

DECEMBER 1996

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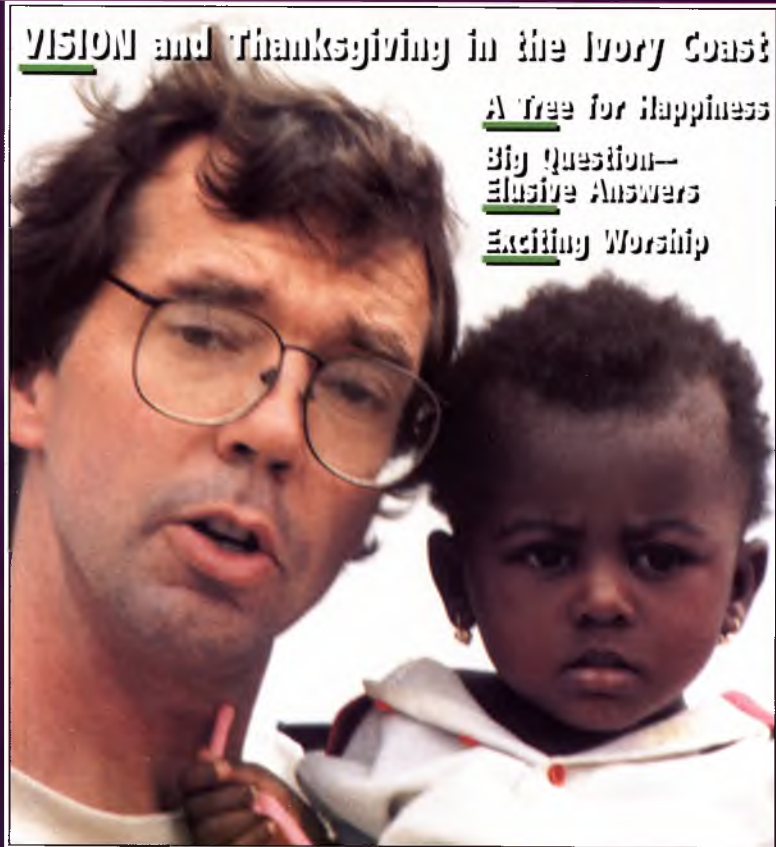
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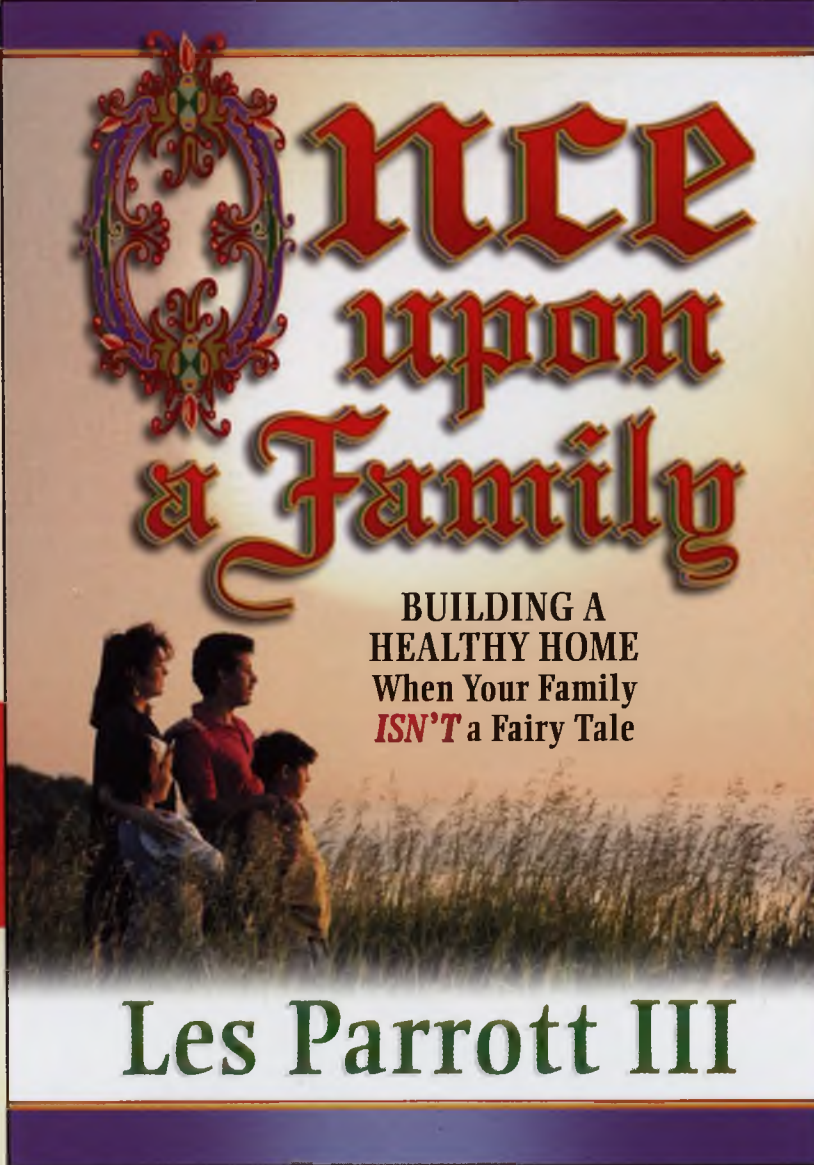
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A Six-Year-Old's Christmas

MICHAEL R. ESTEP



Michael R. Estep is director of the Communications Division, Church of the Nazarene.

A LIST, A DESK, AND A QUESTION.

One of the most memorable Christmases I ever enjoyed was when I was at the ripe old age of six.

Even at that young age, I had a great deal of admiration for my father and his ability to get a lot done. My father was a full-time employee at Armco Steel Corporation and wired houses on the side as a means of a second income.

I would tag along with my dad to those work sites when he came in after working all day long. I noticed on many occasions that he had made a list to go to the electrical supply store to purchase items. As I was beginning to think about Christmas that year, I thought I needed a list. I had earned \$5 helping my dad and selling pop bottles. I determined I would buy a gift for everyone in my immediate family.

Once my list was prepared, I slipped off and rode the city bus from our home to downtown. I knew the bus stopped right in front

of the Murphy's Five and Dime Store where I would make my purchases. I had it figured, almost down to the penny, what I would need to buy all the items on the list and still have 10 cents left over to make it back home—5 cents for the bus fare and 5 cents for a candy bar.

Little did I know that during that same time period my dad was making a desk, one to match his. I had watched him many times go into the den to his desk and work late at night over facts and figures of his electrical on-the-side job. I wanted a desk too. It was the surprise of my life on Christmas morning to receive the first gift that was pure evidence of his love for me as a son. Dad presented me with the desk made by his hands just for me.

But back to my shopping adventure. Obviously, I had not asked for permission to ride the bus to town alone. When I got back, the whole neighborhood had been in a long search for me. My mother was in tears, and by now my father was home and outraged that I had run off on my own. After things settled down, my mother asked me why I had done that. I presented to her the list and showed her what I had purchased, except, of course, what I had on the list and purchased for her. Mother warmly held me. She whispered in my ear how proud she was of me and what a great thing I had done by

buying everyone a gift, even though she was still upset that I had run off on my own.

As I finished the list, my mother asked me a question I have long since remembered. She simply said, "Mike, I notice that you had everyone on the list except Jesus. What did you get for Him?" She told me once again the story of how Jesus came as a babe, died on a cross, and rose from the grave as the greatest gift of all—a gift to humankind and a gift to me. She went on, "Jesus would like for you to give Him a gift at Christmas."

"What would that gift be?"

She told me very simply I should give myself to Jesus, and that would be the best gift He would ever receive at Christmas-time.

Christmas—a sure sign that God loves all of us.

And so, Christmas at the ripe old age of six became a Christmas long to be remembered. I experienced a Christmas where my earthly father gave evidence of his love through a desk, and my mother reminded me that my Heavenly Father had given me an even greater gift—the gift of His Son.

Christmas—a sure sign that God loves all of us.

