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Did Taryn really see Mary and Joseph at the Nativity scene that frosty Christmas Eve? Experience a heartwarming adventure “In the Eyes of the Beholders.”
Shimei's Dust

Ten years ago, this month, a good friend died. We had not seen our former pastor for some time, but knowing that my friend and he had been close, I assumed the pastor would want to be informed of the death. When I called his office his secretary politely told me that it was his day off and that he could not be reached.

"But this is important," I said. "Could you give me his home phone number?"

"Well, I don't know," she replied. "We're not allowed to give out that kind of information to just anyone."

"Maybe I qualify, then. I'm not someone who is anyone. I'm just a nobody who happens to need to talk to the pastor." She put me on hold for a moment. When she returned she gave me his number. I called him at home. His son answered, and I again explained the urgency of my call.

"Hey, Dad, some guy's on the phone... wants to talk to you... I dunno... says it's important... Yeah, but he still says he needs to talk." (Pause. Mumbling in background.) "OK, I'll tell him. Ahh... he says to call his office. Like, this is his day off." (The last phrase was intoned as though punctuated with a question mark.) "Leave a message with the secretary and, like, tell her how to get back with you" (same intonation as above). "'Kay?... Bye."

As he moved the receiver away from his mouth, the young boy shouted, "Hey, it's my turn. Gimmie the dice." (Click!)

I had to leave right away to attend the funeral, and I never did get back to tell the pastor that our friend had died. I guess I'm still a little bitter. The story is true. Our friend was my dad.

Father, forgive him, for he never knew.

Shimei
Dear Shimei...

Many times I have read your article without writing to say how much I appreciate it. I have used some of your thoughts as illustrations for my sermons. Today I write in objection to your article concerning education.

I believe that the error in your thinking is in trying to apply twentieth-century logic to ancient history. I believe that God gives the message to his ministers that are called by Him. The problem many times is that an uneducated person who has trouble keeping his thoughts in order, and at the same time uses poor language, normally will have trouble getting a church that will pay a decent living. At the same time, I realize that many churches would be without pastors if it were not for these ministers being willing to take part-time pastorates. Another error in your thinking is that most of your uneducated ministers had the job of training themselves. I consider this being educated. A third error is that these men were called only to preach one message; or they were trained by the only method they had and that was at their homes and in the synagogues; or in the case of the apostles, at the feet of the greatest teacher ever to live, Jesus Christ. The elders and leaders in the early churches were personally trained by the apostles. I want to note also that because of Paul's education, he was able to get himself out of many problems with the Jews and the Roman officials. Even our early ministers in America who cared were trained in "Log Cabin Schools" and by traveling with older ministers who were already founded in the gospel and the work of the church. They carried books with them to study on their long journeys to wilderness or frontier churches.

Finally, let me make this comparison. A person who is going into a profession such as mechanics, electronics, etc., will need to have some kind of training. Should those who enter the ministry be less prepared for their great occupation—to preach, counsel, and build new churches in an organized and professional way—than these others?

Charles W. Fike
Lexington, Alabama

Rock music...

Hi! My name is Rebekah Patterson. I'm 10 years old. I'm writing to you because I agree with you about rock music. It made me mad that John Lennon of the Beatles said, "We're more popular than Jesus now!" I think record bars and places that sell rock music should be closed down and filled up with Christian music. Don't you think so? Rock music reminds me of Satan. MTV should be taken off; it is nothing but garbage.

Rebekah Patterson
Kernersville, North Carolina

Alcoholic spouses...

Angela Hunt's excellent article "Living with an Alcoholic Parent" made an interesting point about alcoholic spouses. She referred to Dr. Spickard of the Vanderbilt Institute for Treatment of Alcoholism, who found that "9 out of 10 men leave their alcoholic wives; 9 out of 10 women stay with alcoholic husbands."

While that phenomenon was not sur-
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prising, I wish further explanation had been given. Could it be that men have an inherent, subconscious contempt for women written upon their hearts that goes back to the Fall? Consider Genesis 3:12. Adam sounds like a disgusted customer bemoaning some piece of junk the salesman gave him. Eve does not similarly condemn her Lord. Could this be the birth of misogyny?

It must be misogyny that prompts many men (not all) to seek the most attractive partners, expecting them to remain so within the limits they set. Let a wife stray too far by becoming a chronic alcoholic, mental patient, or balding cancer victim, and many a husband feels cheated and escapes to greener pastures. After all, how many young grooms really sincerely promise to cherish their brides in both sickness and health?

Yet when the situation is reversed many women are patient, nurturing, and sometimes pathetically submissive to abuse, particularly in the case of alcoholism. Why? Is self-deprecation written subtly into the programming of a female's heart just as misogyny is in a man's? Or is the brainwashing of a sexist society to blame? It must be a combination of both. Whatever the explanation, it would be interesting to see it developed further in future articles.

Margaret L. Kempf
Greenbelt, Maryland

Never sugarcoat it . . .

I have just read your article on "Living with an Alcoholic Parent." I had one parent who was a very heavy alcoholic. He worked every day, but the home life was always in a constant state of tension. Thank the Lord he has now almost stopped. I can't remember seeing him drunk in almost a year.

Thank you for telling it like it really is. This kind of problem should never be sugarcoated or covered up. Thank you for an excellent article.

T.H.
Connecticut

"Soapbox" hit the spot . . .

Why didn't one of your writers mention the name found in the Bible for the alcoholic? It is "drunkard," is it not?

One of the many Scriptures that could be noted is Romans 13:13. That sure sounds like a behavioral problem to me, not a genetic mutation, an inherited disease, or illness of any kind, except SIN.

From different quarters I hear of definitive research that has been done in this area and that of the "chemical imbalance" of the "mentally ill." Where is it? We keep inventing or building pigeon holes for these "syndromes."

Too many Christians have jumped into the sewer of humanistic nonscience (also spelled n-o-n-s-e-n-s-e) and are enjoying the cool refreshing waters of the intellectualoids.

R. L. Gring
Pearsall, Texas
From the Publisher

Addressing the Students at Notre Dame. Notre Dame invited me to address the students on the topic of political involvement by religious Conservatives (my second favorite topic behind preaching the gospel). The students encouraged me, as they too support our pro-moral agenda. Father Hessberg will be retiring as president of that university next year. For your information, he and former President Gerald Ford have joined the ranks of defectors from Norman Lear's People for the American Way.

Beholding the Glory of the God-Man. The incarnation of God is a most difficult topic to understand, but it is essential to our Christian faith. In this issue I address the significance of Jesus being both holy God and perfect man in "Behold His Glory."

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Merry Christmas! As we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, may He warm your heart with happy memories, the love of friends and family, and the peace that only He can give.
Moral Majority
Finding Our Place in the American Political Scene

Moral Majority. The name sends chills up a diehard Liberal's spine. But the force unites a broad cross section in the American political scene. Despite much opposition, the group ranks more favorably than either political party, most politicians, teachers' unions, the telephone company, big corporations, labor unions, and public utilities.

The latter surprises even me. In a May survey conducted by Decision/Making/Information for the Republican National Committee, over 1,000 Americans were asked to rate a number of 'interest groups.'

"The survey included a section on which respondents were asked to rate how warm or cold they felt toward a number of organizations and groups based on a scale of '0' to '100,'" said Neil Newhouse, vice president of DMI. "Known as a thermometer scale, this type of measurement accurately reflects the perception Americans have of political figures, organizations, and interest groups.

"Unlike a name identification—'favorable' percent compared to 'unfavorable' percent—a few points difference on the thermometer scale is a significant margin. Most politicians fall in the 50s on this scale, with both political parties around 57. President Reagan usually scores in the mid-sixties—a very high rating for a politician.'

Moral Majority received 65.2 points. The most surprising part of the survey reveals the broad cross section of Moral Majority's support:

- Women (66.7) rate the Moral Majority higher than men (63.7).
- Middle-aged (35-54) men (67.6) and women (69.4), and older (55+) women (67.0) tend to rate the Moral Majority higher than other groups.
- Black Americans (67.5) rate the Moral Majority higher than white voters (64.8).
- Baptists (69.1) rate the Moral Majority significantly higher than do Catholics (64.2) or Protestants (65.5).
- Self-described Conservatives (66.5) rate the Moral Majority higher than do either Moderates (63.2) or Liberals (64.1).
- There is virtually no difference between how self-described Republicans (65.9) and Democrats (65.6) rate the Moral Majority.
- Younger (17-24) Democrats (70.2) rate the Moral Majority higher than any other party-age colleagues.
- Those Americans interviewed who are 17-24 years of age and non-students rate the Moral Majority at a very high 68.9.

In 1979 we wanted to start an organization to battle the Liberal forces that had taken such a stronghold in the 1960s and 1970s. We felt that the majority of Americans supported our pro-life, pro-family, pro-moral agenda. We did not have a survey to verify this, but we knew in our hearts it was true. We searched for the right name to unite people to our cause. The only name that fit was Moral Majority.

At first we struggled for recognition. With persistence and patience we presented our position. Facing adversaries daily, those from our state organizations and national headquarters banded together to make a difference in the political arena. Then the news media, political cartoonists, and columnists began to feature the Moral Majority regularly, and not always in a positive light.

People for the American Way, the group Norman Lear formed to oppose Conservative organizations, spent millions in negative advertising against Moral Majority.

Some social engineers said the voting bloc of the 'religious right' was just a fluke. But they were wrong.

In this year's election several political consultants advised their candidates to keep their distance from religious Conservatives. Numerous candidates listened. Most of them lost. Perhaps the Republican Party may have learned the painful lesson that they cannot win consistently without the religious right.

Where do we go from here? No matter what the results of the survey, Moral Majority will follow the same course of action set for it in 1979. Our opposition promises that the battle will continue tougher than ever. The poll, completed without our knowledge, encourages and surprises us by documenting what we believed all along. That is, a large number of people agree with our agenda. Thank God America still has citizens who want to see traditional values upheld. This research gives us a new resolve to fight on.
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Political Involvement at the Crossroads

by Edward Dobson

With the founding of the Moral Majority in 1979, Fundamentalists ventured into the political process. They were not welcomed with open arms of acceptance. Rather they kicked down the door and marched in with a force that sent fear and paranoia through most sectors of the culture. The media was shocked. Fundamentalists were assumed to have been relegated to the backwoods of Appalachia following the public disgrace of the Scopes Trial of 1926. The intellectual elite compared the movement to Islamic Fundamentalism and compared Jerry Falwell to the Ayatollah Khomeini. Political and social Liberals founded groups to oppose these anachronistic hillbillies.

Many believed that Fundamentalists were attempting to impose their theology upon society through law and that those who disagreed would be clearly perceived as second-class citizens or worse (namely, “of the Devil”). One author described Fundamentalists by stating, “He is coming after you to get you to join his army. If you don’t want to join, he’s coming after you anyway” (Texas Monthly, Nov., 1981, p. 178).

Although some of the fear has subsided and the rhetoric has become more reasonable, there is still an underlying uneasiness about Fundamentalist political involvement. Recently, former President Jimmy Carter expressed his feelings by gently saying that as far as he was concerned Jerry Falwell could “go to hell” (in a Christian way of speaking).

With the potential of Pat Robertson’s bid for the Presidency, the issue of religion and politics will not go away. In fact, the debate may now be more intense than ever. Influencing the political process is one thing, but offering a Fundamentalist candidate for the highest office in the land is something entirely different. The candidacy of a “Preacher-for-President” brings Christian political involvement to a dangerous and precarious moment in history.

The candidacy of a “Preacher-for-President” brings Christian political involvement to a dangerous and precarious moment in history.

We clearly understand our religious heritage. Our faith is deeply rooted in our commitment to the inspired and inerrant Word of God—the Bible. We believe that the Scriptures are without error, not only in matters of religion, but also in matters of history, science, and the cosmos. As such they are the authoritative guide for faith and practice. We believe that Jesus Christ is the virgin-born Son of God, the promised Messiah of Old Testament Scripture. We believe He died a substitutionary and vicarious death on the cross and was literally and bodily raised from the dead three days later. We believe that faith in Christ is the only way to heaven and that we are commanded to preach the gospel around the world. We believe that Jesus Christ is coming back to this planet to establish His kingdom and to reign.

In this theological domain of our private religion, we seek no change, conciliation, or compromise. When we state that our objective is to evangelize the world, we mean exactly that. When we state that salvation is predicated upon faith in Christ, and not baptism, confession, or church membership, we mean exactly that. These statements are not anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, or anti-Muslim; they are expressions of what we believe. We have always believed and preached the same message, and we do not intend to change for the sake of...
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Taking the Gospel to all the world
The Pulpit Makes the Difference

by Truman Dollar

There is a growing distance between the pulpit and pew in today's Fundamentalist churches. I know that statement will provoke wounded outcries from the safe, satisfied, and undisturbed pastorate, but it is true. Pastors need to be sensitive to the problem, examining with loving care the hurts and needs of honest laymen.

Fundamentalist pastors made similar charges against the Liberals for years, and they were also true. In the seventies the undercurrent in old-line denominational congregations broke open into a river of unrest. The Conservative membership finally revolted against its socially and theologically Liberal pastors, leaving bare the coffers of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Methodists.

The all-wise denominational leaders abruptly found their institutions and their positions threatened by angry congregations. Pastors were out of touch with laymen.

I am not predicting a similar revolt in Fundamentalism, but quiet and deep tensions do exist between pastors and congregations.

Now, I am not against strong pastoral leadership. No committee ever successfully ran a church, and no board of deacons—without a pastor—ever provided adequate spiritual leadership. Most congregations want strong leadership. The Bible prescribes it and the pulpit gives direction.

Our churches do not need a plurality of elders, a more democratic form of church government, or more congregational structure. Our people need effective preaching, and I fear most pastors are mistakenly certain they are already providing it.

Matthew Simpson said of preachers in his Lectures on Preaching, "His throne is the pulpit; he stands in Christ's stead; his message is the Word of God; around him are Immortal souls; the Saviour, unseen, is beside him; the Holy Spirit broods over the congregation; angels gaze upon the scene, and heaven and hell await the issue. What associates, and what vast responsibility!" Preaching is what counts—what makes the difference.

Today's pastors shepherd congregations that need help from the pulpit in these pressure-packed days. Our people are overwhelmed with deep personal needs.

The public educational system has degenerated in quality. Humanism prevails among educators. Young people are forced to make unthinkable choices. Drug abuse has gone beyond teens smoking marijuana. Adults are hooked on valium and librium. Tranquilizers have become the Christian's alcohol.

People in our congregations need help—and they need it from their pastors. Certainly, the serious pastor has a variety of responsibilities in the pulpit. Evangelism is primary. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). We must understand evangelism, however.

I have heard a hundred times, "We must preach soulwinning or our churches will not grow." Soulwinning is not a technique of church growth; it is the natural by-product of the Spirit-filled believer. We win people to Christ in obedience to the Great Commission—not to build bigger churches. Spirit-filled people naturally win others, but that is not our only responsibility to those we reach for Christ. Of course soulwinning churches normally grow numerically. Let's just be sure we keep our motives right. The pastor who has no converts and takes comfort in this article for his neglect of evangelism, however, has misunderstood my intent.

Paul speaks of the varied uses of Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:16-17. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."

The unsaved must be won, believers must be indoctrinated, the rebellious and wayward must be reproved, and there must be correction in lifestyle. But the Bible also is for instruction—help, assistance in righteousness, or right living. In fact, the Scripture is to help us be perfect or "mature." The Bible is to assist us in accomplishing peaceful lives and good works. That is Paul's explanation of what effective Bible preaching is to do in our lives.

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12).

When Paul said, "Preach the word," he was telling Timothy to teach people how to live the Christian life successfully.

Preaching should have purpose, an aim. It should change or strengthen beliefs, change behavior or attitudes. It should cleanse, purify, inspire—but it should accomplish something besides boring little children and mollifying the consciences of those who feel guilty if they are absent. Going to the pulpit without this deep sense of responsibility is nothing short of criminal. Tragically, pilots, engineers, plumbers, and carpenters often appear to take more pride in their work than preachers do.

I am finally learning that my people need more than sermons, more than cute, alliterative, symmetrical little outlines. Filling up 30 minutes of time is not enough. They need to have the Bible...
taught and preached and applied to their problems. Is it too much for my people to ask, “Pastor, does the Bible really work?” Is it disloyalty for them to say, “Teach me how to live the Christian life.”

The people in our congregations need to know how to deal with vengeance, success, failure, suffering, pain, government, children, prayer, loyalty, ambition, stress, guilt, depression, loneliness, sorrow, loss, marriage, divorce, weariness, vocations, education, and a hundred other subjects about which the Bible provides insights.

In Biblical Preaching Haddon Robinson said, “After all, if a man or woman decides to live under the mandate of Scripture, such action will normally take place outside the church building. On the outside, people lose jobs, worry about their children, and find crabgrass invading their lawns. Seldom do normal people lose sleep over the Jebusites, the Canaanites, or the Perizzites, or even about what Abraham, Moses, or Paul has said or done. They lie awake wondering about grocery prices, crop failures, quarrels with a girlfriend, diagnosis of a malignancy, a frustrating sex life, the rat race where only rats seems to win. If the sermon does not make much difference in that world, they wonder if it makes any difference at all.”

I fear that many of our people attend services only out of a sense of obligation. They come because the Bible commands them to come. They are made to feel guilty if they miss. I am grateful that they are cooperative and obedient. Would it not be wonderful, however, if our people received so much from the pulpit that they believed they could not possibly afford to miss a sermon? What if the sheer joy, inspiration, and instruction made it too painful to be away from a service? What if the fear and potential humiliation of absence were transformed into the delight of attendance? I have wondered what would happen if we spent as much time preparing to feed our people as we do trying to get them there.

