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The **WORD** and **WORK**

"Holding forth the Word of life."

JULY, 1988

The Privilege of Preaching

"Called to preach! Commissioned of God to teach the word! A herald of the great King! A witness of the Eternal Gospel! Could any work be more high and holy? To this supreme task God sent his only begotten Son. In all the frustration and confusion of the times, is it possible to imagine a work comparable in importance with that of proclaiming the will of God to wayward men?"

—W. E. Sangster

"To me the work of preaching is the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called. There is nothing like it. It is the greatest work in the world, the most thrilling, the most exciting, the most rewarding, and the most wonderful."

—D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

"Tragic to relate, many (of today's pastors) are essentially administrators, whose symbols of ministry are the office rather than the study, and the telephone rather than the Bible."

—John R. W. Stott

41st Annual Louisville Christian Fellowship Week

AUGUST 1 - 4, 1988

Day Sessions: Portland Avenue Church of Christ

Evening Sessions: Sellersburg Church of Christ

THEME: "GOD'S PLAN FOR LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH"

MONDAY

Evening Session

7:30 - 8:00 SINGING
8:00 - 8:45 "God's Plan for Leadership in the Church" Orell Overman

TUESDAY

"THE RESPONSIBLE ELDER"

9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:50 "The Qualified Elder" (Acts 20:17-35; 1 Tim. 3)
Victor Broaddus
10:50 - 11:00 BREAK
11:00 - 11:50 "The Elder as a Leader" (1 Pet. 5:3) Dale Offutt
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
1:00 - 1:50 "The Elder as a Protector" (John 10:11) Doug Broyles
1:50 - 2:00 BREAK
2:00 - 2:50 "The Elder as an Exhorter" (John 21:16) Ken Stockdale

Evening Session

7:30 - 8:00 SINGING
8:00 - 8:45 "Follow the Leader" (1 Tim. 5:1) Paul Kitzmiller

WEDNESDAY

"THE RESPONSIBLE DEACON"

9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:50 "The Qualified Deacon" (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8-13)
Victor Broaddus
10:50 - 11:00 BREAK
11:00 - 11:50 "The Deacon as a Servant" (Phil. 2:5-7) Harry Coultas
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
1:00 - 1:50 "The Deacon as a Steward" (Matt. 25) Mike Elaman
1:50 - 2:00 BREAK
2:00 - 2:50 "The Deacon as an Evangelist" (Acts 7, 8) Steve Smith

Evening Session

7:30 - 8:00 SINGING
8:00 - 8:45 "A Servant's Reward" (2 Tim. 4:7) Robert Garrett

THURSDAY

"THE RESPONSIBLE MINISTER"

9:30 - 10:00 PRAYER TIME
10:00 - 10:50 "The Qualified Minister" (1 Cor. 3:5-11) Victor Broaddus
10:50 - 11:00 BREAK
11:00 - 11:50 "A Good Minister—Preaching the Word" (1 Tim. 4:1-6)
Paul Heid
12:00 - 1:00 LUNCH
1:00 - 1:50 "A Good Minister—Practicing the Word" (1 Tim. 4:7-12)
Jesse Wood
1:50 - 2:00 BREAK
2:00 - 2:50 "A Good Minister—Progressing in the Word" (1 Tim. 3:13-16)
Nathan Burks

Evening Session

7:30 - 8:00 SINGING
8:00 - 8:45 "Organized to Evangelize" (Matt. 28:18-20) Earl C. Mullins, Jr

Dennis Kaufman will lead young people's sessions on Tues., Wed. & Thurs. nights.

THE WORD AND WORK

"A monthly magazine set to declare the whole counsel of God."

Alex V. Wilson, Editor

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JULY, 1988

No. 7

In This Issue

THEME:

CHURCH SERVANTS, CHURCH LEADERS

Rise Up, O Men of God! — Alex V. Wilson	194
Surprised by God — Robert K. Hudnut	196
Why the Average Minister's Job Is Harder than Average — Lyle E. Schaller	198
The Minister's Survival in a Declining Church — C. Dennis Kaufman	201
The Clergy System — Carl Ketcherside	205
The Minister System — Leroy Garrett	206
Truths & Half-Truths About Professional Pastors — Michael Hall	207
Questions Asked of Us — Carl Kitzmiller	209
Thoughts From Romans — "Keep Only One Debt" — E. E. Lyon	212
Building Better Christian Families — Talk That Gets Through to 'Em! — Fred W. Schott	213
Dear Nieces and Nephews — Cecil Garrett	215
MISSIONARY MESSENGER	216
What Great Christians Taught About Baptism — Alex V. Wilson	219
A Task Force to Set Goals for the 1990's — C. Dennis Kaufman	223
NEWS AND NOTES	224

THEME:

Church Servants, Church Leaders

Rise Up, O Men of God!

Alex V. Wilson



These are crisis times for the churches, and nowhere more than in the realm of leadership. So this issue (of *W & W*) will deal with that issue (of leadership). You'll notice that this year's Louisville Christian Fellowship Week will also focus on this theme, and that a task-force is being set up to help us set specific congregational goals (goal-setting is an important function of leadership). May the Lord guide and use these efforts.

I hope you'll read the theme-articles this time, even if you'll *never* be a preacher or leader! Why should you bother? Because then you can UNDERSTAND more of the struggles and joys, heart-aches and rewards that make up your leaders' lives. 2nd, you can also ENCOURAGE men in the churches to consider seriously whether God may be calling them to be deacons or elders/pastors/teachers or evangelists or missionaries. A preacher or leader needs to be called by the Lord, but often that divine call is clothed in human words of exhortation and commendation. Pass this copy of *W & W* on to that young man who shows interest in spiritual matters; or better still, give him a year's subscription. 3rd, I hope these articles will stir us all to greater PRAYER, both for present and potential preachers and leaders. We *know* we should pray for the Master to send forth laborers; Christ clearly said so. Are we doing it, regularly?

What am I — Minister? Preacher? Pastor?

There are differing ideas about church leadership—organization, terminology, roles—and we need to think Biblically and clearly about all of this, though without becoming quibblers. So we've even included sort of a mini-debate, to provoke our thinking and study. We realize that most of our theme-articles take the one-man minister system for granted, though Scripture emphasizes both every-member ministry and the importance of elders. Perhaps a future issue will spotlight the work of elders and deacons. We need more elders who preach and preachers who shepherd; such pastor-teachers are much too rare. But where none such are available, other patterns must be followed, at least temporarily. So let's help one another discover our spiritual gifts and use them as effectively as possible.

For example, here's a minister who seemed to be a real misfit. The church members and elders solemnly discussed his drawbacks, and concluded he wasn't the man to lead and instruct their large congregation any longer. So the leaders told him, as kindly as they could, of his shortcomings and that he wasn't cut out to be their minister. It looked like the end for him, but wait! Instead of dismissing him, the leaders said they had decided they would stand behind him and earnestly pray till God showed His purpose and place for the "misfit." And they did pray, and kept on until the Lord provided new directions and ministries for him. Out of this experience, the "inadequate" minister emerged to become a very fruitful evangelist. J. Wilbur Chapman led many people to faith in Christ, holding large gospel-crusades in cities throughout the U.S. early in this century. But what if those elders had so broken his spirit that he quit preaching altogether? And how would *we* have handled his case? (The May '87 *W & W* deals in depth with the subject of evangelists or church-planters, observing, "Perhaps some men who are now pastoring local churches, and doing only a fair job of it, are actually more gifted as church-planters. If such were sent forth and their gifts developed, they might become far more effective than they now are as local preachers.")

Hang In There

Returning to local preachers, let's think about Yale—which started out as a preachers' college! A study of Yale graduates from 1702-1775 revealed this surprising fact: 79% of those graduates who became ministers served only *one* congregation or district of churches all their lives. And only 7% had more than two pastorates during their lifetime; they were considered unstable by many! In those days, most people (at least on the East Coast) lived out their lives in one place.

By contrast, in quite a few denominations today the *average* length of a minister's stay at one congregation is three years, and in some others it is only 1½ years. Obviously we live in a transient society, but an average of 1½ years is ridiculous! A century ago Charles Spurgeon told his preaching students, "Men, plan for a long ministry. If you serve more than three churches in your lifetime, you may need to inquire to see if you have a 'restless spirit.'" Of course circumstances differ from place to place and time to time, but there are many advantages to extended pastoral ministries. William Austin tells some of them as follows:

"(1) You become a better student—of necessity. You have to keep fresh. Too many men merely preach through their sermons, and move on to the next church to do the same thing. No man can preach the whole counsel of God in two or three years. (2) You really get to know your people. (3) You experience the joy of seeing some in whom you have invested so much really come alive in Christ. (4) You lend credibility to the church in your community."

In addition, you and your co-leaders can make long-range plans, and work on them. Studies show, in fact, that usually a preacher doesn't reach a high level of fruitful ministry in a congregation until he has been there for 5-6 years. It often takes that long to get into

high gear. But if, on the average, preachers play musical-chairs every 2-4 years, they probably never reach those most satisfying and productive years.

May the Lord help us all, *leaders and members*, to persevere.

* * * * *

Moving meditations by a minister

Surprised by God

Robert K. Hudnut

What is extraordinary about this job is that it keeps you in touch with birth and death, love and hate, joy and sorrow. When a baby is born, you are there. When a man dies, you are there. When a man and woman want to live the rest of their lives together, they come to you. When they are fed up, they come back to you. This means that a minister must be flexible. He must be able to go from death to birth in a matter of hours, and from a divorce to a marriage in the swing of his office door. . . .