FEATURES

- 8** Vision and Thanksgiving in Africa's Ivory Coast
DEAN NELSON
- 20** Lighting Christmas Candles
VENUS E. BARDANOUE
- 22** A Tree for Happiness
MARILYN FANNING
- 26** Christmas Traditions
SHEILA SINN
- 27** Christmas Traditions for Your Family
PAUL LEWIS
- 28** My Most Memorable Christmas
LIZ PFEIFER
- 30** The Power Outage
KATHY DENNISON
- 32** A Talisman of Hope and Faith
DEREK WRIGHT
- 36** Big Question—Elusive Answers
KEVIN M. ULMET
- 40** What Do You Mean You Want Exciting Worship?
PHILIP K. CLEMENS



8



20

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE FEATURE

- 12** The Gift of a Son, *ELIZABETH POLLOCK SCHAFF*

POETRY

- 25** God with Us, *LINDA KAY MOWERY*
- 38** Night Songs, *CHRISTINA LOVIN*
- Inside back cover**
Christmas Contrasts, *PAULA POWERS CHURCH*



28

CONTINUING COLUMNS

- 3** General Superintendent's Viewpoint, *JAMES H. DIEHL*
- 14** In a Woman's Voice, *REBECCA LAIRD*
- 15** Masculine Journey, *MARK METCALFE*
- 19** Into the Word, *ROGER L. HAHN*
- 33** When You Pray, *E. DEE FREEBORN*
- 46** Observer at Large, *JOHN C. BOWLING*
- 47** Over 60, *C. ELLEN WATTS*

DEPARTMENTS

- 1** Signs, *MICHAEL R. ESTEP*
- 4** Editor's Choice, *WESLEY D. TRACY*
- 5** The Readers Write
- 6** Nazarene Family
- 16-18, 42-44** News
- 31** December's 10-Point Quiz
- 34** The Question Box
- 39** The Quote Rack
- 45** Evangelists' Slates
- 48** Late News

Whose Birthday Is It, Anyway?

by James H. Diehl

One December while pastoring Denver First Church of the Nazarene, I spotted a giant 50-foot-long banner on the archdiocese building that read: "Whose birthday is it, anyway?" What an appropriate question! To save you reading this entire article to find the answer, let me state it right up front: *It is Jesus' birthday.*

C. William Pollard states in *The Soul of the Firm*, "If you don't live it, you don't believe it." Do you really believe that Christmas is about Jesus?

Let's look at four of our Christmas traditions. Whose birthday are we actually celebrating?

Our focusing. Our schedules gear up right after Thanksgiving. There are Christmas parties to plan. Dinners to schedule. Shopping to finish. Cookies and pies to bake. Food baskets to make and deliver. Bedrooms to prepare for guests. A house to decorate. People to meet at the airport. School, church, and community programs to attend. As we near exhaustion, someone asks the question, "Whose birthday is it, anyway?"

These activities are not sinful. However, the question is: Is there any time left to focus on Jesus? It's *His* birthday! Matthew 2:11a (NKJV) states, "And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him." Will you take time this Christmas to kneel down and worship Him? To honestly focus on the virgin-born Son of God, not tinsel and toys? Whose birthday is it, anyway?

Our gift giving. It's amazing what we do at Christmastime. We buy gifts, wrap them, deliver them, send them. We put them under the tree for dad

and mom, wife or husband, all the children and grandkids, and relatives all. We give to people at work, school, church, and sometimes even the teller at the bank, the paper carrier, or the neighbor who watered our flowers while we were on vacation. Gifts. Hundreds of dollars in gifts.

Sinful gifts? No. But, whose birthday is it, anyway? "And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11b, NKJV). Since it is Jesus' birthday,

HOW EASY TO LET THE SECULAR REPLACE THE DIVINE.

doesn't it make sense that we should give Him a gift at least as costly as that we give our spouse or children or parents? In recent years I felt convicted along this line and started bringing a check to church for Jesus on His birthday. Hundreds of others joined me, and all the money was given to a Nazarene inner-city compassionate ministry in Denver. Whose birthday is it, anyway?

Our card sending. I love to do this one. Dorothy and I usually buy around 200 cards, write a personal note on each one, sign, address, stamp, and send them. Can you imagine how much time and money we invest in this tradition? We also receive cards and enjoy reading the notes and photocopied letters and looking at the pic-

tures. It's wonderful. Hallmark and the post office love us. And it isn't sinful.

But do we have any time left to read *His* Christmas card to us? His letter is better than the gold-foiled card we get from the boss. Take time to read the Bible during His birthday season. It contains some wonderful news about the family.

Our singing. Just listen to the music this month. Christmas has become "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," "White Christmas," "Jingle Bells," "Winter Wonderland," and "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town." No, these songs are not sinful; but, whose birthday is it, anyway? Luke tells us a multitude of the heavenly host praised God and sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" (Luke 2:14, NKJV).

Since it is Jesus' birthday, sing songs that focus on Him. "Joy to the world! the Lord is come." "O come, let us adore Him!" "Hark! the herald angels sing, / 'Glory to the newborn King!'" "Silent night! holy night! / Son of God, love's pure light." What a difference there is between "Joy to the world! the Lord is come" and "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town!"

Focusing. Gift giving. Card sending. Singing. Nothing is wrong or sinful in these traditions. But how easy it is to let the good replace the best, to let the cute replace the holy, to let the secular replace the divine. The Denver archdiocese ministered to me with that banner, "Whose birthday is it, anyway?" May we all live out our answer to this question during this blessed Christmas season. **H**



Keep On Singing

WESLEY D. TRACY



LIKE ANY GOOD MOTHER, when Karen found out that another baby was on the way, she did what she could to help her three-year-old son, Michael, prepare for a new sibling.

They find out that the new baby is going to be a girl, and day after day, night after night, Michael sings to his sister in Mommy's tummy.

The pregnancy progresses normally for Karen, an active member of the Panther Creek United Methodist Church in Morristown, Tennessee.

Then the labor pains come. Every five minutes . . . every minute. But complications arise during delivery. Hours of labor. Would a C-section be required? Finally, Michael's little sister is born. But she is in serious condition. With siren howling in the night, the ambulance rushes the infant to the neonatal intensive care unit at St. Mary's Hospital, Knoxville, Tennessee.

The days inch by. The little girl gets worse. The pediatric specialist tells the parents, "There is very little hope. Be prepared for the worst." Karen and her husband contact a local cemetery about a burial plot. They have fixed up a special room in their home for the new baby—now they plan a funeral.

Michael keeps begging his parents to let him see his sister. "I want to sing to her," he says.

Week two in intensive care. It looks as if a funeral will come before the week is over. Michael keeps nagging about singing to his sister, but kids are

never allowed in Intensive Care. But Karen makes up her mind. She will take Michael whether they like it or not. If he doesn't see his sister now, he may never see her alive. She dresses him in an oversized scrub suit and marches him into ICU. He looks like a walking laundry basket, but the head nurse recognizes him as a child and bellows, "Get that kid out of here—now! No children are allowed in ICU."

The mother rises up strong in Karen, and the usually mild-mannered lady glares steel-eyed into the head nurse's face, her lips a firm line. "He is not leaving until he sings to his sister!"

Karen tows Michael to his sister's bedside. He gazes at the tiny infant losing the battle to live. And he begins to sing. In the purehearted voice of a three-year-old, Michael sings:

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine,

You make me happy when skies are gray—"

Instantly the baby girl responds. The pulse rate becomes calm and steady.

Keep on singing, Michael.

"You never know, dear, how much I love you,

Please don't take my sunshine away—"

The ragged, strained breathing becomes as smooth as a kitten's purr.

Keep on singing, Michael.

"The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping,

I dreamed I held you in my arms . . ."

Michael's little sister relaxes as rest, healing rest, seems to sweep over her.

Keep on singing, Michael.

Tears conquer the face of the bossy head nurse. Karen glows.

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine,

Please don't take my sunshine away."

Funeral plans are scrapped. The next day—the very next day—the little girl is well enough to go home!

Woman's Day magazine called it "the miracle of a brother's song." The medical staff just called it a miracle. Karen called it a miracle of God's love.