Certainly we must major on expository Bible preaching and teaching. Preaching through entire books of the Bible, verse by verse, can be very effective. In the course of that kind of expository preaching we will naturally address many of man’s needs. However, it is not improper to devote substantial amounts of pulpit time to the application of Bible truth to practical Christian living. Suffering people need to find relief in Bible solutions.

I am not just pleading for more scholarship. Preaching does not have to be deep, academic, or dry to be effective. Pastors may develop a comfortable and predictable style, but preaching has neither ideal nor exact structure. Homiletics is sometimes misunderstood science when, which, misapplied, can produce look-alike bores and standardized mediocrity. The criteria for preaching is not Blackwood, Brodus, or Robinson. The obvious standard for effective preaching is results and changed lives.

Post-World-War-II Fundamentalism is over 40 years old, and our churches are filled with second-generation Christians. Much of the leadership in our congregations has been in our churches from 20 to 40 years. Solid and even rigid structure is developing; institutionalism and its attendant problems are apparent. Parents and grandparents who have been in our churches for 30 and 40 years need more than simple sermons on salvation.

While evangelism is a major thrust, over 95 percent of the congregation on any given Sunday morning is already saved. My people are less interested when Sunday after Sunday we totally ignore 95 percent of the congregation in pursuit of evangelism. Believers can be fed and helped every Sunday and when properly done that will encourage evangelism. And the neglect of evangelism is inexusable.

But we desperately need studied balance. We do not need more equipment, better visuals, or better methods. We need truth clearly taught and skillfully applied. I am convinced that the private counseling load can be reduced dramatically by effective preaching. And the preoccupation with the counseling ministry has been the convenient side-track for many good and honest pastors.

There is never a time when the people of my congregation are more excited than when they know their pastor is locked up with the Word of God preparing to instruct and bless them. They do not resent it. They are keenly aware that it will keep them from suffering through the froth and burden of unprepared and unenlightened sermon delivery.

Don’t kid yourself. Your people know when you feed them bread and when you substitute leftover, stale, heartless, and sterile sermons. My people do not want a slick corporate executive for a pastor; they want a loving shepherd to feed and protect them.

As I reflect over my ministry, I see clearly that I have done an exceptional job of teaching my people what not to do. They know what hair length is objectionable, the unacceptable dress code for services and youth activities, and what forms of entertainment to avoid. I have given “touch nots,” “taste nots,” and “handle nots” sufficient pulpit time. Yes, my people know all the Baptist rules. What I did not know is that they also discovered years ago that keeping the rules did not make them spiritual.

I also found that they shared Paul’s frustration, “For the good that I would do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do” (Rom. 7:19). Tragically, I spent too little time teaching them how to avoid the things I excoriated them for doing. I am finally learning that my people basically want to live right; they only want me to teach them how.

Our preaching of the great Bible doctrines must also include their practical application in the daily lives of men. The Bible makes it clear; we must do the same. The doctrine of salvation is stated in Ephesians 2:8-9. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” The doctrine’s practical application is stated in Ephesians 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath prepared beforehand for us.”

The doctrine of the Second Coming and its companion truth of our ultimate progression toward the image of Christ is stated in 1 John 3:2. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” The application of that truth is revealed in 1 John 3:3. “And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.”

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Hanukkah, one of the most joyous feasts in the Jewish calendar, is unlike those mentioned in the list of annual feasts in Leviticus 23. As will be shown in the historical treatment below, this feast could not have been included in the Pentateuch, because the events it commemorates took place between the Old and New Testament, about 165 B.C. A number of names have been attached to this celebration. It is called the "Feast of the Maccabees" (Jewish Encyclopedia, p. 223). Josephus, the historian, states that the festival was called the "Feast of Lights" (Antiquities, 12, 7, p. 7). The Talmud, the rabbinical literature, calls it the "Feast of Illumination." In the Apocrypha it is spoken of as "The Dedication of the Altar" (1 Macc. 6:56-59). Hanukkah (the h is pronounced hard) means "dedication" or "consecration." See the enkainia (dedication) of the Greek Old Testament and John 10:22-23, which reads: "And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch." The indication of the time of the year is an incidental mark of authenticity. The feast falls on the 25th day of the Hebrew month Chislev and would tally with a date about the middle of December (A. Edersheim's Life of Jesus, Vol. II, p. 228f.). Our Lord was present for Passover (John 2:13), Pentecost (5:1), Tabernacles (7:2), and Dedication (10:22-23). Early, the Feast of Hanukkah took on certain features of the Feast of Tabernacles: duration of eight days; singing of the Hallel (Ps. 113-118); and the carrying of palm branches (cf. 2 Macc. 10:5—there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of the historical statements, even though the Apocrypha are not inspired).

Historical background. In recent years some have tried to equate Hanukkah with Christmas because of certain external and incidental features: the time in December, the emphasis on lights, and the presenting of gifts. Actually, Hanukkah has no relation to Christmas, which celebrates the birth of our Lord in the first century. Hanukkah commemorates events that transpired in the second century B.C. The birth of the Saviour is basic and pivotal in the Christian faith, but Hanukkah is not considered one of the major Jewish festivals. It is observed for eight days, but normal business and work activities are not prohibited. It is a festival clearly dated in history. It commemorates the revolt and victory of the Maccabees (Hasmoneans) under Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria in 165 B.C.

At this point it is necessary to give a historical resume of events that transpired in the life of the Jews subsequent to their exile in Babylon (c. 586 B.C.). After the Babylonian captivity the Jews lived under Persian rule (539-333 B.C.), then Grecian, and finally Roman. Because of the early death of Alexander the Great, his kingdom was divided between Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Cassander. Ptolemaic kings ruled Egypt and Seleucid monarchs reigned in Syria. Judea became as a political football between them. From about 175-165 B.C. there came to the Seleucid throne Antiochus Epiphanes, a fickle, contriving, arrogant, and capricious ruler, whose strong desire was to Hellenize his realm. Having come to the throne by intrigue and craft, he cared nothing for the revered customs of his subjects. At this time there was in Judea an orthodox party (called the Chasidim), as well as proponents of Greek culture and customs (known as the Hellenists). Taking advantage of unrest in Jerusalem, Antiochus despoiled the temple and massacred friends and foes alike. Later he issued a law that throughout Judea the people were to renounce the law of Moses and sacrifice to Greek gods only, especially with swine. He prohibited the rite of circumcision and the observance of the
Sabbath and festivals. The temple was defiled and then dedicated to Jupiter with the sacrifice of a swine on the altar. A scroll of the law of Moses, found in the temple, was burned. In July, 168 B.C., A statue of Jupiter was put on the altar and sacrifices were offered to it. Houses of worship and instruction were destroyed. The Hasmoneans or Maccabees (the Hammerers), led by an aged father, Mattathias, led a revolt. Upon the death of the father the command fell to the heroic Judas Maccabeus. Victory after victory followed under his able, relentless, and godly leadership.

But let the ancient accounts in the Apocrypha tell the story. Second Maccabees 6:1-2, relates: "Not long after this the king sent an old Athenian [man of Athens] to compel the Jews to depart from the laws of their fathers, and not to live after the laws of God; and to pollute the temple in Jerusalem, and to call it the temple of Jupiter Olympius; and that in Garazin [Garazim], of Jupiter the Defender of Strangers, as they indeed were, that dwelt in the place."

First Maccabees 1:41-64 contains a much fuller account. "And the king sent letters by messengers unto Jerusalem and the cities of Judah: and they should follow the foreign customs of the land, and keep the foreign customs of the land, and keep [forbid] burnt offerings, and sacrifices, and drink offerings, out of the sanctuary, and that they should profane sabbaths and festival days, and pollute sanctuary and priests, build altars, and groves, and idol temples, and sacrifice swine's flesh, and unclean animals; that they should also leave their sons uncircumcised, make their souls abominable with all manner of uncleanness and profanation: to the end they might forget the law, and change all the ordinances. And whosoever would not do according to the commandment of the king, he should die. In accordance with all these commands wrote he to his whole kingdom; and he appointed overseers over all the people; and he commanded the cities of Juda to sacrifice, city by city. And many of the people were gathered unto them, every one that forsook the law; and they committed evils in the land, and drove the Israelites into hiding places, wherever they could find a refuge. And on the fifteenth day of the month Chaselu [Chisleu], in the hundred forty and sixth year, they set up an abomination of desolation upon the altar, and built altars in the cities of Juda round about. And they burnt incense at the doors of their houses, and in the streets. And having rent in pieces the books of the law which they found, they burnt them with fire. And where was found with any a book of the covenant, or if any found pleasure in the law, the king's commandment was, that they should put him to death. Thus did they according to their might unto the Israelites every month, to as many as were found in the cities. And on the twenty-fifth day of the month they sacrificed upon the altar, which was upon the altar of burnt offering. And according to the commandment [begun in 168 B.C.], they put to death the women, that had caused their children to be circumcised.

Some equate Hanukkah with Christmas, but actually it has no relation to Christmas.
cised. And they hanged the infants about their necks, and plundered their houses, and slew them that had circumcised them. And many in Israel were strengthened and firmly resolved not to eat what was unclean. And they chose to die, that they might not be defiled with food, and that they might not profane the holy covenant; and they died. And there was very great wrath upon Israel."

Against almost unbelievable odds the Maccabees (Hasmoneans) fought their pagan Syrian overlords. In Chislev 165 B.C. all images of Jove were destroyed. The polluted altar was removed. A new altar was built and new vessels were placed in the temple to replace the old. All was accomplished in three weeks. On the 25th of Chislev the temple was dedicated with sacrifices and praises. This meant victory of the ancient Hebrew faith over Greek paganism and idolatry. Settlers in Jerusalem lit lamps in front of their homes to symbolize the Law, called "Light." The Hasmonean leaders decreed that the day (25th of Kislev) should be observed as a joyous feast in commemoration of the cleansing of the temple.

**Institution of the feast.** Here the great difference is seen between the feasts of Leviticus 23, divinely ordained, handed down by Moses, and conveying the connected message of the divine plan and the 25th of Kislev the temple was dedicated with sacrifices and praises. This meant victory of the ancient Hebrew faith over Greek paganism and idolatry. Settlers in Jerusalem lit lamps in front of their homes to symbolize the Law, called "Light." The Hasmonean leaders decreed that the day (25th of Kislev) should be observed as a joyous feast in commemoration of the cleansing of the temple.

**Institution of the feast.** Here the great difference is seen between the feasts of Leviticus 23, divinely ordained, handed down by Moses, and conveying the connected message of the divine plan and the spirit of Abraham, the Jews. Then in order to introduce the heart of the gospel, show the importance of light in the life of all men through all the ages. Light is a constant theme in the Scriptures from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22 in numerous passages. The first spoken words in Creation were concerning light (Gen. 1:3). The contrast between light and darkness throughout the Bible is a vital one and unmistakable, not only in the physical realm but even more in the spiritual one. No wonder our Lord Jesus declared: "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). For Jew and Gentile alike!

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Shall We, Then, Live by Grace?

by James A. Freerkens

Young man, you ought to be ashamed of yourself, playing ball on the Lord’s day!”

“But Pastor Green preached Sunday that we are under grace, not under the law, so I don’t have to follow those Old Testament rules.”

This common scenario illustrates only one of the many similar questions occurring frequently among godly Christians today. Has God done away with the law of Moses? If so, can we work on Sunday? And if we are not under the law, are we then under the Ten Commandments? If we are under the Ten Commandments, shouldn’t we be keeping all 613 commandments of the Old Testament?

Problems confront believers on every hand as we seek to discern our relation to the Old Testament law and to grace. Whole denominations and cults have been developed around errant views concerning the law. Systems that follow the priestly order of the Old Testament have certainly placed themselves under its law. Others plainly teach that the keeping of the Sabbath and other legal matters are necessary for salvation or godly living.

We are enslaved not only by religious leaders, but by our own impulses as well. We push ourselves into an outward, legalistic system. Living under external regulations is easier than surrendering our lives to the Holy Spirit. Our church’s brief ethical code is less demanding than the dictates of the Spirit.

For example, students at Liberty University do not always appreciate the written code of the student handbook, The Liberty Way. But later many find that abiding by the handbook is easier than responding to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

The Removal of the Mosaic Law

The scriptural proof of God’s removal of the law is abundant. In Galatians and Romans Paul specifically deals with the law and speaks clearly of its removal. “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace” (Rom. 6:14; cf. Rom. 7:1-6; 1 Cor. 9:20-21). “Wherefore then servest the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; . . . But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which would afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster” (Gal. 3:19; 23-25).

But why and in what way has the law been removed?

Reasons for its Removal. God has removed the Mosaic Law from the life of His people because it cannot accomplish a positive work. It cannot save; it cannot sanctify. It reveals man’s sin, but it cannot release him from it. Though the law is holy, it cannot make us holy (Rom. 7:12-24).

God has provided a better program. He has written His law upon the tablets
of our hearts, prompting and aiding us by the Spirit, who indwells us (Rom. 8:3). The law written on stony tablets has given place to the law written upon our hearts. The external conviction of the law has given place to the inner conviction of the Spirit.

**Extent of its Removal.** In speaking of God's removal of the law, we must not suggest that God has annihilated it. That is far from the truth. Jesus expressly states that He came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it (Matt. 5:17-18). Paul is clear that his preaching of faith in no way annuls the law; indeed, it establishes the law (Rom. 3:31). He preached that Christ was the end (Greek, telos) of the law, not that it was terminated, but that it was terminated "to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 10:4).

While the law was not annihilated, its removal was complete. The Mosaic Law is often compartmentalized into three units: civil, ceremonial, and moral. Though most people can easily accept the removal of the civil aspect involving Old Testament social regulations and the removal of the ceremonial aspect involving the sacrificial practices, few will readily accept the removal of the moral aspect—the Ten Commandments. But to compartmentalize the law is contrary to Scripture. The law is a unit (James 2:10; Deut. 27:26; Gal. 3:10). To violate one point is to violate all. To step outside the circle of the law at one point is to become a transgressor of all. The law is a single whole, much like a seamless garment. One tear makes it a torn garment.

No Christian seeks to keep the civil "part" of the law today (e.g., death to the owner of a reportedly vicious animal that kills), yet the removal of this aspect of the law is the very one on which the Scriptures are silent. By contrast, the New Testament, in the Book of Hebrews, extensively teaches the replacement of the ceremonial part of the Old Covenant by the New. Chapters 3 through 10 of Hebrews show how Christ is better than the ceremonial part of the Old Covenant.

**The Mosaic Law cannot save; it cannot sanctify. It cannot release man from sin.**

Commandments (with all of the 613 commandments) must not suggest that all moral restraint has been removed. Indeed, as we shall see, Christ has given us a greater standard, eclipsing by far the Ten Commandments.

The removal of the Mosaic Law by Christ must also not suggest that the law has no function during this present age. True, for the believer today that relation has been severed; he is free from the law. The condition for the unsaved man, however, is different. No man is released from the law or its requirements until he comes to Christ. Paul thus describes the law as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Gal. 3:24) and as a husband to whom we are married until we are reckoned dead to it through Christ (Rom. 7:1-4). Consequently, Paul says to Timothy that "the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane" (1 Tim. 1:9).

For believers, Christ is the termination of the Mosaic Law in every sense. For He brings us unto its goal of righteousness (Rom. 10:4). For the unsaved, the law continues in all its strength to reveal the righteousness of God and, hence, the condemnation of man (Rom. 2:11-15).

**Life Under Grace**

Understanding better our relation to the Ten Commandments, we might ask, "What principles should guide my life?"

We know that God has freed us from the Mosaic Law, and we realize that arbitrary guidelines are just another form of law. We must appropriate new principles. These principles involve the life of grace.

Three topics concerning the Christian's life under grace are important.

Our life in Christ involves two paradoxical realities: liberty in Christ, and a position under the law of Christ. In his letter to the Galatians, where he focuses upon the Christian's relation to the law, Paul writes: "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (5:1). And again, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh" (5:13).

Through Christ we have learned obedience and so have acquired liberty. Paul's difficult statement in Romans 6:14 supports this truth: "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law but under grace." Sin did have dominion over man under the law, but such is not the case under grace. Grace provides man with a new life, with an ability to obey.

Our liberty is further seen in that we have been removed from a position of a minor (or dependent) to that of a son of full age. Under the law man is regarded as a child who needs a pedagogue (Gal. 3:23-26). Though this word is translated "schoolmaster," no English word fully expresses the concept. In Greek culture the pedagogue was an old but faithful slave. Today, such a one might be called a tutor, truant officer, nanny, chaperon, or guardian. Though no one word will suffice, they all aid in expressing this ministry of bringing a minor to proper maturity.

Before we were saved we needed a pedagogue to dictate our lives. Because of Christ's regenerating work, God can now trust us as sons and does treat us as such. The goal of our position as a son is God-likeness, which the law could not impart (cf. 1 Peter 1:13-16).

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And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and lineage of David,) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

—Luke 2:1-7

by Jerry Falwell

How mysterious, how wonderful, how beautiful is the Virgin Birth Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament we see man made in the image of God, but in the New Testament we see God being made in the image of man—the Incarnation—to become one of us, that He might meet all our needs, beginning with redemption. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:1 and 14). That is the Bethlehem manger.

The Incarnation involves two major miracles. When you try to take those miracles out of the Christmas story, you lose it totally.

Miracle number one is that God could take upon Himself the full nature of man, yet retain the full nature of God. But the Bible declares that He was as much God as He was man, and as much man as He was God. No earthly analogy can even remotely illustrate this wonderful and glorious truth: Jesus is at once, the God-man.

The second miracle is that a human body could be conceived within a mother’s womb without an earthly father. That is exactly how the Birth of Christ occurred. The miracle of the Virgin Birth was not the actual physical birth, but rather the conception of Christ’s earthly body. I heard someone say not long ago that the Virgin Birth of Christ is not very important. “We’re saved by His death, not by His birth. But if you do not understand and believe the Virgin Birth of Christ, He died in vain. Because if He were not God, whose Father was in fact God, He did not have the ability or the right to claim to die for a lost race. So you cannot deny the Virgin Birth and call yourself a Christian.”