Once I asked a newspaperman why he went to church. Reporters can be hard-boiled, and when I find one who is truly religious, I make it a point to talk with him. "When we had to take our little boy to the hospital," he said, "our minister met us there. He stayed several hours."

"What did he do?" I asked. "Pray? Read the Bible? Make small talk?"

"He was just there," the reporter replied. . . .

I empathize too much at hospital bedsides. Occasionally I even think I have the patient's symptoms. Doctors get over this sort of thing in medical school. They know it impairs their effectiveness. But ministers are not always able to. And there is some question whether they should. Empathy may enhance rather than impair a minister's effectiveness. A brusque doctor is one thing. He is treating the body. But a brusque minister is a contradiction. He is ministering to something more than the body. He is suffering with the patient. Suffering love is all the Christian has. . . .

Tonight I am in my car, calling. In this house there is sadness because a grandmother has died. In this one there is hope because a teen-age son is gifted. Over here, a father is getting established in a new business. Down the road there, they sometimes talk of divorce. These are real people with real joys and real sorrows. Inexplicably, they open their doors and hearts to me, a real person with real joys and sorrows, too. And together we open ourselves to the possibility of God. . . .

A woman is thinking of leaving the church because she wants "peace," not "challenge." God knows I want peace, too. But I want honesty more. Better a tortured integrity than a phony peace. So far she has stayed with us. . . .

It's the Bible as much as anything that keeps me at this. I have

never known anything like it. The power of it. I am mesmerized. It is the only permanence. . . .

Some outside the church say they couldn't possibly be in because they're not good enough. Nothing could be farther from the mark. People don't join the church because they're good. The church is a real sinner center. The only difference between the sinners on the inside and those on the outside is that the insiders are trying to do something about their sin. They're more ambitious. They have a plan. . . .

This Sunday, at both services and at the same point in each, a meadow lark sang. It was during the prayers. I was astonished. To have such natural beauty in the service does not happen often. Fortunately, I had the good sense to keep quiet during the second service and let the meadow lark do the praying. . . .

I wish everyone in the congregation could have a chance at this job for a week. Each person would see that there are people whose problems are bigger than his, and in thinking about *their* problems he would get *his* in right perspective. This is really what the "priesthood of all believers" is all about. We are all ministers to each other. . . .

People are too deferential. My friend was saying that my sermons had better be good or he wasn't about to come to hear them. I'm with him all the way. A sloppy sermon wastes everybody's time—including God's. For me this means an hour in the study for every minute in the pulpit. . . .

No other institution can touch the family as a teacher of religion. If there's no religion in the parents, there will rarely be any in the children. We're Christians by chromosome as well as conviction. It's that simple. And also that challenging. . . .

A woman apologized for her husband's never being in church. "The yard work keeps him pretty busy." Yet if a man misses four consecutive meetings of his Rotary Club in a year, he's out. If a man doesn't show up for work, he's fired. This kind of no-nonsense approach makes sense in any organization. It ought to make sense in the Christian church. Certainly Christ is as important as crabgrass. . . .

A man said to me after a sermon, "You must learn compassion." He's right, of course. The ability to communicate compassion is a rare gift. It's a matter of manner as much as anything. A preacher may talk about love with beautiful diction and flawless elocution, but if his mien belies his meaning, his talk will be worthless. On the other hand, he may mumble his words and jumble his thoughts, but if love is in his eyes and manner, his talk will convince. In truly great preaching, mien and meaning marry. . . .

It would be helpful if you could have a burning bush, like Moses, or a Damascus Road, like Paul. But I know no minister for whom it has happened that way. Most people think ministers have seen a vision or heard a call. But most ministers are as blind and deaf as everyone else. The only difference between them and the next fellow—if there is any difference at all—is that they are ready day and night to be surprised by God. This is not to say that the light shines and the voice speaks any more for ministers than for anyone else. It is only to say that ministers are on 24-hour alert. Presumably. . . .

I think of the coffin and the freshly dug grave. I think of the young woman with laughter tumbling from her lips as she talks with her husband-to-be. I think of the little boy in an oxygen tent with his teddy bear. I think of the mother smiling the smile of first mothers as she tells of the birth of her child. And then I think of myself and my being there, and of God's coming somehow out of the nowhere into the now, here, and being there, too.

* * * * *

Why the Average Minister's Job Is Harder than Average

Lyle E. Schaller

"This is my church, this is where I've been a member since 1948 and regardless of who the minister is, I don't plan to leave," declared the sixty three-year-old member of First Church. "I've been a member of this denomination all of my life and I'm too old to change. This is where all of my friends are and even though I'm not happy with our current pastor, I'm staying! I've outlived two other ministers here that I didn't like and I expect to outlast this one!"

"Well, I must admit I admire your tenacity," replied his 34-year-old longtime friend and fellow member, "but my wife and I are leaving. For the past few months we've been attending the Sunday evening services out at that new church on the north side of town. And on six of the past eight Sunday mornings we've gone out there for church. The other night we decided to join. That minister is a superb preacher and they have a magnificent choir that must include at least seventy or eighty people. Both of our kids prefer the Sunday school classes out there, and we're looking forward to the day when our eleven-year-old will be in their youth group. We do hate to leave here, but all four of us have decided to make the change."

"I'm really surprised and I must add I'm sorry to hear this," responded the first man. "Your mother has been a member here all her life, your dad was buried from this church a couple of years ago, you and your wife were married here, your wife's parents are both active members here, and your kids have grown up here. How can you walk out on all of that?"

"It's not easy," replied the younger man, "but we decided that since we're not being fed spiritually anymore, we have no choice but to go where we know we'll be fed. I guess my wife still has mixed feelings about leaving here, but I've become convinced that this is God's will for us."

"Well, I wish I could persuade you to change your mind, but you appear to be determined to leave," observed the older man. "Back about 1950, right after our first daughter was born, we were stuck with a terrible preacher here for a couple of years and my wife and I talked about leaving. But we stayed. When the preacher left, we got the best pastor we've ever known so I'm glad we didn't

leave. Maybe you ought to think about hanging in for awhile. Sooner or later this minister is certain to leave.”

This imaginary conversation illustrates one of the reasons some longtime members leave one congregation to join another church. It also illustrates one of the differences in church life in the 1950s and the 1980s. Today's members appear to be far more willing to change churches.

This conversation also illustrates another change that rarely is talked about out in the open. Today it is far more difficult for the minister with an average or slightly below average level of competence to “get by” in the parish ministry.

Why Is It More Difficult?

Serving as a parish pastor is a more demanding role than it was thirty years ago for at least a dozen reasons.

First, back in the 1950s denominational loyalties caused many newcomers to the community to seek out and join the congregation of their denomination that was closest to where they lived. This provided that congregation with at least a modest supply of replacement members, even though it may have had a mediocre minister. In addition, in many communities where this was the only congregation of a denomination in town, strong loyalty to the denomination kept many discontented members from leaving. There was no place to go.

Second, children today are less likely to follow in the footsteps of their parents than was the pattern thirty years ago. Inherited loyalties were a stronger motivating force in 1955 than they are today.

Third, today a far greater emphasis is placed on the competence, personality and performance of the minister. In the 1950s many members were satisfied if their minister was a committed Christian, an obedient servant of God, and obviously sincere in the faith.

Fourth, the 1950s marked an era in American history when the social pressures were the strongest in regard to church attendance. Every respectable and upwardly mobile citizen was expected to be in church on Sunday morning and the children were expected to be in Sunday school. Today the social pressures are less, the expectations are lower and the competition for people's time on Sunday morning is far *greater*.

Fifth, the generation born since 1945 does not display the same institutional loyalty in general as that of their counterparts three decades ago. Brand loyalties, political party affiliations, and marital ties, not to mention church allegiances, are not as binding as they were thirty years ago.

Sixth, the increasing diversity in our culture has reduced the degree of homogeneity in the typical congregation. This makes it much more difficult for one minister to please everyone. That also is one reason why large churches with a multiple staff are growing. Everyone can find a compatible minister on that large staff.

Seventh, the almost unbelievable increase in the expectations people have for the minister to be able to serve as an effective pastoral counselor means the acquisition of one more area of competence to be a good pastor.

Eighth, back in 1955 the comparison base most people carried in their head when they evaluated their own church and minister usually was (a) the congregation to which they had belonged before moving here, (b) the church down the street, (c) the church they attend when they go to visit relatives. Today the comparison base often is that carefully rehearsed, highly visual, and precisely choreographed performance the typical church member can watch on television before leaving the house on Sunday morning. The average minister in the average congregation has a hard assignment in competing with that TV image.

Ninth, back in the 1950s the typical Protestant minister was a man married to a woman who was not employed outside the home. A fair number of mediocre pastors "got by" on the fact that while the congregation was not very happy with *his* level of performance, they were delighted with *her* contributions to the life, program, ministry, and outreach of that congregation. The members were willing to put up with him in order to avoid losing her. But today, a far larger proportion of pastors are unmarried; and the majority of the spouses of those who are married are employed outside the home, or are fulltime students.

Tenth, back in the 1950s many people saw uniting with a church as a *destination* in a religious pilgrimage. It was for life, unless one moved too far away to continue that relationship. It was the end of the journey. Today, for many adults, uniting with a congregation is a *way-station* on a religious pilgrimage. After two or three or five years at that way-station, some church members conclude they have "graduated" and are ready to move on to what they see as the next stop in their religious pilgrimage. Relationships do not have the degree of permanence they had in the 1950s.

