that others will have the right to raise their children as God leads.
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Shime1's Dust

Too frequently we Fundamentalists have maintained that a decline in evangelistic passion and activity is a symptom of spiritual decline in our churches, we have stressed outreach to the unconverted through pulpit evangelism and evangelistic meetings.

Although our evangelistic meetings have been and still are components in evangelization, are they not actually examples of in-drag, rather than outreach? The emphasis, after all, is on attracting and bringing the unconverted to Christian turf where they will be confronted with the gospel. That sounds like in-drag, doesn't it?

Jesus' parable of the lost sheep points in another direction. The shepherd did not erect a billboard outside the sheepfold to invite passing sheep to drop in. Rather he took the initiative and went into the wilds to look for the sheep.

Frequently we identify evangelism exclusively with our in-drag activities. Hence, if someone calls for a critical examination of the usefulness of conventional evangelistic meetings, defenders of the Fundamentalist status quo become defensive and interpret the call for scrutiny of in-drag as an attack on evangelism itself.

That defensive attitude can blind us to the thrust of Scripture which is on outreach. The model is the Incarnation itself, the ultimate outreach mission: "As my Father hath sent me even so send I you" (John 20:21).

As our society becomes more secularized, people will be less inclined than ever to accept our invitations to evangelistic functions and in-drag will prove less effective in reaching non-Christians with the gospel.

The pressure of the times could well force us to discard in-drag techniques and adopt real outreach.

Shime1

Pick and choose...

Angie Hunt's article "All's Not Wrong with Women's Rights" (November 1983) was excellent. Indeed, there are legitimate abuses and injustices women still face, and they should be corrected. Does that mean accepting every last tenet of modern feminism, such as abortion and lesbian marriage? God forbid. But surely compassionate, intelligent Christians could never fault the good things that have come from the women's movement: shelters for battered women, rape crisis centers, equal pay for equal work, stopping sexual harassment, and dispelling foolish myths and degrading stereotypes.

It is sad to encounter clergymen who treat women as servants. Some are callous toward battered wives, or ignorant of the financial, legal, and social inequities women have faced for centuries.

But many preachers today do respect their fellow human beings. Thank God for those clergymen who steadfastly preach traditional values while rejecting traditional abuses.

Margaret L. Kempf
Greenbelt, Maryland

"Right on!"

I have just read "Necessity of Revival Preaching" (November 1983). The tone and central message was so "right on!" I have not read anything in recent years on this subject that stirred my heart like this article.

God bless you in your labors for Him.

Don Paul Gray, President
Jimmy Swaggart Bible College
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Thank you, Mrs. Schaeffer...

I'm writing concerning "The Importance of Reading to Our Children" (December 1983).

Because of the decline in our schools, our children need to be taught as much as possible at home. This is one aspect of preparing our children in growing up and being able to take on responsibilities.

Thank you for this article. I hope it will make a great impact on parents.

Rebecca Sanders
Lynchburg, Virginia

I do not tithe...

Like a breath of fresh air is your magazine to those afflicted with the trivialities of humanistic church publications.

However, I take exception to "Will a Man Rob God?" (December 1983). I object to the title as being required of all Christians. The title is a part of Old Testament Law. It is not a part of the gospel.

During my ministry in Canada we were raising six children on a limited income. At the time my heart did not compel me to tithe; instead I gave as much as I could. Now that I live alone I do not tithe either. I give more. Curiously, nowhere in the Old Testament do I get permission to do this but my heart tells me that since I am able to give more, I should do so.

God is both just and stern, and no one gets by with robbing Him. But God is also merciful, and extremely reasonable.

Leif A. Kiergaard
Eatrville, Iowa
Book discussion...

I commend you on a consistent forum for believers. Your magazine has been refreshing, interesting, and very timely.

I want to comment on your review of Decision Making and the Will of God (October 1983). I felt the reviewer didn't read the book in discussion. I am glad to see you labeled the section a "Book Discussion," but it is a shame that the author spent most of the article on his conclusions about God's will rather than actually touching base with the actual contents.

I feel Mr. Friesen was given a dis-service by mentioning his name in a negative way ("the dishonor the Friesen Theory brings to the Holy Spirit"). At a section like this is to add the reader in any way, there should at least be accurate references to the book, or quotes, and then an expression of opinion.

Again, your magazine is a refreshing breeze in Fundamentalism.

Tom Dudenhofer, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Stanton, Michigan

Editor's Note: See page 52 for Gary Friesen's response to the review by Robert Evans.

A good example...

I am writing concerning Dr. Patwell's invitation and treatment of Senator Edward Kennedy.

While Kennedy's political views are destructive to our country, he is still a part of our God-ordained government. Our Lord teaches that we owe him our respect and honor. Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

Dr. Patwell is to be commended rather than condemned for his treatment of Senator Kennedy. By treating Kennedy with honor while his supporters treat him with disdain, Patwell is an example that in Christ, we have the power to do what is right regardless of circumstances or personal convictions.

John Williamson, Pastor
Ortley Free Lutheran Church
Ortley, South Dakota

Thanks...

I wish to express my thanks for your fine magazine. I believe Fundamentalist Journal is one of the most open, unbiased magazines of our time. I am a charter subscriber of the magazine and will continue to receive it as long as it is published.

Bob McCutcheon, Pastor
Vivian Baptist Church
Eufaula, Oklahoma

I thank God for the courageous action and godly stand of the Fundamentalist Journal on the social issues of the day.

May we all unite and speak against the issues in the future.

Gary W. Schwitz, Pastor
Orchard Hills Baptist Church
Novi, Michigan

We welcome your comments and will include them in our Letters to the Editor section as space permits — subject to condensation at the discretion of the editorial staff.
Turning the World Upside Down

Turning the world upside down for the Lord seems like an impossible task. Yet we see in the Book of Acts that 120 men and women accomplished just that as they took the gospel from Jerusalem to Judea and the uttermost parts of the earth. Imagine having that kind of impact with no television, radio, or any other means of mass communication. These early Christians were simply following Christ's Great Commission to tell the world of His birth, death, and Resurrection. That commission was not limited to them but is a directive for Christians throughout the ages. We can have the same impact in this twentieth century if we follow the plan of reaching our Jerusalem, our Judea, our Samaria, and the uttermost parts of the earth.

Working through the Local Church

The local church is the key. In Acts we see that the church in Jerusalem filled the city with their doctrine. Several years later the believers there were said to have turned the world upside down (Acts 17:6).

I have always said that two-by-two visitation is God's ultimate way of reaching the world. Nothing can replace this type of personal evangelism, and the local church is God's cornerstone for personal evangelism. As such, the church must constantly examine its evangelistic methods and discipleship programs. During the sixties and seventies, countless churches relied heavily on the bus ministry as a main source of evangelism and church growth. While the bus ministry did provide dramatic results for some churches, it was costly and ineffective for others. In this decade each church must look at its own strengths and weaknesses and examine special needs of the community to see where it can best develop its evangelistic outreach. Perhaps it will choose a bus ministry or a radio ministry or a senior saints outreach program, or a special program for families or all of these and more.

In building the Thomas Road Baptist Church we followed the concept of saturation evangelism—sharing the gospel of Christ with every available person by every available means at every available time. We had an assortment of “Super Days” and Sunday school contests to encourage attendance. We organized our visitation program on a block-by-block basis, knocking on every door. We did not just visit those who had been guests at church. We used radio, television, and the printed media to share the gospel. Our goal was to offer exciting Christ-filled programs for all ages and along the way develop special ministries to meet special needs. We will continue to do just that as our church, our broadcast ministry, and our college and schools examine new ways to meet needs and be a witness for Christ in our Jerusalem—working toward the uttermost parts of the earth.

Taking Advantage of Every Opportunity

Paul’s final charge to young Timothy was, “Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season” (2 Tim. 4:2). Preaching the
Word "in season" is relatively easy when attending a Bible study, speaking in church, or in fellowship with other believers. But preaching the Word "out of season" can be difficult, and this is the place where we should do it most frequently. Some weeks I travel as much as 5,000 miles and speak at 20 different meetings or functions. Most of these are out of season—press conferences, talk shows, and university campuses. I promised the Lord a long time ago that when He allowed me to speak in these kinds of situations I would present the gospel.

During the last year I have spoken at major college campuses such as Harvard, Yale, UCLA, and Princeton. While some audiences were cordial, yet skeptical, others have been extremely rude—everything from boos and hisses to bomb threats. Nevertheless, I use this out-of-season opportunity to explain Fundamentalism, give my testimony, and present the gospel of Jesus Christ.

There are thousands of Christians doing exactly the same thing. I am sure they find, as I do, that people are willing to hear the issues and evaluate the facts, when they are presented in a logical and loving fashion.

Our advantage, however, comes from the power of the message we preach. It is not the mere philosophy of men. We have the gospel of Christ, which is "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Surely not all will believe and be saved, but we have tremendous opportunities to preach the Word and to plant the seed.

Certainly not everyone is called to preach, but we all have opportunities to share the gospel. Right in our own backyard we can reach people who have not heard of the saving power of a risen Saviour.

Employing Every Possible Means

What did Jesus mean when He said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do" (John 14:12)? Simply because there are many more people now than at the time when Jesus lived, we can touch more lives.

Along with unprecedented opportunities we have unparalleled means to share the gospel. We are living in a high-technology age that makes this tremendous prophecy a reality. Some people overemphasize the "good old days." But today is the best time there ever was. Who would trade in a microwave oven, color television, or a car, for a campfire, the pony express, or a horse and buggy? The technology and advancements that are available to the unbelieving world today are also available to the church of the living God. We need to harness these means to get the gospel to our generation.

God has given us extraordinary means to reach these masses. For example, one of the most exciting is direct broadcasting, using large space dishes to pick up programs from satellites, making it easy to receive programs from all over the world. In the next decade, less expensive and more compact models will enable private broadcasters such as local churches to make television programs, beam them to the satellite, and have the signal picked up in thousands of homes. Churches will actually bypass the major networks and save thousands of dollars in air time.

In times gone by the church was the center of social life. There was little to distract people from regular attendance. Today's church competes with television, weekend recreation, shopping malls, jobs, and all the attractions of the world.

The twentieth-century church must employ twentieth-century methods to take the gospel to the unsaved, or she will become extinct. Conventional methods alone are not enough. As far as the ability to reach people for Christ, there has never been a time to compare with today. This is the day of great opportunity when we can see the truth of Christ's prophecy.

While no one knows the appointed hour of Christ's return, we do know that it is certain. Sharing the gospel with every creature must be our highest priority. We have the greater means—television, radio, telephone hotlines, printed word, cassette, computers, Sunday school buses, multimedia—to accomplish the goal of turning the world upside down for the Lord. If we accept and follow Christ's directives in the Great Commission and reach from our Jerusalem to Judea, to Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth, we can impact our world like no other generation in history.

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Sharing the gospel with every creature must be our highest priority.

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FEBRUARY 1984
Is Repentance Part of the Gospel?

The invitation of the gospel calling upon the sinner to "believe" appears no less than 115 times in the New Testament without any mention of repentance. Therefore, some conclude that repentance is not essential to the gospel. Others believe that it was required only of the Jews. Still others argue that repentance is required only of Christians who are already saved.

What Does Repentance Involve?

There are two basic usages of the term repent (or repentance) in the Scripture. The Hebrew word nacham means to "be penitent" or "sorry" ("It repented the Lord that he had made man" Gen. 6:6). However, the word shub means "to turn back" ("Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols" Ezek. 14:6). This latter usage implies a definite change of direction. Likewise, the Greek of the New Testament has two such usages. Metamelomai means "to be concerned" or "sorry" ("Judas . . . repented himself" Matt. 27:3). On the other hand, the word metanoeo means "to have another mind" or "to change one's mind" ("Repent ye therefore, and be converted" Acts 3:19). This latter usage is the focus of our concern in the doctrine of repentance. It is a change of mind that leads to a change of direction and evidences itself in changed action.

Is Repentance Necessary to Salvation?

The absence of a doctrinal statement in one part of the Scripture does not negate its emphasis in other parts. If there is substantial evidence of the requirement of repentance in the Scripture, then it does not matter whether it is mentioned in connection with believe 115 times. Obviously, it is assumed. Let's examine the evidence.

The message of Jesus. Jesus preached repentance as a condition to salvation at least 19 times. In addition, He called the church to repent 7 times in the Book of Revelation! All three synoptic Gospels record His statement of His earthly ministry: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9:13; cf. Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32). The only way to escape repentance as necessary to salvation is to fall back on the erroneous idea that He preached this only to Jewish sinners.

Jesus' initial preaching centered around the theme of repentance: "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matt. 3:2, cf. 4:17). National repentance was the condition under which Israel was to receive the kingdom, which of course they rejected. In Luke 13:3 Jesus strongly announced, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." In the parable of the lost sheep Jesus declared, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15:7). Did He believe that sinners needed to repent in order to gain heaven? The answer is obvious. It is also true that believers can repent and often need to do so. Yet, their need for repentance in no way proves that the message of repentance is only for them.

The message of Peter and Paul. In Luke's version of the Great Commission he records Jesus' direction to His disciples "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). God asks no man to change his own life, for no man can.

Is the message of repentance for the Jews only? Obviously not. It is to be preached to all nations. Did the disciples obey this command?

Peter and Paul are the two major sources of New Testament preaching on repentance. In Acts 2:38 Peter urged the unconverted Jews and proselytes at the Feast of Pentecost to "repent and be baptized." In his second sermon at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, he thundered, "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out" (Acts 3:19). Years later in 2 Peter 3:9 he wrote, "The Lord . . . is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Again, it is clear in this context that if one does not repent, he will perish.
Paul also both preached repentance and wrote about it. To the Greek “pagans” on Mars Hill in Athens he said, “God... now commandeth all men everywhere to repent” (Acts 17:30). As far as the text indicates, there were no Jews present. In Acts 20 Paul, having concluded his third missionary journey, was sailing home to Antioch and stopped off at Miletus on the coast of Asia Minor. There he sent a message to the elders of the beloved church at Ephesus to come for a final meeting with him. At that time he reviewed everything he felt was essential in reminding them of “all the counsel of God” (v.27).

In his farewell message Paul clearly states, “I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Acts 20:20-21). This message is quite clear that repentance was part of that essential counsel of God. Again, this passage reinforces that both Jews and Gentiles are to repent. It also states that repentance precedes faith (cf. Acts 3:19, 11:18; 2 Cor. 7:9-10, Luke 24:47; and 2 Tim. 2:25).

Even though the injunction to “believe” or exercise “faith” appears alone over 100 times, this fact does not prove that repentance is not necessary to salvation. Such an argument is based upon silence. Wherever one finds both faith and repentance together in the same passage, he will observe the same formula; repentance always precedes faith, understanding, or conversion.

Acts 20:21 refers to “repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” This suggests that repentance involves a change of one’s attitude toward God the Father. This change prepares one for the response of faith toward Christ. Note the case of the Philippian jailer, who had already fallen down under conviction and cried, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” The jailer did not need to be told to repent, since he was already showing outward evidence of repentance. To him the message of the gospel was, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31). Yet, only one chapter later in Acts 17:30, Paul, now preaching to unrepentant intellectuals, said that God “now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.” Why the change? These intellectuals could not genuinely believe in Christ until they first changed their basic attitude toward God and His Word.

Is this evidence from Acts merely “transitional”??

There is only one real argument left to those who deny that repentance is to be preached and saved, or not saved, alike. The “hyperdispensational” idea says everything in the Book of Acts is transitional from the Old Covenant, and therefore does not apply to us today.

While certain concepts in the Book of Acts represent a definite “transitional stage” (for example, the speaking in tongues, miracles done by the apostles, attending synagogue Sabbath services, and keeping certain Jewish feasts), this does not relegate the entire book into the Old Testament era. One major fact needs to be remembered: the Book of Acts is the first chapter of church history. While the Epistles tell us what the church is, Acts tells us what it did.

However, the Book of Acts was actually written after many of the Epistles. While it contains a record of the early days of the church, it also continues up to the time of Paul’s imprisonment at Rome. For example, when Paul stood before King Agrippa in Acts 26, most of his earthly life had already passed.

And yet, even at this late date he declared, “Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: but shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance” (vv.19-20).

Three times in his Epistles, Paul refers to repentance: Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; 2 Timothy 2:25 (the last letter he ever wrote). The excuse that the evidence from Acts is merely “transitional” is fallacious. In 2 Corinthians 7, Paul warmheartedly said, “Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance... For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation” (vv.9-10). Man must repent and believe the gospel to be saved.

Is repentance a “work”? One of the major arguments of those who reject the doctrine of repentance as necessary to salvation is the contention that this makes repentance a “work.” To which the obvious reply is that repentance is no more a “work” than is faith!

Remember that repentance (metanoeo) is a “change of mind” that leads to a change of action. Repentance, in the Scripture, clearly comes before “turning to God” in trust or faith. The “works” of repentance then follow the turn to God in faith. Thus:

**REpentance**

(mind changed)

**FAITH**

(total trusting to the)

(works giving evidence that the repentance and faith were genuine)

We need to remember clearly that God asks no man to change his own life, for no man can. He does not ask man either to repent or to believe by means of his own ability. Faith, if it originated from some inherent quality within man, would be just as much a “work” as repentance. The Greek text of the Scripture makes it clear that we are saved on the basis of grace (not on the basis of our “having faith”). Man is saved on the basis of God’s grace, but through the instrumental means of faith. Therefore, even faith is not a “work” since it, like repentance, is a gift of God.

**Repentance Is a Vital Part of the Gospel**

The message of repentance is a vital part of the gospel of salvation. While one need not repent of every single listed sin that he has ever committed, he must repent and confess that he is a sinner who has violated God’s laws. Asking the unrepentant person to believe is like asking the uncommitted one to love. There is no true saving faith without repentance, just as there is no true repentance without saving faith. The two are virtually inseparable, yet vitally necessary, components of the gospel.
I have a confession to make. I was a director for a Christian youth organization for three years, a pastor for nine years, a Bible college teacher for six years, and in all that time I did not witness for Jesus Christ. I scarcely ever shared my faith one-to-one with other people.

You might be interested in knowing why I didn’t witness, and you may identify with some of the excuses I made.

First of all, I didn’t witness because I didn’t have the “gift” of evangelism. It was obvious to me that someone like Billy Graham did, and it was equally obvious that I didn’t. Oh, I could give messages that sounded to me just as good as his, but nobody was ever saved by mine!

Having studied the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and elsewhere, I concluded that there were people who had this special gift, but I was not one of them.

I comforted myself with another reason for not witnessing.

That second reason was that I had the gift of teaching other people the Word of God, a task different from evangelism because it involved Christians. After all, if you have the gift of teaching, you teach Christians and it’s pretty hard to make converts from that group.

Thirdly, I read a book about evangelism and God’s sovereignty. I was impressed by many statements in that book, one of which had to do with impersonal evangelism. Frankly, I had been reared in my early Christian life by a person who fit that stereotype, an “obtrusive buttonholer.” I didn’t like that kind of impersonal evangelism, so I would do “friendship evangelism.” I wasn’t going to cram the gospel down anybody’s throat.

My final reason stemmed from a verse in Acts 13 which says, “and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” (v.48). So I came to the conclusion that if God is sovereign and He doesn’t like this impersonal evangelism, then He can do it with or without me. Furthermore, I reasoned, I’m not going to interrupt His process because I don’t have the gift of evangelism that He has given to others, others through whom He will save those He has ordained from before the foundations of the world.

As you can see, my conclusions seemed to be biblically based. They were carefully reasoned and I felt comfortable with the fact that I didn’t need to engage in personal evangelism.

To be truthful, I had an excuse that was actually irresistible. At this time I was teaching in a Bible college, my wife and six children were believers, and everyone in that Bible college was a Christian. I didn’t know any non-Christians, so how could God expect me to witness under those circumstances?

At that point I remember feeling convicted when a song came to my mind: “Lead me to some soul today, O teach me, Lord, just what to say.” I thought to myself: Did I ever pray that prayer? Even though I’m surrounded by Christians and don’t have the gift of evangelism, did I actually ever ask God to lead me to some non-Christian? That began the change in my life toward the other direction.

The next morning I prayed, “Lord, I never see a non-Christian during the daily course of activities. Lead me to someone.” The day was almost over when a girl from the Bible college came to my office. She said, “I am really embarrassed to bring up this question. But my pastor thinks I am, this school thinks I am, I’ve told everybody I am, and here I am studying for the Lord’s service...and I don’t think I’m a Christian. What should I do?”

I was thrilled with the opportunity to lead that young lady to Christ that afternoon. She later went as a missionary to South...
America. As I went home that night I said to myself, "True, you don't have the gift of evangelism. But you're supposed to do the work of an evangelist! True, you don't see many non-Christians during the day, but did you ever pray to have some come by?" God deliberately rebuked my heart for my excuses. Someone once said an excuse is the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie. And I had a lot of excuses as to why I didn't evangelize.