A few weeks later, Michael's little sister was baptized at the Panther Creek Church. If you were planning that service, what song would you select? Who would you have sing it? Would you ask the congregation to sing along?

I talked to Tennessee pastor G. Steve Sallee, who first shared the story with Leonard Sweet, who published an abbreviated version of it in *Homiletics*. Pastor Sallee said that when Sweet told the story at the Lake Junaluska conference center, a woman jumped up from the congregation, ran to the podium, and interrupted the sermon. "It's true," the woman cried out. "And those were my grandchildren. And I

Please don't take my sunshine away.

want to praise God for the miracle of love." The shekinah of heaven fell. The order of service was destroyed. The whole congregation was hugging, weeping, and praising God as they sang together "You Are My Sunshine." The Holy Spirit turned that old love song from the Charleston flappers era into a hymn of praise too deep for words.

In this sad world, people all around



us lie dying from depression, from criticism, from failure, from sin. If you have a song, won't you please sing it?

In your community there are people who are in despair, people who just can't find the wherewithal to try again. If you have a song, won't you please sing it?

In your church, in your family, there are people for whom hope is as dim as a flashlight left on all night. Don't you know someone who hasn't been serenaded with a love song in 20 years? If all you have is an old love song from the '20s, if that's all in the world you have, won't you please sing it?

The Bible says, "The tongue has the power of life and death" (Proverbs 18:21, NIV). So, if you have a song, won't you sing it?

The Bible says, "The tongue of the just is as choice silver" (Proverbs 10:20). So if you have a song, won't you please sing it?

"But I don't have much of a voice," you say. Well, I don't mean that you have to literally blurt out an old love song like "You Are My Sunshine" or "Love Me Tender." Your God-given song may be a yard mowed, showing up at the nursing home with a bunch of wildflowers, baking a batch of brownies, or sending a check so a college student can come home for Christmas. Your best tune, the best life-giving music you will ever make, may sound like a long overdue apology, a generous helping of forgiveness, a \$100 bill given to a stranger, volunteer work at the Salvation Army, or a Christmas card to one who was sure you had forgotten him or her long ago.

If you have a song, won't you please sing it? If all you can do is hum, whistle, or belt out an old love song from the flappers generation, maybe, just maybe, God can transform it into a hymn clothed in the shekinah of His love.

Keep on singing, Michael—and Joan, and Roberto, and Lisa, and Jim, and Delores, and . . .

HH

Robert's Rules

In addition to your answer on elections in the September "Question Box," I would like to point to *Robert's Rules of Order*, pages 399-400, where it says that "A plurality that is not a majority never chooses a proposition or elects anyone to office except by virtue of a special rule previously adopted."

This means that Dr. Stone's remark has solid ground, since according to *Manual* paragraph 40 we are to follow *Robert's Rules of Order* in our meetings. So the matter is not "just" an opinion but a fact.

*Hans Deventer
Netherlands District Secretary*

Save the Pastors

Thanks for the great articles in your August issue concerning pastors, their expectations, and those of the people they serve. If possible, it would be great to see similar articles in every issue. The future of the Church of the Nazarene is in shared ministry between pastor(s) and the laity.

Always remind us who pastor how to nurture and equip our people. Help us to understand that all comments brought before us are not criticisms but earnest hearts wanting a little more information about our vision and actions. Encourage laity to empathize with a pastor's heart that burns to make a difference in reaching the lost, discipling the saved, and often beats to a seemingly impatient tempo.

*Jon Stout
Lovington, N.Mex.*

Great, Loving Child Inside

I think the *Herald* is a great magazine! I only subscribe to a few magazines, and the *Herald* is one that I read cover to cover. I especially liked your edition on ADHD. I work in a school and have seen many teachers who shun those with ADHD. For many, it's simply that they do not understand it, or they haven't taken the time to really

learn what it is and how to help those students who have it.

I know from personal experience that inside most (if not all) ADHD children there is a great, loving child searching for love and acceptance.

Keep up the great work!

*Eric Yerington
Muscatine, Iowa*

Saving Every Issue

I just started subscribing to the best, and I repeat the best, no messing around now, the finest church magazine ever published. It's a fresh morning, a delightful Hawaiian bowl of pleasurable fruit. A holy gift of God. I love it—can you tell? I've ordered three binders to hold these wonderful treasures.

*John Engler Jr.
Toledo, Ohio*

Good Inside and Out

The article by Dr. J. Kenneth Grider "Tongues-Speaking and the Nazarenes" in the July issue of the *Herald of Holiness* was great. I believe this would make a good gospel tract. Thank you.

Also, the cover of this issue with the waterfall is beautiful. I swam through these falls, and the water was cold, cold.

*Robert Quanstrom
Portland, Oreg.*

Deeply Entrenched

You've done it again! The August issue of the *Herald* arrived on my desk today, and I simply must thank you for the article by Tom Sine at Fuller. I spent six and a half years in Toronto, and the Evangelicals with whom I worked and studied simply did not understand the linkage of Republican politics with Evangelical Christianity in the U.S.

As a pastor of a Nazarene church here in rural Illinois, I find this conjoining of right-wing politics with "true" Christian faith to be a deeply entrenched view. Sine's article is, in my opinion, a needed and timely one.

continued on page 15



Eckley Ministers as a "Good Shepherd"



Lyle Eckley, a retired minister, was featured in a recent edition of the *Olathe Daily News*. The article titled "The Good Shepherd" reported on Eckley's

ministry in an Olathe, Kans., nursing home.

Eckley, 83, whose Nazarene roots are deep, graduated from Olivet Nazarene College in 1933. He had a long career as a Nazarene pastor and district superintendent. Now, in his retirement, he is the chaplain for Good Samaritan Center, where he conducts services and visits residents.

"I always had a calling to people," Eckley explained. "I called upon people who were infirm or sick. I believe it's an extension of my call to be of service to my fellowman."

Three days a week, Eckley goes from room to room, checking on the residents and asking if they need help in getting to the chapel. "Sometimes you have to bring them in, or they couldn't get there," he said.

The Olathe newspaper gave the story front-page coverage with seven photographs. One of the pictures included Mary Scott, former missionary and general NWMS director, who was a resident of the home.

When asked when he was going to quit, Eckley replied, "It's more than a job, it's a ministry. How can I quit?"

Millhuff Receives the Laughlin Award from Menninger

Charles "Chip" Millhuff was honored with the Outstanding Resident of the Year award from the Karl Menninger School of Psychiatry in Topeka, Kans. The Laughlin Award is given to one graduate each year who has demonstrated excellence in clinical and academic performance.

While a teenager, Chip Millhuff, son of Nazarene evangelist Chuck Millhuff, observed a family member suffering depression. "I chose psychiatry," Millhuff said, "because of this early experience with mental illness and my realization of the need for psychiatrists, particularly Christian psychiatrists."

Dr. Bauman-Bork, who made the presentation, said that Millhuff "evidences a strong sense of moral value, a quality



Millhuff receives Laughlin Award from Marci Bauman-Bork, director of General Residency Program at Menninger.

of rarity in today's world."

Millhuff and his wife, Linda, are active members of the Wanamaker Woods Church of the Nazarene in Topeka. They have two children, William and Alexandra.

Manis Recognized for 42 Years as Church Treasurer



Roy Manis (left) with wife, Carol, and Frank Morley, pastor of Barstow First Church, stand beside plaque that dedicates Manis Hall in his honor.

Roy Manis was recently honored by the Barstow, Calif., First Church of the Nazarene for 42 years of continuous service as church treasurer. Manis and his wife were charter members of the church. The very first service of the new congregation was held in their home. Manis, 80, is still active in the church and serves as a resource person on all financial matters.

Family Seminar Held at Kansas City First Church

A Family Seminar, the first ever for Kansas City First Church, was held in the fall of 1996. The seminar was an outgrowth of a planned outreach to 500 homes in the area surrounding the church.

Five persons spoke on topics related to today's family. The National Center for Fathering sponsored an exhibit.