Eleventh, this is the era of (a) the very large congregation with a huge program and an extensive professional staff and (b) the church shopper who may visit a half dozen or more congregations from three or four denominations plus an independent church or two before choosing a new church home. This means the pastor with an average level of competence in the average size congregation with an average quality of programming may not appear very impressive to the comparison shopper.

Finally, the post-1960s era has been marked by a general rising of the level of expectations in all institutions. Far more is expected of the public schools, of the federal government, of private business, as well as of the churches than people expected in the years following the end of World War II. Today the reward system places a premium on excellence, performance, personality and offering people a range of choices. Back in the 1950s faithfulness, obedience, tenacity, and simply "hanging in there" ranked higher on the reward scale.

If you agree these twelve trends do represent some significant changes in our society, you can understand why (a) it is more difficult to be a good pastor today than it was in the 1950s and (b) some mature ministers are glad to be approaching retirement.

—from *MPL Journal*, a quarterly publication of the Minister's Personal Library, P. O. Box 1790, Waco, TX 76796.

The Minister's Survival in a Declining Church

C. Dennis Kaufman

The preacher trotted out to the mailbox. It was a gorgeous day—the kind of day that puts a spring in your step. As he browsed through the stack of mail, he noticed a newsletter from a nearby congregation. The attendance figure was the first thing that caught his eye—1677. The preacher heaved a big sigh as he thought about how hard he worked to get 125 people out on Sunday mornings.

He scanned the long list of baptisms and membership transfers. The pain intensified when he noticed the names of two families who had been faithful members and friends in his congregation. The minister's emotions teetered back and forth between thanksgiving for the success of the super-church and anguish that his church was declining. Two hours passed before he was able to concentrate again upon his morning tasks.

Are you a hard-working pastor who finds himself leading a struggling congregation? It can be a position of incredible loneliness and despair. You give your best effort that the church may grow to God's glory, but you just cannot seem to get off the ground.

If the Lord is calling you to persevere in such a situation, I hope that these ideas will be of assistance to you in your struggle.

I. Your Relationship With The Lord

Keeping our relationship with the Lord vibrant is the most important and perhaps the most difficult task. All through Bible college and seminary, I have heard church leaders talk about the essentiality of personal devotions and time with the Lord. I have learned that they were on target.

When the pressure is on, the easiest thing to drop from your busy schedule is devotional time. When you have 47 deadlines (which often occurs in a small church striving to grow), the least noticeable omission will be our time with the Lord—so we think. Thus, our prayer time suffers in order to accomplish something more public, such as the Wednesday lesson or the hospital visit.

Trying to grow the church on our own power and cleverness is a dead end. The strength of the early disciples is seen in Acts 4:13 when the community noticed their courage and "took note that these men had been with Jesus." We also serve the living Christ and the greatest gift I can give to my sheep is assurance that I have been with the "Chief Shepherd."

Another crucial aspect of spending time with the Lord is the fact that He is our great high priest. No one understands our struggles like Christ. When I feel most alone in my ministry, I know that He has been there, too. He came with the ability to meet every need of mankind, and yet for the most part He was rejected. He knows the pain of betrayal, the feeling of being used, and the incredible

weariness of responsible ministry. What a friend we have in Jesus, indeed!

I realize devotional time can be difficult to carve out in a busy day, not to mention the perennial problem—"The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." We get sleepy or our mind wanders. Some creativity can help here. Take a walk with God. Write down your concerns in a prayer journal. You may be talented enough to write a song to the Lord. Whatever method you choose, the number one survival issue for the preacher is personal spiritual growth. Without that, ministry simply becomes a job.

II. Building An Adequate Support System

When a person's physical survival is at stake, he may require various technologies such as a respirator to keep alive. We refer to this as a life support system. A parallel concept is the importance of a *spiritual* life support system.

There are times when the task of ministry is simply overwhelming. You try to get new programs going to spark the congregation, but you are shorthanded on volunteers. Someone does not like the change you made and loudly voices his disapproval. A new family at church suddenly stops attending and avoids your attempts to contact them. On top of it all, the board meeting the night before left you wondering whether these people have learned anything you have tried to teach them.

I believe the pastor needs someone to debrief with about these feelings of frustration, anger, and sadness. He needs a support system. Some preachers find this in their family. If family life is peaceful and fulfilling, it will be a place of refuge from the endless responsibility of the work. The preacher does well to nurture his family that this interdependence may continue to bring strength to all.

In addition to the support of family, I have begun a ministers' support group in our area. I chose three fellow ministers who had voiced some interest in meeting together. We gather once a month just to share our frustrations and joys in ministry, and then pray together. What a fresh break this is from the typical church leaders' luncheon where there is rarely anything more than surface relationships and fellowship.

I have discovered that dealing with my anger and hurt in this small group removes the temptation to take these feelings into the pulpit, where they may ooze out in unproductive ways. I have seen too many sermons that I felt were pot shots at someone or something the preacher was upset about.

The support group is a superb way to counter the pressures of leading a struggling church.

III. Set Specific, Measurable Goals

Some careers provide a visible product and a sure feeling of achievement. The bricklayer builds a wall, and when it is completed he can see the fruit of his labors and feel a sense of accomplishment. On the other hand, ministry in a declining church yields little in

the way of visible results, and the work is never done. This is most exasperating at times.

One way I have countered this open-ended dilemma is by writing specific, measurable goals for the congregation. For the last two years we have set aside the first Sunday of the New Year to unveil our goals for that year. We called this latest effort, "Our Vision For 1988." Here are some things we have targeted:

1. Conduct a fund raising drive so that by August 15 the church can purchase a large van or small bus.
2. Sponsor one church member or family to visit a foreign mission field during the summer of 1988.
3. Recruit 10 church members for a class in public speaking to begin in February.

When a church channels its efforts into such specific strategies, a wonderful thing begins to happen as goals are checked off as completed. Not only does the minister hear statements like, "I did not think we could accomplish that," but he feels the joy of a visible result. Last year our church had 20 goals and 15 of them were successful, at least in part.

When I look at our church attendance, I do not see an increase yet, but I know real ministry is being done and people's lives are being changed in a positive way. Targeting my efforts toward measurable goals that I believe in helps me concentrate upon faithful service.

IV. Develop A Specialty

Most of us need to feel that our lives count for something. We want our ministries to be relevant. I believe this is the most attractive feature of the large super-churches. People who attend and serve see visible growth and excitement and are convinced that they are a part of it. The church that has declined over the last five years provides little energy and motivation for weary saints. In light of this, there have been times when my preaching has resembled crisis counseling more than joyful celebration of the gospel!

The pastor who is overwhelmed by the aura of the super-church will often feel like the manager of a corner grocery in the shadow of a huge, new supermarket. One way I have dealt with this issue of relevancy has been to try to specialize in a particular area of ministry.

I discovered early in my career that my spiritual gifts are in the area of pastoral care and counseling. Most of the people I have had the privilege of leading to the Savior have been hurting people. Thus, I have attempted to sharpen these skills and make them a primary focus in my congregation. This has included taking graduate courses, which, by the way, have been a great source of strength and joy for me. I highly recommend further education for the discouraged pastor. Making a good grade builds self-esteem. Classes often provide spiritual growth and fellowship, and the development of a specialty may help you keep from feeling trapped in your present dilemma.

Since pastoral care has been my forte, our church leaders have agreed that a good theme for our congregation is "a church that cares."

This principle can be applied to any number of specialties. Your gifts may fall in the realm of evangelism, Christian education, youth work, social action, or ministry to the elderly. The key is to find a need in your community that your congregation can meet and begin targeting your energies toward that ministry. Relevancy is a key survival strategy.

V. Adequate Rest and Recreation

One of the great Bible accounts of ministry burnout is the story of Elijah. The prophet undoubtedly thought the mountain top experience at Carmel would make a difference in Israel's spirituality. But, Queen Jezebel was after his hide all the more. An exhausted, dejected Elijah lamented his failure and asked the Lord to take his life. Have you been there? Some of my most dejected moments have been after a major effort that I really thought would turn the church around. When things plod along the same way, you feel like, "What's the use?"

First Kings 19 is one of my favorite chapters because we see the Lord's reaction to His servant's depression. The first thing God does is provide Elijah with food and rest. The temptation for the conscientious minister is to simply redouble his efforts, but sometimes rest is God's prescription. His still small voice is more powerful than all the work we can possibly generate.

The Lord was gracious enough to ordain a day of rest for His creatures. It isn't as if He was exhausted after six days of creative work, but He did want to lay down the principle of rest. Learning to protect your day off and recreate regularly will help you be a better long-term pastor.

Again, everyone is different with regards to what truly brings them relaxation. For me, it is a round of golf in summer or a trip to the country in the winter to watch my beagle hound run a rabbit. Taking the kids to the park, going for a leisurely walk, reading, watching TV, playing video games, or an occasional nap can also do wonders for the brain that has gone numb.

Don't overdose on rest, but be sure to relax regularly. Our ministry is a marathon not a 100-yard dash.

VI. Conclusion

It is a most interesting time for the church in America. To read the writings of the church growth experts, one could easily get the impression that revival is upon us. At the same time, many preachers across our land feel that we are in a time more like that of the Old Testament prophets. To them it seems that few are interested in righteousness. I suppose your evaluation depends upon where you are.

If your church is growing and reproducing disciples of the Lord Jesus, praise God. However, if Christ has positioned you in a difficult place, perhaps it is because He knows you have the perseverance to do a faithful work there. I pray that these survival tools will, regardless of the church's growth, help your congregation know that a man of God has been among them.

DIFFERING VIEWS: CONSIDER WISELY

Introduction: We often learn more when there is an interchange of ideas. As Christians lovingly share their differing beliefs and experiences, we are stimulated to examine God's Word afresh to discover its original meaning and current applications more accurately.