In His perfect humanity, this virgin-born Babe in Bethlehem’s manger was as much man as He was God. He had a human parentage. In Galatians 4:4 Paul said, “But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of woman.” Jesus was a man. He was a perfect man, but He was a man, and He had the same humanity you and I possess.

His Humanity

Jesus had a human body, soul, and spirit. In Matthew 26:12 the Scripture records, “For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.” The woman poured the oil on His physical body. When Christ took the inner circle of three with Him to pray...
in the Garden of Gethsemane He said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). At Calvary, as He was dying, He said, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23:46). Jesus is body, soul, spirit. He is divine and human.

He prayed as we pray. "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed" (Mark 1:35).

He was tempted as we are, but He did not yield. "Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" (Matt. 4:1).

He learned obedience, just as we and our children learn obedience. "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered" (Heb. 5:8).

He grew hungry. "When he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered" (Matt. 4:2).

He knew thirst. "After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst." (John 19:28).

He was weary. He grew tired after exertion. "Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well" (John 4:6).

He wept. "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it" (Luke 19:41). He wept outside the tomb of His friend Lazarus. Jesus literally shed tears. He had those emotions.

He suffered. "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind" (1 Peter 4:1).

He bled real blood at Calvary. "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water" (John 19:34).

He died. And to add to His humanity, one day on the Cross of Calvary, the Scripture says He actually died physically. When Paul was giving the gospel to the Corinthians he said in 1 Corinthians 15:3, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.''

He is undiminished deity, worshiped as God by angels and men.

We serve a Saviour who was like we are. He understood what we feel. He knew what we know. He walked where we walk. Therefore He can be our faithful high priest. We serve perfect God, perfect man, wrapped up in one Person, the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no one like Him, nor has there ever been one like Him, nor shall there ever be one like Him. Only those who know Him possess eternal life.

His Deity

Christ was as much man as He was God. The opposite is also true. He was as much God as He was man.

The wise men searched diligently for Him, and when they finally located the Child they worshiped Him. "And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him" (Matt. 2:11). He is worshiped as God by both angels and men. "When he beheld in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him!" (Heb. 1:6). Right now in heaven the angels are worshiping Him, undiminished deity.

He is omnipresent. Only deity can claim omnipresence. When Christ gave the Great Commission, He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20). Jesus is everywhere at the same time.

He is omnipotent. He has all power. He said in Matthew 28:18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

He is omniscient. He knows everything. He knows where we are. He knows where everything is. He has all wisdom. When Nathanael was surprised in John 1:48 at how the Lord knew his name, Jesus said, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." Jesus knew him by name before he was born.

He forgives sin. Only God can forgive sin. No preacher, no priest can do that. Only God can do that, and Jesus is God. "When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sicken of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark 2:5).

He judges. Only God can judge. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son" (John 5:22).

He saves. Who can save a lost sinner but God? "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (Matt. 18:11).

He is without sin. This is a statement of fact. In His 33 years on this earth, Christ did not sin. Period. Not one time. Second Corinthians 5:21 says He knew no sin. First Peter 2:22 says He did no sin. First John 3:5 says He had no sin. Jesus Christ was the sinless Son of God. Even His enemies acknowledged that fact. Pilate, in John 19:4, said, "I find no fault in him."

Look at His character. His zeal, the zeal of His Father, caused Him to come to this earth to die.

Look at His compassion. He saw the multitudes and was moved with compassion upon them. He saw the sick and His heart was broken. He looked at the hungry and He fed them.

Look at His meekness and His gentleness. Jesus said, and He says to you and me today, in Matthew 11:28-30, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy..."
laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Look at His courage. From the moment He arrived in the Bethlehem manger He set His face like a flint toward Calvary, toward the Cross. He came to this earth to die. Nobody killed Jesus. He laid His life down of Himself that you and I might not go to hell, but that we might through Him have forgiveness of sins and eternal life and a home in heaven.

Look at His love. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son” (John 3:16). And while Jesus the Son was on this earth, He loved His Father. He loved His disciples. He loved the little children and would not allow the disciples to prevent their coming to Him constantly. He loved His friends. He loved His enemies. He loved the city of Jerusalem. We serve a great God.

He was a man, and He had the same humanity you and I possess.

In the past 6,000 years of human history there have been literally billions of people born into the human family on this planet, with hundreds of different languages and dialects. They practice multitudes of religions. They have numerous cultures. And yet with the diversity of these literally billions of people who have and who do now inhabit this planet, every single human being among these teeming billions share one vital thing in common with all the other billions of human beings, and that one thing is that their eternal destiny is determined by what they do with that one Person, the perfect man, perfect God, born 2,000 years ago in a lowly manger in the city of David.

Consciously or unconsciously, the world celebrates His Birth at this season of the year. As you celebrate, I would like to ask you the most important question ever asked. It is found in Matthew 22:42: “What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?” The poet said:

To the artist He is the One Altogether Lovely.
To the architect He is the Chief Cornerstone.
To the astronomer He is the Sun of Righteousness.
To the baker He is the Bread of Life.
To the banker He is the Hidden Treasure.
To the builder He is the Sure Foundation.
To the carpenter He is the Door.
To the doctor He is the Great Physician.
To the educator He is the New and Living Way.
To the farmer He is the Sower and the Lord of the Harvest.

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“What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?”

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Joy to the World

by Joni Eareckson Tada

I remember as a child walking outside on a cold wintry night, gazing at glistening stars, feeling the crunch of snow beneath my feet. I was filled with wonder and awe and deep respect for the God who, I knew, must be there. Christmas was a family time filled with exciting reminders of the goodness of God. The smell of scented candles, the brightly colored packages, the crackling of a fire, and the cozy fellowship of my family and friends were special gifts from God. Christmas was also a time of exciting activity—taking sleigh rides, baking up batches of cookies, or busily preparing for a church party. All these things I counted as gifts of God. And, as a child, I knew He must be there in the middle of our Christmas celebration.

Now, years later in a wheelchair, I cannot get around easily in the snow and cold. It's difficult to navigate a wheelchair in the ice or snow. I watch others go sledging now. I leave the baking to those who can more easily stir, mix, and cut. My hands cannot unwrap the gaily decorated packages. But the gifts God gives at each Christmas celebration are more meaningful than ever. For, limited as I may be, I still can do many things. Most importantly, I can express through my paintings the wonder and awe I see as a Christian.

Painting by mouth takes a great deal of time. Yet, that time can be used wisely. In the rush and hurry of this season, perhaps we all should take more time to contemplate the joy of Christ's coming. Restricted by my wheelchair, I must be patient with my slow progress in painting, but slow progress can often be God's way of teaching me to be patient with my disability. I must depend on others to help me mix my paints, and depending on them for these needs teaches me a great deal about dependence on God. The limitations may be pressing, but I've discovered that God uses my weaknesses to best demonstrate His power and grace. Each piece of artwork becomes a personal expression of God's love and His sustaining power in the midst of my limitations.

I remember the special lessons I learned when, not long ago, I prepared to paint a rendering of the Nativity of Jesus. As I began preparation for this painting, I sensed once again the child-like wonder, awe, and respect for the miracle of mother and child that I was about to recreate on canvas. As I planned color tests, organized my brushes and materials, researched subject matter, and worked on preliminary sketches, I paused often to reflect on the Christmas mystery of God becoming man—Jesus Christ in the flesh! What colors would I choose to portray the majesty of His birth? What sort of design would focus the viewer's attention on Jesus in the painting? Should I choose a large canvas for the rendering? What verses of Scripture could I use for inspiration, and what composition would best portray a mother and child? I wanted this painting to be my best effort!

After much preparation, I picked up the brush with my teeth and began to lay the color on canvas. As the painting progressed, I dreamed of the wonder Mary must have felt deep in her heart as she held close to her breast the Fullness of the Godhead. Jesus, who was older than time, now nestled in her arms as a new baby! Can you imagine her thrill as she grasped the tiny hands that had once laid the foundation of the universe? What joy she must have felt to lean down to kiss the cheek of God!

After several days of work, I reached the point of painting the face of Mary. As an artist, I wanted to capture something special in the look of this young virgin's face. As I began to paint, I wondered what she must have felt as she watched this same Jesus who had never slept, slumber quietly in her arms. Did she really understand that this tiny baby dreaming in her lap was the same glorious One who dreamed up time and space? As she sang her quiet lullabies, I wonder if she knew that this One designed her song long before she uttered her tune. I wanted the expression on Mary's face to reveal joy and wonder, beauty and peace. After all, she was beholding the face of Jesus!

As the design and composition began to take shape, I slowly mixed paints for the face of Jesus. This little One who listened to her lullaby had once laded out seas. This same Jesus had pushed down the valleys and pucked up the mountain ranges. The hand of Christ had carved out rivers and poured out the oceans. More than that, though, this Jesus was the One who laid aside His robes of state and put on the incredibly great indignity of human birth. He humbled Himself and became like man—Jesus among us for our redemption!

After weeks of work, I finally completed the closing details on my painting of the Nativity of Jesus. I leaned my head over and released my brushes out of my mouth and onto the specially designed tray. I backed my power wheelchair away from the easel to take a long final look at the total picture. As I studied each detail I felt anew the sense of wonder and awe at recreating on canvas a moment in history that was at once miracle and mystery. That God should love His creation so much that He should put on baby flesh in order to secure for us a rich salvation is, to me, a miraculous mystery. Certainly, God owed the inhabitants of this utterly rebellious planet absolutely nothing; yet, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," What a miracle. What a mystery.

The framed painting now hangs in my office. And whenever I have the opportunity, I love to tell its story. I may no longer take part in the kinds of Christmas things I once did as a child, but God has filled my weaknesses with real joy. The coming of Christ means that God can redeem us in the middle of our limitations, giving us peace, power, and purpose. With Christ's coming, truly we can say, "Joy to the World!"

Certainly, my wheelchair does not limit my ability to sing of that joy. And this Christmas, as on many Christmases in my past, I will join with friends and family in singing that beautiful old hymn:

Joy to the world! the Lord is come; Let every heart prepare Him room; Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare Him room And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! the Saviour reigns; Let men their songs employ; While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy.

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In the Eyes of the Beholders

by Angela Elwell Hunt

I couldn’t imagine a more perfect Christmas Eve. A light snow has been falling through the day, and now our street lies quiet and twinkling under the street lamps. My husband has a fire going in the fireplace; Christmas carols are playing on the stereo; and the kids are busy trying to string (but mostly eat) popcorn.

I am alone in the kitchen, stirring a huge pot of warm cranberry juice cocktail and cinnamon. My husband sneaks up behind me and gives me a hug. “Before I read the Christmas story,” he whispers in my ear, would you like to ride around and look for Mary and Joseph?”

Laughing, I swing around and try to hit him, but he ducks and retreats. “Or how about the three wise men?” he calls. “I’m sure they’re out there somewhere.”

He will never let me live it down. Last Christmas we met Mary and Joseph. Or at least I thought we did. Anyway, we had set out hoping for an adventure, and as far as I’m concerned, we met the couple from Galilee.

Last year I had spent the entire month of December trying to come up with a different approach to Christmas Eve. Because we live hundreds of miles from our parents, we decided that Christmases would be spent in our own home with our own family: two parents, two children, a dog, and a parakeet.

When we were single, and even the year our daughter was an infant, Christmas was not a big production. But after our son arrived I tried to find ways to make Christmas memorable without...
Grandmother’s cooking, cousins to play with, and the crowded warmth of visiting relatives.

We baked colossal batches of Christmas cookies, which disappeared by nightfall. We held a holiday open house for friends and neighbors. We attended a Living Christmas Tree. We went caroling from door-to-door. We kept an Advent calendar, painted pictures of baby Jesus, and had our pictures taken in Christmas outfits.

But on Christmas Eve I had no ideas left. We could not have friends in; most of them were out of town visiting relatives. The turkey dinner was planned for Christmas Day. So was the birthday party for Jesus, with candles and gooey birthday cake.

Suddenly I was inspired. I found my husband and whispered my three favorite words: “Let’s eat out!” At 5:00 on Christmas Eve in our small town, we were going out to eat a Christmas Eve dinner—if we could find one.

Our favorite restaurant was about to close its doors, but they let us in. The place was deserted except for an older couple eating ice cream. They welcomed our red-cheeked youngsters with a smile, and we ate our favorites—hamburgers and grilled cheese sandwiches. The older gentleman who managed the place stopped by our booth to talk. “I have a granddaughter about your age,” he told Taryn. “I can’t wait to get home and see her open her Christmas presents.”

The atmosphere was warm and cozy. We hated to leave, but I knew the manager wanted to get home. The frosty air was invigorating. “Let’s not go home yet,” I begged his family. “The Methodist church up on the corner has been building a Nativity scene. Yesterday only sheep and a couple of goats were there. Do you think they are going to have a pageant?”

Gary shrugged. “We can go check.”

Even if they don’t have a pageant, I reasoned, at least the kids can look at the animals and see what a manger looks like.

We parked in the corner of the Burger King lot next to the church. I peered at the makeshift manger scene and caught a glimpse of a man and a woman waiting behind the newly erected “barn.” The man had a full beard and long, silvery hair.

“This is it!” I shrieked. “Taryn, Tyler, look—there are Mary and Joseph!”

Gary couldn’t see the people from where he was and he was skeptical.

“Are you sure?” he asked.

Taryn’s eyes were wide in anticipation. She had been hearing about baby Jesus in the manger for weeks, and I wanted something to make the story come alive for her. We obviously had timed it just right—the church must be sponsoring a pageant. The Mary and Joseph characters were here waiting for the others to arrive.

We waited for a few moments in the car but no one else showed up. No spectators, no other characters for the Nativity scene. We finally pulled the children out of the car and walked over for a look. Gary was carrying our 2-year-old daughter; I had our infant son.

I approached the couple waiting behind the barn. “Is there a pageant here tonight?” I asked. “What time does it begin?”

The woman looked at me quizzically. I had not been able to see much of her. Now I noticed she was not in a costume. She wore faded slacks and a beaten coat too light for the cold.

“Hu-h? she asked, pulling a small transistor radio away from her ear. “Wanna listen to the radio?”

I backed away. Obviously I had made a mistake. A big one. I realized with a start that these people were probably two of the borderline mentally retarded residents of a home near us. I had often seen this couple simply walking the streets or riding the city buses to pass time.

I excused myself and joined my husband who was at the front of the barn. He rolled his eyes at me, and I knew that inwardly he was laughing. Mary and Joseph indeed!

While the children were enjoying the animals, the man and woman walked around and joined us inside the barn. The man said nothing, but the woman smiled and petted the goat. “He likes me,” she said. “He likes to listen to my radio.”

She held the radio to the goat’s ear for a while. I began to draw the children away. “OK, kids, we’ve seen enough. It’s time to go home now.”

The woman suddenly turned back to us. “Your baby would like the goat,” she remarked, smiling. “May I show him?”

I immediately thought of a hundred reasons why I should not hand over my baby to this strange woman. What if she hit him, or threw him into the animal pen? Suppose the man had a knife, and they stabbed us in this cold, dark shelter?

Not 20 feet away cars were passing by, and the Burger King hummed with activity, but I was oblivious to it all. I was debating a simple question—should I hand over my baby to a strange woman so she could have a moment’s pleasure?

Why did I want to stop here in the first place? The answer came slowly. To give my children a few moments of pleasure and to teach them something about Christmas. But, an inward voice reasoned, perhaps I should take a moment to consider someone else’s pleasure and learn something about Christmas myself. In an instant I knew what to do.

“I doubt my son would go to you,” I answered truthfully. “He’s very shy with strangers. But you may show the goat to my daughter.”

Taryn allowed the woman to lead her up to the goat pen, and as the woman stroked the goat Taryn stepped on the lower rung of the fence to peer over the top. I could not hear the conversation between them, but everyone, goat included, seemed to enjoy the exchange.

We said goodbye and climbed back into the car. Gary was grinning at my mistaken assumption and I felt rather silly. But perhaps it was worth it after all.

“Taryn,” I called to the back seat, “did you enjoy seeing the animals at the manger?”

She nodded. “Mary and Joseph are real nice. Jesus has a nice mommy and daddy.”

No matter what we do tonight, on this and many other Christmas Eves to come, part of the tradition will be missing. We will always miss the smiles and waves of Mary and Joseph as we pulled away from the Burger King parking lot. Wherever you are now, my friends, Merry Christmas, and thank you.
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Northfield, Massachusetts, has been called the most famous village on earth, except Bethlehem, because of its illustrious native son, the great evangelist D.L. Moody (1837-1899). One of his enduring monuments was the summer Bible conference there, the scene of so many historic gatherings.

On a summer day in 1914, while vast armies were locked in deadly combat, and rivers of blood flowed in Europe, the tranquil scene in tiny Northfield seemed to belong in another world. Multitudes on that fair morning streamed down Main Street under four rows of stately old elms and across spacious lawns to the great auditorium building on the campus of the Northfield Schools.

Nearly 2,000 assembled there—pastors, teachers, scholars, laymen, and distinguished visitors. After a brief prayer, A.T. Robertson rose to preach a message that touched the hearts and revived the souls of all present, creating an unexpected air of excitement. F.B. Meyer was ecstatic. Listeners came forward by the score to thank this man who opened the Scriptures to them as no Bible expositor at Northfield, or anywhere else, ever had before.

Archibald Thomas Robertson was of Scottish ancestry. He was born on a plantation near Chatham, Virginia, in 1863, but early moved to Statesville, North Carolina.

Archie's boyhood included making flower beds by the veranda, milking cows, feeding and handling horses, plowing, and many other similar tasks. It was providential preparation for a lifetime of labor, although in a different field.