Brenda Nixon, seminar coordinator, felt the event was a huge success. "Several new people came from the neighborhood, some of our members brought coworkers, and many in our congregation attended," Nixon reported. Plans are being made for this seminar to be an annual event.



Jesse Middendorf, pastor, and Brenda Nixon, seminar coordinator.



(Above) 1996 Los Angeles District ordinand class (l. to r.): General Superintendent Donald D. Owens, Rev. Traci Fenimore, Rev. and Mrs. Robert Moreno Jr., Rev. and Mrs. Peter N. Lundell, Rev. and Mrs. Ronald P. Hood, and District Superintendent Roger E. Bowman Sr.



Ordinations

(Below) 1996 Colorado District ordinand class (l. to r.): General Superintendent Paul G. Cunningham, Rev. and Mrs. Jim Rotz, Rev. Marcella Laffin, Rev. and Mrs. Ken Rose, Rev. Ernestina Hubbert, Rev. Ardis-teel Daniels, Rev. Ford Hubbert Jr., Rev. Marita Daniels, and District Superintendent Leon Wyss.



(Left) 1996 Southwest Indiana District ordinand class (l. to r.): District Superintendent M. V. Scutt, Rev. and Mrs. Jeff Tackaberry, Rev. and Mrs. James Hudson, Rev. and Mrs. Todd Stepp, Rev. and Mrs. Randy Boyer, and General Superintendent James H. Diehl.



(Above) 1996 Northwestern Illinois District ordinand class (l. to r.): District Secretary Richard Barriger, District Superintendent Crawford Howe, Rev. and Mrs. Warren Smith, Rev. Glenna and Bill Easton, Rev. and Mrs. Gary Gerstenberger, and General Superintendent Jerald D. Johnson.



(Above) 1996 Central Ohio District ordinand class (l. to r.): District Superintendent Richard Jordan, Rev. Brian McKee, Rev. and Mrs. Scott Rose, Rev. and Mrs. Donald Madden, Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Sinift, Rev. and Mrs. Timothy Throckmorton, Rev. and Mrs. Mark Hale, Rev. and Mrs. James Lanning, Rev. and Mrs. David Smith, and General Superintendent James H. Diehl.



(Above) 1996 Tennessee District ordinand class (l. to r.): District Superintendent Dennis Johnson, Rev. Brian Sayre, Rev. and Mrs. James Shaw, Rev. and Mrs. Earl Shorr, Rev. and Mrs. Bill Koch, Rev. and Mrs. Dean Blevins, Rev. and Mrs. Jerry Roach, and General Superintendent Donald D. Owens.

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—1993-97 Nazarene Manual

The International Board of Education invites those who are preparing to teach in a Nazarene college, university, or seminary to submit a current vita, which will be made available to the undergraduate and graduate institutions of the church. Listed below are known needs for the 1997-98 academic year. Since all needs cannot be anticipated, other openings may occur in teaching, administrative, or staff roles. Nazarene colleges are equal opportunity employers.

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For further information please contact:

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The Resource Institute for International Education maintains a registry for educators and education specialists. Members of the registry are available for volunteer and part-time service to Nazarene higher education either as teachers or consultants. Information regarding the registry can be obtained from Dr. Al Truesdale, Nazarene Theological Seminary, 1700 E. Meyer Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64131.

VISION AND THANKSGIVING IN AFRICA'S IVORY COAST

by Dean Nelson

My battle with Federal Express had gone on for three weeks. The request I made of them was simple enough, I thought. Could this world-famous overnight delivery service please immediately ship a new contact lens to me? The eye doctor in San Diego had the lens ready after I told her by telephone that I lost one down the drain.

FedEx was to pick it up that day and get it to me overnight. Guaranteed. "The World on Time," they say about themselves, but I didn't much care about the world at that point. It was my left eye that concerned me. And since they needed to deliver it to me in western Africa, in the Ivory Coast, halfway around the planet, I was willing to be lenient on the overnight thing by a day or two.

But three weeks?

It's not that I couldn't see anything while in Africa. I had my glasses. My heavy, slide-down-your-nose, out-of-date cheapo frames. I saw plenty. I was there on a mission trip with a group of students from Point Loma Nazarene College and Dana Walling, the school's executive director of spiritual development, my friend for more than half my life.

We saw what 10 years of dedication, work, and prayer by Nazarene missionaries and their

supporters can do in a country. We saw heart holiness preached with clarity and abandon by African preachers, with an overwhelming response from their congregations. In a society that has thousands of years of history with witch doctors and Islam, the gospel of forgiveness and grace is welcome. We saw that every day.

I saw a teenager writing in a journal. He was helping us paint a church, and during the breaks, he

**WE SAW HEART
HOLINESS PREACHED WITH
CLARITY AND ABANDON.**

wrote song lyrics and poetry. He let me read about the last time he saw his parents. They were killed recently in the civil war in Liberia, just north of the Ivory Coast. So were the parents of the other three teenagers working with us. Refugee orphans. The boys sang gospel songs for us in perfect harmony. They'd be sensations in the U.S.

Doug Runyan, our host missionary, told us that these boys were getting kicked out of their Ivory

Coast shack because they couldn't pay their rent. They couldn't pay their rent because they couldn't work. They couldn't work because they were in a country that already had 50 percent unemployment, and they were there illegally. And if they went back to Liberia, they would be killed.

"How much is the rent?" Dana and I asked.

"About \$16 a month," Doug said.

I saw our group not even flinch as they took money out of their pockets and paid the boys' rent for the next 12 months.

We saw islands that made us feel we had stepped back in time 100 years. We walked through villages to the chief's house to ask permission for the group to pass through toward another part of the island. As often as not, the village chief was a Nazarene. And there was usually someone in the village who needed prayer—sometimes it was the chief himself—so before we moved on, we would pray for healing, for relief, for direction, for God's heart.

Those islands were often filled with rubber trees, palm trees, and coffee or pineapple plantations. And there were always children. Thousands of them. Thrilled to see us, wanting to play, which we did.

Then we would see a congregation waiting for us. Maybe a cell group. They wanted to worship together, to sing and pray, which we



Dean Nelson, journalism professor at PLNC (wearing the glasses he hates), with a new friend.

Liberian refugees tell Dana Walling of PLNC what it's like to have to flee for your life



did with more joy and praise than I'd ever experienced, for anywhere from two to five hours at a time.

We saw missionary doctors Kent Dougharty and Ron Farris work in a clinic that had hundreds of women and children in the waiting area. It is a country that doesn't have a problem with starvation, as do Ethiopia, Sudan, and Somalia in eastern Africa. The bigger problem in the Ivory Coast is malaria, ebola, meningitis, and AIDS.

We saw snails the size of shoes. Big shoes.

We saw hospitality that put us to shame. When we would walk up to strangers to talk to them about Jesus, they called for others to bring chairs and benches so we could sit comfortably. Occasionally they built the benches while we stood there. Many accepted Christ.

The hospitality increased when we stayed in people's homes overnight. Henri Nouwen, in his book *Reaching Out*, says, "Poverty makes a good host." That is true in the Ivory Coast. People who had virtually nothing shared everything with us. They sacrificed to provide us with food. They made clothes for us. They prayed for our families back in the U.S. They slept on the floor to make room for us. One couple gave me the serving bowl they used from our dinner together to take to my wife in San Diego.

None of this, by the way, eased my irritation at Federal Express. Calls, faxes, raising my voice—you can do that in a fax, you know—threats of slandering them in the *Herald of Holiness*, nothing worked. They seemed to not know or care where my contact lens was. As if it was my fault that I let my other one go down the drain.

But then I saw something I had never seen before. I met a woman who had cried so much recently that there were no tears left.

I was sitting in the home of John and Linda Seaman, field directors for the Nazarene work in the western African countries. I believe I was saying something about Fed-



David Hines, PLNC student, became the “play leader” with Ivory Coast children.



Genneh-ba Wuo, wife and ministry partner of the Nazarene district superintendent in Liberia.

PLNC mission team at work in an Ivory Coast village



eral Express. It was our group’s last day in Africa. That night, our flight was to leave Abidjan for Paris, and then go to Los Angeles. The phone rang, John answered it, and he hung up in less than a minute.