In this spirit and with this purpose, we present two viewpoints which differ quite strongly (but not entirely). First, two veteran and influential editors set forth a view which has been widely held in the Restoration Movement since Alexander Campbell in the early 1800s. (I'm sorry that the lack of space requires us to present short excerpts only.) Then we hear the other side from a brother who is experienced as a minister, counselor, and writer in Churches of Christ.

If you are like me, you will find your mind and study stimulated as you read on. —Editor

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The First Side:

THE CLERGY SYSTEM

Carl Ketcherside

In this article I am going to discuss what I believe to be one of the gravest errors into which the religious world has ever fallen. So widespread has it become that it will be virtually impossible to ever overcome it. So subtle is its encroachment that even those who deny being guilty of it are nonetheless victims of its malignant influence.

I refer to the rise of the clergy system with its unwarranted and unscriptural distinction between "clergy" and "laity." Never has there been a more serious imposition upon the kingdom of heaven and never another more widely accepted. How did "the clergy" originate to first usurp the rights and privileges of all the saints, and then to claim their prerogatives as a divine right? Some assign the beginning, which ultimately resulted in "a universal father" or pope, to the need for a strong voice to sound out the position of orthodoxy in a time of schism and heresy.

Whatever its origin it became so powerful that, almost without exception, it became "the way of life" for religious organizations. So much a part of the thought processes of our generation has it become that even those who seek to offset it are tricked into using its vocabulary, and parroting its specialized jargon.

Perhaps there is nothing seriously wrong with the mere words clergy and laity. It is the creating of a distinction between them which is so fraught with danger. The fact is that all of God's clergy are laity, and all of God's laity are clergy. Every child of God is a priest. Every child of God is a minister. Every disciple of Jesus has entered the ministry. The word of God knows nothing of a disciple who is not a minister. So long as we pay empty lip-service

to this concept while practicing something which is exactly the opposite, we are hypocritical and acting out a sham.

No one has an exclusive right to engage in teaching, exhorting or admonishing the saints. Why should the talents of scores of brethren be stifled and subjugated so that the one can grow by exercise? Shall we bind all of the members of the body but one, and let them become paralyzed through disuse? Are not all of the bodily members expected to perform the work for which they are gifted by the Lord? Are any gifts of God useless and worthless?

We are tricked into thinking that we are free from "the clergy system" because we have been clever enough to employ other terms to designate our clergy. But being a clergyman has little to do with whether "the common people" designate one by such titles as "Reverend" or "Right Reverend." One who appropriates to himself by reason of his status, the regulation and conduct of that worship which is the right of all, is a clergyman whether he admits it or not. What is the real difference in function between "the located evangelist" hired by a non-instrument Church of Christ, and the "pastor" hired by the Baptist Church a block down the street?

Hardly anyone ever calls the bishops to advise with them in times of marital, financial or social difficulties. The elders are not solicited to come and counsel a wayward son. If a member of the flock is hospitalized a frantic search is made to locate "the minister" to go and "have prayer." I have long been concerned with what we do when we *have prayer*. . . . —*Mission Messenger* (condensed)

THE MINISTER SYSTEM

Leroy Garrett

Along the way I learned that the minister system is a comparatively recent development in our Movement, one borrowed from our religious neighbors and promoted by Bible schools and Christian colleges. Our pioneers sought to return the Bible to the people in an intelligible translation, free of creedalism and clerical deductions, and to restore a mutual ministry in the assemblies of the saints. Campbell once reported on the several churches in his part of Virginia, pleased that there was not an employed minister in any pulpit, but that with their seniors (elders) the saints could edify themselves and share in sending out an evangelist.

The pastor system was so rare among us even as late as 1885 when Isaac Errett in the *Christian Standard* suggested its adoption on an emergency basis due to the paltry condition of the churches following the Civil War, that both David Lipscomb and James Harding rejected the idea as an innovation that would serve only as "a fungus growth upon the church, dwarfing its growth and preventing the development of its members" (*Gospel Advocate*, May 20 1885).

It also reassured me to learn that we have scores, if not hundreds, of churches in this country and abroad that have performed their ministry for generations on a mutual-edification basis, apart from any hired functionary. —Condensed from *Restoration Review*, 1974

The Second Side:

TRUTHS & HALF-TRUTHS ABOUT PROFESSIONAL PASTORS

by Michael Hall

Recently I've been surprised by several things in the "pastoral letters" (I & II Timothy, Titus). One surprise is that they say next to nothing about church structure! Written to church leaders and about church leadership—you'd expect it there. But it's not there.

Another surprise is that the pastoral letters were not even written to "pastors" (in the sense of "elders") but two young men—people whom we usually hesitate calling pastors!

These surprises raise questions. What was "the pastoral role" of Timothy & Titus? Evidence suggests they were "evangelistic" pastors. They took care of churches—they continued Paul's work of appointing and disciplining elders, setting churches in order, and keeping the church on target with the gospel.

How can we integrate these facts into the traditional conceptualization of the "Pastoral Ministry"? It seems to me that our either-or mentality has distorted our perspective. The question—"Are elders the pastors or is the preacher the pastor?"—falsely assumes one or the other. Yet Ephesians 4:11-12 identifies five categories of pastoral leaders: apostles, prophets, preachers, elders, and teachers. When you get right down to it—there is little difference between the work of a preacher and that of an elder in the scriptures. Both pastor: each feeds, takes care of, oversees, guides, directs, communicates, and leads in religious services. All pastoring equips people for the work of ministering.

The "pastoral letters" were written to two young guys engaged in *fulltime* pastoring. Timothy & Titus were *professionals*—engaged in a fulltime "profession." They did "elder" work in that they appointed men to leadership roles, filled vacancies, disciplined, and instructed. (Don't be scared of the word "professional." It simply refers to one with skill; one following an occupation as a means of livelihood. "Professionalism" is the character, spirit, conduct, aim, and method of a professional. This is in contrast to an amateur—one engaged for personal pleasure, as a pastime rather than employment.)

The pastoral letters instruct two young preachers "how to minister to a church." Paul wrote Timothy about the education program at Ephesus (I Tim. 1), public worship of that congregation (I Tim. 2), ordination of lay leadership (I Tim. 3), a special program for refugee widows (I Tim. 4), and the problem of Judaism (I Tim. 6). These were things Timothy needed to know in order to conduct himself properly in "the household of God" (3:14-15).

If you think I'm arguing that *only* "professionals" should study the Bible or lead the church, I'm not. That's not my point! My point is that *there is even room for professionals* in Christianity! A person

gifted with leadership gifts should stir up his gifts and do it fulltime. Timothy was told to keep his eyes open for lay elders who were efficient in word and communication and put them on the payroll (1 Tim. 5:17-18).

"Professionalism" often takes criticism it doesn't deserve. Sure it's often abused. Whenever pride and arrogance enter, abuse occurs. Professionalism violates its place when those involved read their skills as a basis for superiority.

But professionalism has its place. While I might elbow a pilot friend of a two-passenger plane to "let me take the controls for a minute," I'm not about to yell "unfair" when the pilot of a commercial jet won't give me a crack at it! He's the professional. He knows what he's doing. America may still be the home of the free, but I'm glad there are restrictions against amateurs, aren't you? Freedom doesn't mean that we let everybody into the cockpit! Nor does *mutual ministry* mean everybody has the ability to lead a church! Lack of skills and training *should* prevent me from taking a crack at flying a plane!

The same is true spiritually. With regard to Bible understanding, contrary to popular myth that the Bible can be readily understood by any sincere person—it is *not* an easy book to read, much less understand. First, you can't read the original Bible unless you know Hebrew and Greek! Second, as we get further away from first century thought patterns and culture, its literary devices become harder and harder to understand. (Some people don't even know that there are Hebraic literary devices in the Bible and how they differ from English literary devices!) Biblical understanding *is* a literary thing. The Bible is a book—comprised of many genre of literature. Its understanding therefore depends on literary skills & training. The teaching ministry exists for this purpose—to make clear what the early Christian documents meant to the first recipients. Once we know that, then we can begin applying their message for today.

The "*professional*" minister communicates these kinds of things. He is also needed for effective church leadership—administration, counseling, public relations, etc. When you have to appear in court, you don't let your brother's friend Bill represent you just because he's seen all the Perry Mason reruns! You need a professional.

We utilize professional people in medicine, physics, mechanics, music, and math everyday. Life is increasingly more complicated. So church professionals are needed. Our world is one of increasing specialization. Knowledge is progressing at rates that demand more and more specialization.

A professional has giftedness. But it takes more. It takes specialized training in intense programs of study. Lawyers, doctors, tax preparers, school teachers, counselors, mechanics, etc. have developed specialized knowledge that's esoteric to the rest of us. It's not that we are forbidden to enter these realms but that we don't have time, talent, money, and energy to be competent in all of them.

The ministry also has grown. Today no minister can be competent in all areas of ministry. Biblical knowledge, language and

theology, church growth, evangelism, discipleship, worship renewal, pastoral counseling—these are but a few of the specialized areas. I read at least 30 minutes every day in the Hebrew and Greek texts, yet I have no illusion about scholarship in those languages. The more I learn, the more I realize how little I know!

“So you don’t believe in the concept of the ‘mutual ministry’ anymore, do you?” Yes I do. But not in the sense that all are equally talented, gifted, trained, or competent to engage in all areas. “Do all speak with tongues?” “Are all prophets?”