Young Archie was converted at 13 and licensed to preach at 15. From his earliest days he had longed for education. Since his family was unable to help financially in his struggle, the local church association graciously provided for board, room, and tuition at Wake Forest College.
To get there, the prospective ministerial student borrowed $10 from a friend for his railroad ticket. He arrived at Wake Forest on November 6, 1879, with a consuming desire to learn—and $2.50 in his pocket. He was two months late entering, but he worked hard and caught up with his classes by the end of the year. A classmate noted, prophetically, that Archie soon led his class in Greek because of his fastidiousness and remarkable memory.

Since he had entered without any high school or academy background, Archie required six years to finish college. At 22, he graduated as class valedictorian with B.A. and M.A. degrees.

A. T. Robertson with his grandchildren.

He began holding successful evangelistic meetings, but soon felt called to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, to prepare further for his great life work. He was destined never to leave the institution.

Robertson received his Th.M. in 1888. He became assistant to the distinguished professor John A. Broadus later that year, taking up duties as instructor—at age 25.

He was named associate professor in 1890; five years later he succeeded Broadus as professor of New Testament interpretation—the position he held for life.

In 1894 he made his debut as a serious New Testament scholar when he wrote the “Critical Notes” in connection with Broadus’s Harmony of the Gospels. This work brought him recognition and respect among the Bible scholars of the day.

That same year he married Ella, the daughter of Broadus, whom Robertson called his “truest earthly friend.”

A former student recalls the strong points of Robertson as instructor: “He was interesting; lectures were never dull, but sparkling with wit. He was a superb master of his specialty—the New Testament. He knew the possible interpretations of each passage and had good authority for his own. He made the New Testament live. One could feel his depth of love for the Lord and for students, and his craving for them to do their very best.”

Robertson taught more than 6,000 of the 7,000 students who passed through the seminary from its founding until his homegoing. His alumni occupied New Testament chairs in seminaries in many foreign countries and various U.S. institutions. He often lectured at Winona Lake, Northfield, and other assemblies.

He was known as quiet, even retiring, yet he and seminary president John R. Sampey “often enlivened faculty meetings with keen repartee.”

Robertson was slightly under six feet tall, with a tendency to stoop in later life. His well-formed frame, slender in his youth, filled out in later years. His clear blue eyes were striking and most impressive. He had an affectionate nature and a deep love for parents and children.

A student once observed him on a train trip. A little girl across the aisle was playing with her doll when a lurch of the train smashed the doll’s head. The parents appeared unconcerned at the child’s grief. Robertson, great, eminent, ecclesiastic that he was, dried the girl’s tears and comforted her as if he were her father, telling her how the doll could be made better than new.

A preeminent and world-famous scholar, Robertson wore out a dozen Greek Testaments in his lifetime.

A preeminent and world-famous scholar, Robertson wore out a dozen Greek Testaments in his lifetime. He wrote 45 books. The Library of Congress Card Catalog today contains 60 entries under his name, including various editions. Among the most popular and still widely used is his six-volume Word Pictures in the New Testament. Decades of Bible students have profited enormously from this work, and future generations will doubtlessly follow the same pattern. In addition, for 30 years he wrote at least one article a year for various theological journals.

Of course his magnum opus is clearly A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research. Elgin S. Moyer, in Who Was Who in Church History, called it “the largest (1454 pp.), most comprehensive New Testament grammar in existence.” It was 26 years in preparation, the fruit of Robertson’s intense, scholarly study and untiring research.

In the fourth edition of this great work, the publisher declared, “Nothing comparable to this notable record has, we believe, occurred since Erasmus first printed his Greek New Testament in 1514, precisely 400 years before the appearance of Professor Robertson’s Large Grammar.”

This monumental work has gone through 14 printings of 21,000 copies since Broadman began issuing the fourth edition. Earlier figures from the original publisher are not available.

Moody Monthly asked rhetorically (after Robertson’s homegoing), “Had he any peer in his chosen field? What a treasure he has left behind him for the coming generations of Christian teachers and preachers! What a debt the church will ever owe to him through the grace of God.”

On September 24, 1934, Robertson labored in his office until class time. He had reached Matthew 14:21, marking it so he could resume work later. But he never returned. He was stricken in class, taken home, and went to be with the Lord that day.

In the seminary lot in Cave Hill Cemetery, a granite cross lies upon his grave, surrounded by ivy from his home, inscribed: “To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Bernard R. DeRemer is a freelance writer in West Liberty, Ohio. References for this article available upon request.
The second reality concerning our life of grace involves the law of Christ. Though we have liberty, we also have responsibility. When a child passes into adolescence, he gains not only independence but also responsibility. The two must develop at the same rate. Such is also true of God’s children. This responsibility can be called the law of Christ. The New Testament speaks several times of such a law (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 9:19-21; James 2:8, 12).

For a Christian to imagine that God has set him free to run on his own (to do his own thing) misses the mark of biblical revelation by a long way. Our freedom from the Mosaic Law is not an occasion for self-gratification, nor is it removal of all law from our spiritual life. Paul writes, “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God” (Rom. 7:4).

Two points should become clear from this text. First, though my marriage to the law has ended because of death (a reckoned death), yet now I am neither single nor free. I have become married to Christ. I am not in some lawless state; I am under the law of Christ. Secondly, the purpose for my new marriage is a new fruitfulness toward God. God’s goal has always been that man might be holy, even as God is holy. Now progress can be made toward that goal.

The nature of life under grace is that it involves both a liberty and a law, both a release and a responsibility. The New Testament sets forth basic principles of Christian living. First, our lives must be directed toward Christ. Our goal is to please our Redeemer. Our love for Christ constrains us to live for Him and not for ourselves (2 Cor. 5:14-15). Jesus said that our devotion to Him will cause us to keep His commands (John 14:23). Living under grace means living unto Christ.

Love is the second principle that must guide our lives under the law of Christ. Christ, following the statements of the Old Testament, demonstrates that love is the essence of even the Mosaic Law (Matt. 22:35-40). Paul then demonstrates this love to be the essence of the new law of Christ (Gal. 5:13-14; Rom. 13:8). James describes this love as the fulfillment of the royal law of Christ (2:8).

Love is the first by-product of the indwelling Spirit (Gal. 5:22); love is greater than any spiritual gift and greater even than faith or hope (1 Cor. 13). Living under grace means living by love.

The third principle of living under grace involves the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit interprets the situations of our daily lives, showing us through the Word of God how to live. We grieve Him when we ignore His leading (Eph. 4:25-32). When we do walk in the Spirit, however, we never carry out the sinful deeds of the flesh (Gal. 5:16 ff).

As Christians living under grace, we need to allow these three principles to direct our lives. Christ must be the goal of our thoughts and actions; love, the motiva-ting factor; the Spirit, our means of success. Now note the demands God places upon us. The removal of the Mosaic Law has not resulted in a lowering of God’s standard. Indeed, only now can its true heights be comprehended. Jesus discusses the Jewish concept of the Mosaic Law in contrast to God’s intended standard in Matthew 5:21-48. His conclusion expresses the demand of God’s standard: “Ye therefore be perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Matt. 5:48). Peter demonstrates this standard of holiness coupled with our new life under grace (1 Peter 1:13-16, 22-23). Grace demands a superhuman manner of life encompassing the thoughts and intents of our hearts. Grace demands a spiritual life, not struggle in the flesh, but a reliance upon the Spirit.

Two improper responses commonly arise from the doctrine of the liberty of grace. The first is the reaction of license, that is, unrestrained living. Since we are free from the Mosaic Law, some may feel that we are free to live as we choose. This was William Hendriksen’s (N.T. Commentary: Romans, p. 3) concern when he wrote: “Today, too, especially among those influenced by the breakdown of the Reformation, many have come to a false notion that Christian living means doing what God approves...”

No doubt such individuals exist. If they are born again, they are surely immature. Fundamentalism, however, does not promote such ideas, for the admonitions of Scripture are clear (Gal. 5:13; 1 Cor. 8:9, 12; Rom. 14:22).

Along with the ungodly reaction of non-restraint is the equally destructive practice of legalism. Though we all have an idea of what legalism is, that idea is difficult to articulate. Though we may easily identify someone else as a legalist or at least as legalistic, probably none of us would consider himself a legalist. Nevertheless, we all have that tendency.

A definition of legalism is essential. Charles Ryrie’s definition of legalism as wrongly restricted liberty focuses directly upon the problem. Certainly, restrictions are necessary in our Christian life. The basis for these restrictions separates the godly person from the legalist. Just as wrongly directed trust separates the legalist from the biblicist in the area of salvation, so wrongly restrained living distinguishes the legalist from the godly believer. A person is a legalist based upon the reason why he practices what he does.

Jesus identifies some common legalistic motives in serving God. We could be performing our religious acts to impress people (Matt. 6:1-2) or to win their approval (Matt. 23:1-7). Or we may be zealous (sincere) in our action, but ignorant in our deed (Matt. 7:21-23). We might merely desire to fulfill the law itself (Matt. 23:23, cf. Rom. 10:2-3). These are legalistic motivations and will lead a Christian to emptiness and despair.

Yet, the casting off of legalism must not involve the casting off of moral conduct. Legalism must be understood as wrongly restrained living. Hence, the removal of legalism must be the removal of wrongly motivated restraint, not the removal of restraint (1 Peter 2:11; Rom. 13:14; 1 Thess. 5:22). If we are to live above legalism, we must live by the Spirit.

Living under grace means walking by the Spirit. Walking by the Spirit manifests itself most consciously by the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, and self-control (cf. Gal. 5:22-25). Shall we, then, live by grace?

James A. Freerksen is professor of biblical studies at Liberty University, Lynchburg, Virginia. He holds a Th.D. from Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana.
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The tone is heavenly... for very down-to-earth reasons!
The lesson of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30) is that men with different gifts may make an equally good (or bad) use of them, and be proportionately requited (Plummer). Each supplements the other, but they are not identical. The Parable of the Talents enforces the exhortation in verse 13, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." The Parable of the Ten Virgins showed that those who watch for the Second Coming of Christ must be "wise," while this Parable of the Talents proves that they must be "faithful." The waiting may be long, but the Master will come in His own good time.

Two of those receiving talents make a hundred percent increase (five plus five, two plus two). They both receive the same praise ("good and faithful servant") with a share in the joy of their lord and promotion to still higher service. But we are here concerned with the one-talent man who presents a problem in unused power. This is the gravest matter in church inefficiency. It concerns both ministers and all other church members. The word here for talents does not apply only to money, but to all the gifts and graces with which one is endowed. Our very words talent and talented come from this parable. Developments in the use of hydroelectric power have shown what can be done with the unused natural resources all about us. The neglect to use the powers we have is the chief cause of the slow progress in the Christian life and the kingdom of God. Russell H. Conwell had a famous lecture on "Acres of Diamonds," which lie all about us, under our very feet, if we only had eyes to see and mind to use what we have. Let us study the one-talent man as pictured by Jesus.

He accepted his responsibility for the one talent. He took it from the hand of his master with the distinct understanding that he would use it for the benefit of his lord. As a matter of fact, a talent was not a negligible sum. It was about a thousand dollars and that is a great deal more money than many people have at one time. We admit that we possess moral responsibility. How many talents do we acknowledge? In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul presents a varied list of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the church in Corinth. They differed greatly, but each member was responsible for the gift or gifts that he actually had, not for those possessed by others. People are sometimes amazingly humble when they are asked to do certain things for the cause of Christ. They have a sudden attack of the inferiority complex. And if a collection is going on, they feel suddenly poor. But certainly we all will have to admit that we are entrusted with at least one talent by our Lord and Master who is now in the far country. He will come back and demand a reckoning from us for the one talent or more that we possess. Dr. Broadus used to say that 1 was a big percent. The addition of many zeros makes only zero. But 1 is a definite and positive start. Surely the do-nothing and give-nothing members of our churches
The farmer does not always reap a good harvest, but if he never sowed any grain, he would have no harvest.

This man had all that he was able to handle. Each received "according to his several ability." This is the law of grace. Men are not born equal in capacity, though all should be born free and with equal privileges and opportunities. Even if all men could start with perfect equality they would not long remain so. There is diversity of use, even when there is equality of opportunity. Paul makes all this perfectly plain: "But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will!" (1 Cor. 12:11). Let each of us rejoice in the gift that God has given us, with no jealous heart or eye toward those with other and perhaps nobler gifts. The thing is for each to use with gratitude to the full the gift bestowed on us by the Spirit (Rom. 12:6).

No one should feel unduly depressed by the limitations of his environment or the smallness of his task. Jesus said, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much." This is the lazy jealous scamp's excuse for his own conduct. His very words condemn him and prove him to be a "wicked and slothful servant," as his master called him. His own confession shows him to be unworthy of the trust committed to him. He was slow and incompetent and unworthy of more responsibility. "Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." That was the very least that the utmost caution and prudence called for. Even if he did not know how to turn over money so as to make more money, there were men who made it their business.

This man was a hoarder, a "deacon skinflint" kind of man, a tightwad, a deadweight. He accused his master of having a bad reputation and expressed fear of being blamed by him if anything happened to the master's old talent. So he hid it and now returns it safely with interest. The two others were invited to enter the joy of their lord within the house. This useless servant is to be thrust outside into the darkness, out where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. This figure of the outer darkness occurs twice as a picture of punishment in the words of Jesus before this parable (Matt. 8:12; 22:13). It is one of the descriptions of Gehenna, like the furnace of fire (Matt. 13:42), everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46), the worm that dieth not (Mark 9:48). Surely this man can represent only the nominal church member, of whom, alas, there are so many. But surely they need to be warned of the dire peril that faces a do-nothing. James calls faith like that "unprofitable." The master's reply does not deny that he is "a hard money-making Jew" (Plumber), but even so, that offers no excuse for the worthless slave. He was too lazy to trade, to do business with the one talent so as to make more.

This man lost the one talent that he had. "Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents." He had proven himself unworthy. So the one-talent man became the no-talent man. He was an "unprofitable" servant, and it was sheer waste of time and money to leave the talent with him longer. This is the law of nature. Atrophy overtakes organs in the body that are not used. In the Mammoth Cave in Kentucky the fish in Echo River have eye sockets, but no eyes. Living in continual darkness has caused the eyes to disappear because they were not able to function. This law applies to the non-use of the mind as well as the body.

This man lost his own soul. "And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The two others were invited to enter the joy of their lord where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. This figure of the outer darkness occurs twice as a picture of punishment in the words of Jesus before this parable (Matt. 8:12; 22:13). It is one of the descriptions of Gehenna, like the furnace of fire (Matt. 13:42), everlasting punishment (Matt. 25:46), the worm that dieth not (Mark 9:48). Surely this man can represent only the nominal church member, of whom, alas, there are so many. But surely they need to be warned of the dire peril that faces a do-nothing. James calls faith like that dead (2:26). Undoubtedly some members in our churches are dead, walking skeletons. The Parable of the Talents touches every one of us in a vital spot. By our fruits we shall be known, not by empty professions or loud claims of piety.

This anniversary year, reach more people than ever before with the Word of God. The American Bible Society is happy to announce a new anniversary edition of the King James Version Bible at our lowest price in recent years—$1.50! This extra low price makes it possible for you to extend your outreach to others even more.

This full-size, extra low-cost edition features verse-style text with easy-to-read typeface, section headings and a list of words that have changed in meaning.

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375 Years
Don't Be Deceived
by Tim and Beverly LaHaye

Enrollment in many Christian schools is down. As we travel the country we often inquire as to the reason. There are two popular answers: increased tuition and “improvement” in public schools.

We cannot help you with the tuition, but certainly can enlighten you regarding the “improvement.” Who says public schools are getting better? Why, public school officials, of course. How objective do you think they are?

True, some public schools are making noises about better discipline and getting back to basics, but you will find that most are still not appropriately equipped to educate Christian children. These children have been loaned by God to Christian parents, who have been given the responsibility to train them.

Do not be deceived by the public schools’ claim of rising SAT scores. Even with a 2- or 3-point increase, they still appear woefully behind Christian schools academically, and they are still over 70 points behind their high of 1962.

Besides, the most important thing Christians object to in public schools has not changed—the anti-God, hostile attitude toward Christianity, and the extremely secular philosophy of education.

For example, public schools still teach evolution only; the Bible is still forbidden; moral absolutes are not welcome; and in many cases permissiveness is encouraged. Religious history is all but omitted from their textbooks, and with some courageous individual exceptions, many schools permit teachers to conduct harmful values clarification classes.

Yes, Christian education can be expensive, but most of the parents we know believe it is worth it. Remember, the most valuable possession you have is the mind of your child while it is on loan to you from God. Liberals and Secular Humanists—no matter how educated—are still not qualified to educate Christian children.

Where Shall We Spend the Holidays?

The first Christmas of our married life, my husband and I were on the road heading toward the in-laws, 125 miles away. But Bob and I were not traveling together.

We wanted to please both sets of parents during Christmas break from college classes. Unfortunately, by dividing ourselves between two families, we seemed to please no one. In the months that followed, the holidays-with-whom problem came up for discussion. To lessen the conflict and frustration of family pressures, we initiated a pattern we followed for 35 years.

Thanksgiving, we alternated between our own town (where my parents also lived) and the hometown of my husband’s family. But at Christmas we stayed home, inviting family with your family? Christ’s birth assumes its primary importance when love draws others into a group.

There are many variables when working out family activities. Great distances make Christmas appear to be the only time
A Gift from Your Heart... Your Time and Love

This Christmas season, why not take some cheer and love to an orphanage or nursing home? First, check with the administrator of the home to obtain permission and set a date. Then plan your visit.

Create a festive and exciting atmosphere by taking home-baked goodies and fruit as gifts, placed in decorated boxes and wrapped with red and green ribbons. With a smile on your face and a twinkle in your eye, gather your hosts together to sing Christmas carols. Read the Christmas story from the Bible. Take time to pray and talk with the children or elderly. You might even want to have Christmas cards to give each one.