In Exodus 4:10-12 Moses had an excuse too. God called Moses but the latter said, "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." But God said, "Now therefore go and I will be with thee what thou shalt say" (v.12). All He needed was thy mouth, and teach thee what thou needst.

In the very same way, you and I could make every excuse in the book. But you're not called to convert the whole world. Our job is not to bring the whole world to Christ; our job is to bring Christ to the whole world.

Well, aren't people going to reject you if you come with such a message? Yes, but they rejected Jesus before they rejected us. They're really rejecting Him because it's His message.

Then this pastor gave a challenge: "How many of you in the next two weeks will ask one question of one nonbeliever? Just raise your hand if you're willing to get a conversation going with a non-Christian." Frankly, I was a little embarrassed by the challenge. I didn't want to look like I wasn't willing to ask one person one question in two weeks, so I raised my hand.

There's a verse in Ecclesiastes 5 that says it is better not to vow than to vow and not pay. And after a week had passed, I still hadn't asked a soul one question. Two weeks went by, and I confess I never asked that question! Three weeks went by, and guilt overcame me.

Our church had a calling program and I volunteered to go on a Monday night. That night I was watching television and looked at my watch. It was 6:45, and we were supposed to go out at 7:00. I was tired—I had served the Lord all day at the Bible college—and this was a time of relaxation. Why should I go? I reasoned back and forth but finally decided, "Well, I promised. It's been three weeks and I haven't done anything. I'll go."

The home assigned to us was the home of an atheist! We knocked on the door and he answered. We introduced ourselves (his wife had attended the church and had given us his name) and asked, "Do you mind if we ask you a very serious spiritual question?"

He said, "No, go ahead!"

"If you were to die tonight and stand before God, and God would ask you, 'Why should I let you into heaven?' what would you say?" That's the question we learned to get the conversation going.

He said, "I'd say to God, 'Why shouldn't you let me in?"' Well, the pastor who had gotten me into this had said there are only two answers to that question, and that wasn't one of them! He is either supposed to say, "Jesus died for me," so that I know he's a Christian, or he's supposed to say something about works so that I know he doesn't understand what it is to be a Christian after which I can present the gospel. But he said neither!

I frankly didn't know what to say, but I remembered that the Lord promised to go with those who preached His Word. I prayed very desperately that God would give me something to say. And He did.

Norman Geisler is Professor of Systematic Theology at Dallas Theological Seminary, Dallas, Texas.

The most rewarding experiences I've had in my Christian life came from meeting non-Christians and seeing them come to Christ.

What God did with me was progressive in that not long after the office visit, I was teaching at a Christian college in which a well-known pastor came to speak on evangelism. As I sat there listening, every one of the excuses I had ever had was destroyed, literally demolished in the arguments he presented for doing evangelism. As I went home that night I said to myself, "Time, you don't have the gift of evangelism. But you're supposed to say something about works so that I know he doesn't understand what it is to be a Christian after which I can present the gospel. But he said neither!

I frankly didn't know what to say, but I remembered that the Lord promised to go with those who preached His Word. I prayed very desperately that God would give me something to say. And He did.

The sovereignty of God excuse from Acts 13 was balanced by Acts 14 where it says, "And [they] spake with a great multitude...believed." God takes care of His part but our responsibility is to get out and present the message. We're not

FEBRUARY 1984

An excuse is the skin of a reason stuffed with a lie.

I said, "Look, if I knocked on your door and you didn't want to let me into your house, and I said to you, 'Why shouldn't you let me into your house?' what would you say?"

He replied, "I would tell you where to go!"

"That's exactly what God is going to do to you!" I responded. Believe me, that got the conversation back on track.

"Well, frankly, I don't even believe in God," he said.

"That's interesting," I replied. "I would like to explain to you something about that." And I shared with him in a simple way why we believe there is a God.

"Are you absolutely sure there is no God?" I asked.

"No, I'm not absolutely sure there is no God."

"Then you're not an atheist, you're an agnostic. An atheist says, 'I know there is no God,' and an agnostic says, 'I don't know if there is a God.'"

"Okay, then, I'm an agnostic. I'm not absolutely sure."

"What kind are you, a hard agnostic or a soft agnostic?"

"What do you mean?"

"A hard agnostic says you can't know if there is a God, and a soft agnostic says I don't know if there is a God."

"Oh, I'm the hard kind."

"Well, tell me this," I asked. "Do you know for sure that you can't know anything for sure?"

"No, you can't say that."

"Then you're not the hard kind, you're a soft agnostic!"

"Yeah, I just don't know that there is a God."
"Why don't you know there is a God?"
"Well, it's impossible to know."
"But we just went through that," I replied.
"I guess you're right. I just don't know because I've never seen any evidence."
That is the most desirable kind of person to talk to—an open-minded agnostic.
I gave him a book to read by a skeptic who had become a Christian by looking at the evidence. The next night we came back. Within ten minutes, by using an evangelistic tract, he trusted Christ for salvation. He's now a deacon in a church with a family committed to Christ as well.
I said to myself, "I'm not an evangelist."
I became convinced that the reason I didn't witness was because I was in disobedience to God's command for my life. I had a lot of excuses and none of them held any water. God said, "I want you to become a missionary, wherever you are."
That is the most rewarding experiences I've had in my Christian life have not come from teaching, pastoring, or ministering around the world. They have come from meeting with non-Christians and seeing one after another come to know Christ.
I didn't have the gift of evangelism, but when I started doing the work of an evangelist, God started using me to bring others to Himself. When I started sharing my faith with others I discovered that people were not embarrassed to talk about Jesus—I was the embarrassed one.
Most Christians aren't engaged in evangelism because they're disobedient to the Great Commission. They have lots of excuses, like I did. The missionary who silenced my excuses did it by leaning over the pulpit and saying, "I've been a missionary for years, and I was never called...I was just commanded like the rest of you." Ouch! I was never called to be an evangelist, but I have been commanded to evangelize.
Several years ago I read a statement that stuck with me: "You can be on the right track but if you sit there long enough you're going to get run over." If you've become a Christian you're certainly on the right track. But we all need to get moving.

Gruesome Fiction Reflected in Life

Donald Wildmon, who has done an excellent job in his critiques of television, recently published 14 examples of how television influences behavior. We often hear from the programmers that there is no relationship between what is seen on television and the behavior of those who watch programs loaded with sex and violence. Wildmon thinks otherwise. Here are some examples.

Jeffrey Alan Cox murdered his grandfather and grandmother in the same way the main characters of The Executioner's Song committed a murder. Cox had just seen The Executioner's Song on NBC.

The mother of 4-year-old Khonji Wilson stabbed her daughter to death and cut out her heart to rid her of a demon after watching a similar scene in the movie Exorcist II: The Heretic on CBS.

To date, 28 people have killed themselves playing Russian roulette after watching the movie The Deer Hunter on television.

A young girl was raped by gang members imitating a scene they had seen the night before in the movie Born Innocent on NBC.

To date, 28 people have killed themselves playing Russian roulette after watching the movie The Deer Hunter on television.

Five youths terrorized passengers on a New York subway the night after CBS showed the movie The Taking of Pelham 123, about a takeover of a New York City subway train by a gang.

And on it goes with other incidents of violence committed after individuals or groups of people had been so inspired by television programs or movies shown on television. Are these acts of crazy people who might have been inspired to violence from reading a magazine or eating burned toast for breakfast? Perhaps. But most of those committing these acts said they got the idea from television. The industry has a responsibility that goes with its power. So far it has not exercised that responsibility very well.

Reprinted from Kindred Spirit. Other articles and tapes available from Quest Ministries, P.O. Box 2500, Dallas, Texas 75221.
The work God did in my own heart as a pastor was as great or greater than that of any other. I realized that times of playing games with God were over, and that my own sin had to come to an end. If God were to meet with us, sin had to be confessed. I had battled with sin for years with no lasting victory. It was time for God to be glorified. He had to be lifted up at all costs.

"It became clear that I must confess my sin to my people—God's name had to be vindicated. A powerless pulpit had caused many to doubt God and His Word. My sin was not a respectable one, if any are, and I knew I could not speak in generalities.

"When I exchanged my pride for shame and publicly confessed my sin and sought forgiveness to clear and glorify God's name, the windows of heaven were opened. God poured out grace as never before. Rather than rejection, which might have been expected, an overwhelming wave of love and forgiveness came from God's people. Scores sought forgiveness for their own sins, and the glory of God settled upon us.

"Never before in the history of our church have we ever had a time when the Lord worked in such a way."

This actual letter reflects the heartfelt response of a pastor who recently met with God in personal revival.

"Wilt Thou not revive us again, that Thy people may rejoice in Thee?" (Ps. 85:6)
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In the past 10 years there has been a definite change in the way people think about evangelism. The traditional American methods of evangelism are not as sacred in the minds of pastors as a decade ago. We hear less about tent revivals, mass evangelism, the annual church evangelistic campaign, and citywide crusades.

But evangelism is not dead. Gallup Poll conducted a survey for the Christian Broadcasting Network and reported 34 million adult Americans were
involved in witnessing for Christ and 43 million are actively participating in Bible study. An amazing 64.5 percent said they were more interested in religion now than they were five years ago.

Evangelism is as hot as ever, but the old techniques grow cold as new ways are developed to reach the lost for Christ.

**From Decision-making to Disciple-making**

The most obvious shift in evangelism during the past 10 years is that pastors are not as impressed by the evangelist who claims 240 decisions, as with the number of people who continue with Christ. Pastors want to see those who make decisions for Christ become disciples of Jesus Christ and grow toward maturity in the church.

Mass media campaigns have captured the attention of the public with such slogans as “Here’s Life, America” and “I Found It.” These efforts produced a great number of decisions, but pastors saw only a small number of new converts come into their churches. After investing millions of dollars in evangelism, some pastors question whether mass evangelism can indeed effectively evangelize a city.

Ten years ago, pastors passionately sought to be represented on Christian Life’s annual listing of the 100 largest Sunday schools. Statistics on bus riders, baptisms, and yearly growth became an idol to some. The Sword of the Lord listed churches that baptized 200 persons a year. The fixation was so great that some pastors mortgaged their future to bus ministry for instant growth; others tried every gimmick to attract a crowd. Some even lied to keep up the illusion of growth.

Since I was responsible for the “100 Largest” list, I do not apologize for motivating pastors to reach and baptize more people. I am responsible for my motives, and pastors who pursued only numerical expansion must be responsible for their motives. Those who attracted a crowd for the wrong motives paid the price in high mortgages, a mixed multitude, and loss of New Testament credibility.

Pastors now realize that disciple-making is New Testament evangelism. They are not as concerned over the size of their Sunday school as with counting those who are truly Christian.

Some voices in the evangelical community protest Stimulus-Response evangelistic techniques, feeling that people are manipulated into making decisions by long invitations, emotional stories, and other gimmicks. They use the term soul-winning, implying that evangelism is similar to “selling” ice cream. They maintain that the pastor should emphasize the cause (preaching the gospel) and not the results (winning souls). They say that
since the results are God's responsibility, no one can be sure the responder is truly saved—the believer can only share his faith or give a testimony for Christ. Others don't like the emphasis on results, claiming that pastors count decisions like notches on a gun. They claim that a pastor can only say a certain number of persons "prayed to receive Christ." He could not say how many were actually saved.

But a closer examination of Scripture reveals that evangelistic emphasis on both causes and results is biblical. The Christian must "witness" (Acts 1:8) and the evangelist can "preach" (Mark 16:15); these are the causes that will bring a person to Christ. Results are also a human responsibility. In Matthew 28:19 Jesus commands His disciples to "Go ye," a participle that implies continuous action. Then He commands, "teach all nations." The word teach (matheta) is an imperative verb, which is a command. The King James word for teach should be translated to "make disciples." Christians are commanded to witness (Acts 1:8) and to get people to follow Jesus Christ (Matt. 28:19). A wise teacher once said, "There is no success in the Lord's work without successors."

From Front-Door Evangelism to Side-Door Evangelism

Churches are turning from evangelistic outreach to evangelistic inreach. Front-door evangelism was the technique of the seventies; side-door evangelism is paramount in the eighties. Front-door evangelism reaches out of the church into the community, with a view of stimulating people to come into the sanctuary to hear the gospel and respond. This type of evangelism is media outreach, organized visitation, Sunday school busing, advertising, and so forth.

Side-door evangelism finds church members witnessing for Christ in everyday life, getting their friends and relatives into church Bible studies, fellowship groups, sports teams, and service projects.

Surveys reveal that approximately 8 out of 10 persons who become members were first brought into the church through its side door by a friend or relative. They came in through "web evangelism," also called "circles of concern."

But the old has become new, as everything—including evangelism—runs in cycles. Since the church has always grown from the witness of its members, side-door evangelism is "back to the basics" in evangelism.

From Program Evangelism to Being a Witness

Traditionally, local churches have organized a visitation program where members were exhorted to become involved in the evangelistic outreach of the church. They went from house to house to witness for Christ. A pastor once told me, "I motivate my workers to go house to house and try to win people to Christ.

continued on page 38

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one of the greatest challenges facing the individual Christian is the challenge to become a soulwinner. Leading someone to Christ is a thrilling experience. It changes the eternal destiny of a soul, advances the cause of Christ, strengthens the church, and immeasurably blesses the soulwinner—inspiring him to greater heights in his personal Christian life. All of this echoes the praises of God and resounds to His eternal glory.

Since personal evangelism should be a central focus and have high priority in the Christian life, soulwinning ability must be cultivated and developed to the maximum potential. Perhaps the greatest single influence in this area is Scripture memorization. Although one can undoubtedly lead people to Christ without having memorized a single verse, the possibility is greatly enhanced if he is able to rely on memory to recall the appropriate Scriptures. The more Scripture a person has retained, the more skillful he will be as he applies it to individual lives. The greater command one has of the Word of God, the more likely he will consistently win souls to Christ. One characteristic of a great soulwinner is the memorization of biblical passages related to the subject of salvation.

The Bible has much to say about the benefits of Scripture memorization. Psalm 1:2-3 promises that the person who continually meditates upon the Scriptures will prosper in whatever he does. A similar statement is found in Joshua 1:8 where the person who studies Scripture is promised “good success.” Many verses such as these assist the soulwinner in his personal spiritual preparation.

God uses clean vessels in His service, and that is why David said in Psalm 119:11, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

The greater command one has of the Word of God, the more likely he will consistently win souls to Christ.

David had memorized, “hid in his heart,” portions of God’s Word and relied upon them to prevent him from sinning and transgressing God’s law. He said, “I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word” (Psalm 119:16). In fact, many of the Psalms of David are a direct result of his meditation upon the first five books of the Old Testament. The Scriptures, ingrained in David’s heart, gave him spiritual stamina and fortification against temptation. In the New Testament Jesus said, “Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3).

This truth is indeed pertinent to the Christian who may not understand why his efforts to lead people to Christ are not successful. If he has harbored an unconfessed sin, be it ever so small in his own eyes, his prayers and efforts for the person who needs Christ may be seriously hindered (Psalm 66:18). Scripture memorization can play a vital role in this continual cleansing process. The larger his arsenal of spiritual weapons, the more consistently the soulwinner will be able to overcome sin in his daily life.

Another area of Christian living crucial to the soulwinner is his personal prayer life. He must pray with importunity for those who need to be saved. Yet in John 15:7 Jesus said, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.” The Christian who allows the Word of God to continually abide in his life may approach the Lord in prayer with full assurance that his prayer will be answered. The soulwinner would see more people saved if he allowed the Word of Christ to “dwell in him richly” and maintain a habitual dwelling place in his life. What a rich promise to the person who is faithfully sowing the gospel seed in anticipation of reaping a harvest of souls!

The most important aspect of soulwinning as it relates to Scripture memorization is in the actual presentation of the plan of salvation. Most Christians have had the frustrating experience of forgetting a key passage of Scripture while witnessing, clumsily leafing through the Bible in a vain attempt to find the right verse. The soulwinner must know the plan of salvation and the related verses. When the truths are committed to memory, the gospel can be presented without hesitation in a clear, precise manner that carries with it a ring of authority. In just such a bold manner the apostles gave witness...
to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and that kind of testimony will very likely yield similar results today.

The Christian who has committed many passages of Scripture to memory can saturate his testimony with the Word of God. After he has stated a salvation truth, he can emphasize and confirm it by quoting Scriptures that convey the same message in a different way. If done properly, this will further clarify the gospel. The soulwinner must present the message of salvation simply, relying on God's Word and the Holy Spirit to produce the results.

God's Word affects the lives of men and women. Hebrews 4:12 states, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow;" God's Word is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Again in Jeremiah 23:29 the Lord says, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to bring conviction to the heart, and the more Scripture is used to reinforce the truth, the greater the effect of the message upon the hearer. An amazing amount of Scripture can be shared in just a 15-minute presentation of the gospel.

No person can "cause" someone to receive Christ as Saviour, nor can he produce conviction in the sinner's heart. Only the Holy Spirit can do these things. But the soulwinner who uses God's Word becomes the agent through whom the Holy Spirit generates an awareness of spiritual need, a conviction and godly sorrow over sin, and ultimately the New Birth experience. With a storehouse of scriptural truth committed to memory, the Christian can be used in a much greater way to present the gospel and to lead the lost to the Saviour.

Each soulwinning conversation can bring with it an entirely new set of personal problems, spiritual needs, and thought-provoking questions. Although the goal is to present the plan of salvation, there are often occasions to minister to these needs and problems. Sharing appropriate, memorized portions of God's Word is effective when these opportunities arise. The person who is wise in spiritual matters can provide sound biblical counsel and skillfully make the proper application of Scripture to the problem. The soulwinner needs a special measure of wisdom from the Lord in these instances to know how to control the conversation and meet the person's need. If he has been faithful to memorize Scripture, he can be assured that it will be imparted to him from the Lord (Psalm 119:98). During these times there is often a particular "key" or inroad to a person's heart. The Scriptures wisely used can turn this key and win the person to Christ.

Countless other situations lend themselves to the use of the Scriptures from memory. One will discover opportunities to share Christ on the job, while engaged in athletic competition, or in other circumstances where using a copy of the Bible is not practical. The soulwinner has a great advantage if he can use his memory to share the gospel. At other times, particularly in public places, there may be a scarcity of time. If only a few minutes are available to present the gospel, memorized verses enable a seed to be planted that could not have been done so otherwise.

Why not consider the challenge and begin to commit portions of the Bible to memory? Begin with the message of salvation, and use a concordance to find choice verses to memorize. Many Christian organizations have excellent Scripture memory packets, complete with instructions on how to develop this ability. Designate a time and a quiet place for study. You will soon see a difference in the way you are able to share Christ with others.

The soulwinner would see more people saved if he allowed the Word of Christ a habitual dwelling place in his life.

and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The Scriptures wisely used can turn this key and win the person to Christ.

Countless other situations lend themselves to the use of the Scriptures from memory. One will discover opportunities to share Christ on the job, while engaged in athletic competition, or in other circumstances where using a copy of the Bible is not practical. The soulwinner has a great advantage if he can use his memory to share the gospel. At other times, particularly in public places, there may be a scarcity of time. If only a few minutes are available to present the gospel, memorized verses enable a seed to be planted that could not have been done so otherwise.

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The soulwinner needs a special measure of wisdom from the Lord in these instances to know how to control the conversation and meet the person's need. If he has been faithful to memorize Scripture, he can be assured that it will be imparted to him from the Lord (Psalm 119:98). During these times there is often a particular "key," or inroad to a person's heart. The Scriptures wisely used can turn this key and win the person to Christ.

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The greatest aspect of this approach is that the gospel is communicated more effectively. Additionally, the blessings and benefits to your own Christian life will be immeasurable. Not only will you become a successful soulwinner, but your life will prosper in a remarkable way. You will experience spiritual growth, perhaps at an unprecedented rate. And as you share this principle with those you lead to Christ, multiplication will take effect, and countless lives will be touched as a result.

The soulwinner would see more people saved if he allowed the Word of Christ a habitual dwelling place in his life.
Family Love

The essence of the Christian faith is love and that the Christian life is to be marked by and lived out in an atmosphere of sincere Christian love. Various dictionaries, word studies, and commentaries give detailed discussions of the basis and dimensions of Christian love and of the two most frequently used Greek word pairs (noun and verb) for love: agape/agapan and philia/philein, “love/to love.” Most of us have come to learn that agape/agapan are the most lofty and noble of words, involving a Christian’s whole soul attitude toward others. With his intellect, emotions, and will, the Christian is to love others and seek their highest good—no matter who or what—just as God does (Matt. 5:43-48). It is no wonder, then, that this word pair expresses the imperative of the Christian ethic—to love (Eph. 4:15).