The early church wasn’t run entirely by fulltime church-workers (professionals). Along with them other men gifted in leading, teaching, exhorting, encouraging, counseling, and communicating were sought out—men with Christlike character. They were then appointed as the local “old wise ones”—“elders” after the model of the synagogue. These men shared in the leadership. *Today we still have this mixture of professional and lay leadership.* Elders, then, are lay preachers!

“What do the pastoral letters say about church structure today?” Good question. Since not everything they did is normative for all ages, and since there’s no rigid pattern of church structure, and since the church is an organism (alive, growing, flexible)—it always needs *new wineskins* to meet the changing needs. With the healthy teaching of Jesus as our center and with the freedom to “become all things to all people” (I Cor. 9:19-23), we can accommodate. We can “strategize” (plan, dream, make decisions, create new wineskins) appropriate for our times. These are the things pastors do.

* * * * *

Questions Asked of Us

Carl Kitzmiller



Why do you not use the word “pastor” to refer to preachers?

The religious world quite generally calls a preacher a pastor, especially if he is located with a congregation. Many people do so out of habit, adopting a common usage, and use the expression without thought as to the meaning. It is, in fact, not a totally wrong usage, because there are very few located preachers who are not to some extent shepherds of the flock (such is the meaning of the word). There is a more accurate usage, however, and it is this that much of the religious world ignores.

It is not wrong (in truth, it is very right) for any understanding Christian to preach the gospel when the occasion affords. This does not do away with the fact that there is a definite group of

men set in the body of Christ who are evangelists, specially committed to the preaching of the gospel. The word "deacon" means "servant," but the church also has many servants who do not have the special qualifications given for deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13). In other words, there are specific men with specific qualifications for being servants, and there are others who are also servants in a broader sense who, nevertheless, do not fill this office. One can observe that *there are several words in New Testament usage which are sometimes used with a broad meaning and sometimes with a more limited meaning.* In one sense, many Christians are charged with some responsibility for shepherding other Christians (Galatians 6:1; Hebrew 3:12-13; James 5:16), but in a more limited way God has committed responsibility for the tending of the flock to men with specific qualifications. It is not wrong for a preacher to exercise many acts of pastoral concern for those under his preaching. We must admit that modern practice thrusts much of this kind of work on preachers. Some preachers reach the point where they meet the qualifications for overseers and these could be properly called pastors. The term in its more limited use, however, describes those men familiarly known to many of us as elders.

The New Testament uses six words to speak of the men specially charged with the oversight of the flock of God—presbyters or elders, bishops or overseers, and pastors or shepherds. Note that in Acts 20, Paul calls the elders (v. 17), also addresses them as bishops (v. 28), and charges them with feeding the flock (v. 28). In I Peter 5, Peter charges the elders (v. 1) with tending the flock (v. 2) as shepherds (v. 4). These words, then all speak of the same office. When we examine the qualifications given for it in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, it is quite evident that many a preacher does not begin to meet them. In the limited meaning then, "pastors" are really the elders. The general use of the word "pastor" for a preacher confuses and tends to rob the elders of the responsibility which they need to feel most keenly. It places the preacher into a position for which many young men (and some older ones) are not qualified. A young preacher whose children are yet very young, however fine he may be, cannot be a pastor except in the broad sense of the word.

One can strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. Proper use of a name does not, of course, necessarily guarantee all else will be in order. There is great need, though, that we use words accurately so that we may be more aware of the Lord's ordering for the church.

Would you comment on the use of "Thee," "Thou," and such like expressions as used in prayers to God?

"Thee," "thou," "thine," etc., are pronouns that once were standard usage in the English language. Now we hear them almost exclusively only in a religious context. To further complicate matters, many moderns have never really learned which forms to use, and they handle the expressions awkwardly. More and more Christians are using the simple "you" and "your." Modern speech translations

have done a great deal toward making the latter usage acceptable to the ears of great numbers.

There is something to be said for each usage, and the great need is understanding why one usage or the other is favored. We should understand that the New Testament was written in Koine Greek—the language of the common man, the language of the market place of the day. There was no special set of Biblical pronouns reserved for God. The “thees” and “thous,” along with certain singular verb endings, can be traced to the King James translation and its predecessors in the English language. Be aware, however, that such usage was not a special Biblical language when the translations were made. Common people addressed each other with “thee” and “thou” in all the activities of life. Over the years common usage was gradually changed and “you” was adopted for both singular and plural forms. Folks still read of God in a Bible using “thee,” however, so they retained the Bible language in speaking to Him. Gradually this came to be regarded as the reverent way of addressing God. Common usage was considered irreverent. Only in fairly recent years has the trend been reversed.

The person who has grown up on the older usage may find it difficult to change. To him it is the language of reverence, and he feels comfortable with it. He may still use a Bible containing the older forms, and the grammatical constructions present no problem. As he talks with God, why may he not continue to use it if he wishes? Personally, I know intellectually that “You” is as reverent as “Thou,” when it is reverently used, but with the heart I favor the old forms. I certainly have no quarrel with those who use “You” reverently; in fact, I would recommend it as good modern usage.

For the sake of communication with others there can be no doubt but that the old forms ought to be dropped. The youth of today, are for the most part, unfamiliar with it. To the non-reader of the Bible it is a strange language, almost as lacking in meaning to the average man as the Latin in a Roman Catholic mass. To these it is not really a language of reverence at all.

Perhaps you'll allow also a comment or two on reverence. Reverence is not a mere form but is also a matter of heart and life. The Jews of old would not so much as pronounce the name of Jehovah, but they lived in gross sin, including idolatry. We can maintain a careful language and walk and speak softly in the worship without true reverence. On the other hand, there is a danger we may reject the forms and also what the forms were intended to accomplish. If I am not mistaken, this very thing is happening to a large segment of our population today—there is little regard for holy things. The name and things of God are interspersed with the language of the gutter and the drug scene. Words are thought symbols and do not always mean the same things to different peoples, but it is hard to see much awe or true respect of God in some of the music, conduct, and expressions that are “in” today. God is holy, He is God, and we should not deal with Him so familiarly as to breed contempt.



THOUGHTS FROM ROMANS

Ernest E. Lyon

“KEEP ONLY ONE DEBT”

This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for he who loves his fellowman has fulfilled the law. The commandments, "Do not commit adultery," "Do not murder," "Do not steal," "Do not covet," and whatever other commandment there may be, are summed up in this one rule: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law. (Romans 13:6-10, NIV)

The Greek scholar William Hendriksen has an interesting translation of verse six—"This is also why you pay taxes, for when (the authorities) faithfully devote themselves to this end, they are God's ministers." "This" indicates that not only do you need to be in subjection for conscience' sake (v. 5), but for that same conscience you pay taxes. The Christian conscience should tell a believer that it is right to pay taxes. It is right, since it is in harmony with God's purpose for our life. The collection of taxes is a necessary thing to have the kind of government that God wants us to have. There may be some unfair taxes, but it is better to pay unfair ones than to have no government! Of course, the officials should listen to Calvin when he states, "It behooves them to remember that whatever they receive from the people is, as it were, public property, and not to be spent in gratification of private indulgence."

But the outward giving of money in the form of taxes is not all we should do. To give the money and tell the tax collectors to get out will not do; we must show proper respect for the position these men hold. We need to honor them if they are faithful in their task. Let us not forget that the people in general, including ourselves, are benefited when the officials do their tasks well, and also that the cause of the gospel is furthered. Just imagine, if you can, a real anarchy and the work of the gospel then.

I like very much Hendriksen's translation of the beginning of verse 7—"Do not keep on owing anyone anything except to love one another." How much disgrace to the churches could have been

avoided if all Christians had taken heed to Paul's urging here. Think how the gospel has been held back by those who are ready to borrow but very slow to repay the borrowed sum. And note that here we have love mentioned in this background. If we love as we ought, we will want others to have what is due them. But love is then the one debt that can never be fully paid. It is a continuing obligation, a debt we owe to our fellowmen. And note the wording, "love one another." Many would be glad to confine the "one another" to Christians only, but Paul's words go much further to all our "fellowmen." Only when we do that have we "fulfilled" the Law.

The mentioning of the Law brings to Paul's mind the central feature of the law—the ten commandments. Of the "second table" of the Law (commands five through ten), Paul picks out four to illustrate what he means and then shows that the great command that sums up the entire "second table" is "Love your neighbor as yourself." The four commandments are stated in the negative, "Do not," but behind these is a positive command of love that will lead one to do all God wants. To illustrate—You shall love your neighbor, and therefore you shall not covet what is his. And note that that love is to be "as yourself." It is certain that regardless of the faults you may have and of your realization of them, you will love yourself, not wish evil for yourself!

Paul beautifully summarizes what I have been saying (and, of course, what he has been saying!) in the last verse of our text— "Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." Or, as other scholars have put it, "the fulness of the law." Hendriksen shows something in the original that is interesting when he translates this verse, "Love does no harm to the neighbor. Therefore the fulfillment of (the) law is love." Note that "love" starts and ends the verse. God is love, let us never forget, and He works good for us. Let us do the same for all our fellowmen.

Building Better Christian Families

by Fred W. Schott

Talk That Gets Through to 'Em!

"Keep a tight rein on your tongue." James 1:2 (also 1:19-20 & 3:3-6)

The Apostle James seemed quite concerned about Christians getting into trouble through the things they say. It is a central theme running through his entire letter. He seems to be saying, "Slow down, think before you speak. Do not say things that you will be sorry for later. Do not hurt people with your sharp tongue." This is good

advice for Christians in all situations, but we especially need to practice these things in Christian families.