“Get in the car,” he boomed. “Genneh-ba has been picked up by the Ivory Coast police.”

We ran to the car, where I was able to get part of the story. Genneh-ba is the wife of Sam Wuo, the Nazarene district superintendent in Liberia. They have six churches, several preaching points, and more than 500 Nazarene members to look after. Or at least they did before the killing started. In the last five years, more than 150,000 people have been killed in that country’s civil war, and more than half of the 2.7 million citizens have been made homeless, like our teenage friends we met earlier.

Sam and Genneh-ba started a school that had 500 students and 30 employees until it was shut down because the warring tribal groups kept looting it. They also started a social ministry called Restore Hope Liberia, Inc., which is now supported in part by Nazarene Compassionate Ministries. All of this without a Nazarene missionary presence in their country.

Three times Sam has had weapons at his head and was told he would be killed. So far the attackers have changed their minds.

Genneh-ba and Sam’s children had already been evacuated and were living in refugee camps on the border between Liberia and Ivory Coast. After the latest escalation of violence in the country, Sam and Genneh-ba decided that it was time for her to leave Liberia, bring news of the churches to the Seamans in Ivory Coast, and then rejoin her children. He would stay in Liberia to encourage the churches.

She said good-bye to her husband, not knowing if or when she would see him again, and headed south.

But the Ivory Coast, like most countries, isn’t hospitable to refugees, and the police randomly pull over buses full of travelers to see if they have proper traveling cards. Genneh-ba had traveled all night and had only been in Ivory Coast for a few hours when her bus was flagged down. The officers demanded her papers. She had none yet. She was placed under arrest.

The call to the Seamans came from another missionary who had been on the same bus and saw what happened. She had told the missionary where she was headed.

Now it was a race to see if we could get to the place where the bus had been pulled over before the officers took Genneh-ba to an unknown jail.

When we arrived at the scene, John jumped out of the car and looked back at Linda and me. “Pray,” he said. We did.

In about 20 minutes, we saw him walking to the car with Genneh-ba. He had told the officers that he would get her traveling papers that day. She looked tired and very small. And terrified.

She told us about leaving Sam. About having 9- and

10-year-old boys hold automatic weapons against her as they demanded her belongings in return for passage out of Liberia. The few things she had taken with her from home were now in the hands of preadolescent terrorists. All that was left was a small handbag the size of a paperback book. Her earthly possessions.

She told our college group her story. We cried. She just looked off to the sky. Her tears had stopped coming long ago. We gathered around her, laid hands on her, and prayed for her, for Sam, for their children, for the churches, for the children with guns, for the country. Then we emptied our already packed suitcases of shirts, pants, shoes, soap, shampoo, and money and gave them to her to take to her children and others at the refugee camp.

We told her good-bye, gathered our remaining belongings, and headed for the Runyans' home to tell our missionary friends good-bye before going to the airport.

Pam Runyan, Doug's wife, pointed to their kitchen table.

"Something came for you today, Dean," she said.

And there it was. With the Federal Express logo all over it. Addressed to me.

I began to say something about the severity of my inconvenience, but Dana heard it coming and stopped me.

"You can't say that after seeing what you've seen today," he said.

He was right, of course. On a day that we thought we were "done" with Africa, it was as if God was saying through our encounter with Genneh-ba, "Before you go, I want to show you one more thing. Africa is not done with you." And after spending three weeks enjoying the hospitality and joy and blessing of seeing how enormous is the family of God, it was as if He was saying, "Now that you have seen what brings Me joy, let Me show you what breaks My heart." And after feeling as if we had been missionaries, it was as if God was saying, "You think you know missions after three weeks? You haven't got a clue."

And, after complaining nonstop about a little piece of plastic that would have simplified my already pampered life, it was as if God was saying, "Maybe your vision should be replaced with a Vision."

So I did what anyone would do when humbled by God. I thanked Him. For the lesson He taught me. For the way He uses metaphors to make His point. For bringing my contact lens to me in His perfect timing. And I even thanked Him for Federal Express.

But I *really* thanked Him for healing my Vision.

"My son, do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline, . . . for the Lord disciplines those whom he loves" (Hebrews 12:5-6, NEB).

Dean Nelson teaches journalism at Point Loma Nazarene College in San Diego. His most recent book is *New Father's Survival Guide*, published by Augsburg/Fortress.

HH

WORDACTION

DID YOU KNOW?

DON'T MISS THE BUS!



Did you know that Nazarene Caravan is now 50 years old? October 20 of this year marked the official birthday celebration, but throughout '96 and '97 Nazarene churches will be honoring a program that for half a decade now has helped children grow socially, mentally, physically, and spiritually.

In honor of Caravan's big five-zero, Children's Ministries and WordAction teamed up to create all-new graphics and illustrations on the covers and throughout the program. The new look is getting rave reviews from Caravan leaders and Caravan kids alike.

The biggest change in the anniversary year is more than cosmetic, however. Benson's Buddies replaces Chippewa as the Caravan program for children ages four to six (not in first grade). Benson is a double-decker English-style bus who takes our younger children on a tour of their world—their neighborhood, family, church, and more—helping them discover how much God loves them.

You can order Benson, the *Starter Kit*, and all other Caravan materials through the Nazarene Publishing House toll-free number: 1-800-877-0700.

—Mark Gilroy
WordAction Director



For a **FREE WordAction catalog**
call **NPH** at
1-800-877-0700



THE GIFT OF A SON

by Elizabeth Pollock Schaff

Our daughter Kelly was never a rebellious child. She had received Christ as her personal Savior in her early teens and was always tender toward the Lord. Sometimes she got off track, but she'd soon get back on again.

I never believed Kelly would find herself in such trouble—unmarried and pregnant. Being a victim of date

rape, she determined to make the best of the situation. She refused to consider terminating the pregnancy.

When Kelly became aware of her plight, she began preparing herself to give the child up for adoption. With maturity beyond her years, she recognized her inability as a college student to provide financial security or a home for her child.

Midway through her pregnancy, Kelly learned of a childless Chris-

tian couple who wanted to adopt. Because the couple lived 600 miles away, Kelly felt she should move to that location, so she made the arrangements.

When she came home from college and revealed her plans to her father and me, we were shocked. Down deep, we wanted Kelly closer to home. But we were impressed with her handling of the situation and gave her our blessing.

Kelly quickly found a good job in her new location. The couple wanting to adopt the baby helped her by paying medical bills and covering her salary when she missed work.

Though Kelly neither met the adoptive couple nor knew their identity, “Mr. and Mrs. Jones” telephoned her frequently. They expressed their gratitude and excitement and assured her of their prayers. This sealed Kelly’s belief that the Lord was leading.

I wanted to be with Kelly to provide loving support near the time of delivery. When the doctor indicated the time was near, I was on my way.

As I drove the 600 miles alone, the dread of seeing my daughter pregnant almost overcame me, even though I had tried to visualize her condition. Love and concern kept me going when I felt like turning back.

The Lord was merciful. At the first sight of my child, so obviously with child herself, I fell into her arms. Our time together was precious.

We had five good days together before Kelly delivered. We shopped, laughed, read the Bible, prayed, shared dreams, and just loved one another.

Then it was time. As I drove her to the hospital, I was aware that Kelly was facing one of life’s toughest moments. And so was I. Giving birth would be easy compared to giving up a child—and grandchild—for adoption.

In the delivery room, Kelly verbalized a jumble of feelings as they swept over her. Between labor pains, she tried to focus on the fact that it would all be over soon and she could get on with life. But the dread of giving away the new life inside her was difficult to suppress.

I was having my own emotional battle.

After seven hours of labor, Kelly delivered a robust son. The attending nurse placed the newborn in his mother’s arms. As Kelly checked him over, a sense of pride rose within her. The child was perfect.

“Won’t the ‘Joneses’ be happy

with him?” she asked me.

I nodded as I choked back the tears.

Kelly clung to the infant a moment longer, then the nurse took him to the nursery. That was the end of the time that had been planned for Kelly to spend with her son.