Some orphanages allow families to "adopt" a child for a few days at Christmas time. This gives families a chance to share their blessings with a child who has no family. In the warmth of a loving home, the child receives gifts and participates in the celebration of Christ's birth. It can be a rewarding and memorable experience for everyone.

In January, after all the seasonal festivities are over, your newfound friends may experience a time of loneliness and depression. Be sure to follow up with a visit and occasional phone call to lift their spirits and let them know you care.

At Christmastime

I have a tiny musical Christmas tree with a wee angel in it that plays "Standing on the Promises." When I wind it up it chimes with valiant enthusiasm, but as it runs down it also slows down, sometimes stopping before the tune is finished—that is, it stops standing on the promises and is only sitting on the premises! I have often preached about how Christians mistake the one for the other.

It is possible to stand on the promises in an austere orthodoxy that knows little of resting in the promises and living day by day on the strength of them. I want to stand on the promises and not run down in the middle of my life like the little music box.

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Conquering the Long-Distance Christmas Blues

The bells of Christmas rang sweetly for me as the glow of a happy marriage promised to blend with the glory of the season. My life was so full that I nearly dismissed the nagging feeling that crossed my mind when I thought of my mother and my grandmother. We had spent Christmas together for many years, and this being our first apart, I knew they would be lonely.

United Parcel would deliver my presents, and I would make the long-distance call that seemed a poor second to being together, but that was not enough to keep the Christmas blues from visiting two dear ladies. I wondered what I might do to fill the gap.

My first bit of inspiration came from a song, "The Twelve Days of Christmas" always set my mother's soul

Cindy B. Gunter

Lucibel Van Atta

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Lucibel Van Atta
A few years later my mother and my grandmother both died the same year. Now my husband's daughter, Ann, keeps the Christmas spirit connected between Michigan and Arizona, where we retired. Sometimes I wonder how many postal employees enjoy the daily decorated packages she sends.

Although it is good to be on the receiving end, I wish I could once more be among those who do the giving. I wish I could provide companionship for the lonely, bring joy to those who are sad, and heal the brokenhearted. I wish I could offer freedom from the burden of guilt and introduce love to those who feel that no one cares. Unfortunately, I do not have the power to distribute all these gifts, but I know the One who does. God offers the gift that keeps on giving throughout eternity—His Son, Jesus Christ, whose love and peace is available for all who will receive it.

I, Esther M. Bailey

Are You Plugged in and Shining?

One of the things I like best about Christmas is the strings of colored lights found on Christmas trees, around windows, and across roofs. They remind me of so many things.

Each bulb has a filament in the center, which produces light to shine out for everyone to see. There is a special Christmas spirit that comes from within each Christian and shines out to everyone around us as well.

These lights can shine only when they are hooked up to the power source. You cannot put strings of lights up where the cord will not somehow be connected to an electrical outlet. Christians need to be plugged in to the love of God. His love is the power source for the unique glow of anticipation that is part of the Christian spirit.

If you remove one of these bulbs, they will all go out. Christians also need to work together. The Christmas season is one of friendship and sharing. Each member is important to the group. Each one is necessary. One person turning away or pulling loose affects everyone.

These bulbs are all the same on the inside, but the glass is painted or stained different colors. People come in different colors too. Different colors make the lights and people more interesting. These colored lights represent a celebration. So we too are all celebrating an important event in Christian tradition. The birth of Jesus is a very special time. Join in the festivities! Are you plugged in and shining for Jesus today?

Advice for the Single-Parent Christmas

Single parents often deal with unique frustrations. The following advice may help you make it through the often-painful holidays in one piece.

Admit to your children that you will have a hard time with Christmas. Let them know you are unhappy or lonely, as they are.

At some point in their lives children will have to deal with their own disappointments as far as the broken family situation is concerned. Your child must come to grips with a neglectful parent or face the finality of a parent's death in his own way. You cannot do it for him, nor should you try.

In the case of non-custodial parents, a buy-off will quickly be recognized for what it is. The parent who ignores his child all year will hardly be excused for such neglect just because he comes through with a lot of expensive toys or exciting trips.

You might want to spend the holidays with other single-parent families you know. Pool your kids for a Waltons effect.

You do not have to confront all your problems and disappointments at Christmas. If your loss is very recent, do not feel that you have to plow through the holidays like a trooper, dealing with all the pain. Taking some shortcuts or glossing over some sore spots is all right.

Think carefully before you decide to get together with your former spouse. Such reunions during holidays are nearly always painful for everyone involved.

Adapted from The Christmas Book by Alice Slaiceu Lawhead, © 1985. Used by permission of Crossway Books.

Family Bookshelf

10 Best Gifts for the Children on Your List

Critter Country books and tapes by Christine Wytzen, Standard Publishing, $4.95/book and cassette, $1.59/book only

Precious Moments Bible New King James Version, Thomas Nelson Publishers, $16.95/white, $19.95/colors

Bible Stories in Rhyme by Jean Bernard Thompson, Moody Press, $15.95

Choosing God's Way by V. Gilbert and Ronald A. Beers, Victor Books, $11.95

Giant Steps for Little People by Kenneth N. Taylor, Tyndale House Publishers, $6.95

The Bible in Pictures for Little Eyes by Kenneth N. Taylor, Moody Press, $11.95


Bible Stories in Rhyme by Jean Bernard Thompson, is an easy-to-read book of Bible stories children love to hear. The fact that they rhyme makes the stories catchy, and the 6-year-old will enjoy picking out the rhyming words. Lots of pictures illustrate the stories and hold the attention of the young listener. (Moody Press, 1986, 119 pp., $15.95)

An excerpt from Bible Stories in Rhyme by Jean Bernard Thompson

As Jesus continued to teach the importance of hearing and living His Word, He knew that some hearts would be moved by His message, while others would never be stirred.

He told of a sower who planted some seeds on four different kinds of terrain. When some of the seeds simply shriveled and died, He said that the soil was to blame.

The sower, of course, is the Savior Himself; the seeds are the words He relays; the soils are the people that, hearing His words, receive them in different ways.

Editor's Note: Tim LaHaye plans to write a new book on How to Avoid the Trauma of Divorce. Before doing so, he is conducting a survey of divorced Christians to see the reasons behind their tragic circumstances.

If you know of divorced Christians who would participate in this anonymous survey, please have them write to Dr. Tim LaHaye, 122 C Street, NW, Suite 850, Washington, DC 20001. Participants will receive a free copy of the book upon publication.
I'm delighted to have been created woman," she begins as she addresses a meeting of Christian women. "I think women need to be appreciated and recognized for the contributions they have made to society in every area of life. On a personal level, I believe women need to find their identity, not in their careers, not even in their husbands and children, as important as they are, but rather in the God who made them. From that relationship will come the greatest of all self-esteem."

Dee Jepsen was born and reared on a small Iowa farm in the post-depression years. Her mother died when Dee was on the threshold of adolescence, and Dee reports that communication with her father was never good. After a period of rebellion she left home for an early marriage. It was a mistake, and even the daughter she bore did not mend the ill-fated union.

Dee believed in God, but knew she did not have a personal relationship with Him. When her first marriage ended in divorce, she felt defeat and an overwhelming sense of failure. She worked two, sometimes three, jobs to support her child, and later met Roger Jepsen. She married him, became mother to his four children, and together they added another child to the brood.

Dee was happy in her new marriage and found her identity in her successful and ambitious husband. He obtained a county office, then ran successfully for state senator. When he won an election for state lieutenant governor, his attention shifted from home to politics and Dee became frightened. Her identity and her sense of self-worth were dependent upon her husband. Now he seemed to be drifting in another direction, and she had no support. One night by her bedside she prayed to receive Christ, seeking the stability and support she desperately needed. "It was no big emotional experience, but it was real," she recalls. She began to pray that her husband would find the same peace in Christ. Her prayers were answered seven years later.

In 1978 when Roger Jepsen announced that he would run for the United States Senate, Iowa politicians doubted his good sense. His efforts seemed doomed from the start. But Roger Jepsen did win the Senate race, and he and his wife found themselves in Washington, D.C.

Dee worked as an unsalaried assistant in her husband's office and found that politics, formerly a point of conflict in their marriage, had become a point of unity. "The nicest thing about being married to my husband is knowing that I'm appreciated and needed on a very personal level by someone, and to know that I've been a positive contribution to his life. He lets me know that. He's really my number-one fan, and vice versa."

In 1982 she was called to be President Reagan's special assistant for women's groups. "It's not easy to work in the White House," she says. "The work load is horrendous, and the white furht of the media is upon you." She found that practically all she did or said was criticized by the Liberal media and militant feminists. They found fault with her beliefs, her office decor, and even her hairdo. She worked in the White House for 13 months, then resigned to work in her husband's re-election campaign.

But in her contact with thousands of women's groups, she realized something profound. Women were experiencing unrest and dissatisfaction from causes far beyond the equal rights issue. The cries
of women were echoing from empty hearts and lives that had not found fulfillment, because they had not found the God who made them. “We came from His hand, and we are hungry to know Him—women all over the world have this hunger,” she believes.

Other issues also hinder women in their search for fulfillment. “Our secular society focuses upon material gain and worldly achievement—to the exclusion of personal fulfillment. If women were to be recognized for their value as human beings, and as very special members of society—who bring a viewpoint that’s needed all across the fabric of our society—that would help bring about the attitudes that provide opportunities and fair treatment, all those things the woman’s movement has been pushing for so long.

“I believe a woman’s greatest responsibility is to fully become what God created her to be and to be the very best at that calling—to develop to excellence her skills within God’s plan for her life. Because a lot of opportunities have opened up today, and society is pushing women that way, there are more things for women to make decisions about.”

The women who approach Dee have practical questions. “Should I work outside the home? Should I feel guilty for wanting to develop interests outside my family? How can I know God’s will for my life?”

Dee gives practical answers. “No one can decide for anyone else, but there are certainly guidelines. First of all, seek God’s plan for you. Some women can handle a one-ring circus; some women can handle a three-ring circus. We’re all different. Our priorities need to stay in the right order. Our first order of consideration is our relationship to God and what He wants, then our relationship to our husband, our children, and then to the world. The Lord will not violate those relationships if His plan takes us outside the home to do something, and I think he prepares our family for that. If we’re meeting our family responsibilities, not only physically but emotionally and spiritually, then maybe He has something else for us to do.”

The “something else” for Dee has not come easily. “My greatest challenge was to set aside the limitations the world has put upon us and to move into areas the Lord has called me—to-areas I had perhaps never considered and certainly had not been eager for—going to the White House, working for the President, writing a book about a controversial and touchy subject today: women.”

The challenges have led to what Dee considers her greatest opportunity. “To have been allowed to have a platform and an audience to speak about the Lord and His work is a great opportunity and privilege that outshines any other. On a natural plane, to serve as a special assistant to the President of the United States is a privilege and an honor that God allowed.”

The farm-girl-turned-President’s assistant has had an unusual opportunity to view the result of a woman’s influence. She often tells the story of President Reagan’s mother, Nell Reagan, who raised her children on biblical principles. President Reagan now owns his mother’s Bible, and Dee reports that the pages are margined with scrawlings and heavily underlined. “That woman probably would have never guessed that the small boy in her care would one day influence the country and the world with the principles she sought to instill,” Dee believes.

Who has been most influential in her life? Her mother. “My mother died when I was 13, but a neat thing happened after her death that spoke loudly to me. I remember my grandmother talking about my mother to another family member. She told a story about a time when my mother was a legal secretary. Mother had gone to a window to watch a passing parade. Her employer, who was a married man, had come over to the window and put his arm around her. Mother turned around, picked up her purse, and said, ‘I’m sorry, but I’m going to have to quit.’ That spoke volumes to me about our personal conduct as women and about the value of womanhood—how it can be cheapened so easily and how we should set ourselves apart from that.”

How do Dee and Roger handle the ups and downs of political life? Jepsen lost the 1984 election and now serves as chairman of the National Credit Union Administration in Washington. How does it feel when the public perceives you to be in political favor one year and out of favor the next?

“Well, you’re always in God’s favor,” replies Dee. “In 1976 we won the race that was supposed to be unwinnable, and God walked us through a campaign where everything, including the kitchen sink, was thrown at us. Through Scriptures and other means of reassuring us, He lifted us above the fray, and we were able to walk above it all. We went to Washington with a great sense of being where God would have us.”

“[In 1984] we worked very hard in an election we did not win. It was a nasty election, very difficult. It’s hard to read things you know are not true, or are half-truths, or truth distorted, on the front page of the papers or hear them on television. But in the midst of all the struggles, the Lord was so gracious and so present. He lifted us up above it all in such great ways that they were the times of the greatest spiritual growth together we’ve ever had. It’s like the three Jewish boys in the fiery furnace—once they were thrown into the furnace, God protected them, and they came out not even smelling of smoke. That’s really what happened to us. At the end, election night, my husband was able to say that since it now appeared that our state would have a new senator, he could see that God obviously had something else for him, and he was eager to get about doing it.”

She, too, is eager to get about doing what God has for her to do. If she could settle for a selfish plan, Dee says she would like to “just fade away—go cut into the mountains, paint, and be a nice old lady.” Instead she is working on a sequel to Women: Beyond Equal Rights, speaking to women’s groups, and planning other ways to bring comfort and encouragement to women. She’s excited about the future and its opportunities, and she believes “that the age in which we live is the best time to be alive. This time is crucial in the history of the world, and it’s crucial in God’s timetable. It’s a privilege to live now, but it’s also a tremendous responsibility.”
Who Ministers to the Unlovely?

A rescue mission is a last-chance attempt to reconcile a man with God. T.J. Sullivan (inset) has been ministering to the poorest of the poor for 30 years.

by Mike Fluent

By its very nature, a rescue mission is a last-chance attempt at reconciling a man with God. And as expected, it takes a Herculean effort.

"These people are not always real cooperative," says T.J. Sullivan, superintendent of the Union Gospel Mission in Dallas. "You're cursed every day and you're threatened. Some of the people don't want you to get close to them. Still, to lead one of the men to Christ and watch him grow is the greatest thrill."

T.J. Sullivan experiences that thrill dozens of times a month. He has been ministering to the poorest of the poor—the street people—for 30 years, and for 28 of those years he has been the superintendent at the Union Gospel Mission.

The 120-bed mission offers food, clothing, shelter, and employment opportunities to any individual who appears at the South Dallas doorstep. Each Thanksgiving and Christmas Day approximately 300 needy people crowd in for a turkey dinner. In addition, students from Trinity Christian Academy make and distribute presents to the poor at the mission.

When the essential physical needs are met, workers turn their attention to spiritual matters. There are nightly worship services and regular Bible studies, two gospel services on Saturday, and three on Sunday. The mission is the only such organization in Dallas providing for physical and spiritual needs free of charge.

A yearly budget of $185,000, and the sacrifices of those who share the burden, support the mission's efforts. The mission accepts no public funds. It depends exclusively on the donations of individuals, businesses, and churches. Nearly three dozen churches from the Dallas area help the mission in various ways. One of the typical larger supporters is Scofield Memorial Church.

"This isn't the type of ministry that people flock to get into," says Scofield member Mike Stockton, who sits on the mission's board. "I've always been for the underdog. Who ministers to the unlovely? Who ministers to the down-and-outer?"

His questions are not meant to be...
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John Gardner have been threatened by
Sullivan and assistant superintendent
inflicted by a belligerent alcoholic. Both
Superintendent Sullivan recently needed
and 5,000. Privately, some individuals
people in the city runs between 4,000
that the number of permanent street
homeless who sought shelter on an aver-
age night were parents and their children
(Newsweek, Jan. 6, 1986).

Studies by the City of Dallas reveal
that the number of permanent street
people in the city runs between 4,000
and 5,000. Privately, some individuals
speculate that the number is growing by
as much as 25 percent a year. Eighty per-
cent of the people who find their way to
Union Gospel Mission are chronic
abusers of alcohol or other harmful sub-
stances. Three-fourths of the women
suffer from some form of mental illness.
Superintendent Sullivan recently needed
10 stitches in his mouth to close a wound
inflicted by a belligerent alcoholic. Both
Sullivan and assistant superintendent
John Gardner have been threatened by
people with knives.

Nevertheless, God continues to per-
form miracles at the mission. More than
1,200 men and women accepted Christ
there in 1985. Another 500 rededicated
their lives. Cumulative attendance at the
daily chapels surpassed 89,000. And
131,000 meals were served last year—
about 350 a day.

"I first heard of the mission from one
of the elders at Scofield," says Jack Gray,
who is also one of the mission's board
members. "The elder took me to one
of the services, and afterward he asked
me if I liked it. "Sure,' I said. 'Fine,'
he replied. 'Next time, you preach.' I
did and two people were saved. That
was 15 years ago, and to this day I
can't get over the fact that two people
were saved because of something I said.
And I had never preached before in my
life!"

Representatives from several Dallas
churches compose the mission's board
of directors. Five of the men come from
Scofield. In addition, two of Scofield's
pastors have preached at the mission.
The church's high school students
regularly witness and provide music
there, and another 25 to 30 laymen help
in various capacities.

Each Dallas church that supports
the mission tries to send a team of
volunteers one night a month to con-
duct preaching, singing, and counseling
duties. Jack Mathison of Scofield
preaches once a week. Ed Marder,
also of Scofield, holds a monthly Bible
study.

All the volunteers agree that the work-
horse of the mission is T.J. Sullivan. An
alcoholic for 15 years, Sullivan was saved
at 33 on a West Texas farm. He immedi-
ately sensed that God wanted him in a
rehabilitation ministry. Within a year
he moved to Dallas to attend a Bible
school. Six weeks after his move he at-
tended a noon gospel service at Union
Gospel Mission, then only five years old.
By the end of the service he had found
his calling.