In family settings, people are likely to say mean and cruel things that they would not dream of saying to complete strangers. "We always hurt the one we love" is an old saying that is too true. The instrument of hurt, the thing that we use to inflict pain, is most often the tongue. "The tongue is also a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body," said James.

If we are going to build better Christian families, it is imperative that we tame the tongues of family members. As in so many areas of life, it is almost impossible to train children to tame their tongue unless adult family members have first tamed their own.

To keep a tight rein on our tongue, however, does not mean that we never speak up, that we must always bite our tongue. In fact, the scriptures are also filled with the opposite message. There are times when we need to speak up. The early Christians found courage to speak up before kings and judges who had the power and often did sentence them to death.

It also takes courage at times to speak up in a family. Often family members would rather avoid problems that need to be discussed. Sometimes one or more family members want to do things that are not helpful, or things that are just wrong. It takes courage to speak up and stand for what is right. When one family member verbally abuses another, it takes courage to get involved as the peacemaker. Jesus promised that through the Holy Spirit He would give Christians the right words when they stood before judges and kings. I am confident that He will do the same for those times when it takes courage to speak up with love in a family.

Words carefully chosen can also bring comfort and healing. "The tongue of the wise is a choice silver. . . The lips of the righteous feed many." (Proverbs 10:20-21). Just think of all of the words of Jesus that bring comfort and feed us. One of my favorites is "Come unto me, all that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

One of the most profound spiritual experiences I ever had was at my father's funeral. I was overcome by grief. Then our family's pastor, an old and dear friend, simply began to read the words of Jesus. He began, "In my father's house are many mansions. . ." As he read one passage of comfort after another, a peace so powerful that I physically experienced it literally swept over me.

Every parent must instruct the children God has given. It is more true than we realize that Children learn more from our actions than our words, that values are caught, not taught. Even so, there comes a time when we must speak if we are to teach. The wise parents' "lips promote instruction . . . are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and healing to the bones." (Proverbs 16:23-24)

What parent would not like the way they communicate described that way, not only with the children but with other adult family members? All of us desire to be wise, but especially at home. The wise use of talk requires a dependence on the Holy Spirit. It also takes patience and self-discipline.

Good training and instruction can also be helpful. Proverbs 19:20 tells us that we will be wise if we listen to advice and instruction. It is not a sign of weakness but of wisdom to seek out parenting classes that teach us to be better listeners, better talkers, and that teach us better ways to handle our emotions.

The challenge: Will our Christian homes be places of respite from the pressures of the world, a place of healing and instruction, a "honeycomb?" Or, will they be a "hornet's nest" where people hurt the ones they love the most? Much of that depends upon our ability to "keep a tight rein on our tongue" by learning to use them wisely and with love.

Questions, Discussion, and Application:

1. In your family, what are some things that provoke members to turn on each other with their tongues? What can you do to prevent it from happening so much?
2. Can you think of a time you said something mean or cruel and wished you could take it back almost as soon as it rolled off your tongue?
3. Can you think of a time when you knew you should have spoken up but could not find the courage? What made it so hard to speak out?
4. Can you think of a time when you were distressed and somebody said something that really helped you?

(If you have questions on parenting you want Fred to answer in *Word & Work*, send them to him at 1404 'N' Ave., Omaha, NE 68107. His question/answer column will begin in September, Lord willing.)

Dear Nieces and Nephews,

When two people team up, there is no way to take a majority vote about problems and major decisions. Someone has to lead, and the other has to follow. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, chapter 11, he shows that the man has the responsibility of leading—he is the head of the woman.

Some complain that gives the man all the power. But a brief study of history will show that some of the most powerful people were in advisory positions. They give advice, which the leader may or may not accept, but they do not have the responsibility of the decisions (which is a good thing in case the advice should turn out to be wrong!).

I Peter 3:1-12

Wives and Husbands

In the same way you wives must submit to your husbands, so that if any of them do not believe God's word, your conduct will win them over to believe. It will not be necessary for you to say a word, because they will see how pure and reverent your conduct is. You should not use outward aids to make yourselves beautiful, such as the way you do your hair, or the jewelry you put on, or the dresses you wear. Instead, your beauty should consist of your true inner self, the ageless beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of the greatest value in God's sight. For the devout women of the past who placed their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful by submitting to their husbands. Sarah

was like that; she obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are now her daughters if you do good and are not afraid of anything.

In the same way you husbands must live with your wives with the proper understanding that they are the weaker sex. Treat them with respect, because they also will receive, together with you, God's gift of life. Do this so that nothing will interfere with your prayers.

To conclude: you must all have the same attitude and the same feelings; love one another as brothers, and be kind and humble with one another. Do not pay back evil with evil or cursing with cursing; instead, pay back with a blessing, because a blessing is what God promised to give you when he called you. As the scripture says,

"Whosoever wants to enjoy life and wishes to see good times, must keep from speaking evil and stop telling lies.

He must turn away from evil and do good; he must strive for peace with all his heart.

For the Lord watches over the righteous and listens to their prayers; but he opposes those who do evil."

—Good News Bible

The Apostle Peter points out that Sarah trusted in God—and called her husband "Lord". She allowed Abraham to make the final decisions, and trusted in God to provide for her if Abraham should fail in some way. (Which is exactly what happened! Read Genesis 20 for the amazing story).

But a wife who considers her husband potentially undependable, who needs to be bossed by her, is not trusting in God, but herself. If things go wrong, she will have no one to blame but herself, but may, of course, blame her husband.

Wives should learn from the sports arenas: Teams do much better when supported by a cheering section; so do husbands. If you want to be a leader, be first of all a cheer-leader!

Love from Uncle Cecil



Nemesio & Myrna Auxtero
(Excerpts from a long report)

Bohol, Philippines

April 18 1988

Bible School: It is a great joy to see the first batch of the 3 year Associate of Theology graduates, and 14 for the 2 year Basic Course. Our hearts leap for joy as we remind ourselves of God's faithfulness. God has honored that faith. Many churches have been formed because of the training the students obtained.

The Church: There are now 8 congregations: the newest is *Pinango* (a village at Jao Island). After 3 years of seeming fruitless labor, 4 people were baptized, followed by 6 more.

Sag Island: The new congregation has 16 baptized members and many sympathizers. They are well persecuted and receive stoning from

time to time. Two newly baptized members were ejected from the land they live in.

High School Bible Clubs: More and more nuns are employed to destroy our Bible-club work in the campus in Talibon. Threats on grades has always been the persecution that led to dropping out of students from attendance. More & more slanders are being sown in the minds of the students. The discouraged counselors attended our Training Camp and were again renewed in their dedication. We had a great time together learning from the life of Jeremiah. After 8 days, we went home so much blessed.

Open Air Preaching Campaigns: Three of our students went to 6 islands and 5 mainland places, and ministered to approximately 368 people.

Baptisms: Since January, there has been a total of 20 baptisms. Praise the Lord for this.

The Church will sponsor 10 Daily Vacation Bible Schools to target 500-800 students in 10 different places. After this, an Evangelistic/Discipleship Camp will be launched for Young People on the second week of May.

Eyeglass frames have been sent by a generous person who collected them from friends. They have been distributed to our students and members who badly need them. They are too poor to buy food, much more for eyeglasses. I've talked to an optometrist who will grant a special price.

Jimmy Yee,

Manila, Philippines

May 30, 1988

Many public lands in Metro Manila are appropriated by squatters. We happened to buy the right to a piece of land in a squatters' area near the dump site. The owner, a government community leader had been attacked by 4 known leaders of a communist organization. He had 3 gunshot wounds and narrowly escaped death. He begged us to buy the right to his property. Out of pity we did and so begin our ministry to this community of a thousand families. This is one of the recruitment areas of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and not a few of their leaders have been liquidated by the police. But the group persists. Not a few people have warned and discouraged us from starting a work there but after some thoughts and prayers we feel the Lord wants us to minister to these people.

We had dental and medical outreach, a film showing, & follow-up. Now a regular Bible study for young people and adults is in progress. We hope to have a congregation here in a year's time. Our priority right now is to put up a chapel to serve as a multi-purpose center where feeding for children can be done. We hope to show this people that God loves them and Christianity is the answer, not communism.

Karen Ashley

Solomon Islands

June 13, 1988

I have been here in Honiara for the last 3 weeks, 5 days of it in the hospital, threatening to miscarry. I am much improved now, but our return to the village could be complicated if things don't completely settle down before then. James and the boys could not come

with me but they will arrive tomorrow for a 3-4 week stay here in town. I have missed them *very* much, so I hope we will not have to be separated again when time comes for our return to Sa'a. At least James *must* go back in July if we hope to get our house built by the end of September. Plans now are for us to return to the States in October—I am due at the end of November. Then we hope to return to the Solomons in February.

James' language learning continues to progress, and he has also been encouraged by the response of the local leaders regarding fund-raising to pay the translators' salaries. Because of our return to the States, we won't start translating until next year, but meanwhile he is working on a dictionary and a write-up of the grammar with the translator who lives in Sa'a and has the other translators working on other projects. One is trying his hand at translating some stories from Genesis, using a booklet of stories in Pijin as a starting point.

Tom Nickell, missionary to Agta tribespeople in the northern Philippines:

One of our men, Diner, graduated from 6th grade in Bagabag March 31. He will return to Blos and become a major ingredient of our literacy program (we pray). He must fight the temptations of social prestige and material wealth.

The Agta church at large is under pressure from culturally dominant ethnic groups. Agtas have continued meeting with Kalinga and Ilokano believers here. That's as it should be; we enjoy the fellowship of these people. But Kalingas and Ilokanos do not recognize Agta values. Agtas, by nature, do not stand up for their values. The result is superficial teaching in church meetings, conducted in the western manner to which these dominant groups have been exposed. Any real discipling is limited to "casual" contact outside of the church setting.