The other word pair, philia/philein, unfortunately has often suffered because of its comparison with agape/agapan. It has often been viewed as though it were an unworthy stepsister. However, it is worth noting that two other Greek word pairs are either omitted or scarcely used at all. Eros/eran had characteristically come to stand for physical love, often being used for sexual love in a lower sense. These two words do not occur in the New Testament. Storge/stergein was employed particularly for family love. Yet, neither noun nor verb appears in the New Testament. However, in one distinct context—Romans 12:10—the same root is combined with the root for philia/philein to form the compound adjective philostorgos, which the King James Version correctly translates “kindly affectioned.” Here among the ethical instructions of this great chapter, Paul reminds the Roman Christians that in a real sense believers constitute a family and therefore Christians are to treat one another with all the love and closeness of members of their family.

The translation “kindly affectioned” is particularly appropriate, since the English adjective “kind” and adverb “kindly” are related to a root that has also produced the noun “kin.” (All three are ultimately related to a primitive root meaning “to produce,” and to the German word kind “child.”) Thus, in being kind, by treating a fellow believer kindly, a Christian treats another Christian as he would a member of his own family, with all that full family membership entails. And such he is, for as saved by the grace of God and faith in Jesus Christ, the believer is loved by God so that “in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness [different Greek word] toward us through Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4-8). Rather than “biting” or “devouring” one another (cf. Gal. 5:15), as is too often the case, we who claim Jesus’ name would do well to remember Paul’s injunction concerning family love (Rom. 12:10).

John’s instructions concerning love (agape) ought to be ours: “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (1 John 4:10-11). Perhaps we could better convince an unloving world of the truth of God’s love (agape) (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8), if, while standing uncompromisingly on the fundamentals of the faith, we would truly demonstrate to the world that Christians really do love one another as Christ commanded (John 15:12 cf. 1 John 3:11-16). Knowing God’s love should cause us to share that love with others, especially with the members of the household of faith (Gal. 6:10). Paul expresses it just right: “Let love [agape] be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned [philostorgos] one to another with brotherly love [philadelphia]; in honor preferring one another” (Rom. 12:9-10).
Russia

King of the North - Part II

by John F. Walvoord

John Walvoord continues his detailed evaluation of Russia in prophecy in this final of a two-part article. He picks up with a description of Israel’s prosperity at the time of the invasion from the north.

Until our generation, the geographic area of the land of Israel was anything but something to be prized. Today Israel is once again a nation that has wealth.
A third feature may also be observed. This portion of Scripture is explicit that one of the reasons why Russia wants to conquer the land of Israel is that it has become a land of great wealth. Russia comes to take a prey, to take silver and gold, and the wealth that has been accumulated (cp. Ezek. 38:12-13). Until our generation, the geographic area of the land of Israel was anything but something to be prized. It did not have any wealth; it was a land that was strewn with stones, a land that was backward as far as civilization is concerned. Many of the areas that at one time were fruitful in Bible times were unused prior to Israel’s reclamation. The land was eroded and useless as far as agriculture is concerned.

Since the Israelites have gone back to their ancient land, they have done fabulous things. They have taken rocky fields, gathered the stones in piles along the edge, and cultivated and irrigated the ground and made it to bring forth abundantly. They have reclaimed swamps where mosquitoes and malaria made civilization impossible before. In fact, the first people who tried to do something about it lost their lives because of the unhealthy situation. These former swamps are today one of the richest areas of farmland in the entire world. It is almost incredible what has occurred there since 1948. They have spent money, they have put forth extreme effort, and from one end of Israel to the other tremendous progress is in evidence. The result is today that Israel is beginning once again to be a nation that has wealth. A great deal is being exported to other countries, and money is beginning to flow back to the little nation of Israel.

In addition to agricultural wealth, there are some factors that Ezekiel did not know, which we know today. One factor is that near the land of Israel are tremendous oil reserves. One of the largest and richest oil fields in the entire world is in the Middle East. It is outside the present geographic area of Israel, but the nation that wants to control that oil land must control the nation Israel. It is obvious that the tremendous oil reserves of the Middle East are one of the prizes that Russia wants to secure.

Another aspect of wealth which has come to light in modern times is the chemical value of the Dead Sea area, where water has evaporated for centuries, leaving its mineral deposit. Israel has established a plant at the south end of the Dead Sea and is reclaiming the chemicals. Millions of dollars of those chemicals are being shipped, and they have just begun to tap this wealth. Ezekiel anticipated the time when the land of Israel would be fabulously wealthy.

Military Importance of Israel

In addition to all these factors, it is obvious that the geographic location of the Middle East, being as it is a hub between three major continents—Europe, Asia, and Africa—is of tremendous strategic importance to any nation that wants to dominate the world. The geographic significance of the Middle East alone would be worth a real effort on the part of Russia to have this portion of the world under its control. Again Ezekiel anticipated today's situation.

The Destruction of the Invading Army

When the Russian army comes down upon this land, they are met with complete and utter destruction. Strange to say, as we examine the Scriptures, we do not find them being destroyed by an opposing army, but rather it seems to be by divine intervention. In Ezekiel 38:19-20 a description is given of earthquakes, mountains falling, and other disturbances which hinder their progress. Then God declares:

And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord (Ezek. 38:21-23).

When the Russian army comes down upon this land, they are met with complete and utter destruction.

The army's destruction is portrayed in Ezekiel 39:4 ff. God declares: "Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured." In other words, the army is completely destroyed, and the means used are earthquakes, hailstones, fire, and brimstone. It seems also that parts of the army begin to fight each other, so that every man's sword is against his brother.

Some natural questions are raised about this. Some have suggested that the description of hailstones, fire, and brimstone might be Ezekiel's way of describing modern warfare, such as atomic warfare. There is a possibility that Ezekiel was using terms that he knew to describe a future situation for which he did not have a vocabulary. The language of Scripture indicates, however, that the victory over this invading horde is something that God does. It is God, Himself, who is destroying the army.

In any case, regardless of the means, the army is completely destroyed and chapter 39 goes on to describe the aftermath. For months thereafter they have the awful task of burying the dead. For a long period after that, men are given full-time employment as additional bodies are discovered and the process of burial continues. Attention is also directed to the debris of the battle. It is used as kindling wood for some seven years. The general character of this battle and its outcome seems to be quite clear,
even though we may have some questions and problems about the details.

Time of the Invasion

One of the principal questions one could ask about this battle is, When is the battle going to occur? It has not occurred in the past. What indication do we have in this portion of Scripture that the battle will occur at a specific time? Unfortunately, varying opinions have been offered by capable Bible scholars on this point, and there has been considerable disagreement. Some have felt that the battle will take place before the Rapture; others believe it will take place in connection with the Battle of Armageddon, or the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty, at the end of the Great Tribulation. Some place it at the beginning of the Millennium, as an act of rebellion against Christ. Some find it at the end of the Millennium, for there is a reference to Gog and Magog in Revelation 20. Others put it in the earlier part of Daniel's Seventieth Week, just before the Great Tribulation.

It will not be possible to consider all these views in detail, but there are some hints that provide a good clue as to when this battle will take place. One of the hints given is that the battle takes place at a time when Israel has been gathered into their ancient land and are dwelling securely and at rest. There are not too many times when Israel is at rest in God's prophetic program. They have been scattered and persecuted over the face of the earth, and not even in the future will Israel have many periods of rest.

Certainly Israel is not at rest today. Israel is an armed camp, living under a truce with their Arab neighbors about them. Their enemies would drive every Israelite into the Mediterranean Sea and kill them if they could. The reason that they do not is, humanly speaking, Israel has a good army that is more than a match for its neighbors. Today an armed truce separates Israel from their enemy.

Every young Israeli man is required to have two and one-half years of military training and every young woman two years of military training. While the women are trained for jobs that are not necessarily of combatant type, they also learn to use weapons, so that if they need to fight, they can. After military training, many of them are settled in villages near the border, where they can serve a double purpose—following their occupation, whatever it is, and serving as guards for the border of Israel. Israel's state of unrest does not correspond to Ezekiel's prophecy. If Russia should invade the Middle East today, it would not be a fulfillment of this portion of Scripture. That has to take place when Israel is at rest.

One point at which Israel will be at rest is in the millennial kingdom. But we are told expressly that, in the millennial kingdom, there will be no war (Isa. 2:4), and only when the rebellion occurs at the end of the Millennium when Satan is set loose (Rev. 20:7-9) does war break out. Certainly Israel is not going to be at rest under these circumstances either, once Satan is set loose.

Some have suggested that Israel will be at rest in the period of Great Tribulation, and that the prophecy of Russia will be fulfilled at that time. In the time of Great Tribulation, Israel will not be at rest, for Christ told them to flee to the mountains to escape their persecutors. Therefore the invasion described by Ezekiel could not be a part of the Battle of Armageddon, or the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty.

There is only one period in the future that clearly fits this description of Ezekiel, and that is the first half of Daniel's Seventieth Week of God's program for Israel (Dan. 9:27). After the church has been raptured and saints have been raised from the dead and the living saints have been caught up to be with the Lord, a confederacy of nations will emerge in the Mediterranean Sea. Out of that confederacy will come a strong man who will become its dictator. He is described in Daniel 9:26 as "the prince that shall come." He will enter into a seven-year covenant of protection and peace with the people of Israel (Dan. 9:27).

Under the covenant, Israel will be able to relax, for their Gentile enemies will have become their friends, apparently guaranteed their borders, and promised them freedom. During that first three and one-half years, we have the one time when regathered Israel is at rest and secure. Apparently Russia will invade the land of Israel during that period, possibly toward its close, and the Scripture will then be fulfilled.

Problems of Interpretation

There are some other problems in the passage that merit study. A reference is made to bows and arrows, to shields and chariots, and to swords. These, of course, are antiquated weapons from the standpoint of modern warfare. The large use of horses is understandable as Russia today uses horses a great deal in connection with their army. But why should they use armor, spears, bows and arrows? This certainly poses a problem.

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There have been two or more answers given. One of them is this—that Ezekiel is using language with which he was familiar—the weapons that were common in his day—to anticipate modern weapons. What he is saying is that when this army comes, it will be fully equipped with the weapons of war. Such an interpretation, too, has problems. We are told in the passage that they used the wooden shafts of the spears and the bow and arrows for kindling wood. If these are symbols, it would be difficult to burn symbols. However, even in modern warfare there is a good deal of wood used. Possibly this is the explanation. We are not in a position today to settle this problem with any finality.

A second solution is that the battle is preceded by a disarmament agreement between nations. If this were the case, it would be necessary to resort to primitive weapons easily and secretly made if a surprise attack were to be achieved. This would allow a literal interpretation of the passage.

A third solution has also been suggested based on the promise that modern missile warfare will have developed in that day to the point where missiles will seek out any considerable amount of metal. Under these circumstances, it would be necessary to abandon the large use of metal weapons and substitute wood...
such as is indicated in the primitive weapons. Whatever the explanation, the most sensible interpretation is that the passage refers to actual weapons pressed into use because of the peculiar circumstances of that day.

The Future of Russia

The general character of the passage, the nature of the war, the invasion when it comes, and the outcome are, however, perfectly clear. What significance does it have to the modern scene? First of all, if we understand the passage correctly, Russia, instead of being a nation which is going to dominate the whole world, is headed for a tremendous military defeat. It is not possible to predict what is going to happen between now and the time this battle takes place, but the Bible seems quite clear that there is no room for a Russian-dominated world empire. The Bible prophesies only four world empires. The empire of the Great Tribulation period that will come as a form of the revived Roman Empire, is the final form of the fourth empire of Daniel, not a Russian Empire. This, in turn, will be succeeded by the millennial reign of Christ.

The passage seems to confirm that Russia, instead of becoming a world power that is going to dominate the whole world, is headed for an awful defeat, a judgment from God because of its blasphemy and ungodliness. If this becomes true during the time of the Seventieth Week of Daniel, it may explain something that otherwise might be difficult.

The Emergence of a World Empire

We know that in the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week there will be a world government headed by the ruler of the Mediterranean confederacy. The question is, how does he forge this world empire so quickly and so easily, and apparently without fighting for it? We learn in Revelation 13:4 that the question is asked, "Who is able to make war with him?" That is, with the Beast. The answer is that nobody is able to make war with him. It should be obvious that if Russia and her satellites are destroyed as military powers, the other side of the balance of power, represented by the Mediterranean confederacy, is then in a position to dominate the whole world. Nobody is able, for at least a time, to contest their right to rule.

The destruction of the Russian army may be the preface to the world government which will sweep the world during the last half of Daniel's Seventieth Week and be in power at the time Christ comes back to establish His millennial kingdom. These two portions of Scripture, while they concern themselves with a future war, are of tremendous significance as we face the present world scene and the dominance of Russia as a military power. We can trust that God, in due time, and perhaps sooner than we think, will bring these Scriptures to their sure conclusion and fulfillment.

The Emergence of a World Religion

There is another aspect of the problem that is worthy of careful consideration. What is the relation of all this to what we today call Communism? It must be recognized that Communism and Russia are not synonymous, for there are nations which are communistic which are not necessarily following Russia's leadership. Communism is a form of political philosophy; it is a form of religion. It is an ideology that is not limited to the Russian nation even though Russia has provided the major spark for it.

Communism is an atheistic religion—a religion denying that God exists, a religion denying that there is anything that is supernatural, a religion that recognizes only material force. If these facts are kept in mind, it becomes a most significant fact that

The Lord Jesus Christ is coming to take the church out of the world before Russia attacks the land of Israel.
modern day seem to be just the beginning of that which some day will sweep the entire world.

Those who have put their trust in the Lord Jesus can certainly have a wonderful refuge in the Word of God in facing these facts. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming first to take His body, the church, out of the world in the resurrection of the dead in Christ before these things come to their consummation, before Russia attacks the land of Israel, before this godless religion sweeps the world. But the very fact that these forces are in the world today, Russia, a great nation, poised to the north of the Holy Land, Israel in its place, already a nation of wealth and significance and a prize to be sought, indicates that the end may be near. Ezekiel described the building of cities without walls and anticipates a time when Israel would be secure and at rest. We see today the remarkable preparation for events that will take place after the Rapture of the church. God is setting the stage in Israel, in Russia, and in Communism for world events that will end the age.

We certainly must realize that this situation is not going to remain static, that it is rapidly moving to a consummation. In that consummation we believe the first important event will be Christ's coming for His own. If there ever was a generation of Bible-believing Christians who had a right to look forward to the coming of the Lord momentarily day by day, on the basis of what they see in the world, it is our present generation. Even unbelievers are telling us today that things cannot go on as they are much longer.

An interesting commentary on the widespread expectation of a coming world climax is found in the present tension between Israel and the Arab world. The efforts of Israel to secure a peace have been unavailing because of fanatical opposition on the part of the Arab world to any sort of a settlement with Israel. Any Arab ruler who would attempt to negotiate with Israel would be in danger of assassination even as one king of Jordan has already been killed. Jewish leaders, however, are still longing for the day when peace can be consummated. One of their leaders made the statement in the hearing of the writer to this effect, "Sooner or later there will be someone who will make a covenant with the people of Israel, and as soon as he does it, while he may be very popular before he does it, he will be hailed as a hero and as a leader in the Middle East."

In Daniel 9:26 there is the prophecy of "the prince that shall come" who will make a covenant with Israel. We cannot presume that the covenant Israel hopes for today is necessarily Daniel's covenant, but it might be. When this Israeli leader was asked when this might come about, he replied, "It could be any day." This coming from the lips of one who is not of the Christian faith and who does not know the prophetic Scriptures was certainly almost prophetic in its character. The hour of the Lord's return may indeed be very, very near.

The rise of Russia and the widespread power and influence of Communism are two important factors pointing to the conclusion that the stage is being set for the end of the age. The future invasion from the north obviously fits into our contemporary scene and adds its important evidence that time is running out and that the nations will soon move into their final crisis.

The invasion pictured in Ezekiel 38 and 39 is probably, however, not the last invasion of the king of the north. As previously indicated in Daniel 11, there is evidence that the king of the north will again come upon the Holy Land. According to Daniel 11:40 a series of actions will take place in the great battle and world struggle which will be under way at the very time that the Lord Jesus Christ returns in power and glory. As this event takes place several years after the debacle of Ezekiel 38 and 39, it appears that the king of the north is able by that time to put another army in the field and again becomes a factor in the struggle with the Roman ruler. Details of the second invasion are not given, however, except the mention in Daniel 11 and intimations that an army comes from the north in the very last days of the age.

Adapted by the author from The Nations in Prophecy © 1967 by the Zondervan Corporation.
What or Who Is an Evangelical?

by Harold Lindsell

Why a Leading Evangelical Recommends the Term "Fundamentalist"

In The Battle for the Bible I asked the question whether one who denies biblical inerrancy should be considered an Evangelical. Today an increasing number of Evangelicals do not wish to make inerrancy a test for fellowship even though ordinary consistency requires an Evangelical to believe in it. The term Evangelical can and does mean different things to different people. Consequently its use in a variety of ways makes it more difficult to link it exclusively to inerrancy. Those who do not wish to make inerrancy a requirement for fellowship often argue that a strict application could produce undesirable divisions that could damage the Christian enterprise. This aspect of the subject is inflammatory and arouses passionate responses. At a time in history when Evangelicals are front-page news they ask if it would not be better to forget inerrancy as a test for fellowship, assuming that it is just not that important.

A Definition of an Evangelical

Sometimes the word Evangelical has been employed to describe someone who is not a Catholic, that is, someone who is not connected with the Roman Catholic Church. Many German churches have traditionally employed the term Evangelical in their church titles and still do even though there is little Evangelical faith among many of them. North American denominations have often used the word Evangelical in their official titles and still do. The Evangelical Baptist Church of Canada, the Evangelical Church of North America, the Evangelical Congregational Church, the Evangelical Covenant Church of America, and The Evangelical Free Church of America. Some of the churches using the word Evangelical are by no means Evangelical in their theological convictions. So the word requires further definition.

James Barr in his book Fundamentalism identifies a number of different terms as the equivalent of the word Fundamentalist, a word he constantly uses pejoratively and with disdain. In fact, he thinks that people of this type suffer from a severe pathological condition. He uses such terms as Evangelical, Fundamentalist, Conservative, and Conservative Evangelical interchangeably. The burden of his book has for its central theme, biblical inerrancy, which he considers to be part of the Fundamentalist tradition to which he is opposed. His book serves two purposes. The first is his witness to the effect that Evangelicals traditionally held to biblical inerrancy. The second is his detailed verification of the departure from biblical inerrancy on the part of those who have in the past professed to believe in it. He is saying that these
people are inconsistent, and he wants them to acknowledge that they really agree with him that the Bible is an errant book.

What other doctrinal beliefs belong to the term Evangelical? Let's forget momentarily the material and the formal principles of the Reformation and simply list the major doctrines associated with Evangelicalism in its historical form: the belief (1) that God is a Trinity, one in essence, subsisting in three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; (2) that Jesus is the incarnate, virgin-born Son of God, sinless, holy, and the vicarious substitute for man's transgressions; (3) that Adam was the first man, he sinned in the Garden of Eden and his transgression wrought disaster for the human race; (4) that Jesus rose in bodily form from the grave, ascended into heaven, and is coming again personally, visibly, and in power and great glory; (5) that salvation is by faith alone, without works of righteousness; (6) that there is a heaven and a hell. To these could be added other terms of belief that would form a more complete statement of traditional Evangelical convictions, but these are sufficient for our purposes.

It is not enough to assert that the foregoing articles of faith constitute a satisfactory definition of what Evangelical belief consists in. The assertion must be followed by evidences to support that definition. If there were no people anywhere who believed these articles of faith, it would be obviously ridiculous to say they comprise Evangelical beliefs, but history comes to our support.

The Westminster Confession of Faith includes all of the items mentioned in this section. The New Hampshire Confession of Faith does the same. The canons of the Synod of Dort do the same. The doctrinal commitments of any number of denominations include them: the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the Evangelical Wisconsin Synod, the American Lutheran Church, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Reformed Church, the Conservative Baptist Association of America, the Evangelical Free Church, the Southern Baptist Convention, and the various offshoots of the United Presbyterian Church and the Presbyterian Church in the South, to mention only a few. Many schools and parachurch organizations are also committed to these convictions: Westminster Theological Seminary, Wheaton College, Westmont College, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Moody Bible Institute, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, to name a few. The National Association of Evangelicals, the largest interdenominational Evangelical church organization in the United States, holds to these same convictions. So do all of the Bible institutes and Bible colleges.

When Does One Cease to Be an Evangelical?

When does one cease to be an Evangelical? We can ask this question in two ways: (1) How many of the tenets of Evangelicalism can one surrender without forfeiting the right to the use of the Evangelical label? (2) Does the denial of any one of the basic Evangelical tenets mean that a person has forfeited the right to the use of the term?

Some people are saying that one does not cease to be an Evangelical so long as he retains belief in all the basic doctrines of the faith except inerrancy, provided he believes the Bible to be the infallible or inerrant rule of faith and practice. Using this statement as a starting point, I think we can proceed with an examination of the viewpoint. Clearly, if one denies the Virgin Birth of Christ he denies what is plainly taught in the Bible and is a matter of faith. Ergo, such a person can hardly be called an Evangelical, however much he covets the use of the label. So also with the deity of Christ, the doctrine of the Trinity, the vicarious Atonement, the bodily Resurrection of Jesus from the dead, and so forth. The denial of any one of these means that such a person is not really an Evangelical.