If my daughter noticed that I refrained from touching the baby, she was quiet about it. I had decided earlier that I would not hold my grandson. I didn’t trust myself. I feared that I would break down and seek to keep the baby myself. So I focused on Kelly and prayed continually for strength for both of us.

IF MY DAUGHTER NOTICED THAT I REFRAINED FROM TOUCHING THE BABY, SHE WAS QUIET ABOUT IT.

The next morning, we wandered down the hallway toward the nursery. I was reluctant, but Kelly hungered to see her baby again. As the nurse brought him near the window, I sensed the surge of love that was filling her heart. Tearfully, she backed away and headed toward her room.

I strongly understood her inner conflict, for my heart was breaking too. Mentally, we knew her plans were best; but emotionally, we both wanted her son.

To encourage ourselves, we talked together, trying to envision the excitement of the “Joneses” with their new baby. Kelly firmly believed the Lord had provided this couple to parent her child.

On the second evening, after I left the hospital, an overwhelming compulsion came over Kelly to hold her baby again. She asked the nursery attendant for him. During the hour she held him, the “Joneses” telephoned.

Kelly detected their surprise and apprehension when she told them she was holding the baby. She realized their call was part of God’s timing. Kelly reassured the couple that the baby was theirs. She only wanted one more time with him.

When Kelly held the phone down to capture the baby’s little sounds, his adoptive parents squealed in delight. Their response strengthened Kelly’s resolve, and she sent the infant back to the nursery.

But a restless night followed. When I arrived early the next morning, Kelly told me about her dread of being discharged that evening. The day passed slowly as we were pulled again and again to the nursery and repeatedly forced ourselves to walk away. We learned much about each other—and about our God—on this agonizing day.

Everything had been carefully staged. At five o’clock an attorney, a judge, and a social worker would come to get Kelly’s signature. By signing her name, she would relinquish all her rights as a mother. Then she and I would leave the hospital by one door while the adopting parents would enter by another.

As the time neared, Kelly dressed slowly. At four o’clock, Kelly blurted out, “Go get the baby!”

“Have you changed your mind?” I gasped. I felt a strong desire to keep the child as well, but as I considered that possibility, the devastation occurring to the “Joneses” flashed through my mind.

“No,” Kelly replied. “Just get him. I want to hold him once more. I want to dedicate him to the Lord myself, and I want you to help me.”

What a wonderful idea! Thanksgiving filled my heart as I went to the nursery to get the baby I had vowed I would never hold. I will be ever grateful for that moment.

Tears streamed down Kelly’s face as she took her child from me. With the three of us alone in the room, Kelly asked me to pray. I wondered if I could, struggling as I was with my emotions.

Hesitantly, I opened my mouth.

Please turn to page 14

How Big Is God?

REBECCA LAIRD



Rebecca Laird is a writer and ordained minister living in Madison, New Jersey.

MY HUSBAND CAME HOME, waving a fax in his hand, and said, in effect, "Guess who's coming to dinner?"

His former professor and our long-time friend Henri Nouwen would be in our area and wanted to reconnect.

At first we thought a grand tour was in order. But he had said by phone, "I'm not interested in seeing buildings, but I am interested in seeing you." We were certainly flattered. Over the course of a decade our paths had crossed with this kind soul. His proficiency and profundity as the author of dozens of books on the spiritual life never seemed to alter his humility and commitment to live simply in the present moment. It was Henri who 15 years ago had encouraged my husband to check into a monastery to "let his head descend into his heart" before starting Golden Gate Community in San Francisco. Later, when Henri visited us there, he spoke to our fledgling Nazarene house church. When we married, he sent us an icon of Jesus. When a study guide needed to be written on his book *Letters to Marc About Jesus*, I was tapped for the task. When each of our daughters was born, he

God's expansive love is perfectly sized to fit the human heart.

sent an angel for our Christmas tree.

So the night came. Henri arrived late and flustered. Unfamiliar roads and vague directions had left him circling and recircling our street. We settled in to eat and talk. It was the opening night of the Atlanta Olympics, so *en famille*, at Henri's request, we gathered around our tiny television to watch the extravaganza. All of the largesse of the event reminded my four-year-old of the question she had repeatedly asked for months—"Is God bigger than that?"—when she saw a Manhattan skyscraper, a wide-open yard, or, in this instance, a grand celebration. She really wanted to know, "How big is God?" My answers did not satisfy, so I said, "Ask Henri." And she did.

He replied, "God is as big as your heart."

She persisted, "And how big is my heart?"

He smiled and gestured with his large hands, "Your heart is big enough to contain the whole world."

It was a good answer. We've repeated it in our household for months. God's expansive love is perfectly sized to fit the

human heart. Jesus came to show us that God wants to pour His love into us until it fills and overflows. He is Emmanuel, God with us. By Henri's words and presence, our friend embodied the Advent truth that Emmanuel, God with us, is truly in each of us and moving through us.

Note: Henri Nouwen died unexpectedly on September 21, 1996. He was pastor of l'Arche Daybreak Community in Toronto, an interdenominational community for the mentally disabled; a former professor at Yale and Harvard Universities; and author of more than 30 books on the spiritual life. He was 64.

The words that came forth were not my own. I began by praising the Lord for how He had taken care of Kelly and the baby, then my prayer turned to the new parents. "We pray that his parents may always cherish this child as Your gift, that their love for him and for You may be so strong that they will be the best possible parents."

I prayed for my grandson. "O Lord, may he early in life receive You as his personal Savior. May he wholeheartedly serve You all of his life. Kelly and I dedicate this little life to You, dear Jesus. You take charge of him."

Needing a handkerchief, Kelly handed the baby to me. I continued to pray. "Dear God, please help Kelly. It hurts to give up this precious little boy! But, because You know how it feels to give up a Son, You know best how to help her. Giving up her son is difficult, but we know Your sacrifice was greater. Thank You for the gift of Your Son—and for helping us right now as Kelly gives up her son."

Time passed rapidly. Sorrowfully, we took the baby back to the nursery. With my arm wrapped around Kelly, we went to the room where the papers were to be signed. The judge carefully explained everything to Kelly. Then, with tears in her eyes, she took a deep breath and—with a quick glance toward me—signed the papers.

It was final. Kelly had given up her son.

Believing that the Lord was sharing our loss strengthened both of us. We left the hospital together. Knowing that God was in charge of her life—and of her son's life—Kelly could face the world again.

Both Kelly and I have had tearful moments since then. We have also experienced peace. We will always love Pip and pray for him daily, yet we pray with assurance—we've entrusted our son and grandson to a faithful Father who loves him more than we will ever know.

Drs. Hahn and Bowling also ring the bell this month. Thanks again.

Brook Thelander

Disappointed, Extremely

I was extremely disappointed in the article written by Tom Sine on "Depoliticizing the Church in '96." I believe the *Herald of Holiness* did a disservice to its readers by publishing this article. . . .

Tom Sine provides a very narrow view on this subject. He completely ignores the influence of the Christian beliefs of our founding fathers and the influence it had on the establishment of our government. He did not elaborate on the unchecked liberal influences on our government during the past 100 years. Lack of Christian Church involvement in our government at all levels has resulted in many government policies and court decisions that are clearly in violation of God's laws. This lack of involvement resulted in the current government position on abortion, pornography, homosexuality, and many other issues that promote sinful or anti-family behavior. . . .

I would also suggest viewing/reading materials from Focus on the Family. Specifically, their new videotape series *Community Impact Seminar* and booklet LF212/7982 titled *Why You Should Be Involved*.

Ralph Lentz
Beavercreek, Ohio

Biased or Unbiased?

It seemed odd to me that the first item in your October "News of Religion" section, "Media Has Liberal Bias," contained not one word about religion. Then it struck me. The connection is that we can hope these people in the news media will be advocates for nurturing and educating children, caring for the aged and infirm, defending our environment as God's creation from those who would despoil it for profit.

It is too bad you didn't have space to note that the current trend concentrating control of the media by a small number of large, profit-driven corporations is a threat to this ministry.

Also, please assure us that you are convinced that the staff of the Roper Center has no agenda beyond finding and publishing truth, and that the Freedom Forum is scrupulously unbiased. Thank you.