Sullivan talked to the superintendent
about joining the staff. Two weeks later
he started part time. A year later he be-
came the assistant superintendent and
the following year he stepped into the
superintendent's position.

That was 1958, and a lot has changed
since then. "When I first started here,"
recalls Sullivan, "most of the men were
45 to 55 years old. Now many are in their
teens and twenties."

"It's hard to categorize these guys,"
says John Gardner, assistant super-
intendent. "Their backgrounds are
so complex, but generally you're deal-
ing with broken families, abuse, and
alcoholism."

Gardner had a full-time sales position
with a North Dallas firm when he
developed a burden for the work at the
mission. "I never realized that things like
this went on," he says of the people and
the work. But like Sullivan, he was
swayed after he visited a daytime service.
"After that I started coming down here
Sunday afternoons after church. I had
a lot of opportunities to witness and
eventually to preach." Last spring he
left his sales job and joined the staff full
time.

The mission staff includes Sullivan,
Gardner, Jeannetta McGary (women's
director), and her assistant. Volunteers,
usually men who are completing a
rehabilitation program, perform a fair
amount of cooking and housekeeping
duties.

The staff hopes for a deeper commit-
ment from area churches in a recently
formed discipleship program. The plan
is for greater numbers of street people
to make a successful transition back into
society. The mission supplies a man with
groceries, rent money, and job place-
ment, but the men frequently need the
one-on-one support that a church body
can give.

"If you look into these guys' eyes,"
says Mike Stockton, "you'll see the
hurt and pain. And if those eyes could
talk, they'd tell a whole of a story.
Like I said, I try to look out for the
underdog."

Mike Fluent is a free-lance writer
in Dallas, Texas.

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even more sobering, point. Christians have failed to understand the real issues and are not playing their proper role as “salt.” As a result the situation is our fault. The church must bear the blame and must take up its responsibility to change things before it is too late.

I have only one quibble with Whitehead. He presents the antithesis between Secularism and Christianity as one between religious faiths. But if this is so, we cannot claim to have the truth—to be right. Nor can we claim that Naturalism is wrong. We must, I think, fight this battle in the arena of truth.

This is a very valuable book. It deserves to be read carefully. A great deal is at stake, including our very freedom and that of our children. (Crossway Books, 1986, 304 pp., $7.95) David Beck
An excerpt from
THE END OF MAN
by John W. Whitehead

It is virtually impossible to predict
the future. There are simply too many
variables.
The world appears to be headed
for a series of disasters. Rivers of
blood could flow.
At least two things are certain.
Dehumanization of people will con-
tinue, and freedom as we have known
it in the past is in jeopardy.

We must, therefore, concern our-
selves with humanness. A primary
task for this generation is in keeping
humanness in the human race—that
is, upgrade and then maintain man's
high place in the universe.

All men bear the Creator's image.
They have value, not because they are
redeemed, but because they are
God's creation in God's image.
Modern man, who has rejected this,
has little if no clue as to who he is.
Because of this, he can find no real
value for himself or for other men.

"Hence," Francis Schaeffer writes,
"he downgrades the value of other
men and produces the horrible thing
we face today—a sick culture in which
men treat men as inhuman, as
machines. As Christians, however, we
know the value of men."

We must also teach the true
nature of liberty. This concerns the
variable of internal freedom. Freedom
cannot exist externally without the
internal freedom that true Christianity
offers. Freedom can never be im-
posed from without. It must come
from within the person and flow into
the external world. Possessing this
true freedom is why believers incar-
cerated in concentration camps can
speak of joy and freedom even under
conditions of imprisonment.

Finally, we must not circumvent
true freedom by giving ourselves over
to modern deities, even if some grand
inquisitor demands it. As men and
women, we must assert that we are
creatures of worth and dignity made in
the image of God and not machines of
the modern state. We must not submit
to servitude because pleasure com-
mands it or because fear demands it.

In the words of the Apostle Peter, we
must obey God rather than men in do-
ing everything at our disposal to keep
true freedom alive for all people.

---

Haggai's exposure to a wide variety
of world leaders gives a distinctive qual-
ity to the book in the form of living illus-
trations from every conceivable setting,
supporting his successful attempt to
"bypass Western ethnocentrism" in the
formation of leadership principles.

Biblical precedents for his principles
are helpfully contextualized by his global
applications from both secular and reli-
gious sources.

This is not another positive-thinking,
motivational-rally-in-print nor is it exec-
tive philosophical theory. The tested
material is practical and applicable to
leadership at any level, from the family
to the CEO's office. It will provide
guidance to the novice, redirection to the
experienced, and a challenge to all.

One thing is certain though—only
leaders will appreciate the value of this
$12.95) Don Preiser

FAITH DEVELOPMENT
AND YOUR MINISTRY
Report based on Gallup Survey
by The Princeton Religion
Research Center

An effective ministry presupposes a
working knowledge of human growth
stages in the spiritual life. This landmark
study represents a major resource for
pastors and other professionals who
address this critical task of faith develop-
ment. Using self-assessment techniques,
1,042 adults were surveyed over a four-
year period by Gallup's telephone inter-
viewing staff. This study of individual
spiritual maturation was conducted for
The Religious Education Association of
the United States and Canada.

Seven hypotheses were tested. Some
of the most useful findings indicate that
faith development: correlates with times
of personal change or crisis (e.g.,
extended periods of loneliness); is 'posi-
tively related to one's involvement in
organized religion'; and involves a
struggle, incorporating both cognitive
and affective change (i.e., there was a balance
between adults who witnessed per-
sonal growth through discussion and
thought versus those who attributed
their maturity to strong emotional
experiences).

At its conclusion the Gallup report
provides practical implications for minis-
try, suggesting that spiritual leaders
should: encourage followers to challenge
their faith (e.g., to search, question, and
'own' their faith); remind people of the
enormous benefits of an active faith;
stress that a mature faith is a serving
faith; encourage the valuable bond-
ing of small fellowship groups and
more. (The Princeton Religion
Research Center, 1986, 82 pp., $25.00)
Ronald T. Habermas

WHEN YOU HAVE BEEN ABUSED
WHEN YOU HAVE FAILED
by Andre Bustanoby

The goal of most Christian authors is
to meet the needs of God's people in
writing. Andre Bustanoby has done
a masterful job in preparing these two
little books to meet the needs of Chris-
tian people today.

When You Have Been Abused is a
60-page case history of Marsha, an adult
woman suffering greatly because she
Most people feel that pornography is someone else's problem—not theirs. But the truth is, it's tearing away at the bonds that hold our society together. Consider:

- More boys and girls are infected by sexually transmitted diseases per year than were stricken by polio during the entire epidemic of 1942-1953.
- Studies have shown a link between the viewing of hard-core pornography and violent behavior against women and children.

Today our personal safety and the safety of our children is being threatened by the plague of pornography. Now is the time for responsible citizens to respond.

Read PORNOGRAPHY: A Human Tragedy. Because we need to know.

Available at your favorite bookstore for $14.95.

The Benson Company has another winner in this new release of Squire Parsons. "Scars of Love" is worth the price of the album. "The Great Conqueror" also presents Christ as King and Lord. Every heart will be challenged by the new song, "Set Me On Fire." This is truly a great album. (Benson, $8.98) Don Norman

Bill Gaither—Christmas Back Home in Indiana—Word Records
Sandi Patti—The Gift Goes On—Impact Records
was victimized sexually as a child. The reader can feel the compassion in the counselor as her guilt and self-doubts are faced and dealt with. The book contains enough counseling material to be useful to a counselor while at the same time being written in a way that makes it appropriate to hand the book to someone who may have had similar experiences.

The second book, *When You Have Failed*, confronts many failures Christians are prone to. Sexual immorality, substance abuse, the loss of a job, the loss of status in church or community are examined with the compassion of a Christian counselor who has been there. The author's personal testimony of failure and recovery, going from pastor to janitor, is most touching and genuine. (Here's Life Publishers, 1986, 60 pp., $2.95 ea.) David R. Miller

**HOW TO KEEP YOUR KIDS ON YOUR TEAM**

*by Charles Stanley*

Charles Stanley has transferred the precision of his preaching and the relevance of his concerns to his new book *How to Keep Your Kids on Your Team*. This is not a "how to" book of cross-referenced and exhaustively researched principles. Rather, it is constructed chapter by chapter with absolutely timely discussions related to the Christian family in today's world.

Stanley suggests toleration and understanding with teenagers, emphasizes modeling for younger children, and reinforces the health of a God-ordained, spirit-controlled husband-wife relationship. His book is filled with quotes worthy of framing and Bible references asking to be memorized for future use.

While some may swallow hard on finding Stanley allowing his teenage son to play in a rock band (for a while!), *How to Keep Your Kids on Your Team* is a joy to read and a blessing to share. So many relevant issues are discussed and Bible-based suggestions offered that readers will find it impossible to keep it to themselves. (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1986, 160 pp., $10.95) D.R.M.

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**FILM REVIEW**

**TURN YOUR HEART TOWARD HOME**

James Dobson's newest film series, *Turn Your Heart Toward Home*, is filled with quotes worthy of framing and Bible references asking to be memorized for future use.

For a time, those were argument-ending words. They amounted to "the last word in human wisdom," says J.I. Packer in his Foreword to this analysis of Francis Schaeffer's place in the future of Evangelical Christianity.

But that time was nearly a generation ago. Schaeffer himself is gone, and the question being asked now is whether he was a prophet just for his own time—or for all time.

This collection of 10 essays—dealing with Schaeffer's system of thought, apologetic method, and views on philosophy, theology, ethics and culture—will surely not be the final answer to that question. But, equally surely, it is a significant and revealing contribution.

Gordon R. Lewis, Clark H. Pinnock, Richard V. Pierard, Ronald A. Wells, Ronald W. Rugegsegger, Forrest Baird, Harold M. Best, Dennis Hollinger and James B. Hurlay pay tribute where they take issue where issue is called for. "Likely to make Schaeffer part of an ongoing debate, rather than allowing him to be either ignored or idolized.”—Arthur F. Holmes

"A very fair, judicious, and generous assessment of Schaeffer as a Christian thinker, apologist and polemicist.”—Colin Brown

**REFLECTIONS ON FRANCIS SCHAFFER**

Ronald W. Rugegsegger, Editor

Softcover/$12.95

Available at your local Christian bookstore, or from Dept. DMS, Zondervan Publishing House, 1415 Lake Drive, S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506.

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**Schaeffer says**

feel tribute is due and
Christmas Gifts to Christ

by Daniel E. Gelatt

ONE-A-DAY® is the name of a vitamin product, but it is also the average frequency with which requests come across a pastor's desk for financial and prayer interest in some type of missionary enterprise. The types of needs are as broad as the spectrum of the Lord's work and man's imagination in seeking to accomplish the work.

What do you do with all the requests for help? Relegate them to "file 13," give them prayer interest, or send sacrificial financial help?

First Baptist Church of Elkhart, Indiana, has tried a concentrated, continuing approach to meeting the needs of missions. We call it "Christmas Gifts to Christ." The approach is simple and direct.

By September a special project has been selected (from a list submitted by a missionary family) and approved by the leaders of the church.

By November the project has been announced with great enthusiasm to the entire church.

By Thanksgiving weekend, specially prepared banks and envelopes have been distributed to the entire Sunday school. A special program is arranged for the Sunday preceding Christmas. Except for the infants, the entire Sunday school meets together for the first 20 minutes of the hour.

After a greeting from the missionary whose project we have assumed, the procession of bringing our gifts to Christ begins. From the inquisitive 2-year-olds to the faithful senior citizens, they walk past the various receptacles and deposit their sacrificial gifts to the Lord Jesus Christ.

During the morning service an initial count of the gifts is given and everyone rejoices in song for what God has done in our midst.

The people who give have determined to put Jesus Christ at the head of their gift list. They have decided that a gift to the Lord Jesus Christ would be of larger monetary value than any other single gift they give. Children and young people have done extra chores or jobs to earn money to give to Christ. Some of our children even break their piggy banks and put all of their pennies in pop-can banks, shaking them happily as they bring them for the glory of God.

Through this effort and dedication, a quarter of a million dollars has been raised for missionary projects over the last 15 years.

For more details on "One-a-Day" missions opportunities, contact First Baptist Church, 2625 Prairie Street, Elkhart, Indiana 46517. In addition to a free packet of information, audiocassettes and videocassettes are available for purchase.

Daniel E. Gelatt is international administrator of evangelism and church growth with the Association of Baptists for World Evangelism, Cherry Hill, New Jersey. He formerly pastored First Baptist Church in Elkhart.

Sermon Outline

Great is the Mystery of Godliness—1 Timothy 3:16
A. Incarnation of the Son
B. Vindication of the Son
C. Manifestation of the Son
D. Proclamation of the Son
E. Exaltation of the Son

Word Study

Manifest (phanerō). As a verb this term signifies the acts of making visible, clear, and plain. It occurs most frequently in the writings of Paul and John, conveying the notion of uncovering, revealing, or laying bare. Used to signify the coming of Christ into the world, it shows at once that He has prior existence. God was manifest as One who already exists. Then it shows full disclosure. Jesus demonstrates all that God is. For this reason He said to one of His disciples, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

A Special Christmas Hymn

Father Joseph Mohr was the priest in a village in Austria in the early 1800s. He was frustrated because the church organ had broken down on Christmas Eve. Franz Gruber, the organist, had tried to repair it.

Mohr heaved a sigh. It was no use worrying about what he could not change. Getting to work, he started down the road to visit his parishioners. He stopped at a humble woodcutter's cottage just after a baby had been born. The kind pastor

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welcomed the baby before going on his way.

After making his calls, Father Mohr made his way back home. His thoughts were full of the baby he had just seen and especially of the Babe of Bethlehem, for it was Christmas Eve. As he thought about that Baby who was born the first Christmas, the words of a song came to him. When he reached home he quickly scribbled them down on a piece of paper.

When Father Mohr returned to the church he found that the organist had not yet been able to repair the organ. He handed him the paper on which he had scribbled the poem.

"Make up a tune for these words," he said, "and we will sing them as a duet for the Christmas service tomorrow, accompanied by your guitar."

The organist quickly composed a tune. "It was easy," he said. "The words sang themselves."

The next day the two friends sang "Silent Night." People liked it so much they called it "Song from Heaven."

### Matilda Nordtvedt
Adapted by permission from The Family Idea Book, © 1984, Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.

Silent night! holy night! All is calm, all is bright. Round you Virgin Mother and Child! Holy Infant, so tender and mild, Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! holy night! Shepherds quake at the sight. Glories stream from heaven afar, Heavenly hosts sing: "Alleluia! Christ the Saviour is born. Christ the Saviour is born."

Silent night! holy night! Son of God, love's pure Light Radiant beams from Thy holy face. With the dawn of redeeming grace, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night! holy night! Wondrous Star, lend thy light: With the angels let us sing: Alleluia to our King! Christ the Saviour is born. Christ the Saviour is born.

### The Debt Dilemma

After graduation, Jeff decided to wait to become a missionary. Actually, that had been decided for him the day he took out his second (or was it his third?) school loan.

Last fall he chose to take a job as a teacher to pay off those loans as quickly as possible—all $13,900. Otherwise, the mission agency through which he wanted to go overseas would not let him go.

A few states away, Mike and Linda Fish, recently married missions enthusiasts, plan to go overseas one day. Before they married, they decided to pay off their debts quickly. For months they worked part time and cut their living costs. Now that the other debts were paid, the house would be the last to go.

Mike and Linda have been successfully repaying their debts in order to go overseas. In our culture that's not an easy task. Jeff is struggling to make it. Others have failed.

Greg Fritz, head of the Caleb Project, an organization that specializes in helping its participants remain true to their mission vision, says, "Debt is often the first thing to distract people from missions. People can't go overseas until they pay off their debts, but in the process of paying off their debts, they get distracted by things like buying a car and a house. Before they know it, they can't pay off any debt."

John Kyle, director of Inter-Varsity Missions, thinks the local church needs to take the initiative in solving the debt problem early in the life of potential missionaries. More churches need to counsel parents and young people about education and how to pay for it. Kyle also thinks churches should make a concerted effort to help with the tuition costs of their college-aged members who are preparing for full-time Christian work.

Ralph Winter, director of the U.S. Center for World Mission, feels, "School debts are certainly one of the most tragic problems facing the healthy growth of the mission movement today—especially because they are essentially unnecessary." Winter says mission agencies and educational institutions need to rethink their definition of education for missionaries—coming up with education alternatives that are both experience-oriented and affordable.

Since many agencies and denominational boards require formal Bible training and some require training in special skills, potential missionaries are trapped in a sort of a Catch-22. They cannot go overseas until they have more education; they cannot pay for their education without going into debt; if they go into debt they cannot go overseas.

Most agencies specify that candidates cannot begin active service until they have no financial obligations outstanding. There is a practical reason for such policies. The salary set by sending agencies is large enough for living expenses, but not large enough for the burden of heavy monthly payments. Sending agencies are also leery of those who have large credit card bills or other payments that indicate irresponsible spending.

Finally, debt causes yet another dilemma—perhaps
just as stifling to the mission movement as its affect on potential missionaries. Many who otherwise could support mission work are prohibited from doing so because they are strapped with huge monthly payments.

One thing Mike and Linda realized was that even if they could pay off their other debts, they could never pay the monthly mortgage on their house and offer support to other missionaries while they are still here.

Today another potential missionary is signing loan papers, unaware of the affect that loan may have on his future. It could delay him in two or three years, or—as it delays so many—forever.

Maybe he will not fall into deep debt. Maybe some financial seminar will help him make wise decisions that will not jeopardize his future. Maybe his church will offer to pay for his education.

More than likely he will never get help, and he will never make it overseas.

Amy Prange. Adapted by permission from World Christian, © 1986, PO. Box 5199, Chatsworth, California 91313.