Some who think a man can be an inconsistent Evangelical as long as he holds to inerrancy in matters of faith and practice, also think that Jesus taught that all of the Bible is inerrant. Surely if the testimony of Jesus with respect to Jonah is not binding, why should not Jesus' testimony with regard to Scripture be disregarded too? So I must declare that whoever denies inerrancy also denies the witness of Jesus Christ to the whole Bible. Those who deny the witness of Jesus Christ entertain an erroneous Christology. How can they then be considered Evangelicals? And if one can extend to them the courtesy of the Evangelical label even though they deny the witness of Jesus Christ, why should they not be given the same courtesy if or when they deny other things which Jesus taught with reference to His death, Resurrection, and Second Coming? The doctrine of Scripture is no less a doctrine than is that of the Virgin Birth, the vicarious Atonement, and the bodily Resurrection.

I do not equate the term Evangelical with that of Christian. I am not saying that one who limits inerrancy to matters of faith and practice cannot be a Christian. As far as one can judge, James Orr did not believe in inerrancy. But he otherwise affirmed the other basics of Evangelical faith. Was he not a Christian? I would suppose he was, but I add quickly that a man can believe all the great doctrines of the Christian faith, including biblical inerrancy, and still be lost. The devils believe and tremble. Belief in the cardinal truths of the Christian faith does not bring salvation with it, but surely there can be no salvation without belief in at least some of the cardinal doctrines of the faith of a salvatory nature. There may be some who do not claim to be Evangelicals who have saving faith in Christ and are thus justified. But that is not what I am discussing here. I am talking about the proper use of the term Evangelical both with respect to its meaning and to its application in the Christian church. Carl Henry's conclusion that one of my statements implied that those who deny inerrancy are numbered among the tares is incorrect. If I worded
my statement badly so that one could
draw such a conclusion I correct it again.
One other observation is in order. The
content of the term Evangelical is more
important than the word itself. Those
who believe all of the doctrines I have in-
cluded in the word Evangelical are
Evangelicals even if they know nothing
about the word itself or if they refuse to
apply the label to themselves. Con-
trariwise the one who uses the label but
denies some or all of its contents is not
an Evangelical.

The Broadening of the Term
Evangelical

In my contacts with the World Coun-
cil of Churches, I have found many who
refuse to allow the term Evangelical to re-
main the property of those who are the-
ological Fundamentalists in the best sense
of that misused term. The ecumenists also
want to use the word Evangelical. Thus it
came about that the ecumenists today
call people like myself Conservative Evan-
gelicals and others Liberal Evangelicals.

In this way the adjectives Conservative or
perhaps we ought to call ourselves
Liberal carry the freight rather than the
word Evangelical. Perhaps what we need
is a new word and the suggestion was
made by one well-known inerrantist that
perhaps we ought to call ourselves
Orthodox Protestants. This would
distinguish us from those in the Catholic
tradition and align us with those commit-
ted to historic orthodoxy.

I must regretfully conclude that the
term Evangelical has been so debased that
it has lost its usefulness. Decades ago
when the label New Evangelical was
coined, its viability was based upon one
positive and one negative aspect. On the
positive side it took over without change
the basic theological heritage of Funda-
mentalism. By this I mean its commit-
tment to historic orthodoxy as derived
from the New Testament, and the Refor-
mation, and expressed in the various
creeds of Christendom since then. This
theological heritage was acknowledged,
accepted, and propagated by diverse
groups, and yet allowance was made for
differing interpretations such as Luthern,
Reformed, Arminian, and dispensational.

On the negative side, it dispensed with
the traditional Fundamentalist sociology,
that is, Fundamentalism's understanding
of the relationship of the Christian to the
world. Earlier Fundamentalism tended to
retreat from society beyond its own walled
city with its own mores. Many Funda-
mentalists demitted the major denomina-
tions that had turned from orthodoxy,
building Bible churches, leaving behind
groups of Evangelical believers who still
cling to their denominational attach-
ments. The Bible school movement was
the Fundamentalist response to theologi-
cal seminaries that had turned Liberal,
especially since Fundamentalism tended
to look upon theological education with
great suspicion. The New Evangelical
turned from Fundamentalism's sociology
to positive interaction with the world and
engagement on the intellectual level with
Liberal theological education. This move-
ment recovered the notion of the believer
who is not of the world but who is sent
back into the world for witness, and to
challenge the powers of darkness as well
as those of Liberalism.

Fifty years ago the term Evangelical
represented those who were theologically
orthodox and who held to biblical iner-
rance as one of the distinctives. The
Evangelical Theological Society is one
case in point. Fuller Seminary is another.
Within a decade or so neo-Evangelicalism,
that started so well and promised so
much, was being assualted from within by
increasing skepticism with regard to
biblical inerrailility or inerrancy. For good
or for ill this was the focal point around
which today's struggle was to be centered.

It was not long before the Evangelical
camp was divided into two parties—the

continued on page 37
No thrill surpasses that of seeing someone born again right before your eyes. Jesus told the apostles to "preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). As disciples of Christ, we must obey this command.

The Bible is full of examples of men who practiced personal evangelism. Jesus certainly evangelized individuals and did it consistently. In John 4 the Lord Jesus went out of His way to reach one lonely fallen woman. Remember when the disciples returned with the food and said, "Let's eat"? Jesus was not hungry any longer. He said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of" (John 4:32). He had the thrill of seeing that woman saved and cleansed. Then He told His disciples, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work" (John 4:34). Though He preached to multitudes, He was always ministering to individuals.

Paul said, "...have taught you publicly, and from house to house" (Acts 20:20). This is the 20-20 vision we all should have. Preaching publicly is not enough. We must preach personally and privately.

Peter denied the Lord but repented and then, filled with the Holy Spirit, became an ardent soulwinner. "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42). Under Peter's ministry it is stated, "And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:14).

Essentials for Successful Evangelism

What is going to make a church evangelistic and its people soulwinners?

One must have the love of Christ to constrain him. It did Paul, as he said in 2 Corinthians 5:14. If believers are full of the love of Christ, they too will give the Lord Jesus to the world. Love, agape love, which constrains one to be an ambassador for Christ, comes from God. It is totally selfless and yearns to make others happy. Most do not witness because they have so little genuine love.

One needs a burden for souls. Paul had this. He wrote, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved" (Rom. 10:1). It has been my experience that the minute
a person is born of God he has a burden

to see loved ones and friends saved.

One needs tears of concern. "He
that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing
precious seed, shall doubtless come again
with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with
him" (Ps. 126:6). Jesus wept over Jerusalem
(John 11:35). Paul wept "with many tears"
(Acts 20:19). Jeremiah wept (Jer. 9:1). We
should, too. Our tears do not save peo-
ple. They show that our hearts are in tune
with God's.

One needs to consider the reality
of hell. "In hell he lift up his eyes, being
in torments" (Luke 16:23). Hell is no joke.
Never laugh about hell. Maybe we need
more old-fashioned hellfire and brimstone
sermons, until, as in Jonathan Edwards's
day, people feel like they are slipping into
hell and cry out for mercy.

One needs to see soulwinning as
a privilege. The biggest thing that ever
happens in a city is not a multimillion-
dollar deal by the president of some cor-
poration. It is a soul won to Christ.

One must confess and forsake
every known sin in order to be used
by God in winning people to Christ.
"Behold, the Lord's hand is not short-
cned, that it cannot save; neither his ear
heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniq-
ities have separated between you and
your God, and your sins have hid his face
from you, that he will not hear" (Isa.
59:1-2).

It just takes Spirit-
filled Christians
faithfully sowing the
seed for hundreds to
come to Christ day
after day.

Witnessing

Witnessing, or soulwinning, is not
natural. Satan fights it. The flesh does not
want to do it. The world surely hates it.
If a pastor and people are going to make
this a vital part of their balanced ministry,
here are some things to be considered.

Organize your time. You will not
find time to go soulwinning unless you
plan on it. Set definite times for soulwin-
ing visitation. Just as a pastor has his
study time, he must have his soulwin-
ing time, or it will not happen.

Be soul-conscious. Every time God
puts us with a person for a few minutes,
we should look for the reason. Knock on
all doors. Do not try to push the door
down, but gently knock on the heart's
door of every person you can. If they are
unconcerned, you know God only wants
you to plant the seed at this time.

Keep at it. "And let us not be weary
in well doing: for in due season we shall
reap, if we faint not" (Gal. 6:9). Oh, the
tragedy that so many give up so quickly
and easily. They go out a few times and
nothing happens. Then they tell
themselves, "This isn't for me. I'm just not
cut out to be a soulwinner." How foolish.
No one is "cut out for it." It is hard work.
The Devil fights it.

Scatter the seed. No farmer digs
one enormous hole and pours a whole
bag of seed in it. He scatters it, if he wants
a good harvest. Look for ways to scatter
the seed into the hearts of thousands. "He
which soweth sparingly shall reap also
sparingly" (2 Cor. 9:6).

Avoid detours. If Satan cannot
defeat you, he will suggest a detour. Do
not get off on tangents. Whatever you do,
do not fight some other preacher who
does not see eye to eye with you. Sow the
seed.

Never argue. Real soulwinners do
not argue. "The servant of the Lord must
not strive" (2 Tim. 2:24). You may win an
argument, but you will not win a soul for
Christ. If in witnessing you feel the con-
versation getting heated, stop. Apologize.
Let the person know you do not want to
argue and you are sorry. Soulwinners
learn quickly that they must not strive
or be offensive.

Leave the door open. Our mothers
kept telling us, "Shut the door!" But a
soulwinner learns to leave the door open,
spiritually speaking. If the person being
witnessed to is not open and receptive,
do not push.

Be authoritative. They said of
Jesus, "He taught them as one that had
authority, and not as the scribes" (Mark
1:22). A soulwinner must be authorita-
tive, not arrogant. Some people witness
but are almost apologetic in their ap-
proach. A lost person is not going to have any confidence in them or their message.

**Be serious.** I cut up a lot and love to tease people, but when witnessing I am dead serious. You need not be so serious that you make a person feel uncomfortable, but he must know you are serious about leading him to Christ.

**Beware of distractions.** Telephones, television, and a thousand other things can distract a person from really hearing the gospel, even during one-on-one witnessing. If a person begins to ask questions that you know will be clear after he receives Christ, ask if he minds saving his questions until you have gone through the plan of salvation first.

**Use the Word of God.** "Faith cometh by hearing" (Rom. 10:17). Quote Scripture. The person might not read a verse you just pointed to in the Bible. The Word of God is the "sword of the Spirit" (Eph. 6:17) which brings conviction and cuts to the heart (see Acts 7:54).

**Give them the gospel.** The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). What is the gospel? "I declare unto you the gospel... that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he arose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:1,3,4),

Be sure the lost person understands the gospel before he makes a decision.

**Do not use difficult theological terms.** One must learn how to think as the unsaved do. Put yourself in their shoes. There is so much talk about being "born again," but precious few know what preachers are talking about. They will understand if you talk about the forgiveness of sin and going to heaven.

**Give invitations.** Again, do not push them or try to force a decision, but do give them a chance to say yes to God. You can never see the heart. The person may be about to say yes to God.

**Presenting a Plan of Salvation**

Most Christians cannot give a simple, logical presentation of the plan of salvation. People often criticize a "canned" presentation of the gospel. What some fail to realize is that very few people are original enough or spiritual enough to extemporize articulately when they begin witnessing. How then, are they going to present the gospel? Too often it is uttered in a haphazard way, and then Christians wonder why they have no success leading people to Christ. People need help. Most soulwinners started out using someone else's tried-and-proven methods.

Invariably, people say the hardest part of witnessing is getting started. Here are a few approaches.

**Tracts.** What a key to open the door! What a tool for witnessing! Never be unfriendly when passing out a tract. Always be pleasant, with a smile on your face. In a home, a service station, or a restaurant it really works. After paying a bill or visiting a few minutes in a home, hand a tract to a person and say, "Let me give you something good to read when you have a few moments."

**Testimony.** Very often the door will open to share a word of testimony during a conversation. In the home of a newcomer to town or a first-time visitor to church, a pastor can say, "You know, I'm preaching for one reason. I want to help people go to heaven. After I was saved, I found it so wonderful to know that all my sins are forgiven and that I'm going to heaven that I had to tell others. Do you know for sure you are going to heaven?" If the person is not interested at the moment, leave a tract and an invitation to come to the greatest church in town. Then send others to visit or call.

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**Most Christians cannot give a simple, logical presentation of the plan of salvation.**

**Take-offs.** Just be alert during a conversation and look for something you can lead into witnessing. There are many obvious ones. On a plane I once asked the stewardess how high we were. She said 30,000 feet. Then I asked if she were ever going to be any closer to heaven than that. Startled, she said, "I sure hope so!" From that I led into the plan of salvation, and she prayed with me to receive Christ. You can ask a person for directions, thank him, and then ask graciously, "Do you know how to get to heaven?"

**Trying.** Just try the door and see if it opens. If you walk in the Spirit, have a genuine love for people, and sincerely want to help people go to heaven, you really do not need gimmicks or fancy ways to witness. Often on a plane, in a waiting room, or in a service station, after talking a few minutes to a person, I'll just ask, "Could I ask you my pet question?" No one has ever said no. Then I ask the same question, "Do you know for sure you are going to heaven?"

**Instruction**

Now that the door is opened, how do you present the gospel simply and logically? It is so important that the presentation is clear so that people understand what they are doing. Here are four ways to present the Word of God.

**The Romans Road** is probably the best known and most widely used method of presenting the plan of salvation. It is good to have an outline to keep on track and thus be open to the Holy Spirit directing you to particular verses that fit the occasion. (Rom. 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9,10,13).

**The Four Spiritual Laws** used by Campus Crusade can be an effective witnessing tool. In my possession are at least 15 booklets that are spin-offs of the Four Spiritual Laws booklet. Campus Crusade has proved the value of a tool that helps and guides Christians in the presentation of the gospel.

**The James Kennedy plan** also is effective. It is explained in his book Evangelism Explosion. Many feel this plan is too complicated for the majority to use. It takes extensive training, but it has proved worthwhile in countless churches.

**Invitation.** Truth transforms, not just informs. When the gospel is not responded to, it tends to harden the heart. Never try to force a decision, but always give an opportunity for a person to make a decision.

When the person has said "Yes, I want to be saved," and appears to understand the gospel, you can say something like this: "Bill, God says, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out' [John 6:37]. How do we come to Him? Why, in our hearts, for God 'looketh on the heart' [I Sam. 16:7]. Jesus said, 'Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear..."
### What do all the leaders have

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<tr>
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<th>City, State</th>
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### State Chairmen

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These Christian in common?

Greg Dixon
Indianapolis Baptist Temple
Indianapolis, IN
Central Committee

Truman Dollar
Kansas City Baptist Temple
Kansas City, MO
Central Committee, speaker

W.E. Dowell
Baptist Temple
Springfield, MO
Central Committee

Jerry Falwell
Thomas Road Baptist Church
Lynchburg, VA
Co-chairman, speaker

Billy Hamm
Mountain States Baptist Temple
Denver, CO
Central Committee

Ed Hindson
Thomas Road Baptist Church
Lynchburg, VA
Speaker

Cecil Hodges
Bible Baptist Church
Savannah, GA
Central Committee

J. Don Jennings
Northwest Baptist Seminary
Tacoma, WA
Speaker

Ronnie Riggins
New Life Baptist Church
New Cumberland, PA

Terry Samples
Beacon Baptist Church
Englewood, CO

Don Stone
Lanakila Baptist Church
Waipahu, HI

Jerry Towles
Flood Baptist Church
Artesia, NM

James Upchurch
Midway Baptist Church
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Raleigh, NC

Willie Weaver
Calvary Baptist Church
Connersville, IN

You will want to join them in Washington on April 11-13, 1984.

For more information remit coupon from page 16.
“M y children are too young to understand what salvation is all about! How can they comprehend a place called heaven when they cannot see it? Why should I burden my little ones with talk about sin and guilt? Won’t they just become confused and frustrated if I present the gospel to them while they are very young?”

These questions are frequently asked by Christian parents and educators, who seem afraid to bear the responsibility of leading their little ones to the Lord. However they are the only ones who think that they should wait before beginning to influence their children’s minds. Television advertisers do not wait and cultists do not wait. Satan does not wait. Why should we?

In Mark 10:14 we read Jesus’ command for child evangelism: “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” The Greek word for child used in this passage signifies a very little or young child, or even a newborn infant. If we are to obey the words of our heavenly Father, we must begin at once to lead to the Lord the little ones placed in our care. Here are some teaching ideas to help you do it most effectively.

**Build a Spiritual Foundation for the Plan of Salvation.** During the preschool years the parents and Sunday school teachers have the responsibility of building a spiritual foundation within the little child. Together they should teach him about God’s love, obeying God, and being kind to others. They should help him see that he does wrong things each day (things which hurt God), that these wrong things make God sad and must be punished, and that Jesus already took the punishment for the bad things (sin) that the child has done and will continue to do.

**Make the Plan of Salvation Simple.** As the young child becomes sensitive to the naughty things he does each day (as early as three years old), he will see his need for salvation. At this point...
make clear that God knew that people never could or would stop sinning on their own, so they could never be with Him in His heavenly home. Therefore, He had a plan to send His only Son to earth to take the punishment for the sins of each boy and girl.

Help Your Child Make the Choice. Once your little one has seen his need for salvation ("For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. 6:23) and has understood God's plan for salvation ("For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3:16), he must make a choice. But what should be his reason for choosing to give his life to the Lord? Do not coerce him to make the decision out of desire for personal gain (escaping the fiery flames of hell in order to walk the golden streets of heaven) or out of desire for a reward (a Bible, a colorful bookmark, or a special gift). Do not let him respond because others around him do so or because he will make you—the parent or teacher—happy. Rather let him choose the plan of salvation because he is sincerely sorry that he has done wrong and made God unhappy and wants His forgiveness.

Guide the Prayer of Salvation. Having expressed a desire to ask Jesus to save him, the young child will need guidance in praying the prayer of salvation. Avoid using abstract or symbolic terms with the young child. Cliches such as "get saved," "let Jesus into your heart," or "give your heart to Jesus" may confuse a child and give him a false understanding of what actually takes place. Instead, use phrases such as "become a child of God" (John 1:12) or "give your life to the Lord" or compare salvation to a "New Birth" (John 3:3).

Encourage the young child to use his own words in his prayer of salvation, not parroting yours. Explain that as he talks to Jesus he should tell Him he is sorry for his wrongdoing, thank Him for dying on the cross, and take Him as his Saviour. When he has prayed, make sure the young child knows that Jesus is now his Saviour forever. He will still do things that are wrong, but these sins have already been forgiven. (One of the most frequent errors in child evangelism is using visuals which communicate that once a child is saved he is now sinless. This is why children think they need to be saved over and over again.) Now encourage him to tell others right away about the decision he has made (Rom. 10:9).

Visualize the Plan of Salvation. A variety of easy-to-make visual aids can be used to help clarify the plan of salvation to young children. 1) Teach the children the ABC's of salvation—Acknowledge your sins, Believe that Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for your sins, Confess Jesus as your Saviour. 2) Cut three large circles out of construction paper. Color the first black; draw a cross on the second and a pair of praying hands on the third. With the pictures teach the children that everyone is a sinner, that Christ died on a cross to take the punishment for our sins, and that when we pray and receive Jesus as Saviour, God forgives our sins and makes us His very own children. 3) Place three objects (black circle, cross made of craft sticks, picture of praying hands) in a box and wrap as a gift. Explain that each of us can choose the "gift" of eternal life. To discover how to receive the "gift" of eternal life, the child will unwrap the box and learn the meaning of the three objects inside. 4) Cut a white circle out of construction paper and cover with clear contact paper. Let the children color the circle black and then wipe it off with a soft cloth. Use this to illustrate that when we accept Jesus as our Saviour, all our sins are forgiven—past and future—and as we confess our sins every day, Jesus continually wipes them away. 5) To help the young child remember that his salvation is forever, have him hold out his hand and on the five fingers teach the five words "Jesus Is With (John) Forever.

With these teaching ideas in mind, challenge yourself to take the first opportunity to teach the simple truths of the gospel to your little ones.

What or Who?

Moreover those who entertain these views are going to be labeled Fundamentalists whether they like it or not. In the Missouri Synod battle the dissidents were not labeled what they really were—Liberals—but were everywhere called "Moderates" which they were not, while J.A. O Preus and his associates were everywhere called "Fundamentalists." James Barr's attack on Fundamentalism demonstrates that the academic world, which hates the theology of orthodoxy, will always label it Fundamentalism. In its heyday neoorthodoxy also identified Conservative Christianity by using the Fundamentalist label.

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Evangelism
continued from page 19

I know they don't win souls naturally, but I hope to prime the pump so they will try to win their friends in daily life."