Example: A young Kalinga woman, studying at a Bible school in the provincial capital, has come home for the summer vacation. She offers to conduct a Vacation Bible School for two months for all the Kalinga, Ilokano and Agta children. We offer blackboard, chalk, material and a dollar a day salary. Wonderful! But guess what Bible she uses to teach memory verses: King James Version English! Her choice of songs and choruses—English. The "special number" in the church service—English. This was a major problem and it called for all of God's grace and far more tact than I keep in store. Our goal was for her to teach *Agta* memorization verses and choruses to Agta children. Result: the teacher is now enthused to teach Agta memorization verses. One verse she gave me to translate is Eph. 2:13, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometime were far off are made *night* (sic) by the blood of Christ." That's from her handwritten list. I hope you can see why I quake in terror at the use of KJV English by tribal people. I have many such examples.

Translation: Gilliam and I have completed an initial check of Matthew and Mark. Now we hope to polish the four T's (Thess. - Tim.) for publication in March 1989. I hope to draft Revelation and Romans while Kristy is delivering our second child in Manila in July.

What Great Christians Taught About Baptism

Alex V. Wilson

Christ Jesus, not baptism, is the Savior. Trust in Him rather than in your immersion. It scares me the way some folks stress baptism almost constantly. It bothers me when I hear *many* people talk about "Back when I got baptized . . ." and *few* people talk about "Back when I received Jesus as my Lord and Savior. . . ." It makes me wonder sometimes about their personal relationship with our Redeemer back at their conversion—and *now* as well.

On the other hand, it deeply disturbs me too when evangelists, teachers, and authors who are zealous, gifted, and in many ways soundly Biblical won't touch baptism with a 10-foot pole. They take wide detours around it instead of facing up honestly to God's Word and telling it like it is.

But they are not all like that. In the April 1982 *Word & Work* we gave extensive quotations from leading Bible scholars like F.F. Bruce, Michael Green and James Stiffler. They deal with the Scriptural teaching sincerely and clearly, letting God's Word mean what it says. Again, in March of this year, we quoted outstanding reformers, evangelists and teachers—Luther, Calvin, Wesley, Torrey, and Andrew Murray—and saw what they taught (or at least admitted) about the New Testament's teaching on this subject.

Now we continue. Let me repeat briefly what I said at some length in the earlier articles: We are not trying to prove Christian doctrine on the basis of what uninspired men believe, however great they may be. We are simply showing, for what it is worth, that many excellent Bible teachers and Spirit-filled leaders have held views identical or at least similar to the views of the non-legalistic teachers in the Restoration Movement through the past 150 years. (See May and June 1982 issues of *Word & Work* for a thorough presentation of the views of the Campbells, Stone, and others.) Sad to say, legalistic loudmouths in the Restoration Movement too often drowned out those teachers who stressed God's grace and Christ's cross.

Consider, then, the quotations from Ironside, Nee, Barclay, Christenson, and others that follow. If you share them with your Bible-believing friends who downplay baptism, you may stimulate them to study afresh what *God* says—which of course is what we really want to do.

H. A. Ironside, outstanding Bible expositor, author of over 60 books, and for many years the minister of the Moody Memorial Church in Chicago:

"Let me give you a word of personal testimony. For the first six years of my Christian life I was largely dependent upon what I called the Spirit's guidance. I knew very little of the guidance of the Word. When perplexed, I would say, 'I will ask the Lord what

His will is,' and as I felt impressed I would act. But I found as I read my Bible that I was going contrary to the written Word. I shall never forget the night I knelt before God, and opened my Bible to a passage of Scripture on the subject of baptism, which I had been avoiding for years. I would say, 'I am going to ask the Lord about it,' and then I thought I had an inward feeling that baptism of the Holy Spirit was all I needed, and every time I read a scripture and saw baptism before me I dodged it. I had a lot of dodging to do, for there were a great many scriptures that had to do with that subject, but finally before the open Word I said, 'Blessed God, by Thy grace from today on I will never try to dodge one thing that is written in Thy word for Thy people in this age. If Thou wilt make it clear to me, by Thy grace I will walk in obedience to it.' And from that time I had blessings I had never experienced before. Two weeks after that I went down to the sea-side and was buried in baptism, and a week later I sat at the Table of the Lord. I had said, 'All you need is to feed mentally upon the body and blood of Christ, you do not need the outward symbols.' One by one many things came before me that I had tried to make myself believe were all right, but I found they were contrary to His Word. I have sought conscientiously now for many years to yield obedience when God speaks. I do not always understand why He tells me to do certain things, but it is not necessary for me to understand, the thing for me is to obey, to do what God has asked me to do." (From *Addresses on First Corinthians*)

Watchman Nee, notable Bible teacher, evangelist, leader of a "restoration movement" in China during the 1930's and following, and author of *The Normal Christian Life* and *Sit, Walk, Stand*:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." (Mark 16:16) We would suppose that most Protestants become a bit apprehensive over this verse. When they see it, they change it in their mind to read 'He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized.' The Lord, however, has not so said. In order to escape the error of the Roman Catholic Church, Protestants unwittingly alter God's Word and thus fall into another error. The Lord speaks clearly that 'he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' No one is authorized to change it to 'he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized.'

"'And Peter said to them, Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins' (Acts 2:38). Does the word of the apostle sound strange in our ears? Again, many Protestants seem to have difficulty with this verse so plainly spoken by the apostle. In what way can baptism lead to the forgiveness of sins? Is it not strange that the apostle does not lay stress on 'believing' in his message? . . . It is because all of his hearers were participants in the killing of the Lord Jesus. Fifty days ago they had cried out: 'Away with this man.' They had been in the crowd shouting their rejection. Now, though, some of them desired to be separated from the crowd. How? By being baptized. Through baptism they would come out of the world and sever their rela-

tionship with that brotherhood. Never take the word 'salvation' purely in a personal sense. According to the Bible, it is more a matter of coming out of the world than of escaping hell.

"The world will still reckon a person one of its own if he does not give an outward expression of his inward faith. For example, in Kuling, Foochow, there is an idol festival in the autumn. Every inhabitant is supposed to contribute to it. If one merely says he has believed in the Lord and cannot therefore participate, he will nonetheless not be excused. But let him be baptized, and he will immediately be known as having left the world. Consequently, baptism is the best way of separation. Through baptism the believer declares to the entire world that he has severed his relationship with it and has come out of it." (From *A Living Sacrifice*)

William Barclay of Scotland, a Presbyterian; a famous professor and commentator: "Baptism in the Early Church was intimately connected with confession of faith. A man was baptized when he entered the Church. And he was entering the Church direct from paganism. Baptism marked a dividing line in his life. In baptism a man came to a decision which cut his life in two, a decision which often meant that he had to tear himself up by the roots, a decision which was so definite that for him it often meant nothing less than beginning life all over again... Baptism was symbolically like dying and rising again. The man died to one kind of life and rose to another kind of life. He died to the old life of sin and rose to the new life of grace.

"Paul was using language and pictures that almost anyone of his day and generation would understand... The Jew would understand it. When a man entered the Jewish religion from heathenism it involved three things—sacrifice, circumcision, and baptism. The Gentile entered the Jewish faith by baptism. The person to be baptized cut his nails and hair; he undressed completely; the baptismal bath must contain at least two hogsheads of water. Every part of his body must be touched by the water. As he was in the water he made confession of his faith before three fathers of baptism, and certain exhortations and benedictions were addressed to him. Now the effect of this baptism was held to be complete regeneration; the man was a new man; he was born anew. He was called a little child just born, the child of one day. All his sins were remitted because God cannot punish sins committed before he was born. Any Jew would understand fully Paul's words about the necessity of a baptized man being a completely new man." (From *The Letter to the Romans*)

Alan Richardson, renowned British scholar and writer: "In the Church of the New Testament, faith and baptism belong together, like soul and body in biblical thought; the one cannot exist without the other. To regard sincere faith as adequate to salvation apart from baptismal incorporation into Christ's body is sheer "Christian Science" by the standards of the New Testament theology. The profession of faith without the bodily action of submission in baptism is not the obedience of the whole man. Believing while dispensing with the act of obedience—with the act of baptism—is not belief in the New

Testament sense at all. The action—or rather, the passion—of being baptized, is itself part of the act of believing since to believe means to obey.” (From *An Introduction to New Testament Theology*)

Larry Christenson, well-known Lutheran author (*The Christian Family, The Christian Couple*) and leader in the charismatic movement:

“Baptism is tied to the forgiveness of sins. ‘Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.’ The Greek text suggests movement: Baptism is the vehicle which moves a person into the forgiveness of sins.

“Baptism rescues from judgment. ‘In the days of Noah a few were saved through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you.’ The deliverance of Israel through the Red Sea is likewise seen as a parallel to baptism. The children Israel were ‘baptized into Moses in the Sea.’ (I Cor. 10:2) Through this ‘baptism,’ they were delivered from Pharaoh’s power. The typology is evident: Through the waters of baptism, we are delivered from spiritual slavery; we are no longer under the authority of sin and Satan.” (From “What About Baptism?”)

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In conclusion, we look at the experiences of a man, who—unlike all those quoted earlier—was a preacher from the Churches of Christ. He is not widely known, like the other men, but he was a faithful, longsuffering servant of the Lord. I refer to the late Stephen Eckstein, a missionary to Jews in the U.S.