Wallace W. Roseboro
Salem, Oreg.

I Was Wrong

MARK METCALFE



Mark Metcalfe is a senior technical writer, husband, and father of four who lives in Nashua, New Hampshire.

THREE WORDS THAT some men find more difficult to say than "I love you" are "I am sorry" or "I was wrong." Whenever I admit being wrong, my wife asks, "What?" This she does just to hear me say it again. She says she has a hard time believing that my lips can form the words.

As men, we find it especially difficult to admit inadequacies, errors, and sin. As Christian men aspiring for Christian perfection, we find it nearly impossible.

A sanctified man can be wrong. Sanctification does not mean that we will never have to say "I am sorry" again. Some of us have made sanctification (or Christian perfection) unattainable because we have defined perfection as being without error or flaw. It is as if we feel the need to eliminate the desires and emotions so that we can be pure instead of seeing the need for God to make in us pure desires and emotions. God has emotions, pure ones. He wants to fashion us after His

image. He is the only one who can do it too.

Christian perfection is better understood as being "fulfilling one's purpose." The ear makes a lousy instrument for seeing, but it is perfect for receiving and interpreting sounds; that's its purpose. Yet, who has the perfect ear? Many men of God have been far from flawless, but they have been suited to fulfill God's will.

Part of Christian perfection is admitting wrong when we are wrong. Confession is a necessary component of the Christian life. Without it, we hinder our growth by carrying the burden of trying to hide our faults (as if we could) and excusing our failures.

First John 1:9 tells us what to do when we have been wrong—confess.

Confession keeps our relationships clear of obstacles, paves the way for forgiveness and restoration, and teaches us humility.

John tells us that he is writing to us "so that you will not sin" (1 John 2:1a, NIV). Holding on to God, I claim that as His ability to keep me pure.

But I am so thankful for the very next phrase, where John is quick to say, "But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense" (v. 1b, NIV).

God is in the process of perfecting us. Philippians 1:6 says, "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (NIV). This good work purifies us by a process that includes the confessions of a contrite heart. Ironically, the words "I am sorry" and "I was wrong" must be part of our vocabulary if we ever want to be perfect. H

If you ever want to reach Christian perfection, you need to learn three little words.

Education and Ministry Consultation in Kiev

The Kiev consultation on education and the ministry provided a giant step forward for Nazarene theological education in the Commonwealth of Independent States (formerly the Soviet Union). A group of Nazarene missionaries, educators, pastors, and administrators met September 30—October 3, 1996. From that meeting came a basic curriculum for ministers in the CIS. Nazarene learning centers are being de-

veloped in Moscow, Kiev, Volgograd, St. Petersburg, and Akmola. The planners framed objectives, considered the unique context, projected financial needs, evaluated educational resources and personnel, and prioritized options in a 14-page report. The group concluded that there is no greater need in the CIS today than the training of pastors and lay leaders in the emerging churches.

The consultation was followed by a two-day "teaching the teacher" workshop presented by a team of educators, including Roger Hahn, Wesley Tracy, Bettye Tracy, and Jerry Lambert. Such topics as educational philosophy, learning theory, educational objectives, and methodology for distance learning were explored. Missionaries Chuck and Carla Sunberg, Jay Sunberg, Lonnie Norris, Milton Karahadian, Bob and Colleen Skinner, Jon and Kathy Mowry, and CIS pastors Svetlana

Kleschar and Volodya Ermushin were among the participants.

"We have been doing whatever it takes," said Kathy Mowry, who along with her husband has been giving leadership to the fledgling education program. "But it was essential that we get an organized plan like this in operation soon." Some 50 students on the field have already begun their theological education, according to Chuck Sunberg. Every effort is being made to bring the ENBC extension program into creative relationship with the CIS learning centers and curriculum.

Under the direction of Bob Skinner, the consultation and teaching workshops were prefaced on Sunday, September 29, by the dedication of a Nazarene Ministry Center in Kiev. Through the generosity of Walter Cisco a large brick building and about an acre of land were purchased. The building will house a number of Nazarene compassionate, educational, pastoral, and outreach ministries when its remodeling is completed.

Some 150 Nazarenes gathered for a service of worship and dedication. Wesley Tracy preached in the worship service. Kent Hill, speaking the Russian language, delivered the dedicatory address.

The two services were followed by a great Nazarene tradition—dinner on the grounds. The participants soon found out that just like their counterparts in the United States and other world areas, the Ukrainian Nazarene women are great cooks.



Volodya Ermushin, Antonie Holloman, Colleen Skinner, and Larry Kromer intently consider a point in the Kiev consultation.

veloped in Moscow, Kiev, Volgograd, St. Petersburg, and Akmola.

The meeting was launched by a "big picture" address from Franklin Cook, Eurasia Region director. John Haines, regional education director, presided. Besides Chuck Sunberg, mission field director, a team of missionaries, and two pastors, resource persons included: Jerry Lambert, Nazarene education

Walter Cisco displays a plaque presented by Pastor Svetlana Kleschar (left). The plaque was made from materials from the building that Cisco funded.

There are no happier smiles in the CIS than you see on the faces of these Nazarene youth. Don't they deserve the best education for Christian service that we can provide?

There are no happier smiles in the CIS than you see on the faces of these Nazarene youth. Don't they deserve the best education for Christian service that we can provide?



World Mission Literature Receives Large Gift

The congregation of Colorado Springs First Church recently presented \$10,000 to Ray Hendrix, director of Publications International, for World Mission Literature. Rev. Gene Grate, pastor, made the presentation on behalf of the church. The gift was designated for the translation and production of the book *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* by Dr. Ray Dunning.



Grate presents Hendrix with a check for \$10,000 for translation and production of *Grace, Faith, and Holiness*.

This theological textbook will be used by the Russian-speaking Church

of the Nazarene as well as many other evangelical organizations throughout the former Soviet Union.

Bresee College Alumni Hold Reunion

More than 150 alumni of Bresee College participated in a three-day reunion in Hutchinson, Kans., September 20-22, 1996. All the events were hosted by the congregation and pastor, Rev. Larry Leonard, at the First Church of the Nazarene.

Special speakers for the reunion were Dr. Raymond Hurn, former general superintendent and a Bresee College alumnus; Dr. Loren Gresham, president



Andy and Alyce Hayes

of SNU; and Dr. Edmond Nash, superintendent of the Kansas District.

Bresee College was founded in 1904 in Hutchinson and became a four-year school in 1927. Thirteen years later it merged with Bethany-Peniel College

and moved to Bethany, Okla. Today the institution is Southern Nazarene University (SNU).

Rev. A. F. "Andy" Hayes and his wife, Alyce, who are both alumni of Bresee College, served as the reunion coordinators. Andy Hayes said, "It [the reunion] is not for any particular graduating class, but for anyone who ever attended the school." Hayes has been instrumental in planning six such gatherings.

The next reunion is being planned for SNU in 1999, the 100-year celebration of all the colleges that make SNU today.

VBS Offering Breaks Half-Million Mark for Quadrennium

Nazarene boys and girls have raised more than a half-million dollars during the past four years through the VBS mission offerings, according to Miriam J. Hall, Children's Ministries director. A total of \$125,285 has been raised in 1996 thus far, bringing the quadrennial total to \$522,886.

The 1996 offering will be used for developing Spanish VBS materials and to help develop the new Touch for Life program. Touch for Life will help local

churches serve at-risk children by providing funds and materials in after-school programs.

The annual VBS Offering is used for a variety of projects, including the purchase of vehicles and equipment for missionaries.

"Our boys and girls have done a tremendous job in supporting the VBS Offering," Hall said. "Their generosity has impacted hundreds and thousands of people around the world."

Leth Accepts Pastorate of Detroit First

Dr. Carl Leth has accepted a call to be senior pastor of Detroit First Church of the Nazarene. Leth comes to this new assignment from North Carolina, where he was pastor of Raleigh North Nazarene Church for 11 years.



Leth is a graduate of the University of Kansas and NTS. He received a Ph.D. in church history from Duke University in 1992.