A survey shows that only 6 out of 100 visitors to the church result from the traditional organized visitation programs. Yet, 86 out of 100 visitors come at the invitation of a friend or relative. Program evangelism has a place and has some results, but such results are small compared to web evangelism.

**While the methods of evangelism are continuously modified, the command to evangelize remains constant.**

Two books have highlighted the shift in evangelism: *Life-style Evangelism*, by Joe Aldridge, and *Evangelism as a Lifestyle*, by Jim Peterson. These authors are telling Americans that simply verbalizing the gospel message is not enough to reach secularized Americans. Peterson describes a "post-Christian culture" where the average American does not operate within a religious framework. He says we must employ "affirmation evangelism in practice." By this he means that evangelism is "a process of modeling and explaining the Christian message. His [God's] people must incarnate His character, then audio-visualize the nature of His eternal reign."

Thirty years ago, Jim Rayburn, founder of Young Life (an evangelistic organization to reach high school teens), called lifestyle evangelism, "winning a hearing." He says we must live a godly life before the unsaved so that they will listen to our message. What Rayburn calls "winning a hearing," the Bible calls "witnessing" (Acts 1:8).

For all the advantages of lifestyle evangelism, Aldridge seems to be against confrontation evangelism. He wants evangelism to grow naturally out of life's relationship. However, lifestyle evangelism and confrontation can go together. Jesus confronted Nicodemus, Zacchaeus, and the woman at the well. Philip confronted the Ethiopian eunuch, and Paul confronted Sergius Paulus and the demon-possessed girl in Philippi.

**From Media Evangelism to Personal Evangelism**

Many churches have used every available means in their attempt to evangelize their cities. They have purchased advertisements on television and radio, and in the newspapers. They have passed out flyers throughout the community, mailed newsletters, organized a phone blitz, employed dial-a-prayer, nailed posters on trees, and walked from door to door to invite people to church.

But media evangelism is expensive. Ten years ago it cost $400 to purchase an entire page in the Lynchburg newspaper; today it costs $1,600. A decade ago television cost $4 for a 10-second slot; today it costs $35, depending on the number of slots. New and small churches cannot afford the cost of saturating their towns.

The greatest evangelistic asset for any church is not television time or electronic help. The power of evangelism still resides in church members who share their faith because they love Jesus Christ and because they are excited about their church.

A recent survey indicated that nonmembers look first for friendship when choosing a church. Secondly, they choose a church where they get spiritual help. Churches need to capitalize on friendship evangelism when planning evangelistic strategy.

In spring 1981 when the Heritage Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, was averaging 83 in Sunday school and having difficulty reaching 100, a Friend Day Campaign was planned. By a system of accountability everyone pledged to invite his friend to church. Rod Kidd, then pastor, preached a series of sermons on friendship. On the big day, 238 attended "Friendly Heritage Baptist Church." Because of organized follow-up, subsequent attendance never dropped below 150. Today the church averages 450. Kidd told the Liberty ministerial students that everyone should plan a Friend Day to take advantage of the inherent strength of web evangelism.

From Mass Evangelism to Body Evangelism

In the past, pastors have led their congregations to become actively involved in citywide crusades. It was thought that a big-name evangelist, a large civic center, and the multiplied efforts of all churches could make an evangelistic impact on the city that individual churches could not do separately. In return, churches expected a percentage of the decision cards, so some new converts could be brought into their local congregations.

In the fifties each Billy Graham Crusade got larger. The first criticism against citywide crusades was that cooperative evangelism joined Conservatives and Liberals. The issue of second-degree separation divided Fundamentalists and Evangelicals. However, there is a second criticism against mass evangelism: for all the massive budgets, publicity, organized outreach, and numerous decisions, mass evangelism had comparatively small results for the cooperating churches. In many cases, there were no results, but actually a decline in church membership in cities where mass evangelistic crusades were held. Why? Because citywide crusades syphoned off money and evangelistic efforts for the local church, so that membership went down, rather than up, says Peter Wagner of Fuller Theological Seminary.

Body evangelism is local church evangelism. The title is taken from the picture of the church as a body. Body evangelism is the most effective type of evangelism, says Wagner. Perhaps what we have found by statistical verification (i.e., that local church evangelism is the most effective way to reach the lost) is that it always has been the priority in God's program of outreach.

While the methods of evangelism are continuously modified, the command to evangelize remains constant. We must be conscious of the current needs of people and examine the most effective ways of reaching the world with the gospel. Whatever program we implement, our only motive must be to honor God.
An Interview with Del Fehsenfeld, Jr.

Questions and Answers

Q: How long have you been in evangelism, and where has your Life Action ministry taken you?

A: I have been in evangelism for about 15 years and in Life Action for 14 of those years. Through our crusades and one-night programs, we have been in over 1,500 churches and Christian schools. I have conducted over 300 church crusades, and we have been in virtually every state.

Q: Your father was an evangelist. How did he influence your life?

A: He is 71. He has been in evangelism for over 50 years. During the summer he took us children with him and we got firsthand exposure to the old sawdust trail, tent revival crusades, and church crusades. He was of the old school, a hard-hitting preacher with a great deal of compassion, who would often break down and weep in the middle of his messages. He poured out his heart for people but he was relentless against sin. Most of what I know about the character and ways of God, the works of God, and the Word of God, came from his life.

Q: Is there a difference between evangelism and revivalism?

A: Although the words are often used synonymously, in reality there is a significant difference. Evangelism is the process of reaching the lost.
with the salvation message of the gospel. Revival is the moving of God's Spirit in the lives of believers that restores them to fresh love for God and obedience to His truth. The pattern of Scripture, as I understand it, is that revival generally precedes and produces greater fruitfulness in evangelism. When God purifies and revives His people, the result is an increased God-consciousness and spiritual awakening among the lost. The greatest evangelistic thrusts and missionary movements of history have been born out of times of revival among God's people.

Q: Is revival totally a sovereign act of God or can we influence it and if so, how?

A: Of course, God is absolutely sovereign. He moves as He chooses and pleases. But we must respond to God. There are these two facets of revival, and neither is true to the exclusion of the other. Historically, we can observe the sovereign divine choice of God who sets His people to praying and initiates an outpouring of His Spirit in revival. We also know from God's Word that genuine revival can be experienced as a direct result of people seeking God with all their hearts. God has given us conditions in His Word, and if we meet those conditions we can expect Him to fulfill His promises and pour out His presence and power. There is a degree to which we can influence Him because in His sovereignty He has moved us to seek Him with all our hearts.

Q: What would you, from your perspective, see as the greatest hindrances to revival in America's churches?

A: I believe that one of the greatest hindrances to revival in our nation is a sectarian spirit—denominationalism, man-made movements, and following after men. We have a high "church" doctrine and a low "Jesus" doctrine. People are often more loyal to an organization or an institution than they are to Jesus.

Another hindrance is the tendency to exalt preferences and personal interpretations to the level of the absolutes of Scripture. These preferences are too frequently used as standards by which to evaluate others in the body of Christ. As a result, there is an enormous amount of pride in our churches. The Scripture says that pride causes contention. Unfortunately, while some have been contending for the faith, others have become contentious with the faithful. This sectarian spirit has made us suspicious and skeptical of each other and is destroying the freedom of God's Spirit to move. While we must not embrace error, we can stand firmly on the truth of the Word, and as instructed in Ephesians 4, do so in love.

"Plastic professionalism," hypocrisy, and leaving a better impression of ourselves than is honestly true are all hindrances to revival. Pretense starts in the pulpit and spills into the pews.

Another problem is that we have programmed ourselves to death. We don't have time in most of our churches to seek God in extraordinary, earnest prayer. We're so caught up in doing things for God that we have little time left to spend with Him. So we just keep letting our programs run and end up having to squeeze Jesus into whatever time is left over.

There is another sense in which our predetermined programs can be a hindrance to revival. Too often we choose a convenient week for "revival" services, much as we select a date for some other event. We tell God we're going to have a meeting and then ask Him to come and bless it. There's no such thing as instantaneous revival that can be produced whenever we happen to find a suitable slot for it in our already overcrowded schedules. I doubt that we will witness genuine revival until we become so hungry and so desperate for a visitation from God that we are willing to set everything aside, make Him the first priority, and go for broke until we have met with Him.

Q: America has had two great national awakenings. Is it possible for her to have a third great awakening?

A: Yes, there is absolutely no doubt in my mind. There are some sincere people who make statements like, "America is apostatized and too far gone and God won't send revival to apostasy." Well, I agree that he won't send revival to apostasy, but I think we tend to throw the term apostate at anything with which we disagree. Although there are apostates in leadership in our nation, I don't believe that America as a nation is apostate. I'm convinced that the vast majority of people are just plain old-fashioned lost people who desperately need to have the light of God's truth shed in their hearts.

Then some say, "How can God send a great revival when the prediction in the Scripture is that, in the end times, things will just get worse?" I don't see any biblical evidence that this prediction prevents the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit during the last days. In Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:21 he says, "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages." He didn't say "until it gets so bad that it's too late." The very last moment before Jesus returns for His children, God can break in on His church and send a great revival. As long as God is on His throne and His Word is true, I believe that it is still possible for Him to pour out His Spirit in revival.

Q: How do you answer the criticism of some pastors that a lot of revivalism is just manipulation of people's emotions?

A: I think that many pastors have been burned by some well-meaning evangelists (and some who are not so well-meaning) who in the energy of their flesh have tried to induce what only God's Spirit can produce. On the other hand, the heart consists of the mind, will, and emotions—and when God moves on the heart, emotions must be involved. I don't mean manipulation from man's standpoint. When the Spirit of God falls on man, it is overwhelming what God does. I have been where the presence of God has been so powerful that a choir would start to sing and couldn't continue. The words to the song became so meaningful and so real in the presence of Christ, that the people just broke down and sobbed. I have been where God has moved in such revival fire that people would travel to the meetings from miles around, having heard about it. They were drawn by the invisible hand of God. His manifest pres-
ence in a service would cause such intense conviction that they would fall to their knees without an invitation ever being extended.

Many pastors are skeptical because, all too often, evangelists have produced short-lived results and called that revival. However, genuine revival is the fire of God falling from heaven, melting the hearts of people, purging the dross, and transforming lives—not just for a week of meetings, but for a lifetime. We have a tendency to put down revival with a broad brush because of our limited experience and because of disillusionment with that which falsely has been called revival.

In many cases, our churches have become so plastic and phony, and so barren of the life of Christ, the fullness of God, and the fruit of the Spirit, that if the Holy Spirit took charge, it would petrify most of us. He would end up exposing leaders as much as church members, and He would probably radically alter much of the church programs, our philosophy, our priorities, and our direction.

Q: From your perspective, what do you see as the greatest weaknesses in pastors today?

A: The weaknesses in pastors are probably no different from the weaknesses in evangelists and others in vocational ministry. They are the same weaknesses that God has had to confront in my own life. I know how tough it is to prioritize prayer in a demanding schedule. But I also know that a prayerless pastor produces a powerless pulpit. The sins produced by walking after the flesh instead of after the Spirit are consuming many pastors and evangelists. Bitterness, insecurity, selfishness, reputation-protecting, kingdom-building—these are all evidences of walking after the flesh and cause disillusionment, hurt, and discouragement in others.

The supreme motivation to be “successful,” rather than to be a servant, and the prioritizing of production and programs over building the lives of people are other weaknesses that plague the ministry.

From my perspective, the absence of lives that back up and illustrate our messages may be our greatest failure.

A.W. Tozer said that one of the curses of our generation is the assumption that because we know something, it is a reality in our lives. Just because we know a fact doesn’t make it a part of our lives. There is more to Christianity than knowing right and doing right. Biblical Christianity also involves the heart being in a right relationship with a living Christ. We pride ourselves on holding to the Scriptures as our final source of authority—and from thence we depart. We are not committed to it in practice on a daily basis. We are assuming that because we know certain truths, they are reality in our lives. That has produced a great deal of spiritual barrenness and emptiness. The results of our failure in this area are disastrous in our people—many of whom are experiencing spiritual burnout and disillusionment, rather than a vibrant, growing, personal relationship with Christ.

Q: Is the ministry of the evangelist in decline?

A: From my limited perspective, yes. And I think it may be the death of the church.

Q: Why do you feel it is in decline when just a few years ago the ultimate in the church was to be an evangelist?

A: I think there are several reasons. In part, many of our churches have become so backslidden that they won’t tolerate prophetic preaching that confronts them at their point of need. It’s one thing to preach against the sins of the world. But church people get uncomfortable when you start preaching against the sins of the church. The right kind of preaching strips the cosmetic coat of religious paint off the dead orthodoxy, hypocrisy, and empty, barren, carnal, backslidden lives of believers and exposes them for what they really are. A lot of people run from that kind of preaching.

Another reason for the decline is that many evangelists have become so egocentered, flesh-oriented, manipulative, and dependent on Madison Avenue tactics, and three-ring circus methodology that they have discredited the purity of God’s truth and the reality of His power. Pastors have felt forced to say, “Enough of this nonsense. We’ve had enough of these jam-out-buildings full campaigns.”

They are realizing that a lot of “church growth” has not been growth at all; it has been church “swelling.” (If I ram my head into a wall, it swells, it gets bigger—but it hasn’t grown!) I think some of us have awakened to the fact that inflated attendances and inflated offerings aren’t meaningful if we can’t motivate our people to true spiritual growth and vital Christian living.

Another thing I think has hurt the cause is that enough evangelists were insensitive or caused trouble in the churches that pastors started inviting other pastors to their pulpits instead of risking an evangelist who might ruin the church. And I don’t blame them.

On the other hand, if the church and the pastor stop inviting evangelists simply because they can’t stand the “heat” of biblical confrontation, the problem is really in the church and the pastor. The decline is coming from both problems and both have damaged the role of true biblical evangelists.

Q: What about many churches coming together for revivals—is that a trend? Is that out?

A: For years the trend has been away from mass crusades. Some have laid the blame for this at the feet of big-name national evangelists who have tolerated a mixture of truth and error—in association, cooperation, and so on. Although there may be a measure of truth to this assessment, I have discovered in recent years that even when rigid requirements for cooperation are established for citywide crusades, some of those preachers still can’t get along with each other. I don’t believe the problem is that people are no longer hungry for the truth. The real problem is that many of us are more concerned about building our own ministries and reputations than we are about building the church of Christ. We’re more concerned about making the mark for our denomination in our town than we are about making a mark for Jesus.

February 1984
Q: The trend in a lot of churches is to hold shorter evangelistic meetings such as Sunday through Wednesday, Friday through Sunday. Is that a good or bad trend?

A: I think it depends on what you want to accomplish. If you want to pump everybody up with some attendance-breaking reports and lots of decisions and not wear your people out, then it is probably good to hold short meetings. If you want to meet with God, the chances are it will take at least the first week for people to give God their undivided attention and to begin to respond in brokenness, humility, and repentance before Him. We generally schedule crusades for two full weeks. Many of our crusades have been extended into unscheduled additional weeks. One pastor of a large church said, “Del, my people would probably run me out of town if I suggested that we were going to have a two-week meeting. I want revival and we desperately need it, but can’t we do it in a week’s time?” This is like saying, “God, give me patience, but hurry up! Make me a spiritual giant instantaneously, with no price, no cost, no time involved.” But God will only meet with us on His terms.

Q: A lot of pastors complain that even when an evangelist holds a week or two of successful meetings, one year later their churches are in desperate need of the same thing again. How do you answer that type of criticism?

A: As long as we are housed in this earthly tabernacle of flesh that is constantly pulling to have its own appetites fulfilled and pampered, warring against the soul to do wrong, we are going to need times of spiritual refreshment. Acts 3:19 says that “times of refreshing” come from the presence of the Lord. Notice that it doesn’t say “a time”—it says “times” of refreshing, times of revival. A lot of what is called revival doesn’t last because it really isn’t revival; it isn’t of God. It is man-made manipulation. But when God obviously transforms lives in revival, why is there a falling away? I believe that what it takes to send revival is exactly what it takes to keep revival and what it takes to continue revival. After we spend six weeks in cottage prayer meetings pleading with God for revival in our church, and God pours out His Spirit, it’s easy to relax and stop praying, except on Wednesday nights. Then we wonder why God isn’t moving anymore. Whatever God brings to the church in revival will only continue to the extent that His people continue in humility and obedience. We can blame the revival, the revivalist, the team, or start questioning whether it was really of God, but in reality we are to blame because we haven’t continued in the things that brought it.

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**God is bringing churches, slowly but surely, to the point of genuine revival.**

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Q: After 14 years in traveling all over the country, do you feel we are any closer to a national revival than we were 14 years ago?

A: i would say the most revolutionary change, and the most needed change, has been in me. It hasn’t been in the preaching, it hasn’t been in the churches, it has been in me. And I think that is what real revival does. It gets you to stop focusing on everybody else’s relationship to God before you have dealt honestly and seriously with your own condition before God.

My priorities were all out of whack. I thought my job was to reach America, and God brought me to the realization that if I couldn’t even handle myself, how could I handle the nation? My philosophy was to reach out and be a success, and God showed me that I needed to be a servant and lay my life down for the men whom I served. I used to have a philosophy that it was my responsibility to add every radio station and team member I could and expand as fast as I could to capture America. God has shown me that if I take care of the depth of my personal relationship with Him, He will take care of the breadth of my ministry. I committed myself to start developing within my life the reality of what I was preaching from God’s Word so I could say with Paul, “Follow me,” instead of, “Follow my outlines and my cassette tapes,” and so on.

I think God has been producing within me a deeper understanding of genuine repentance and brokenness. I am amazed that God would have anything to do with me and overwhelmed that He would let me be a part of His family, let alone share with anybody else what He is doing in my life and showing me from His Word. He has also intensified my commitment to the authority of Scripture. I began to realize that I was preaching and parroting a lot of good things that good men had said but that I could not substantiate in the Word of God. And so I said, “Lord, if Your Spirit will tutor me, I will throw out everything I have ever learned and go straight to the Word as my final source of authority. By Your grace, even if it radically changes everything I have ever preached or any of my preconceived notions, I’m willing to let Your Word change me.” That liberated me and started a whole new process of spiritual growth.
Missions and the Local Church

by Richard Lewis

Fundamentalism is cemented in the belief that all activity for the cause of Christ should be directed through the local assembly of believers. Though we acknowledge that the body of Christ is comprised of all born-again believers, regardless of denominational affiliation, according to Scripture we maintain that God does His work through the local church.

A local assembly sent forth the first missionaries, Paul and Barnabas (Acts 13:1-3). To that same local assembly those missionaries made their report on the work accomplished (Acts 14:7-28).

In contrast, many present-day denominations and organizations operate almost totally outside the local church. The missionaries are sent not by a local body of believers but by a board or association. The work performed by those missionaries may be educational, agricultural, medical, or church-related. The mission philosophy of many of these groups is evangelism by subsidy—meaning financial subsidy for national works for the opportunity to present the gospel.

The national churches associated with this mission philosophy operate freely outside the local church concept. The national Christians feel little responsibility in purchasing their own church property, building their own buildings, or paying their pastors’ salaries. All of these needs are provided by outside sources.

This mission philosophy is very appealing. Governments like this subsidy program. Free aid develops countries. In some Third World countries, missionaries are allowed in only if they provide aid. Missionaries working in Bangladesh, North Yemen, Somalia, and the Sudan testify that they were not allowed to preach or give witness of their faith in Christ. These countries did not want the gospel, just aid. Countries that do allow gospel preaching look with disdain on mission groups who do not provide some type of social program.

Missionaries like the subsidy program, for they are accepted by everybody and hated by nobody. In areas of high harvest yield, like Kenya, a missionary can buy his land, his church, his pastor, and his converts, with little or no effort. The reports of revival from these groups are staggering.

Organizations back home like the subsidy program. They know Americans are responsive in giving their excess dollars to the less fortunate in other parts of the world. There are certainly enough agencies from which to choose. One survey reports 714 North American Protestant mission agencies with a total income of over $1.1 billion. Less than 30 percent of those agencies are involved in establishing churches.

Because of the attractiveness of evangelism by subsidy, many fine Christians are drawn into this method. Christians committed to world evangelism should analyze their program and giving by asking these questions:

Does the parachurch organization we support work to help or hurt the local church principle?

Many fine groups are dedicated to helping the needs of suffering mankind. Christians have a moral obligation to help truly needy people (1 John 3:17). Certain organizations, such as Food for the Hungry, have programs designed to help local assemblies. Their “food for work” projects provide the type of aid that gives the national people a sense of dignity rather than cultivating in them a beggar mentality. Parachurch programs should be analyzed in light of how they will affect the community and local church. If aid is little more than a handout, it will just produce “rice Christians.”

Are the missionaries we support committed to the biblical principle of the local church? If a missionary’s objective in life is just reporting big results to his supporters back home, then the biblical principle will suffer. “ Winning the lost at any cost” should not be a slogan taken too literally. There should be a limit to certain methods. The report of conversions in Kenya is impressive, yet finding one church in a thousand that supports its pastor from the offerings of that local assembly would be difficult. The ministry of a missionary is not just evangelism but also “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28:20). This means teaching the national church how to support its pastor and become indigenous.