Church News

A $200,000 judgment against the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago for using songs without paying copyright fees has left churches uneasy,” said Chuck Fromm, chief executive officer of Maranatha Music, America’s largest publisher of contemporary praise and worship music.

According to Fromm, “Church leaders are confused about copyright laws. We felt it was time for a music company to blast through the red tape and help churches do their job. Our goal is to make it simple and legal for pastors to get good music.

Fromm says Maranatha’s plan “provides a one-step copyright approval process [which] often enables churches to use songs for one-tenth the fee charged by other music publishers. They can make their own bulletin inserts, overheads, and song sheets. No hassles and no additional requests for permission.”

For more information, call Maranatha Music’s Copyright Hot Line, toll free, at 1-800-243-SONG.

New officers for the Baptist Bible Fellowship were elected during the September annual fellowship meeting in Springfield. Harold Herringer, pastor of Canton Baptist Temple in Ohio, was chosen to remain president for the 1986-1987 year. Bob Perryman, pastor of Park Crest Baptist Church in Springfield, Missouri, is new first vice president, and Kenneth Gillings, pastor of Cherry Street Baptist Church also in Springfield, is second vice president. Tyrone Adrian of Glenwood Baptist Temple in Kansas City, Missouri, was reelected secretary, and Don Elmore of Temple Baptist Church in Springdale, Arkansas, will serve as treasurer.

Editor’s Note: Back issues of Fundamentalist Journal may be purchased for $2.00 each—prepaid—while supplies last. All issues from June 1985 through November 1986 are available. To order, make checks payable to Fundamentalist Journal and mail to Subscriber Services, Fundamentalist Journal, Lynchburg, Virginia 24534.

Missions News

Missions in India. By tradition, Christianity was first brought to India by the apostle Thomas in AD 52. Today, however, Christianity claims less than 4 percent of India’s 760 million people, and has recently faced opposition from militant Hindus and the government. Despite the fact that the Indian government and people recognize the valuable role Christian missionaries have had in areas such as education, Christianity is still viewed as a “foreign religion.” In Pulse, the Evangelical Missions Information Service quotes one Hindu leader as saying, “When anyone changes to another religion which does not belong to this land, they become anti-national.”

For years new missionaries have had difficulty obtaining visas to enter India. Now the central government has not only ceased issuing new visas, but also has failed to renew visas for missionaries already serving in the country.

At least two local state governments have passed legislation designed to hinder effective Christian evangelism. And for many years missionaries have been barred from entering certain areas to minister.

The September 1986 issue of The Church around the World reports that K.V. Thomas, a member of India’s ruling Congress party, said the government has decided eventually to expel all foreign missionaries. Thomas discussed this policy with Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, asking that permits be extended to missionaries, but the request was denied.

Although the Indian constitution provides for freedom of religion, low-caste believers can still lose certain privileges in education, employment, and career benefits. Along with Christians, Sikhs (2%) and Muslims (11%) are also facing increasing discrimination and persecution.

Howard Erickson

Prison Fellowship Ministries’ Project Angel Tree provides Christmas gifts to needy children. It brings joy to many neglected children of prisoners across America. For information on providing gifts or volunteering to help with Project Angel Tree in your community, contact Prison Fellowship Ministries, P.O. Box 17500, Washington, DC 20041, (703)478-0100.

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A Twentieth-Century Pioneer

"I learned to be a pioneer at Liberty University," said Ricky Eason, pastor of Seven Hills Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Virginia. "I learned how to really seek God in prayer, and I learned a lot just by watching Dr. Falwell's life."

Eason, who founded his church in 1983 after gradu-
ating from LU, has found great pleasure in his work. "Seeing more people get saved and being able to minister appropriately to the people of our church has been my greatest pleasure in the last year," he said. "We accomplished several of our goals. We organized school classes, built fellowship, and developed a good soulwinning program."

But Eason has found that the ministry is not different," said Eason. "The people have certain expectations that you have to learn. They respond in different ways. They express Christianity in different terms, and if you don't understand how they express it, you might misinterpret what they are trying to say to you."

Eason was raised in a black church, but since Liberty University and Thomas Road Baptist Church are primarily white, he had to readjust some of the things he was taught.

The greatest challenge is staying strong under the pressures of the ministry. There are financial pressures and pressures of your people's spiritual growth pains. Plus, the pioneering experience always takes a little extra. I've found it is a challenge to stand alone when it seems others may not be there when I need them.

There are particular challenges when pastoring a black church. "The cultural and working relationship is different," said Eason. "I had to contextualize my thinking," he said. "The message is not different, but the presentation is."

He and his wife, Sabrina, have four children: Jecoliah, Jubilee, Jessica, and Ricky.

Angela E. Hunt

Liberty Home Bible Institute Breaks All Records

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, Liberty Home Bible Institute achieved a record enrollment this past semester. A back-to-school special enrollment program enlisted over 200 new students. Harold Willmington, dean of the institute, reported that enrollment for the 1986 calendar year reached a record of 3,565 new students. The old enrollment record for the same period was 3,167 new students, held since 1978. Over 18,000 students are now enrolled in this two-year Bible correspondence program. Over 25,000 students have studied the Bible through LHBI since its beginning.

"Ten years ago Dr. Willmington and I dreamed that people of any age and any background might study the Bible throughout and methodically. We put together a program for people at home to study the Bible with us," said Dr. Falwell. "People everywhere can study the course. This is the same material Dr. Willmington gives the students in the institute here at Liberty. This course is for people who want to study the Bible only."

Students study all 66 books of the Bible, chapter by chapter. They learn the major Bible doctrines and choose from a broad selection of electives and practical seminars. Upon successful completion of the entire course, students graduate with a General Bible Diploma. They may come to Liberty and graduate in cap and gown.

"We had one student on a nuclear sub in the Atlantic. He asked for the material and requested that we treat him a little differently since he would be underneath for six months. He finished the course in two sessions like that. A few years ago we had a 16-year-old boy complete the course, and an 83-year-old lady completed it," said Willmington.

For a free information packet about Liberty Home Bible Institute, call 1-804-847-9000, or write Liberty Home Bible Institute, 2220 Langhorne Road, Lynchburg, Virginia 24514.

Toyland Spectacular

On December 21 TRBC will host one of its biggest annual bus promotions—Toyland Spectacular. Children who ride the buses to church will redeem tickets for toys provided by TRBC members, LU and LCA students, and OTC employees. Tickets have been earned by the children on the buses for memorizing Scripture, bringing friends, bringing parents, bringing Bibles, and so on. They have four weeks to earn tickets, and after church on the fifth week the children visit a display area of all the donated toys. Toys have different values. The more valued the toy, the higher...
the number of tickets needed to earn it. "This helps us get toys to needy children," said Jerry Cordle, bus ministry pastor. Through this event children realize that TRBC cares about them socially as well as spiritually. It also provides TRBC members, LU and LCA students, and OTCH employees the opportunity to participate in the spirit of Christmas giving.

1977 Pam Humble became the first deaf student to graduate from Liberty University. Currently, LU has 18 hearing-impaired students and Lynchburg Christian Academy has 7.

In addition to the nationally televised interpretation of the "Old-Time Gospel Hour," Hands of Liberty helps the local community by offering interpreters to citizens needing legal, medical, and educational assistance. At TRBC, Sunday school is taught for all hearing-impaired students. The National Counseling Center for the Deaf, located at Old-Time Gospel Hour headquarters, provides 24-hour, toll-free counseling service.

"Older women are commanded in Titus 2:3-5 to teach the younger. The weekly Bible study is the heart of this successful ministry. So many have responded to our ladies fellowship by saying, 'This is really meeting some needs I have,'" said Celeste Wemp, chairman of the fellowship.

Next year the ladies plan to view "A Wise Woman Honors God," by Darien Cooper. This video series combines principles from her best-selling books, You Can Be the Wife of a Happy Husband and The Beauty of Beholding God.

Once a month the ladies attend a missionary luncheon after the morning Bible study. Here they personally meet missionaries supported by TRBC and learn of their needs. Realizing that not all ladies can attend the weekly morning sessions, monthly evening meetings are also held. This year's agenda included a mini women's conference, a retreat, a Christmas festival, and will conclude in the spring with a mother-daughter banquet.

For Women Only

Women are special at Thomas Road Baptist Church. And the TRBC Ladies' Fellowship helps meet their special needs. Approximately 150 women gather each Wednesday morning for prayer, Bible study, and fellowship. Weekly guest speakers share personal experiences such as the loss of a child, invalid parents, disease, financial loss, depression, and so forth. They offer encouragement to those experiencing the same problems. After studying God's Word, the women break into elective classes on topics of individual interest. Courses include sign language, public speaking, future biblical events, Bible survey, family life, losing weight, crafts, counseling women, and a class for newcomers.

Looking Back... 1968

Ears for the Hearing-Impaired

"And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness" (Isa. 29:18). Until "that day" the TRBC Hands of Liberty deaf department will continue to interpret the "Old-Time Gospel Hour" for the hearing-impaired.

This outreach began in 1968 when Don Cabbage of the Bill Rice Ranch first taught a course in sign language. Two interpreters completed the course.

In 1973 the "Old-Time Gospel Hour" broadcast was first interpreted by the "lady in the circle"—Sue Willmington, director of Hands of Liberty. "The 'Old-Time Gospel Hour' is one of the few Fundamentalist broadcasts interpreted for the deaf," said Beverly Windsor, secretary of the TRBC deaf ministry.

Liberty Bible Institute accepted Fred Parziale as its first deaf student in 1974. He continued on to receive his diploma. In 1977 Pam Humble became the first deaf student to graduate from Liberty University. Currently, LU has 18 hearing-impaired students and Lynchburg Christian Academy has 7.

In addition to the nationally televised interpretation of the "Old-Time Gospel Hour," Hands of Liberty helps the local community by offering interpreters to citizens needing legal, medical, and educational assistance. At TRBC, Sunday school is taught for all hearing-impaired students. The National Counseling Center for the Deaf, located at Old-Time Gospel Hour headquarters, provides 24-hour, toll-free counseling service.

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Calendar

December
2—Students return from Haiti and Mexico City World Impact Campaigns
3—LU classes resume (after Thanksgiving break)
12-14—Living Christmas Tree, TRBC
13—Christmas Festival with Scott Wesley Brown at LU
18—LU semester ends

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“Giant Oaks from little Acorns Grow”
Mississippi Officials Raid Church-run Girls Home

If the Welfare Department didn't come in and interfere with the ministry at Bethesda, God would still be working in my daughter's life. There was definitely a change in her. I mean, God had touched her life.

Now I don't know if we'll ever be able to reach her again. So as far as I'm concerned, the State of Mississippi is responsible for trashing my daughter's life. I feel a lot of pain. But the real people who are paying the price are the children. They're lost forever. This was their last hope. This was their parents' last hope.

I hold the pain pretty well. But every time I think of years and years and years of suffering that we've had to go through. I just can't bear it. I might have to identify her in a morgue. I may never lay eyes on her again. —Mrs. Lynn Jenkins, whose 17-year-old daughter ran away from home after Mississippi welfare workers shut down the Bethesda Home for Girls in Hattiesburg, Mississippi.

The governor's office said they're not talking. The judge said he's not talking either. The Welfare Department refused to comment. The prosecuting attorney said he's too upset at Jerry Falwell to talk. Robert Wills, director of the Bethesda Home for Girls, was told not to talk about the case. The parents of the girls were told not to talk to Wills. And the media were told not to print a word about the state raid on this church-run home for wayward girls.

All is quiet in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Well, all was quiet until Jerry Falwell showed up.

"Hattiesburg, Mississippi," Falwell told about 2,000 pastors and supporters gathered at Central Baptist Church of Hattiesburg, "is the site of the worst violation of religious liberty in the history of the United States."

In the history of the United States? Let's start from the beginning.

On September 14, just three days before the Bethesda Home for Girls was to convert to a boarding school, the Welfare Department assembled 30 state agents, a handful of deputy sheriffs, two Episcopal priests, and the commissioner himself, Thomas Brittain, for an unexpected, invited, friendly visit to the girls home.

The entrance to the home was immediately blocked off, a court order was served, Wills was told not to talk to the girls, and the girls were told the welfare workers were now in charge. After some preliminary questioning by the social welfare workers and the two Episcopal priests, all 117 teenage girls were taken downtown, questioned, and then released to their parents or placed in foster homes.

Why?

"I don't know. They never gave a reason," said Wills.

Surely, they must have given some reason.

"No. All they said was they had a court order to come in, but no reason was given."

Well speculate. Why do you think the state raided the home?

"There has been a personal vendetta shown to us by these men for a number of years. And there's no question in our hearts that that was exactly what happened."

A vendetta? What vendetta?

"I don't know."

Mrs. Jenkins said she too tried to find out why the state raided the home.

After arriving at the girls home to pick up her daughter, Mrs. Jenkins said she met Welfare Commissioner Thomas Brittain on the front porch.

"He came up to me and told me I would need to get a welfare worker to check our daughter out. He said I couldn't just take her, that the welfare worker would have to take her and I would have to follow in another car. And I said, 'What do you mean?' And he said, 'If you try to take your daughter off the property you will be apprehended.' So we got into a heated argument. But I was upset because I didn't know why he had the authority to keep me from taking my own child.

"So I asked him, 'Why are you here?' And he said, 'We're doing an investigative report.' And he told me the home was not closed. And I said, 'What are you investigating?' And he said, 'Allegations made against the Wills.' And I said, 'What allegations?' And he said, 'I don't know.' And I said, 'You mean to tell me you're here to investigate something and you don't know what it is?' And he said, 'I'm here to tell you I'm doing an investigative report.'"

Though it may be impossible to determine the motives behind this "gastapo-like" raid, there are some interesting facts of information that may help put the puzzle together.

For instance, Commissioner Brittain is a former employee of the Texas Welfare Department. The Texas Welfare Department was responsible for shutting down the Corpus Christi homes of the late evangelist Lester Roloff. Because the Corpus Christi homes for wayward girls and boys refused licensure, the Texas Welfare Department closed the doors and sent the girls into the night. Within 60 days, four girls were found dead after having returned to their life on the streets. Unable to resist the pressure any longer, the Corpus Christi homes finally moved to Missouri.

Wills said he remembers "Dr. Brittain saying he had dealt with problems like ours in the past, but that was before the..."
Jerry Falwell hosts a press conference in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Rev. and Mrs. Robert Wills (far right) are directors of Bethesda Home for Girls.

The reference to an "open-door policy" was meant to be taken literally. For prior to the raid, the Bethesda Home for Girls kept the exit doors locked. This was to prevent the girls from escaping and returning to their lives of prostitution, crime, drugs, and illicit sex. (Inside the home, it should be explained, none of the doors were locked except the entrance into the director's quarters.)

"After the raid," Wills said, "the Welfare Department said they had the right to enter the home and remove the girls because we locked our doors. But they never gave a reason."

The Welfare Department, of course, could have raided the home years ago if this was the sole reason.

Was the "closed-door policy," then, a guise to move against the home? "It is obvious to me," Wills said, "that they moved in three days before we could get the doors unlocked because they would no longer have an excuse to raid the home. So you can see the conspiracy—their getting in here before we could actually open our doors."

During the raid, Wills said, one of the Episcopal priests told the girls that he "took drugs to handle confusion and that they could and should do the same." And later this same priest said that "he would see about getting some alcohol for one girl."

And there's another piece of fascinating information: After the girls were taken "downtown" they were repeatedly—according to those girls interviewed—questioned about whether there was sexual misconduct at the girls home. Was this an ex post facto attempt to find a crime against the officials at the girls home?

Said Wills, "They came in and did it. Then they were looking for a reason for having done it."

The pieces of the puzzle are still scattered, but the testimony from Wills, the parents, and the girls raises some troubling questions: What role did Brittain play in the closing of the Corpus Christi homes? Did Brittain come to Mississippi with a vendetta against church-run wayward girls homes? Was Britain looking for an excuse to shut down the Hattiesburg home? Was the "closed-door policy" of the girls home just a handy guise to justify a raid? Were welfare officials fishing for a reason to shut the home down when they questioned the girls? Did the Welfare Department have to return the girls to their parents and disperse others to foster homes, or was this simply an effort by Brittain to break up the home?

Yet, if the raid was unusual and unexplained, Wills said it did not compare to the "most bizarre and un-American thing that happened on Sunday."

"When we went to preach, Brittain told me that I could not preach. And I said, 'If you're not going to let me preach then my associate will preach.' But he said, 'No. He's not going to preach either.' Then I said, 'Well, if you're not going to let him preach we'll just take the kids downtown (where the church is located) for service.' But he said, 'Nope. They're not going down there either.'"

What authority did Brittain have to stop a church service? "He said he was under court order and had complete control to do anything. You just couldn't believe this could happen in America."

With no charges, no accusations, not even a hint of misconduct, the Welfare Department obtained a court order giving Brittain authority to storm the home and remove the girls, and shut down church services as well.

The story infuriated Jerry Falwell, which is why he agreed to fly to Hattiesburg, hold a news conference, and host a pastors' rally.

"If they [state officials] do not pay a personal cost for every little child that is dead or wiped out by drugs and for every parent who has gone through emotional hell because of what they did, this same thing will happen again," Falwell told the pastors.

"The idea is to bring to public shame every person involved in this Hattiesburg Watergate. Everyone—until there will not be a welfare worker or bigot out there who hates Christianity . . . who will decide it's worth the fight."

Currently, the Bethesda Home for Girls remains open as a boarding home. Enrollment is down—24 girls. And home officials are waiting.

Waiting for what? "For the state to come back," Wills said dryly.

** Martin Mawyer
Teachers and Their Civil Rights

Christian students are not the only ones fighting to protect their First Amendment rights in America's public schools. So are their Christian teachers.

These men and women are struggling to maintain Christian integrity before their students and coworkers, in spite of administrators who threaten them, and school boards who sue them for violation of the separation of church and state.