As we ponder these excerpts from his autobiography, may they sting us with the realization that it costs to follow Jesus—for He demands total allegiance. The issue is not some trivial controversy over rites or ordinances. No, it boils down to authority: am I willing to give Jesus of Nazareth full authority over my life—trust His promises, obey His commands, and leave the consequences with Him? It was quite easy for me and probably you to be baptized. But would we have dared if we had been Jews, threatened with ostracism or worse? Eckstein wrote,

“I have been asked often, ‘What is the greatest obstacle, or hindrance, which stands in the way of a Jew accepting Jesus as his Messiah?’ My unequivocal answer is baptism.”

“A Jew will at times admit faith in Christ, but will not submit to baptism, for baptism cuts him off from the Jewish race. . . .”

“My experience during many years is that baptism is the main line of demarcation between the Jew & the non-Jew. A Jew will not recognize another Jew as a traitor, deserter, renegade, or apostate because he has married outside of his faith, attended services in a church, or given of his means to help a church. Yea, he may be appointed a deacon, or change his name, but as long as he is not baptized, he will not be recognized as a meshumod (one who has annihilated himself by Christian baptism).”

“A baptized Jew cannot be buried in a Jewish cemetery.”

“A Jew can say that he believes in Jesus, but as long as he is not baptized, he is a Jew. A Jew to be classed as a Christian without being baptized would be incomprehensible. It would make as much sense as if you said ‘cold fire.’”

“Were it not for baptism, I could claim in 39 years of work 2000 Jews saved. Actually, however, only 24 have been baptized.” (End)

A Task Force To Set Goals For The 1990's

In March of this year, the School of Biblical Studies presented a lectureship entitled "No Revival - No Survival." This event was designed to face squarely the problems of our brotherhood and begin the process of looking for biblical solutions and growth. There was obviously great interest in this endeavor. Attendance was nearly twice that of previous lectureships.

The sermons and the discussion time insightfully portrayed our struggle. We realized that we live in a rapidly changing culture where there is significant spiritual drought. It was also noted that any group or organization which is not superbly led tends to "run down" after first generation leaders pass from the scene. Our brotherhood grew for the first forty years of its existence but plateaued in the 60's and has declined during the 70's and 80's.

Of all the brainstorming that took place during the lectureship, one idea seemed particularly important and timely. This was the formation of a task force to begin writing goals for the 1990's. It was pointed out that we truly need some specific targets for our labors in the years ahead.

Certainly, the Great Commission provides all we need as we define our mission. However, we also need specific objectives. For example, I personally have heard of several individuals and young families who are very interested in foreign mission work. This is exciting, but it also creates a number of questions. Where in the world will they serve? How will they be supported? How shall we train them?

Similar questions arise in the area of home missions, Christian education, and social action. It has been said, "to fail to plan is to plan to fail."

In the past two decades, our brotherhood has developed very few new ministries and has struggled to maintain the existing ones. This pattern will no doubt continue as long as we drift aimlessly without some specific, biblical targets.

The School of Biblical Studies is in the process of selecting the task force to set goals for the 1990s. It will be a group of 16 men, approximately half elders and half being preachers. There will also be a regional balance with men from five states (Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky). The sole responsibility of this team will be to produce a set of goals that will challenge and motivate our local congregations to cooperative action.

On the whole, this concept has received significant support. Christians from around the country have shared their excitement that something is being done to reverse the downward spiral we find ourselves in. There have also been a few criticisms of the plan. It has been mentioned that this undertaking sounds like the development of a denominational hierarchy which will threaten the autonomy of the local church. Another legitimate question has been voiced concerning the School of Biblical Studies and who they think they are

to undertake a project that involves setting goals for the whole brotherhood.

First of all, with regard to the autonomy issue, lengthy discussions have been held concerning this very question. Let me emphasize that the task force is a temporary group. After it finishes its task, it will disband. The goals that are written can only be seen as recommendations to the brotherhood and the local church. It is certainly our hope that the goals will challenge the local churches to greater cooperation, but we cannot and would not disturb the authority of the local congregation.

As for the place of SBS in all of this, we see ourselves only as the implementors of this idea. We view the task force as an extremely important and timely project. We did not want to be guilty of the perennial problem of waiting for someone else to take the initiative. I would hasten to add that once the task force begins its work, it will be free of its connection with SBS, and will simply exist as a servant of the Lord and the churches.

The task force is tentatively scheduled to meet on the Fridays following the Louisville Fellowship Week and the Central Louisiana Fellowship (Aug. 5 and Nov. 18). *Your prayers and your suggestions* are appreciated as we strive to be good stewards of all God has so richly provided.

—C. Dennis Kaufman, Chairman of the S.B.S. Board

NEWS AND NOTES

"They rehearsed all that God had done with them."

Lilly Dale, Ind.:

We are thankful for all who helped work on the boys' bathhouses at Woodland Camp.

And all of us here at Lilly Dale are very thankful to God for providing us with a van to transport groups of people to meetings and other activities.

—Sharle Sutcliffe, reporter

Jacksonville, FL:

We are in need of a minister at the Woodstock Park Church of Christ, 2934 Lowell Avenue, Jacksonville, Florida 32205.

If interested please send a resumé to John H. Adams, 2019 Barton Ave., Jacksonville, FL 32207. Telephone number: (904) 396-6523.

—John H. Adams, Minister

Crowley, La.:

At the Ave. E Church of Christ in Crowley, we praise the Lord for our highest monthly attendance averages ever, during May. We averaged 84 in Sun. school, 97 for morning worship

meetings, and 65 on Sun. nights And VBS the first week of June averaged 59.

The churches combine for a special service on the 2nd Sunday of each month at the local nursing home. Crowds of 60-80 usually turn out for this.

We thank the Lord for His goodness as we see spiritual growth in the lives of many.

—A. Valdetero

Buechel Church, Louisville:

Our Sunday Evening video series by Dr. James Dobson has been a blessing to all who have been in attendance.

The next two videos are important for our young people to see. They center around the areas of: "The Origins of Self-Doubt" and "Peer Pressure and Sexuality."

—Larry McAdams

Portland Christian School, Louisville:

Ted and Crystal Hardin have accepted positions for the next 3 years

with Academia Los Pineres, a mission school in Honduras. Ted will serve as principal of the elementary level, and Crystal will teach grade 6.

Academia Los Pineres has two important purposes: offer good education for "missionary kids" (about 20% of its students are MKs), and also present the gospel and a Christ-centered education to the Honduran students who attend. Many of the latter are from the upper social/economic level of society, and from their ranks will probably come national leaders in coming years. Pray earnestly for Ted, Crystal, and their children—Tabitha, Hope, and John, as they prepare to live and serve the Lord in Honduras. They have been a great blessing in many ways during the past 9 years at PCS and Portland Church, especially in their burden for world missions.

Pray also for PCS: for the teacher(s) of God's choice to fill the gaps; for more students; for Earl Mullins, who will continue as administrator and also double as principal of K-12. We thank God the debt has decreased.

Southeast Church of Christ, Louisville:
GUEST SPEAKER TONIGHT. After trying two previous times, we are pleased that Ray Naugle is scheduled to swap pulpits with Nathan Burks tonight. Illness and schedule conflicts have prevented this twice before. Ray and his wife, Sandra, minister to the church at Henryville, IN.

Wednesday, June 1, the evening service will be devoted to an open forum on foreign/local mission interest and questions. This will include the teens. We hope to develop from this meeting a committee to work on mission programs for this congregation.

HOME WITH THE LORD

Sister Genevieve vonAllmen went home to be with the Lord on Friday, March 25, 1988. At the funeral home many, many friends brought remembrances of her kindness and gentleness.

A more faithful prayer partner you could not find. When any of us at the Shawnee Church of Christ had a burden, we knew by sharing it with her, she would take it to the Lord in prayer. Answers to these prayers were felt by many.

When the church started its missionary outreach to Ghana she was very excited. She wrote many letters of encouragement and made many friends in Ghana by mail. One young man wrote us of what a wonderful Christian lady she was and he was so happy to have her as his friend. It did not take a long association with Sis. vonAllmen to see the love of Christ dwelling in her.

The funeral was conducted by Bill Smallwood and Ben Rake, Jr.

Our sympathy goes to her husband, R. H. vonAllmen and their children and grandchildren.

FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR FAMILIES who want to have guidance in selecting movies and videos, we have two publications in the church office which may interest you: (1) Book, **The 1988 Movie and Video Guide for Christian Families**; and (2) Periodical, **Movieguide**, a Biblical guide to movies and entertainment. Both publications were obtained through Good News Communications. We have subscribed to **Movieguide**, and you are encouraged to use it. —Bulletin of the Brookvalley Church, Atlanta

"Words of Life":

Brethren T. Y. Clark, Robert Gill, Earl Mullins, Sr., and Cleo Russell left May 16th for two weeks in Mindanao visiting twelve congregations in Zamboanga and Cagayan de Oro City area. We also attended the graduation of seven students from the Bible Training school in Cagayan de Oro under the supervision of Bro. Cyrus Gesulga. This is a two-year course daily with field work (house to house) in the afternoons and additional classes in the evenings. This makes nineteen graduates since 1986, and many are now preaching.

We traveled many miles over land and sea, and all the people were greatly encouraged. In most places they asked us all to speak an hour each, but we took less time as we had to go to other places. It was around 100 degrees with no air conditioning, except at night in some of the hotels.

Woodland Bible Camp opened June 12 with 56 campers and workers in attendance. A great time was enjoyed by all following the theme "My Heart—Christ's Home."

—Linton Bulletin

Bill and Rita Smallwood
Shawnee Church of Christ

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