Do our gifts help to propagate the local assembly concept? Sending money to build a church in a foreign country can produce a gratifying feeling among American church members, but erecting churches, without commitment of the nationals to do their part, builds monuments, not people.

These issues are difficult to deal with, but another trademark of the Fundamentalist is his willingness to deal with tough issues. The establishing of local indigenous national churches is a slow, tedious program. But Fundamentalist Christians have no other choice, for after all, it is biblical.
From a small beginning in rural Kentucky there came a spiritual giant who recaptured Satan's territory for more than six decades. Mordecai Fowler Ham, Jr., was born in Allen County, Kentucky, on April 2, 1877. During his 84 years, nearly one million souls received Christ under his hard-hitting preaching. He fought hard for Christ against the Devil. He opposed modernistic theology, biological evolution, religious formalism, and liquor, while standing firmly for God, morality, and America.

As an evangelist he worked with local churches and became an intimate of such Fundamentalist leaders as Lee Scarborough, J. Frank Norris, W.B. Riley, A.C. Gaebelein, C.I. Scofield, and Gypsy Smith. In 1935 Bob Jones College, then in Cleveland, Tennessee, conferred upon Ham the honorary doctor of divinity degree, and the following year he was elected president of the Interdenominational Association of Christian Evangelists as they met in Winona Lake, Indiana.

Mordecai Ham had a rich spiritual heritage. He was born into a godly family that included four sisters and a brother. His grandfather, Mordecai, after whom the lad was named, was saved and baptized at age 22 and ordained to the gospel ministry five years later. The elder Mordecai sometimes pastored as many as six Kentucky congregations at one time. He concurrently served
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My call to the ministry was a continuous and irresistible urge.

Mordecai learned two things—hard work and spiritual sensitivity. He later noted that his father "believed in the dignity of work, and he didn't believe in labor-saving devices." Every evening in the Ham home was a spiritual revival.

Mordecai felt called to preach at age 9 and was a Sunday school superintendent by age 16. After attending Ogden College in Bowling Green, where he also studied law, Mordecai took a salesman's job with a grocery firm because he was too young to take the bar exam. Ham recalled, "My call to the ministry was a continuous and irresistible urge. I fought it when I started out as a salesman, because my God had not completely whipped me, and I did not want to be a preacher until I had first made a fortune."

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local church. He fell in love with the dentist's 14-year-old daughter and they were married the following June. Mordecai was 31. Annie Laurie Ham was a perfect helpmeet for Mordecai, and they lived to celebrate beyond their 50th wedding anniversary. Ham declared that Annie Laurie was "the greatest blessing" God ever gave him. Between 1912 and 1924 God blessed their home with three lovely daughters.

As Ham's meetings grew in size, he could no longer meet in most church auditoriums. Instead, his practice was to erect a large wooden tabernacle to seat about 5,000 people. Sometimes a tent was used. He often spoke five or six times each day, including a large noon meeting and gatherings in area factories. Extension services were held in local churches to aid their soulwinning efforts. Church rallies were held to receive the new members into local fellowships.

In 1911 Ham led revivals in Texas, including meetings at First Baptist of Fort Worth. Pastor J. Frank Norris offered him the opportunity to share his pastorate there, with each spending 50 percent of his time in evangelism. Ham refused the offer. In 1912 in Waco, Texas, Mordecai met and secured the services of an associate, W.J. Ramsey, a good songleader. They were considered a great team as they served together for the next third of a century.

The burning issue in America in the early 1900s was the prohibition of alcoholic beverages. In city after city where Ham visited, citizens voted to outlaw liquor. In fact, from 1907 to 1915 no less than nine Southern states voted to go dry—largely as a result of the Ham revivals. The Prohibition Amendment was finally adopted in January 1920. After that, many sought its repeal. The Presidential elections of 1924, 1928, and 1932 were dominated by this issue. The Democrats were against prohibition. As a result, Ham campaigned vigorously for Hoover and against Al Smith in 1928. Smith was a Catholic, and some of his followers disliked Ham so much that they dubbed Mordecai Ham, J. Frank Norris, and two others the "Four Horsemen of the Devil."

Earlier in Texas, the governor was being impeached. Ham advertised that he would speak on "Governor in the Middle of a Fix," since he was in San Antonio. The governor sent four well-paid stenographers to copy down the message. True to his word—but to the governor's dismay—Mordecai preached on the troubles of Pontius Pilate.

Mordecai Ham's only interlude from regular revival and evangelistic meetings came between 1927 and 1929, when he pastored the First Baptist Church of Oklahoma City. During the previous year a campaign in that city had netted nearly 1,000 church additions. The church boasted a 5,000-seat tabernacle, and it was not unusual to have 2,000 in prayer meeting. However, Mordecai's love for evangelism soon drew him back into the field.

As Ham reentered evangelism, liquor was still a hot topic until the Prohibition Amendment was repealed in 1933. Ham used to say that "Liquor is a lecher that feeds on communities which tolerate it." He was violently opposed by the liquor forces. Several times he was physically accosted and his family was under constant threat. Frequently police had to protect him from angry drunken mobs, but he resolutely stood for righteousness.

The 1920s and 1930s were also times when atheists, evolutionists, and modernistic theologians made broadside attacks upon Fundamentalism's men and their message. Ham was not immune from such, but met each challenge head on. He loved a fight, but sought God's help in every battle. Mordecai was slandered, ridiculed, made the brunt of jokes and cartoons, but continued to win the lost everywhere he went. One pastor in Burlington, North Carolina, wrote, "Ham is as scriptural as Moody, as logical as Torrey, as winsomely persuasive as instrumental in seeing that literally hundreds of young men received Bible training after being called to the ministry. He often took offerings to train young ministers. Mordecai Ham had a profound effect on his generation.

Between his pastorate and 1941 he held 61 extended meetings in 15 states and saw 168,550 souls won and backslidden reclaimed for Christ. After ending the tent and tabernacle campaigns in 1941, Mordecai and Annie Laurie devoted their efforts to an extensive radio outreach and short speaking engagements.

Mordecai Ham continued his ministry until the Lord called him home in December 1961. As a giant Fundamentalist leader and a true champion for Christ, Mordecai Ham certainly was a thorn in the Devil's side.

** Mordecai was slandered, ridiculed, made the brunt of jokes and cartoons, but continued to win the lost everywhere he went. **

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**The greatest thing about him is he is a soulwinner.**

---

_Gypsy Smith, Sr., and as graciously tender as [J. Wilbur] Chapman._

In November of 1934 during Ham's crusade in Charlotte, North Carolina, a 16-year-old youth was saved. His name—Billy Graham. Mordecai F. Ham was also

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"Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth?" (Mark 1:24).

One of the most astounding things the human mind has to contemplate is why men and women will not eagerly accept salvation so fully provided for them and so freely offered to them. Our Saviour Himself gives the answer to this perplexity. In John 3:17-27 we read: "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." All the reasons why men do not accept Christ Jesus are given in this Scripture.

The light is objectionable to the sinner because it arouses his sleeping conscience and destroys the Devil's peace into which he has been lulled and which furnishes his only comfort in sin. Many people remain away from revival meetings because they want to escape the pain of an awakened conscience. They love sin, and they cannot be happy in their sins with the light turned on them. In a meeting we held, years ago, in Beaumont, Texas, a millwright was converted and at once got busy among the 250 men he had working under him in erecting a big mill out in the pine woods. He took a Personal Worker's Manual with him out to camp, and when the men assembled for dinner and began lighting into their grub, he called a halt and told them that things were going to change. He then bowed his head and said grace. The men were dumbfounded, especially when he announced that they would have a prayer meeting that night in the big dining tent; this they did. Those who became conscious of sins they loved too well to give up soon quit their jobs, and the foreman, shortly thereafter, had all others converted.

During that same Beaumont meeting a physician came to me. He was in a maudlin condition, but inasmuch as I could not smell liquor on his breath, I concluded that he was drunk on some sort of dope. He said that he had visited a brother in a distant log camp, a year or more previously, while a revival was being conducted in the neighborhood. His brother had proposed that they attend, but he had said, "Oh, to blazes with the revival! Let us stay here and talk." He continued to say that the saddest part of it was that he was a member of a church, but his brother was not. A short time afterward his brother was shot and killed by a man he had discharged. The brother died unsaved, and a disturbed conscience was making life unbearable for this physician.

The moral for the Christian is this: never lose an opportunity for turning the light on sin; for the sinner the moral is: when the light is turned on and you see it, do not hesitate to come to the light and be saved.

The best way on earth to study human nature is to hold up Christ to your crowd and note how He affects them. Each man or woman can be judged by his or her attitude toward Christ. If their deeds are evil, they will shun His light.

Often I hear wives try to tell me that their unsaved husbands are good, clean, honorable men and that the only thing wrong with them is that they are not Christians. I know right then and there that their men have them fooled. If they were good, clean, honorable men, they would become Christians. They do not accept Christ because their deeds will not bear the light, and they are not willing to give them up.

Just three things induce people to reject Christ: love of gain, love of sinful pleasure, and the fear of man. These three impel...
Daniel fearing the ridicule of his young friends. You would not either if you had in you the elements of sure-enough manhood and womanhood.

The love of money sends many to hell. They just couldn't give up their unholy business, but would deliberately sell their souls for unclean money. Every person in the liquor business knows that it is a disreputable trade. No lodge will receive such a person as a member. He knows that he ostracizes himself and his family from public respect and will surely damn his soul in endless hell. What a fearful price to pay for worldly wealth.

At Belton, Texas, a man, whom I cornered, finally said, "Brother Ham, I'll be honest with you. The only reason I will not surrender my life to Christ is that I am buying cotton seed for the oil mill, and by the manner in which I handle the transactions, I make a lot of money. If I should become a Christian and live a consistent Christian life, I could not do some of the shady things I am doing and I would lose money. So it is a matter of dollars and cents with me."

That kind of gain never gives abiding satisfaction. Love of frivolous, fleeting, and transitory pleasures keeps many young people from accepting Christ. They sell their souls for a bauble.

Large numbers of timid, moral cowards go to hell because they dread what ungodly friends may say more than they dread the prospects of hell. In every revival meeting I have ever held, some lost their souls because they feared what somebody else might say about them, were they to make a decision for Christ.

Not a small number of young people are deterred from accepting Christ for fear companions will ridicule them. Imagine Daniel fearing the ridicule of his young friends! Daniel would pay no more attention to their ridicule than he would to the bark of a dog. You would not either if you that can do nobody any good and does harm to many; so we have determined to quit and we want Christ to help us stay quit." Such is what everyone needs at that stage of his life.

Whenever men and women sit down and give the matter of their salvation the calm consideration of reason, uninfluenced by the Devil, they will be bound to reach the same conclusion the aforementioned couple reached. Every sinner is morally insane. No other state of morality would tolerate sin. A drunk man once wandered into a sideshow at a circus and staggered up to a den of snakes. He said, "I'm a snake charmer; watch me." He opened the cage and took out a large snake. It buried its fangs in his hand, and in spite of all that could be done for him, he soon fell to the ground dead. They had in you the elements of sure-enough manhood and womanhood.

Whenever a person determines to give up sin and to become honest and clean, he wants Christ. In our meeting at Temple, Texas, a dancing teacher and his wife came to the service one morning and said, "My wife and I have decided that we are in the wrong business, a business it gradually fell to the ground. On going to investigate, the boy found that the eagle's prey was a vampire, which had fastened its teeth into its captor's throat and sucked out its lifeblood. Many a man and woman, with equal pride of fancied strength and security, soar aloft in the social realm, fastening on to a sin here and there until they find their moral lifeblood being gradually sucked away, and presently, the sin so joyously hugged to the bosom brings them down to earth never to rise again.

All sinners sell their souls fearfully cheap. Can you afford to be so foolish? Can you get the consent of your mind to make such a bad bargain? God's Word says that the game is in your own hands. He has, at fearful cost, made provision for your full salvation without other cost to you than your full and free acceptance of it. Can you afford to reject it for any reason?
BIBLE
STUDY

God's Super Bowl

Each January one of the most famous and widely viewed sports contests held in our part of the world takes place. It's called the Super Bowl. At this time, the top two professional football teams meet for a decisive play-off. In the Word of God we also have described for us a spiritual super bowl! The players are mentioned in Hebrews 11, and the action is recorded in Hebrews 12. Many believe Paul to be the author of Hebrews. This amazing apostle was many things. He was a missionary, a soulwinner, a pastor, a great theologian, a tentmaker. But in his spare time he also seemed to be a sports lover. Often in his writings, Paul uses sports as an analogy to get his point across. Here in Hebrews 12, the writer chooses the analogy of a footrace. This is what he says:

Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. 12:1-2).

Let's look at the meaning of these words. Great. We often feel (wrongly so) that we are all alone, as Elijah once did (1 Kings 19:10,14,18).

Cloud. This underlines the word great. The Greek here is not nephele, which refers to a detached and sharply outlined cloud, but nephos, speaking of a huge mass of clouds, covering the entire visible space of the heavens.

Witnesses. Who are those witnesses? They are not angels, for the Greek word is marturos, referring to one who has seen, heard, and performed something, usually while suffering at the time. It speaks of a well-qualified expert. The context strongly suggests that these witnesses are the faith heroes mentioned in chapter 11.

"Let us lay aside every weight" (12:1). Here the word is onkos and refers to a bulk or mass. The concern of the Greek runner was not simply whether something was immoral or moral, but rather how it would affect his race. Thus, the enemy of the best is often not the worst, but the good. Beset means "to surround, to cleverly encircle, to ambush." It speaks of a loosely fitting robe. Paul may have had in mind the sin of unbelief here, but it also refers to any sin the believer allows to upset him.

"Let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (12:1). Every believer has been entered in this race by God Himself. It is not just for pastors and missionaries. The usual word for race (dromos) is not used here, but rather the Greek word agon, from which we get our English word "agonize." This is a serious race. The pace of each runner is set by God. The object of the race is to please God and win rewards. Its goal is not heaven!

"Looking unto Jesus" (12:2). The phrase here speaks of a steadfast, intent, and continuous gaze. How easy it is to get our eyes off Him and look to the left or right. Perhaps to our left we see another runner behind us. It may be that a runner is far ahead of us on the right. This then can produce pride (as we view the runner on the left) and envy (as we see the runner on the right). Both are sin and cause us to slow down!

"The author and finisher of our faith" (12:2). Christ is both Founder and Finisher of the Christian faith. Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed founded three worldwide religious movements, but death finished Confucius, Buddha, and Mohammed.

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THE STIFLED SCRIPTURE

by Harold L. Willmington

God's Super Bowl

February 1984

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Think About It by Bob Larson

Record Grooves

Arthur Lintgen has the strange ability to "read" phonograph records. Holding the disc flat in front of him, he turns it slowly while gazing at the grooves. By detecting the spacing and contour that has been pressed into the vinyl, Lintgen correlates what he sees with his repertory of classical music. Compositions from Stockhausen to Beethoven have been deciphered by his watchful eye. He explains that soft passages look gray in the grooves while loud refrains have a silvery appearance. Reading record grooves is a remarkable feat. But even more amazing is the ability to read the motives of men. Only Jesus can do that. In the midst of all life's songs, He looks deeply into the grooves to see whether our music is intended to give Him glory. Other people might like our melody. But He will know if we are in tune by the grooves in our hearts.

Springtime

The old adage, "In the springtime a young man's fancy turns to thoughts of love," has gotten an endorsement from modern science. Seasonal light changes apparently affect the pituitary and pineal glands, causing a shift in hormone levels. Thus, the romantic surge felt by springtime lovers may be as much physiological as it is psychological. We ought to be grateful that God's love is not as capricious. The mercy and grace of the Lord knows no season, and His favor is not dependent on the whims of temperature and lighting conditions. He loves the whole world, and when it is springtime in the northern hemisphere, the gales of winter still buffet southern climes. So, no matter where you live or what the season may be, remember: God loves you—now! Don't wait for the springtime to return His love. The winter of sin may fatally freeze your soul before the warmth of spring days can thaw your heart for the Lord.

Flowers

Flowers are a thing of beauty and an expression of sentiment which may mean, "I love you," "Get well," or "My condolences." In keeping with the cynical spirit of our age, a new venture called Flowers of Extinction will deliver buds and petals guaranteed to be dead upon arrival. The offensive gift is designed as a way to get even with former bosses, jilting lovers, or whomever you would like to insult with revenge. It may sound like a clever retort, but it won't meet with Christ's approval. "Do good to them which hate you," Jesus said (Luke 6:27). Has someone wronged you? Do you feel bitter about the injustice of a friend? I have a suggestion. Instead of scheming for a way to return evil for evil, love your enemies and former friends. Why not send them flowers? Instead of Flowers of Extinction, make your peace offering a Bouquet of Distinction.

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FUNDAMENTALIST JOURNAL
The Minister's Library
by Cyril J. Barber
Baker Book House
Vol. 1, 1974 (fourth printing, 1981)
425pp., $17.95
224pp., $14.95

Reviewed by Paul R. Fink
Professor of Pastoral Ministry
Liberty Baptist College
Lynchburg, Virginia

As the title indicates, this is especially for pastors and Christian workers. The description on the dust cover says it all: "Essential for building and organizing an orderly and useful library." What the cover promises, the books deliver.

Volume 1 is set up in two parts: 1. How to Set Up Your Library, and 2. A Guide to Books for Your Library. Those who have been around for some time are aware of the need for pastors and Christian workers to organize the books and materials they collect. In the days since World War II there have been a number of suggestions for remedying this problem, from the simple single alphabet system to the more complicated systems such as Memory-O-Matic. In frustration, many pastors either arranged their books by color, order of purchase, size, or at random, trying to remember what was in them—or they simply gave up trying to organize the mess. The result was that most of the information in the minister's library was not used and remained inaccessible.

Barber has come to the minister's rescue by relying upon the time-tested Dewey Decimal System for the classification of the minister's books. Step by step Barber instructs the minister first in classifying his books and then in cataloging them. He recommends the purchase of library cards from the Library of Congress but also shows the minister what materials are needed, what information is necessary, and how information is to be placed on file cards should he elect to type his own, out of necessity or personal choice. The first part of the book concludes with a helpful Subject Guide to the Dewey Decimal Classification System.

In Part Two the books of general interest to ministers are classified into types (e.g., Bible Commentaries and General Reference Works, Old Testament, New Testament, Doctrinal Theology, etc.). The minister is then able to turn to the section in which he is interested and find each area further broken down into appropriate categories, with books listed alphabetically by author. The appropriate bibliographical data is given, together with a brief description of the contents and evaluation of the books. This information could be included on the contents section of the individual catalog card, if desired. Those works which the author regards as especially worthy of purchase are indicated with an asterisk (*). Books that espouse a viewpoint different from the Conservative, Evangelical viewpoint are marked with a dagger (†). Each category includes a number of other books helpful for a broader knowledge of the subject or worthy of purchase if the minister has additional funds available. Part Two of the book serves as a guide to what is available in a particular field, and as an evaluation of how the pastor might best spend his money.

Volume 2 is a follow-up to Barber's original 1974 publication. It follows the same format used in the earlier volume so the reader does not need to acquaint himself with either a new system of nomenclature or evaluation. One helpful improvement in the present volume is the attractively laid out table of contents which readily lends itself to rapidly locating books that have been written on a particular subject of interest. Volume 2 which collects the information that has appeared in supplements is helpful in its own right, but someone just beginning the process of organizing his library will find it necessary to acquire Volume 1 as well.

These books are a must for the minister who is serious about his library. Barber has provided tools that will help the pastor organize his library in a useful, efficient way and will guide him in his reading and future acquisitions.
IN RESPONSE


I am told that “It is better to be criticized than ignored.” Recently a well-known author informed me that “The best kind of publicity for selling books is bad publicity.” If both of these statements are true, Robert Evans's review in the Fundamentalist Journal has left me better off and well publicized! I assume that his critique is motivated by a desire to clarify truth and edify the church. My comments have the same motivation and we can both be thankful to the Fundamentalist Journal for providing the forum for discussion.

Mr. Evans began his critique with the suggestion that Decision Making and the Will of God is a “shortcut” to God's will. In truth, it is an honest effort to determine what Scripture actually teaches on the subject. Our conclusions are set forth in four main principles:

1. In those areas specifically addressed by the Bible, the revealed commands and principles of God (His moral will) are to be obeyed.

2. In areas where the Bible gives no command or principle (nonmoral decisions), believers are free to choose their course of action. Any decision made within the moral will of God is acceptable to God.

3. In nonmoral decisions the objective of the Christian is to make wise decisions on the basis of spiritual expediency.

4. In all decisions, the believer should humbly submit in advance to the outworking of God's sovereign will as it touches each decision.

From the very beginning, God instituted the ideas of His moral will (Principle 1) and an area of freedom (Principle 2) when he said to Adam, “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.” Where the commands of God end, a God-given area of freedom exists. This is not only taught by the first command (Gen. 2:16-17), but stated or implied in many passages (cf. 1 Cor. 7:19,38; 6:8; 10:25-27). This area of freedom is always within the moral will of God.