Three cases illustrate the matter of teachers' constitutional rights to live their Christianity in the public forum. None of these cases involved the indoctrination of students, or forcing Bible reading and prayer on them.

Marie Russo, a New Jersey biology teacher, was cut to a part-time position because she sponsored a Christian concert and told Christian students about it. She also informed her students about the Equal Access Act, which provides for the use of public school buildings for religious activities outside school hours, and she made New Testaments available at Christmas.

North Carolina junior high math teacher Linda Ellis read her Bible while on lunch duty. She was first reprimanded and later denied a new contract.

In Tennessee, fifth grade teacher Herman Partin was penalized after he refused to join the National Education Association. Its pro-abortion stand conflicts with his religious beliefs.

These teachers were not flagrantly flaunting their faith in the classroom setting or interweaving their biblical beliefs illegally into their subject matter.

In fact, the law actually permits greater latitude in self-expression within the classroom than any of these teachers were exercising.

Academic freedom deals with the teacher's liberty to teach and the student's freedom to learn. In *The Freedom of Religious Expression in the Public High School*, John Whitehead of the Rutherford Institute discusses the subject, including the use of the 1972 federal court "Tinker test," as it is relevant to a high school teacher's First Amendment freedom of expression. The test was applied to *James vs. Board of Education*.

"In the *James* case, as a form of religious expression a high school teacher who held to the Quaker faith wore a black armband into the classroom to protest the Vietnam War. The court upheld this form of expression as being within the ambit [scope] of academic freedom, in that it did not in any way disrupt the orderly operation of the school or classroom."

Whitehead also discusses *Healy vs. James*, where the Supreme Court held that school officials cannot restrict the rights of students and teachers concerning speech or association because they disagree—even strongly disagree—with the views expressed by the group.

Also quoted in the book is the case of *Russo v. Central School District No. 1* (not Marie Russo). "There is little room... in the majestic generalities of the Bill of Rights... for an interpretation of the First Amendment that would be more restrictive with respect to teachers than it is with respect to their students.
where there has been no interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school.”

The key to rulings in the seventies was the protection of a teacher’s freedom of speech as long as his actions did not disrupt or detract from discipline in and the purpose of the classroom. Personal opinions, even religious ones, were permissible, as long as there was no attempt to indoctrinate the students.

An examination of the three cases cited proves that the teachers did not violate the rulings cited here. Linda Ellis silently read her Bible in the lunchroom. This certainly did not unduly influence students, the curriculum, or the classroom.

Herman Partin’s issue was even farther removed from the classroom and the students. How could his refusal to join the teachers union be indoctrinating his students with his religious beliefs?

And Marie Russo certainly did not impose on students by making New Testaments available to them, which they could take or leave. Nor was the announcement of a concert a threat to the students’ academic freedom. Finally, the Equal Access Law was provided by the United States legislature for the students.

Yet each one of these teachers was threatened, and each decided to defend his actions.

Marie Russo was a first-year teacher when she took her stand for the Lord in the fall of 1984. She sponsored a Christian band concert off school property and after school hours. She told some Christian students about it. They told others. Some 70 or 80 teenagers attended the concert.

One parent called the school’s student activities coordinator and complained that she had not known the program was going to be religious. Marie was visited by a union leader, who told her she was wrong to sponsor such an activity even on her own time. “He never told me why,” she commented.

Teachers brought the second charge against Marie after they saw students carrying the New Testaments she had provided for them under a Christmas tree. She was called to a meeting with the school board, and she was told she could not mention God, deity, or Jesus in or out of the schoolroom, because such subjects violated the separation of church and state.

She was also asked to sign a statement of understanding, which outlined that she could teach Humanism, but that she must keep God out of the classroom. She refused to sign it.

Marie Russo was then directed to Concerned Women for America by a Christian mother. Michael Farris of CWA represented her before the board in February. He got the same response.

When contracts were issued she was offered a part-time position, at half salary, teaching two classes—because of a decrease in enrollment. Again Farris intervened, and Marie was promised the first full-time position to become available.

Two weeks before school started the board went back on its word. Marie learned of a full-time position from the union representative. Farris threatened the board with a lawsuit, and the matter dragged into her second year of teaching. By February the complaint was filed. Throughout this time Marie taught her two classes. In April the board settled out of court, giving the teacher back pay, a full-time position, and tenure.

In the school where Linda Ellis taught, teachers were allowed to read whatever they wished on lunch duty. Ellis chose to read her Bible. The result was a letter from Principal Nancy Bell, telling Linda that she could not read the Bible “while on school property.”

In addition, Linda was told she could not discuss religious questions, even those initiated by students, on school property. The principal suggested that Linda rent space in the community facilities of the Education Center.

However, complaints against her were resolved without litigation after Linda contacted attorney Carl Horn, who was able to convince the board members that Linda Ellis was within her First Amendment rights.

Out of the conflict came a 16-point policy for the school system regarding religion in the schools. Carl Horn and Linda Ellis find the document encouraging and feel it is a model for other systems. It clarifies such controversial
issues as Nativity scenes, moments of prayer, Christmas carols, the reading of religious material, prayer at school functions, and student counseling.

If the principal of Carter-Lawrence Elementary School had had his way, Herman Partin would have been denied a pay raise granted under a new state program for veteran teachers. This threat came in spite of Herman's previously unblemished 12-year teaching record. The reason: Partin held a pro-life stand, and he was "one of those fanatic Christians who believe Jesus Christ is the only way to heaven."

Yet Partin had been a member of the union for 12 years. "I couldn't support the public posture of the pro-life stand," he explained, referring to the NEA publication "20 Questions about the NEA." Kersey, who was a former NEA and TEA (Tennessee Education Association) president threatened to leave the school system if he was not supported in the Partin decision.

The board sided with Kersey. However, Partin won the salary increase of $1,000 after he and a representative from the Rutherford Institute went before the state board of education. That board overruled the local board's decision, because of Partin's superior teaching record.

However, Partin was transferred from Carter Elementary to Johnson Middle School, where he teaches sixth grade. That is not the way he wanted it, because now he is unable to disprove the charges of incompetence against him in the environment where they were made.

These personal confrontations with administrators and school boards do not deal with conflicts over teacher prayer groups and Bible studies on school property before or after school.

For example, in Linda Ellis's school efforts were made to disband a prayer and fellowship group that met on school property at 7:30 in the morning. On the other hand, some teachers were enjoying Tupperware parties and various social activities on the property before and after school hours.

In Evansville, Indiana, school personnel were not only forbidden to hold their meetings in the school building, but also restrained from meeting in a car on the school parking lot.

Unfortunately, the Evansville (Mary May) case ground to a halt recently when the Indiana Supreme Court found against them on technical matters, instead of ruling on the First Amendment issues in the case. Also unfortunate is a growing trend for courts to sidestep constitutional issues in favor of procedural rulings.

The cost to each teacher and teacher group is high in money and time—but each agreed that the emotional and spiritual costs are the most draining. "I stood on God's promises," Marie Russo said, "I grew a lot."

Her comments echo the others who have made the decisions to fight to maintain their religious liberties in the public school system.

Marie Russo was told she could not mention God, deity, or Jesus in or out of the schoolroom.

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continued from page 12

being accepted according to the standards of others.

One of our problems is how to translate our zealous commitments in private religion into the marketplace of public morality. The point of tension seems to lie more with our methods than with our message. Sometimes we exercise our religious objectives in a way that destroys the impact of our message. Paul admonishes us to "speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15). Our message must be tempered with a love that accepts others—even those with whom we strongly disagree. It is precisely at the point of political involvement that we need a Christian political philosophy. A philosophy that would help us understand what it means to be a politically involved Christian. A philosophy that judges our methods as well as our message. A philosophy that transcends partisan politics, manipulative pressure, and political name-calling. At times we have been guilty of justifying worldly methods because they appear to produce good results. While we should not lessen our efforts to bring about change, we should nevertheless judge all of our methods by the standard of Scripture.

An Assessment of Our Involvement

A second matter of utmost priority is an objective assessment of what we have accomplished in the last seven years. We have spent millions of dollars, formed new organizations and coalitions, printed volumes of literature, registered new voters, and so on. The level of activity has been intense. But what have we really accomplished in relationship to our original goals? Has the American family been strengthened? Are we any closer to eliminating abortion-on-demand? Have we impacted the pornography industry? Does our constituency really understand the moral and social issues? Does our movement have real or perceived influence? If our objective is to bring America back to its Judeo-Christian values, we must measure our success by the degree to which we accomplish this goal. Have we been effective and efficient with our resources? These difficult questions demand an answer. We must give an account of our stewardship.

Unless and until we develop a clear political philosophy, and critically evaluate our past endeavors, we will be impotent to determine our future goals and strategies. The Fundamentalist political movement is at a critical juncture. I am not suggesting that we cease our activity. The initial goals articulated by Jerry Falwell and the Moral Majority should continue to guide our movement. However, it is time for thinking as well as acting. It is time to search our souls.

A Christian political philosophy will give structure and direction to our future involvement. Without such a parameter we may be doomed to life as just another PAC—not even Christian at all. The need for assessment and evaluation will help us identify priorities and assign appropriate resources to meet these goals. Without such directives we may resort to wasting our God-given resources on maintaining our activity without bringing about significant changes.

Portions adapted from a paper presented at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan.
Dan Coats Leads National Family Strengths Project

The National Family Strengths Project, an outgrowth of the concern of the minority members of the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families, is designed to emphasize family strengths.

“We decided we needed to look at the other side of the coin,” Representative Dan Coats, senior Republican on the committee, stated. “We needed to concentrate on what’s right, not just what’s wrong with the family.”

The result was the appointment of a private executive committee and an advisory board for the purpose of outlining the direction of the project, founded on the premise that the family is an essential unit of society, which influences both the “functioning and formation of moral values within society.”

Research by James DeFrain of the University of Nebraska and Nick Stinnett of Pepperdine University is the basis for the project. The two surveyed 3,000 families in the United States and abroad to learn what characteristics are shared by strong families.

Their results show six strengths held in common: commitment, appreciation, communication, time, spiritual wellness, and coping ability.

Commitment involves the effort to promote the welfare and happiness of other family members rather than the individual. Appreciation deals with thought and deeds. Communication skills are well-developed in strong families, and family members spend both quality and quantity time talking to each other. Spiritual wellness deals with “a sense of divine power in life, and that belief gives them strength and purpose, whether they go to formal church services or not.” Finally, the ability to cope deals with the approach of the family to stress and crisis. Strong families view both as an opportunity to grow.

The first of the three-part program is to conduct three public hearings, two of which were held in April and June, and the third was held in November during Family Week.

Will these efforts achieve the goal? Can the minority make an impact on the majority? Coats thinks so.

“It’s difficult representing the minority, and it’s frustrating,” Coats stated. “But we have made a very decided impact on the topics considered and on recommendations made (by the House Select Committee).”

The project is one way to promote the family positively in contrast to so much negative news about the institution of the family. Coats was joined in his effort to form the project by other members of the House Select Committee, particularly Representative Frank Wolf.

And Coats believes the effort is paying off.

“Two or three years ago all you would read is that the House Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families said this and then gave one point of view. Now there are alternatives; there are two sides and two points of view.”

This very contribution was illustrated earlier this year after the Committee’s majority report was released by Representative George Miller on the results of the Endings concerning the epidemic of teenage pregnancies. Even though it recommended the establishment of school-based health clinics to disburse family planning information and contraceptives to teens, Coats was contacted for the minority point of view.

He was able to report that the committee had also found that although many public programs were available for the dispersal of birth control devices, the pregnancy rate has not decreased. He could tell reporters that the strengthening of the traditional family with its teaching on abstinence would open an alternative to premarital sex, which is the real cause of the teenage pregnancy epidemic.

Ann Wharton

December 1986 63
Christian Broadcasting Network Celebrates Silver Anniversary

VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.—The Christian Broadcasting Network held a public gathering
 to mark CBN's 25th anniversary celebration on October 1. “A Time of
 Thanksgiving” also marked the 25th anniversary of full-time Christian television
 broadcasting.

Held in front of CBN's International Communication Center, which houses
 CBN’s studios, the festivities featured
 keynote speaker Adrian Rogers. Rogers,
called “eloquent and dapper” by U.S.
 News and World Report, currently serves
 as president of the nation’s largest Prot-
estant denomination, the Southern Baptist
 Convention, with 14.4 million members.

Music was provided by baritone Jer-
ome Hines of the Metropolitan Opera,
 Christian recording artists Lamelle Harris
 and Tramaine Hawkins, and a 250-voice
 choir composed of choirs from CBN
 University and First Baptist Church of
 Norfolk.

The program concluded with a
 pyrotechnic display, choreographed
 to music, by noted fireworks experts
 Zambelli International of Pennsylvania.

In 25 years, a host of Christian tele-
 vision programs and preaching have
 reached many millions through the elec-
 tronic media.

Fetal Abuse Case Debated

A pregnant woman should be allowed
to abuse drugs even if it jeopardizes
the life of her unborn child, said Benita
Berkson, co-president of the San Diego
County chapter of the National Organiz-
aton for Women.

Berkson made her remarks follow-
ing the arrest of an El Cajon woman who
was charged with contributing to her baby’s
death because she allegedly abused
drugs during her pregnancy.

The mother, Pamela Rae Stewart,
gave birth to a son who was born brain
dead with amphetamines in his system.
The child lived five months on life-
support systems before dying on New
Year's Day.

The Christian Broadcasting Network in Virginia Beach, Virginia.
Berkson, however, objected to the prosecution of Stewart—even though the mother was warned that drug abuse could jeopardize the baby—because, "ultimately, it's her choice."

"Really," Berkson said in an Associated Press interview, "it gets down to her personal rights."

"A personal right to abuse drugs? A personal right to jeopardize the life of her child?"

According to Deputy District Attorney Harry Elias, the only right Stewart enjoyed was the right to follow her doctor's orders and refrain from drug abuse and to seek immediate medical attention in case of hemorrhage. Stewart, allegedly, did neither of these.

If convicted, Stewart faces a year in jail and a $2,000 fine.

"Touchdown" Scored in Favor of Pre-football Game Prayer

An agnostic filed suit to prevent students from offering a pre-football game prayer. A judge issued an order prohibiting the prayer. But after the national anthem was sung, the Lord's Prayer was recited anyway.

William Jager, on behalf of his teenage son Doug, filed suit in federal court to prevent Douglas County High School (Georgia) from offering a pre-game prayer before the Tigers' home game against Peddiebrook High.

Jager, whose son is a member of the school's marching band, said religion and school athletics should be kept separate.

School attorneys argued that the 50-year-old traditional prayer should be continued since students are not forced to go to football games and listen to them.

But Judge Ernest Tidwell issued a preliminary injunction against the practice saying it "has no secular purpose."

But on the fated Friday, when 5,000 people crowded into the stadium, it was obvious many were not about to obey the court order.

Some carried protest banners. Some wore the word "pray" on their cheeks. Some wore T-shirts saying "Prayer: It works." And on the outside, some distributed handbills.

School officials were unaware of who organized the distribution of the leaflets.

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Dr. Jerry Falwell

Liberty Home Bible Institute
Dept. 1082 Lynchburg, VA 24514

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A.W. Tozer explained in *Of God and Me*: "There is scarcely anything so dull and meaningless as Bible doctrine taught for its own sake. Truth divorced from life is not truth in its biblical sense but something else and something less ... No man is better for knowing that God in the beginning created the heaven and the earth. The devil knows that, and so did Ahab and Judas Iscariot. No man is better for knowing that God so loved the world of men that He gave His only begotten Son to die for their redemption. In hell there are millions who know that.

Theological truth is useless until it is obeyed. The purpose behind all doctrine is to secure moral action.'

Brevity is no guarantee of good preaching. Granted, some preaching is so pointless it should be brief, but most people will be attentive for long periods when they are being helped. There is neither an ideal nor an absolute time frame for preaching. Our culture has dictated all of our ideas about length.

I enjoy the amens of the brethren when I preach, but that is certainly no guarantee of good preaching. Amens often mean only that you have told them for the hundredth time what they already know but do not practice. Amens can mean also that your message is entertaining but not disturbing. Amens can mean we have told men what they want to hear, not what they need to hear. There are times when effective preaching brings such deep spiritual pain that an amen would be sacrilegious. Quiet tears and anguish of soul can sometimes be the evidence of an effective message.

Our people need loving instruction. Angry tongue-lashings and endless in-compassionate diatribes alienate good people. I have found that I can provide the most severe correction when my people really sense I love them. I want to change their behavior by preaching. My spirit in the pulpit often makes the difference. I am not their Lord; I am their servant. Unlisted phone numbers and inaccessible pastors do not lend themselves well to a real sense of honest concern and substantive spiritual help. I am human, and my people need to know that.

God called me to help my people: They are not mindless pawns in an ecclesiastical chess game. They are not tools to build my ministry and further my personal ambitions. Each of them is a personal responsibility committed to me by a sovereign God. When one of them stumbles, I hurt. When one of them leaves our church, I consider it a personal leadership failure.

I fully understand how vulnerable to criticism I become when I make such strong statements about the function of preaching. I am not holding myself up as an example or ideal. I am as inept as the rest. I am embarrassed at some of the froth my people have endured; however, I want to do a better job. I hope that every time I prepare to preach, my own written observations will plague me until I sweat, pray, and study so that I am ready to deliver.

Some will doubt my credentials to write on this theme. I readily confess they are not very impressive. Neither my preaching nor my academic background recommends my opinions very highly. But after 30 years of struggling and studying the discipline of preaching, I will venture my observations.

Perhaps these suggestions will encourage others who are more expert to offer their help by way of rebuttal. Heaven knows, both pastors and our people need all the help and good advice we can get.

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“...give the light of knowledge”
11 Corinthians 4:6

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