Thus, to please God, the believer must answer two questions for each decision: “What is moral?” and “What is wise?” It is the Spirit who personally ministers these answers to the dependent believer through illumination of Scripture and learned wisdom.

The criteria of wisdom and spiritual expediency (Principle 3) characterized the decisions of the apostles themselves: “We thought it good” (1 Thess. 3:1).

Evans is free to disagree with these four principles, but he goes too far when he calls them “spiritual Russian roulette,” and “the trial and error method.” Further, Evans incorrectly describes how a proponent of the Wisdom View would select a church—“He does not need to ask God for a decision, so he just chooses one.” He does not “just choose one.” The Wisdom View requires moral guidance, wisdom guidance, and trust in God's secret guidance as taught by the four principles above.

For such a decision, God would guide by His written moral will that describes the qualities of a healthy church. God's wisdom would be provided to choose a church where one's family could best be edified and find avenues for service. Beyond this, God would be secretly guiding by His sovereign will to make “all things work together for good” (Rom. 8:28).

Finally, the book contends that if somehow God's promised normative guidance is not sufficient, God can break in with direct revelation. He did this on rare occasions in both the Old Testament (e.g., Abraham's call) and in the New Testament (e.g., Paul's call, Macedonian vision, etc.). But these were revelations—not hunches or vague impressions. They were authoritative because God's revelation—whether written or oral—is always authoritative.

The book calls this last possibility “special guidance” (p.230). It does not deny its existence (p.231). It rather affirms that God will provide whatever guidance we truly need (p.254). So Evans is not entirely correct when he says, “Friesen holds that, while God spoke audibly to Bible characters, He does not do that today.”

The examples Evans uses to prove an individual will of God are actually instances of “special guidance.” Direct guidance given by revelation to Elijah, for instance, is not promised for us—though it is possible. The Canon is closed, but special guidance by revelation is not impossible. Indeed, there are yet two prophets to come (Rev. 11:3-13).

The Traditional View described in the book appears to be only about 150 years old, beginning with the Keswick movement in England. On the other hand, the Wisdom View appears to be present throughout church history. It was practiced by Calvin and probably Augustine. Of course, the Wisdom View is not correct just because it is older. But its age and scriptural foundations provide good reasons for a fair consideration by any thinking believer today.

So, thank you, Mr. Evans, for not ignoring Decision Making. I hope the readers of the Fundamentalist Journal will show the same thoughtfulness.

A Feast of Families

by Virginia Stem Owens

Zondervan, 1983, 143pp., $9.95

A Feast of Families is about families and faith, and of how the two are intertwined. Mrs. Owens begins with several chapters describing her thoughts and feelings as an adult child returning home to visit "mother, father, grandparents, two
generations of aunts and uncles, and an assortment of cousins." The joy and reverence of her pilgrimage are refreshing. The precision and tenderness with which she sketches the "monuments" who are her ancestors cause a longing to truly know those from whom we have come.

The author continues her scrutiny of families and faith by examining the issues of generational sin, the primacy of mothers in our lives, the apostasy of the children of believers, the crisis and crucible of parenthood, the inadequacy of biblical family models, and the significance and implications of God as our Father.

The promise of a feast ("something partaken of or shared in with delight; a religious festival of rejoicing") is never completely fulfilled, however. If her vision is clear, then it is not always clearly expressed. Many of her conclusions are still questions and not answers. We are left with a sense of uncertainty and even sadness over what has been said. Perhaps the gloom was not intended, but neither is celebration entirely achieved. This book will certainly have an audience, but its style and tone often make it difficult reading. Nevertheless, the book will achieve an important goal if it convinces readers of the importance of family bonds in God's economy in general and in the communication of faith in particular.

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Bible Panorama
by Terry Hall

Church or Christian school teachers, pastors, Bible students, parents—this is a resource book to get excited about. Subtitled "A wide-angle view of the Scriptures—to give you the big picture," Bible Panorama fulfills its promise. Described by the publisher as an "audiovisual pro, Bible scholar, and Christian education expert," author Terry Hall furnishes the reader/student with 268 mini-charts and maps, more than 50 charts, and half a dozen songs.

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Practical Steps
continued from page 33

my voice, and open the door. I will come in [Rev. 3:20]."

He replies yes and you say, "Bow your head with me. While we both have our heads bowed and our eyes closed, pray this after me if you really mean it. Dear God [pause for him to pray], I know I have sinned, too. [Pause] I'm sorry for all my sins. [Pause] Lord Jesus, I accept you as my Saviour. [Pause] Come into my heart and save me right now. [Pause] Change my life and help me live for you. [Pause] In Jesus' name, amen."

Ask, "Did you pray that from your heart and mean it? Jesus said, 'I stand at the door, and knock: if any man . . . open the door, I will come in.' Where is the Lord Jesus right now?" If he answers with assurance, "In my heart," rejoice with him.

Indoctrination

The baby is only the beginning. It takes years for him to grow up. A newborn baby needs the right kind of atmosphere, food, and care to start off on the right foot. So does a newborn babe in Christ.

Assurance. It is most important to see that he has a genuine assurance of salvation based on the Word of God.

Confession. Like the cry of a newborn baby, the first thing a new Christian should do is confess Christ openly as Saviour. If someone is with you, get him to say to that person, "I have accepted the Lord Jesus, too, and I know I'm saved." It is strengthening for the new Christian to look someone in the eye and in his own words confess Christ as his Saviour. Then he should confess Christ publicly in a church (Matt. 10:32).

Baptism. Baptism is like putting on the wedding ring. It identifies what you have done. Of course, it does not save you any more than a ring marries you. Baptism is important as a first step of obedience, though. Brand new converts should be told of its importance and urged to take this step very soon.

Bible reading and prayer. Every new Christian should desire the Word of God as a newborn baby desires milk (1 Peter 2:2). This is important to stress.

Confession of sin. What happens when a Christian sins? A new convert needs to know how to confess sin and get back into fellowship with the Lord.

Incubation. Joining a church will no more make one a Christian than joining the Elks will make you an elk, but it is important. There are so many things new Christians need to know, but like a newborn baby, they can only take a little milk at a time. You must have a good follow-up program, especially in these first and most critical days.
How Do I Find and Use My Spiritual Gifts?

There seems to be a great deal of confusion surrounding the doctrine of spiritual gifts. Without doubt far more heat than light has been shed on this subject, if recent literature tells us anything. Here are four general principles that may not answer all the questions but should serve as guidelines to help the individual discern how he ought to approach the issue in his own life.

First, spiritual gifts are God's gifts to God's people, for God's glory (1 Cor. 12:3; Eph. 4:7-13). Genuine spiritual gifts are never legitimately exercised to blaspheme God or to violate His Word. God controls both the giving and the exercise of them. Many so-called Christian feminist writers have asked, "If God gives a woman the gift of pastor-teacher, should she not cultivate and exercise it?" The problem here is not so much in the question as in the asking of it. Scripture clearly teaches that women are not to serve as pastors (1 Tim. 2:12; 3:1-7). For God to give such a gift would entail a contradiction of His Word. This applies equally to men who fail to measure up to the standards for pastors given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. I sincerely doubt that a divorced pastor still has the gift—if he ever had it.

Second, some spiritual gifts are applicable only to the first-century church. Few question that the gift of apostle was temporary and given specifically for laying the foundation of the church (1 Cor. 3:10, Eph. 2:20). Yet many fail to recognize that the "sign gifts" were given only in conjunction with that of the apostles (Heb. 2:3-4). In other words, they are given exclusively to validate and enhance the apostolic ministry and they have passed away with the apostles. The New Testament seems to single out the miraculous and the revelatory gifts in this category (1 Cor. 13:8-12; Heb. 2:3-4). To seek such a gift is like asking God to place you back in a previous time. Obviously, He cannot be expected to do this.

Third, spiritual gifts are not given for personal edification, but for the benefit of the body of Christ and the propagation of the gospel (1 Cor. 12:6-7; 14:4,24-25). When gifts are used for personal enhancement they no longer have a legitimate function, and such behavior receives the censure of the New Testament. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians 14:4 to explain what was happening in Corinth. However, he never commends or condones this practice. Indeed, the remainder of the chapter rebukes it. This eliminates the so-called "private" use of some gifts, often asserted today to justify the exercise of tongues.

Fourth, spiritual gifts are given sovereignly in relation to the individual's placement in the body. There is far less emphasis in the New Testament upon being able to pin a label on our gifts than upon the need to exercise ourselves in love toward one another. Indeed in such actions we will not only exercise our gifts but we will be a gift to the church.

This is the whole thrust of 1 Corinthians 12 to 14. If you have been placed of God into a position of leadership . . . lead. If you are given great wealth . . . give. If you are given a Sunday school class . . . teach. Whatever God has placed in your hands—a rod or a shovel, a desk or a dishpan—use it for His glory and the edification of the church. This is your gift and God's gift to the church. Indeed, I am inclined to think that it would be far more helpful to ask, "Where can I serve?" than "What is my gift?"

Is there a Bible text or scriptural problem that has particularly perplexed you? We invite you to "Ask the Prof," c/o Fundamentalist Journal, Lynchburg, Virginia 24514. Questions selected for publication will be answered by a specialist from the Liberty Baptist College faculty.

Answered by Daniel R. Mitchell, Professor of Theological Studies at Liberty Baptist College and Seminary, Lynchburg, Virginia. He holds a Th.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary.

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In Liberty, Maine—
A Man Is Used of God

When South Liberty Baptist Church dedicated its new building October 2, 1983, some 300 people-half the township's population—crowded into the auditorium.

Nate Garnett came to his pastorate at age 40, after a seven-year saga beginning in 1972. Then 33 and the father of seven children, he mortgaged his farm to attend Liberty Baptist College. By the time he graduated, two of his sons and his wife had also been students at the college.

He came to South Liberty to pastor a country crossroads congregation of about 25 after graduating in 1978. God honored Garnett's ministry, and within six months regular Sunday services saw 130 to 140 persons fill the turn-of-the-century meetinghouse to its doors. In keeping with the “liberty” theme shared by both his alma mater and his field of service, Garnett has chosen the Christian Liberty Academy Satellite School system, from Prospect Heights, Illinois, to use in the church's new Christian day school program.

South Liberty is a rural community squeezed between the hills in a back corner of coastal Waldo County, a region designated in Time magazine just a decade ago as one of the six most “unchurched” counties in America. But the folks came to hear Nate's preaching. Loggers, lobstermen from the nearby coast, carpenters, mill hands, and shipyard welders from larger towns a few miles distant brought their families and neighbors, and the church grew until it could hold no more.

Three years ago the congregation bought 20 acres of worn-out, stony pasture across the road from the old meetinghouse. Within weeks of instituting a building program, 75 percent of the ma-

Eric Wiggin, former instructor at Piedmont Bible College, is a journalist in Rockland, Maine.
A ction for Life Symposium agenda is dedicated to providing Christians with effective solutions in reversing the various forms of dehumanization that plague our nation. The purveyors of lies and propaganda must be challenged directly by the unchanging truth of Christianity. The Symposium will teach you how to effectively save babies from their executions. Everything from counseling mothers to picketing the responsibility will be covered. In short, we are seeking to help Christians help those who cannot help themselves.

The paper war is over.

WHAT is it?

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WHEN will it take place?

May 10, 11, 12, 1984, Thursday through Saturday. Delegates are encouraged to come early and enjoy the surrounding beauty of Ft. Lauderdale. Saturday morning 10 a.m. there will be a rally-march from Westminster Academy. The march will be headed by Dr. Francis A. Schaeffer and sponsored by Debate; Omega.

WHERE will it be held?

Action for Life, a Symposium Agenda will take place at the beautiful Bahia Mar Hotel and Yachting Center on the ocean of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. All reservations must be made directly. A special room rate of $50 per evening has been granted to all Convention guests. You'll enjoy delightful dining, swimming and shopping right on the premises.

For more information call collect 1-305-764-2233, ext. 5032. Toll free 1-800-241-5500.

A limited number of hotel rooms has been reserved so it is imperative to register immediately.

REGISTRATION FORM

☐ Adult registration - $65. total seminar fee.
☐ Married couples - $95. total seminar fee.
☐ Full-time students and senior citizens - $45. total seminar fee.
☐ Saturday morning action prayer meeting & breakfast - $10.
☐ Activist Awards Banquet Dinner $25. ☐ I cannot attend but here is my contribution enclosed
☐ Total for Symposium, Breakfast & Dinner - $100. - Single -

Make checks payable and mail to DEBATE FOUNDATION, P. O. Box 11796, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida 33306

This is an advance registration form. Prices for Symposium will increase 20% effective Jan. 15, 1984.

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
City, State, Zip __________
Home & work phone __________

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL ____________________________
Jean Emond (305) 486-4837
Survival Fund a Success

Last December the Old-Time Gospel Hour established the Survival Fund to raise needed monies to finish the year with all television affiliates still a part of the Old-Time Gospel Hour network. Dr. Falwell has announced that the immediate need has been met and the Old-Time Gospel Hour entered the new year confident of God's continued provision.

This financial reprieve will allow the television and radio ministry to move forward with renewed optimism that the hand of the Lord is upon the ministry and is directing its steps.

Senior Saints Weekend

Two Senior Saints Weekend activities are scheduled for 1984, April 6-8 and October 5-7. Each weekend will include messages by Dr. Falwell, music by Don Norman and Robbie Hiner, a tour of the ministry facilities, and a banquet. A Senior Saints choir will also provide music. Other activities will include Bible contests, a talent show, a seminar on how to organize a senior adult ministry, and a display area featuring ideas for ministering to the senior adults.

October 5-7, Ed Hindson will be the Bible teacher, and Mack Evans will be featured in concert.

Church Fellowship Elects New Officers

Liberty Baptist Fellowship for Church Planting recently announced the election of its 1984 officers. LBFCP is dedicated to helping assist Liberty alumni, and alumni from other Fundamentalist schools, plant Fundamentalt, Bible-believing churches across America. To date, nearly 700 men and women from Liberty Baptist schools have started or assumed churches, with many attributing their success, in part, to the financial support of Liberty Baptist Fellowship for Church Planting.

Liberty Baptist Fellowship for Church Planting is not a competitive movement with the Baptist Bible Fellowship.
ESPN Honors DeMoss

There are always some outstanding yet unrecognized athletes in every area of sports. For this reason, ESPN has established “The Unsung Hero Award.” Liberty Baptist College senior Mark DeMoss recently received this honor for his kicking ability on the Flames football team. DeMoss has played football all four years, and his kicking ability allowed him to set several LBC records including all-time scorer with 185 points.

In his career with the Flames DeMoss has successfully hit 31 out of 49 field goal attempts and a phenomenal 92 out of 93 point-after attempts. Each week ESPN receives hundreds of recommendations from all over the country. They choose the one they feel is the most successful yet least recognized.

Don Garlock, the team’s chaplain, heard about the award and immediately sent in a recommendation for DeMoss. ESPN asked for verification of DeMoss’s statistics and then informed Garlock that he had been selected.

DeMoss was honored on ESPN’s Weekend Sports Center with national cable television recognition November 19. He and Garlock received T-shirts and Timex watches.

DeMoss has had a very successful season with the Flames. The question is, Will he go professional? As of now no one can say, Garlock feels that he has the potential, and DeMoss’s record speaks for itself.

—Tim Brockway

Basketball Provides Platform for Gospel

Head basketball coach Jeff Meyer is the man in the spotlight as the 1983-84 season moves forward. In his third season with Liberty Baptist College, Meyer has led the team to 38 victories, a district championship, and the National Team Sportsmanship Award.

This year the Flames basketball team moved from NAIA to NCAA Division II and will play against teams in the Mason-Dixon Conference. The coach is very optimistic about this year’s team. “We’re looking forward to another exciting season here at Liberty. We want to play hard and together for the people who support us,” he said.

Meyer received an offer to become the head coach in 1981, which he promptly accepted. Under the new coach the Flames were able to improve their record to 15-11 for the 1981 season and to a 23-9 record and a division championship last season.

Coach Meyer believes that having a good Christian testimony is as important as winning ball games. Last season the team won what Meyer called “the highest honor ever received by the basketball team.” It was the National Team Sportsmanship Award.

Coach Meyer also believes that basketball can be a means of furthering the gospel. “Basketball provides a platform to reach people for Christ; through it we could reach people who would never be reached in church,” he commented.

—Tim Brockway

Foreign Exposure Campaign to Mexico City

During the 1983 Thanksgiving break at Liberty Baptist College, 14 students and two missions staff members boarded a Pan Am flight for Mexico City—the fastest-growing city in the world. They experienced the sights, sounds, and lifestyles of this fascinating city. They had opportunity to become personally acquainted with radiant Mexican Christians and missionaries who have a vision of God’s love for Mexico.

The hosts for this group were Baptist Bible Fellowship missionaries Dick and Linda Redding, who have been in Mexico City for five years. They shared their time, experience, and insights on life in the mission field of Mexico.

The students visited the Teotihuacan Pyramids, Constitution Square, and other historic places.

One of the most special events was their visit to a Christian orphanage called Ninos de Mexico. Here the students saw how God uses a small team of North American missionaries to raise and minister to 33 children.

The last night of the campaign the students had the privilege of interacting with several missionaries in an open forum. Several students expressed a desire and interest to work and minister among Latin American people.

The total ministry of the Foreign Exposure Program at Liberty Baptist College revolves around a single purpose: to fulfill Christ’s Great Commission by helping Christians answer the question, “Where do I fit into God’s plan to evangelize the world?”

LBFCP continued
Frankland, Ball Praise Maine Christian Schools Decision

"To God be the glory," remarked Pastor Herman C. "Buddy" Frankland when he learned that the Bangor, Maine, U.S. District Court had ruled on December 20 in favor of his church school, effectively exempting some 60 Maine Christian schools with about 3,000 students from state control. "All we did was believe God, stand on conviction, and God did the rest," Frankland added. He praised constitutional lawyer William B. Ball for his "thoroughness, dedication, and compassion" in fighting the case, which Frankland says "more or less wrapped a constitutional fence about the schools and their parents."

Though plaintiffs in the case were 21 Christian schools, 17 of them members of Frankland's Maine Association of Christian Schools, Frankland and Ball both feel, and Judge Conrad K. Cyr's ruling seems definitely to agree, that all church-sponsored schools in Maine are protected by the 83-page decision.

Ball sees favorable implications for home schools in this, since parental rights based on the freedoms of speech and religion guaranteed in the First Amendment are alluded to frequently in the opinion. Ball also found Cyr's judgment to be "a very powerful lesson for other states" such as Nebraska where seven fathers have been in jail since November 23 for sending their youngsters to Pastor Everett Sileven's Faith Christian School, Louisville. Ball said, "This decision has many references to the First Amendment, to freedom of expression, to prior restraints, and to religious liberty... that would be very useful in other states." State education authorities, noted Ball, must be very careful not to make up any law not "spelled out crystal clear" by their legislatures.

Ball may get to use the Maine decision as part of his argument in a Lincoln, Nebraska, case that may be heard before the Nebraska Supreme Court this spring. On December 20, coinciding with the Maine ruling, a Nebraska Supreme Court judge recommended that the court give a full trial to the case that Ball represents for Carl Godwin of Park West Christian School. Ball says, though, that the court could yet decide not to hear his case.

Cyr's ruling holds that Maine statutes were intended by the state legislature to regulate public schools only. In fact, the core of his decision is that the Maine Department of Education and Cultural Services had attempted to "arrogate to the Commissioner (of Education) the powers and responsibilities entrusted by the legislature to local public school authorities."

These "powers," Cyr wrote, are found in the "enforcement of truancy laws" that require parents of a child, aged 7-17, not in public school to give evidence that the child is receiving "equivalent instruction" at home or in a private school.

Maine Deputy Attorney General Rufus Brown, who argued the state's case in the eight-day trial (February 21-March 2, 1983), feels that since the ruling in favor of the Christian schools "was decided on statutory grounds" it is "narrow," and that its applications for other states are "absolutely none."

Ball takes strong issue with Brown's reasoning. He cited Cyr's ruling that "certainly subjecting the parents of children attending church schools to truancy actions... would have a significant effect on the schools, thereby affording the state substantial de facto control of the church schools." Ball noted that the quote from the judge's ruling is saying that a "whole-sale prosecution" of parents "would certainly raise First Amendment questions." He further noted that Cyr himself cited the Constitution as a caution against truancy action, and that fact gave the ruling weight for other states also.

Pastor Frankland said in an early January interview that the Maine Association of Christian Schools had heard no word whether the state intends to appeal, and he noted that he would be shocked if the department does not walk very cautiously on such matters. State education bureaucrats say that no legislative action is planned this year, and officials will not comment whether they plan a court appeal.

Frankland recounted several steps that MACS has taken over a period of nearly five years to find a point of co-existing with the department, and he noted that the Maine Department of Education has rebuffed every one of them. Two stand out. In March 1980 MACS entered a bill in state legislature to exempt private schools from state control. Though some 3,000 supporters came for a legislative hearing, the liberal-controlled Maine legislature rejected the measure on advice of the education commissioner.

In May 1980, Ball, newly hired as MACS counsel, wrote Maine Attorney General Richard Cohen for an opinion on whether Maine education law might not apply to public schools only. Cohen did not respond, says Frankland. Later, on the witness stand in court, Maine Commissioner of Education Harold Raynolds, Jr., admitted that he also had not replied to several of Ball's letters in 1980-81 on the same issue. Raynolds is now Alaska education commissioner.

The Maine suit is evidently unique in that it took place in federal court, giving Cyr's ruling status with courts across the nation. Further, it was initiated by the Christian schools in October 1980. Rather than await prosecution, MACS sued the department when state officials warned nine new schools to disband or "face legal action."

—Eric E. Wiggin
Bangor, Maine
For nearly seven years the state of Nebraska has struggled to find a tactic, any tactic, to shut down the unapproved Faith Christian School in Louisville, Nebraska.

The state has padlocked the church, thrown its pastor in jail, bodily removed 85 ministers from its sanctuary, physically occupied the building with guards, sent seven fathers to jail, and forced seven mothers to flee the state as fugitives with their children. Yet, Everett Sileven, school administrator and pastor at Faith Baptist Church which houses the school, has remained unshakably determined to fight state approval.

Sileven and 24 other unapproved church schools in Nebraska argue that Jesus Christ, not the state, is the head of his religious school ministry. To allow state officials—possibly unbelievers—to license, supervise, or control his church ministry would be unbiblical and unconstitutional, he maintains.

The state counters Sileven's arguments claiming it has a duty to ensure that every child receives a quality education, a duty the courts of Nebraska have ruled greater than Sileven's religious arguments.

However, Faith Christian School—under a court order since 1979 to close—continues to operate, year after year, turmoil after turmoil. Yet the battered school has suffered. At the close of 1983, only four of the 25 students enrolled last fall remained to attend classes.

Troubles resumed in Louisville when on Thanksgiving Eve seven fathers were thrown in the Cass County Jail for refusing to tell a district court whether the unapproved church school was still operating.

Not wanting to incriminate themselves, the men pleaded their right to remain silent. But Judge Ronald Reagan of Sarpy County said the Fifth Amendment is not permitted in civil contempt lawsuits, only in criminal cases. He sentenced the fathers to jail until they were willing to talk.

"The judge has sentenced them to life in prison, and for no crime," said their acting pastor, Jim Keeton of Liberty, Missouri, apparently confident the men will maintain immutable silence. "Those are seven strong men. They're holding up tremendously," Keeton said in December. "If God chose seven preachers to put in jail they wouldn't have held up better than these men."

Confined to a single cell, the men spent their first weeks in prison pacing the floors, praying together, memorizing Scriptures, preaching to each other, scrubbing the calaboose, and growing beards.

"If they lose everything and come out of jail uncompromised," Keeton said, "then they’re the winners. What good is it to have a job or home in a state where you’re not free?"

The fathers petitioned more than 40 attorneys throughout the state before the firm of Nelson, Morris, and Holdeman, in Lincoln, agreed to defend their case. Judge Reagan said he was not legally bound to appoint the men an attorney since they were neither indigent nor involved in a criminal trial. Opinion has varied on just why the men experienced difficulty obtaining legal counsel. Some suggest the problem was due to the men's insistence on pleading their right to remain silent. Keeton and others believe the men were being "blackballed" by attorneys throughout the state who want to steer clear of the controversy.

The wives of the men, Sileven, and Teresa Schmidt (Sileven's daughter and schoolteacher) were also subpoenaed to appear at the hearing. But they chose to flee the state instead. The mothers wanted...
to avoid the likely risk of losing their children if they went to jail, and Sileven wanted to avoid becoming the focus of national attention again. Judge Reagan reacted promptly and firmly to their absence by issuing a bench warrant for their arrest.

But as the mothers fled the state, and the steel bars separated father from child, hundreds of vexed pastors nationwide rallied at Faith Baptist Church to show their support for the so-called "Louisville Seven." In a tension-filled sanctuary, Greg Dixon from Indianapolis, Indiana, said, "This is the greatest struggle in the religious history of America."

But this "greatest struggle" soon caused Faith Baptist to smack more of a fort than a church, especially as the state renewed its threats to close down the school. The church posted signs greeting every newcomer with a strong warning: only people seeking worship or spiritual guidance were welcome. Anyone else, especially government officials, must first call and seek permission to enter. Dixon said the church had formed its own "security force," an action prompted when an unknown gunman blasted the windows out of the church's front doors. Sentries were found stationed everywhere—when entering the door, when going to the basement, when making a phone call, when going in the pastor's study, and when leaving the back door.

Clay Nutall, of Fruitport, Michigan, went as far as to say that the church was prepared for a confrontation with police for reopening the school. One unfortunate pastor became the victim of such alarm when he was forcibly pinned against a wall for wearing a badge on his belt. He was not an undercover policeman, he pleaded, just a volunteer fireman. He promptly removed the badge.

Yet Ed Rowe said the Louisville group was committed to nonviolence. "People have been invited to get out if they carry a weapon any more dangerous than fingernail clippers," he said. "You never use carnal weapons in protecting a spiritual ministry." He speculated that an outbreak of violence could erupt only if the sheriff's department were responsible. "Some of the officers are very jumpy, you know," Rowe said.

Before Sileven left the state he formed a 10-member steering committee to plan a strategy for the release of the imprisoned fathers and to care for the fugitive mothers and their 31 children.

The committee met daily behind tightly guarded doors. Some notable figures in that think-tank were Greg Dixon, president of the American Coalition for Unregistered Churches; Ed Rowe, president of the Church League of America; and Robert McCurry, publisher of Temple Times.

They emerged with a single-minded objective: to raise national awareness over the church-school battle in Nebraska and to bring national reproach on the state for "persecuting" seven families who want to follow their religious convictions.

"These families are identifying with persecution in a way most will never know. They are experiencing Christian persecution," Keeton said.

A telephone bank was set up at the church across the hall from the school where hundreds of pastors went to work mobilizing thousands of colleagues. In addition, they telephoned both major media networks and state officials to lobby for the state for "persecuting" seven families who want to follow their religious convictions.

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For several weeks the pastors rallied each day at the Cass County Jail in Plattsmouth. At times the temperature dipped to 17 degrees below zero. They marched around the building, sang hymns, delivered short sermons, carried Bibles, and waved placards that read, "Why are seven godly men in jail?" "These arrests would be OK in Russia," "Let my people go," and "Don't arrest my wife."

The steering committee also directed a massive educational effort at Congress and the Reagan Administration. In addition to writing thousands of letters and attempting to make a "million" phone calls, the Louisville group sent the fugitive mothers to Washington to lead a demonstration at the White House that attracted more than 1,000 participants.

By Christmas, the steering committee reportedly received support from 10 Senators and 12 Congressmen and some vague promises from officials at both the Department of Justice and Department of Education over possible federal involvement.

Nevertheless, the seven fathers spent the holiday season in jail, separated from family and friends.

"They want to win the battle for the whole nation," said an inspired fugitive mother, Julie Nolte. "They want to stay until it's over."

—Martin Mawyer

Louisville, Nebraska
Tennessee Mother Jailed over Textbook Battle

On November 23, the same day seven Louisville, Nebraska, fathers were jailed for refusing to compromise religious convictions, another American, a mother of four, was arrested and spent two and a half hours in the Rogersville, Tennessee, jail for asserting what she believed were her rights as a parent.

When Vicki Frost went to Church Hill Elementary School to remove her second-grade daughter from the reading class where books Mrs. Frost considers hostile to Christianity are used, she was promptly arrested on two counts of trespassing. Although the charges were dropped some two weeks later at a preliminary hearing, a lawsuit filed by lawyers in Greenville federal court on behalf of Mrs. Frost and other parents is pending. The issue is seen as a matter of state versus parental authority.

Mrs. Frost, her husband, Roger, and a number of other Hawkins County families who organized in September as Citizens Organized for Better Schools say the books published by CBS-owned Holt, Rinehart, and Winston advocate "situation ethics, self-autonomy of children, gun control" and contain "anticapitalist and antibiblical biases."

Mrs. Frost said the parents sought "every reasonable avenue, including asking for alternate books and offering parent volunteers to sit with children during the reading period. We even offered to hire private tutors." But school officials insisted the Holt books be read by all students.

According to Mike Farris, attorney for the parents, they are waiting for U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Huss to rule on a temporary injunction. The injunction was filed as part of a lawsuit seeking to allow the children to return to school and use an alternative reader until a final court decision can be reached on the textbook controversy. Farris said this is the first lawsuit involving suspension of schoolchildren or arrest of parents.

Farris, an attorney for the legal defense foundation of Concerned Women for America, a Christian activist group headed by Beverly LaHaye, is representing 11 Church Hill families who sued the Hawkins County School Board December 2. Local attorney Les Bailey is assisting. Besides asking that the children be reinstated with no "adverse action" taken against them, the complaint requests unspecified monetary damages, probably including, said Farris, tuition costs for children whose parents felt compelled to enroll them in other schools.

"We don't want to dictate our conscience but likewise we don't want them to force their beliefs on us."

"It was either move my kids to another school or have them arrested," said Mrs. Frost, referring to a December 10 report in the Knoxville Journal that related a plan devised by a Rogersville juvenile judge for readmitting students who had been suspended, then arresting them for unruly conduct if they failed to attend reading classes as parents had instructed.

Juvenile Judge Reece Gibson, head of a group opposed to COBS, said in the article he is excusing himself from hearing any cases involving the Church Hill families. He maintained that parents could also be charged with "encouraging or aiding and abetting, or contributing to the unruly acts," a potential misdemeanor carrying up to a maximum of "11 months and 29 days in the county jail." But the plaintiffs' attorney, Les Bailey, said the threats are without foundation in law.

Negotiations between both parties to achieve a compromise have been unsuccessful. Bailey said the parents "are still willing to sign an agreement as long as vital interests are not at stake; that is, with full reservation and protection of their constitutional rights." Bailey added that Nat Coleman, attorney for the school board, made it clear there is no room for compromise, and students may return to school only if they attend reading classes.

Emotions over the textbook dispute have been running high in this East Tennessee community. Mrs. Frost has had threats against her life. Attorney Mike Farris said he was told by a prominent Hawkins County citizen that "there's going to be a lynching when this is all over." School superintendent Bill Snodgrass called the COBS group "extremists," a "wrecking crew," and referred to Concerned Women for America which has a Capitol Hill office, as "outside agitators with their fat wallets and attorney from Washington, DC." Snodgrass made the remarks at a December PTA meeting of some 800 parents, students, and school officials, plus a handful of COBS members and sympathizers. Jean Price, principal of the school where Mrs. Frost was arrested, said in a letter to the editor of a local paper that the parents' protest is "really an organized all-out attack against public schools."

In her letter, Mrs. Price assessed the parental action in the controversy as part of "a national anti public education movement that would like to indoctrinate students in its narrow religious and philosophical point of view."

Vicki Frost disagrees. "We don't want to dictate our conscience on anyone else. But likewise we don't want them to force their humanistic beliefs on us."

-Suzanne Clark
Rogersville, Tennessee
Gundry Asked to Resign from ETS

At its 35th annual meeting, the Evangelical Theological Society reaffirmed its commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture. With a decisive majority the society voted to reject the views of one of its members and to request his resignation for “detracting from the historical trustworthiness of the Gospel of Matthew.”

Meeting December 15-17 at the Criswell Center for Biblical Studies in Dallas, the Conservative debating society was urged by Paige Patterson to go on record as rejecting the position taken by Robert Gundry in his recent commentary on Matthew. Professor Gundry of Westmont College disturbed many of his colleagues with such assertions as: “The gospel writer materially altered and embellished historical traditions.” Employing the adjective midrashic and haggidic to describe the genre of Matthew’s gospel he states “Matthew treats us to history mixed with elements that cannot be called historical in the modern sense... hence, ‘Jesus said’ or ‘Jesus did’ need not always mean that in history Jesus said or did what follows.”

The ETS requires its members to affirm that “the Bible alone and... in its entirety, is the Word of God written, and therefore inerrant.” Many of the founding fathers and elder statesmen of the society were visibly and vocally present to express “grave concern” for the future of the society if Gundry’s views were accepted. In the tense and sometimes heated business session on Saturday the members overwhelmingly brushed aside efforts to table the Gundry issue, and went on to ask him to resign from the society.

Gundry responded: “Of course, I will resign.” He then commended the society for its diligence and expressed his regrets at their decision. He graciously urged his supporters to remain in the society and to put this incident behind them. It is not yet certain how this will affect his position at Westmont College, a school that has a strong Conservative constituency.

Daniel R. Mitchell
Dallas, Texas
Religious Broadcasters
Return to Washington

WASHINGTON—The National Religious Broadcasters' annual convention was held January 29-February 1, featuring nationally known religious figures. Jerry Falwell spoke for the FCC luncheon. Workshops dealt with changes in technology, marketing, regulations, and audience needs, with special emphasis on spotlighting the ministry to Hispanics and blacks.

Appearances by members of Congress, the Commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission, and leading legal authorities were the highlights of the NRB Convention.

North Carolina Southern Baptists
Uphold Option
of Ordaining Women

GREENSBORO, N.C. (RNS)—North Carolina Southern Baptists have upheld the right of their congregations to ordain women pastors, taking action on a topic that has become increasingly controversial in Conservative church circles. At their annual meeting, the Southern Baptists passed a resolution to ordain women by 927 to 724. While the resolution reaffirmed a position taken by the North Carolina convention in 1975, debate over ordination for women has been renewed in several local Southern Baptist associations this year. The North Carolina resolution reaffirmed the policy of local autonomy, recognized "freedom of conscience," and upheld the "right of the local church to ordain all persons who are called to a church-related ministry." Its wording was substituted for the original proposed text, which called for "undiminished support of the commitment, ordination, and employment of women" in every part of the Southern Baptist ministry.

NCC Defers Vote
on Homosexual
Church Membership

HARTFORD, Conn. (RNS)—The National Council of Churches said here that it could not grant membership to the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, a denomination formed primarily for homosexuals. The council's governing board voted 116-94 to postpone action indefinitely on a proposal that would have declared the 27,000-member denomination eligible for membership. To many, the vote was a "polite 'no'" to the request from the gay church to join the council. But to those who favor involving the denomination in council activities, the postponement was not a full rejection. A few felt that the action still left open the possibility that the church might be declared eligible for membership sometime in the future.

Judge Suspends Sentence
of Woman Who Stole
Baptist Church Funds

RALEIGH, N.C. (RNS)—A judge in Raleigh granted a Baptist church's plea for "leniency and mercy" in suspending the sentence of a former church secretary who he had found guilty of embezzling almost $30,000 in church funds. Instead of giving a jail sentence for the offense, Superior Court Judge Robert L. Farmer ordered Kay Lee Buchanan to perform 200 hours of community service. The defendant was secretary of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina, between 1970 and 1981. She will also undergo psychiatric treatment as part of the sentence. Prosecutor John T. Kelly said Mrs. Buchanan had tried to resign her job twice when she realized she could not control her impulse to steal, but church officials would not accept her resignation. They refused her resignation the first time because they thought she was doing a good job. The theft was discovered by her successor long after she left.

IRS Seizes Priest's Car
for Tax Payment

INDIANAPOLIS (RNS)—Since 1982, Rev. Cosmas Raimondi of Indianapolis has withheld half of his personal income taxes to protest U.S. spending for nuclear arms, American policy in Central America, and draft registration. But the Internal Revenue Service has repaid Father Raimondi in kind by seizing his car. The 32-year-old Catholic pastor is not fazed. "We need to live more simply anyway," he said. The pastor says he is going to cut his salary to the point where he will not owe any taxes. He now makes $6,500 a year and gets his rectory free. The parish council of the Holy Cross Catholic Church told the IRS that it would not "undermine its pastor's decision to withhold his personal taxes."

People Magazine, UPI, and
the Joan Rivers Myth

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif.—Recently, Rev. Jerry Falwell was guest at a Beverly Hills dinner hosted by entertainer Pat Boone. Boone also invited approximately one dozen leading Hollywood figures. Some of these celebrities had previously supported Norman Lear's smear campaign against Falwell's Moral Majority.

FUNDAMENTALIST JOURNAL
Boone asked Falwell to share his faith and his personal convictions regarding the drift of the television industry and to answer questions. Falwell did just that. Reports from those who attended were positive toward Falwell.

However, United Press International and People Magazine reported an erroneous version of that same occasion. In the UPI/People version, Falwell was reported to have been an admirer of the risqué comedy of Joan Rivers and allegedly told Rivers that he "adores her." UPI added the sarcastic comment that "it's not yet certain when Joan Rivers will be speaking at Liberty Baptist College."

Falwell said, "It is this kind of dishonest and vitriolic reporting by the national media that reveals the true feelings toward the efforts of Moral Majority."

Falwell says he made none of the alleged statements attributed to him by People and UPI, nor had he ever heard or seen Rivers on stage or in person before that dinner meeting.

Mail-order Minister Gets Nine-year Term

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (RNS)—A pastor of the mail-order Universal Life Church has been sentenced to nine years in prison for fraudulently claiming more than $200,000 in charitable contributions in preparing tax returns for other persons.

Assistant U.S. Attorney George O'Connell said the defendant, William R. Richardson, had described himself as a doctor of divinity with the Universal Life Church, the leader of a 25-member congregation.

Federal prosecutors said he falsely claimed 50 percent of taxpayers' adjusted gross income as a charitable contribution and then split the refund check with the taxpayers after preparing their tax returns for a fee. O'Connell said he had prepared such claims for more than 250 clients and claimed refunds totaling an estimated $600,000.

Deaths

SCHROON LAKE, N.Y.—Marge Wyrtenz, wife of Word of Life's founder Jack Wyrtenz, died on January 1 at their home in Schron Lake, New York. She was born on May 10, 1912, and received Christ as her Saviour at Pinebrook Bible Conference in July 1933. On April 18, 1936, Marge married the boy next door, Jack.

Marge was a constant supporter of Jack's ministry as he conducted open-air preaching services and radio broadcasts in New York City, and she continued that support as the Word of Life ministry grew to reach and encourage young people and families around the world.

Mrs. Wyrtenz is survived by her husband, Jack, five children, 14 grandchildren, and one sister.

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FEBRUARY 1984

FJ-24A
Brotherly Love!

The early church was a loving fellowship (Acts 2:46; Heb. 10:33-34). Paul’s converts and associates in the ministry showed love to him (Acts 16:15; Rom. 16:3). This love was returned by the apostle (2 Cor. 6:11-12). He further expressed his love to the vast majority of churches and individuals with whom he corresponded. Even a brief study of the New Testament reveals that love was a principal ingredient of Christian experience and relationships. Why, then, is it at such a premium today? Just what does the New Testament teach about the love that is to be shown among true believers, regardless of their denominational “tag”?

First, our love for one another is based on the love Christ has for us (John 13:34; 15:12; 1 John 3:23). When we express love to others in the family of God we are giving genuine evidence of our belonging to Him.

Second, love is an evidence of the New Birth because it is part of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). One who does not belong to Christ cannot be producing the fruit of the Spirit, for he has no spiritual life. Only saved persons can manifest the fruit!

Third, love is taught by the apostle Paul to be the one overall controlling factor of the Christian life (1 Cor. 16:14). One might paraphrase this verse in this way: “Let love regulate all that you do!” What a high and holy goal for those who know Christ.

A fourth New Testament principle concerning the exhibition of love among Christians is found in many references (Phil. 1:9; Col. 3:14; 1 Thess. 3:12, to name just a few). Showing love to others within God’s family is part of a growing faith! Increasing maturity will produce greater expressions of love. Our “love quotient” is the tool of measurement for the level of spiritual maturity we have reached.

Another wonderful aspect of this love between Christians is that it is a most practical thing. Too often, love is viewed as almost ghost-like—unknown and unknowable! The New Testament, on the other hand, presents its manifestation in the most down-to-earth terms. Love is taught as the outward expression of an inward attitude. We show love when we meet the needs of others (Heb. 6:10) and when we help strangers (Matt. 25:35).

Love is shown in clothing the naked (Matt. 25:36) and visiting the sick (James 1:27). We prove our love when we support weaker believers rather than raising our spiritual noses at them (Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14). This is further emphasized by realizing that we show our love by covering, rather than exposing, the faults of others (cf. Prov. 10:12 with 1 Peter 4:8). Love is known as we forgive injuries (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13) and practice patience (Eph. 4:2). Yes, Christian love is most practical!

A solemn word of warning is sounded in the Epistle of 1 John: Hypocrites do not have any love (1 John 2:9,11; 4:20). Does the way you relate to other believers prove your love—or expose you as a hypocrite?
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