After graduation from NTS, Leth served a specialized mission assignment in West Germany for 4 years.

During the 11 years Leth was pastor at North Raleigh, the church doubled in size. He led the congregation in a 7-year relocation process to new facilities on a 13-acre site.

Leth and his wife, Nancy, have two children: a son, Carl, and a daughter, Stephanie.

Allen Named to ONU Post



Brian Allen has been selected as the executive director of university relations, John Bowling, president of Olivet Nazarene University, announced recently.

Allen has been serving as the director of church and alumni relations.

In the new administrative position, Allen will be responsible for the four departments that manage ONU constituent relations: development, alumni relations, church relations, and public relations.

"I am very pleased that Brian Allen could step into this very significant position," Bowling said. "He has strong administrative skills and knows both the church and alumni very well."

Brian and his wife, Lynda, have two sons, Kyle and Spencer, and a daughter, Shelby. They reside in Bourbonnais, Ill., and are active members of College Church of the Nazarene.

Stone Announces General Assembly Program



Jack Stone

Jack Stone, general secretary, announces that the Board of General Superintendents and the General Assembly Program Committee have designed a new

format for the services of the 24th General Assembly in San Antonio, Texas, June 18-27, 1997. Following the NWMS, NYI, and Sunday School Ministries Conventions, the services will shift from the traditional program emphasis to a new thematic approach.

The proposed service themes are as follows:

Friday, June 20, 7 P.M.: General Assembly theme, "Holiness . . . The Message of Hope." James H. Diehl, speaker.

Saturday, June 21, 7 P.M.: Lay ministry celebration with the theme, "Holiness and the Priesthood of Believers." John A. Knight, speaker.

Sunday, June 22, 10 A.M.: Theme, "Hope for the Family." Jerald D. Johnson, speaker, followed by Communion.

Sunday, June 22, 5 P.M.: Theme, "Hope for a Hurting World." Donald D. Owens, speaker.

Monday, June 23, 7:30 P.M.: Clergy celebration with the theme, "Messengers of Hope." Paul G. Cunningham, speaker.

Tuesday, June 24, 7:30 P.M. Theme, "I Have for You a Future and a Hope."

William J. Prince, chairman of the Board of General Superintendents, will deliver the quadrennial address on Monday morning, June 23. He will also direct the Wednesday evening service, June 25, that will feature the installation of the newly elected general superintendents.

Throughout the entire assembly, the focus will be on the future as the Church of the Nazarene looks to the new quadrennium and the 21st century.

All evening services will be held in the Alamodome.

PLNC Will Host Wesleyan Conference in January

The Wesleyan Center for Twenty-first Century Studies of Point Loma Nazarene College is sponsoring a conference in San Diego, California, January 22-25, 1997. The conference theme is "What Happens to 'Person' in a Postmodern Era?"

Maxine Walker, the director of the Wesleyan Center at PLNC, is the convener of the conference.

Dr. Stanley Hauerwas, professor of theological ethics at Duke University, will deliver the keynote address. Plenary speakers are Dr. Gene Edward Veith Jr., dean of the School of Arts

and Sciences, Concordia University, Wisconsin, and Dr. Mary Stewart Van Leeuwen, director of the Center for Christian Women in Leadership, Eastern College, Pennsylvania.

Several concurrent sessions and workshops are being planned. All conference sessions will be held at Humphrey's Half Moon Inn and Suites, a hotel about five minutes from campus. On-campus activities will include an art exhibit and a concert.

For information or to request a registration form, call 619-221-2549 or E-mail: wesleyancenter@ptloma.edu.



Maxine Walker

Children's Ministries Plans Activities During General SS Convention

Children's Ministries is planning a variety of activities for boys and girls during the 1997 Sunday School Convention in San Antonio. Tickets will be offered for daily field trips, evening services with Steve Pennington, and a mission fiesta. Ticket information, registration forms, and volunteer applications are available by writing:

Children's Ministries
c/o Melody Rolfe
6401 The Paseo
Kansas City, MO 64131

Hurricane Hortense Causes Damage in Caribbean

John Smee, Caribbean Region director, reports that Hurricane Hortense caused extensive damage, although initial reports were to the contrary. According to Smee, the eastern side of the Dominican Republic had severe flooding. Crops were wiped out and livestock were swept away, destroying many families' only source of income.

In addition, one young man who attended the Nazarene church in Magadalen was drowned, and the parsonage on the Dominican East District was completely flooded.

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Devotion and Duty in Deuteronomy

Put In a Good Word to God for Me

ROGER L. HAHN



Roger L. Hahn is professor of New Testament at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

*And I prayed to the LORD and I said, "O Sovereign LORD, do not destroy your people and your family heritage whom you redeemed in your greatness, whom you brought out of Egypt with a mighty hand. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; turn your face from the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness and their sin, lest those in the land from which you brought us out might say, 'Because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land that he promised them, and because he hated them, he brought them out to let them die in the wilderness'" (Deuteronomy 9:26-28).**

EVERYONE NEEDS A FRIEND. Sometimes the need is just for companionship. Other times the need is for someone who will listen. Occasionally we need a friend to put in a good word for us when no one else will.

Moses proved to be such a friend for Israel. Deuteronomy 9:8-24 reviews Israel's sin of making the golden calf. In anger, God was ready to destroy the people Moses had led out of Egypt. Though God's anger was justified, Moses stood up for his people with the intercessory prayer summarized in Deuteronomy 9:26-29. That good word Moses put in for Israel is instructive for us.

The very way Moses addressed God to begin the prayer is significant. He uses an unusual title for God that appears in Deuteronomy only in Moses' prayers. It emphasizes the Lordship and sovereignty of God. (The NIV captures this nuance by its translation, "O Sovereign LORD.") The traditional versions (KJV, NKJV, RSV, NRSV, NASB, NEB) all translate this title as Lord GOD rather than the normal expression LORD God (notice the change in capital letters). Moses began by acknowledging that God and God alone would be the One to ultimately decide Israel's fate. We must acknowledge that He is in control when we are putting in a good word for someone else.

Moses also reminds God of His previous investment in Israel. He describes Israel as "your people and your family heritage." The Hebrew word translated "family heritage" here refers to property that belonged to a family and was passed on from generation to generation. God had frequently used the term to describe Israel's special value in His eyes. Now Moses uses the same word to remind God of His love for Israel.

Moses also mentions the Exodus. If God has already invested so much in Israel to bring them out of slavery in Egypt, then surely He should be patient and forgive them for this sin. Foreclosure now could be devastating. In verse 27, Moses chooses another of God's favorite words in Deuteronomy, *remember*. He calls on God to remember not only the Exodus but also the promises He had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To destroy Israel now would invalidate those promises. Moses knew that God's own integrity resists abandoning the promises He had made.

Moses' final words in verse 27 require careful interpretation. The Hebrew

literally says, "Do not turn your face toward the stubbornness of this people." We would say, "Turn your face from this people's stubbornness." Moses does not want God to ignore sin. Rather, Moses asks God to remember His long-term goals for Israel. To destroy Israel would cause the surrounding nations to conclude that God was weak and hateful. His purpose for Israel was to bless all nations (Genesis 12:3). Destroying Israel as punishment for their sin would lead the surrounding nations to draw a conclusion about God opposite of what He wanted them to have.

Finally, Moses appeals to God's own greatness. Verse 26 speaks of His greatness, and verse 29 mentions His great power. It is easy for us to conclude that His only options were to destroy Israel or to ignore sin. Moses knew that God always has more options than we see. He calls upon the Lord to find another option that will accomplish His purpose for His people to be a witness and yet not ignore their sin.

Moses' good word on behalf of Israel required sacrifice and courage. It is not easy to ask God to forgive those who obviously deserve punishment. In this ministry Moses, the intercessor, shows many of the same characteristics that we find in Christ, who came to speak a good word for us, even when we didn't deserve it.

Moses' good word on behalf of Israel required sacrifice and courage.

For further study: (1) Study Exodus 32-34. What other indications of Moses' love and commitment to his people do you find in these chapters? (2) Study Luke 11:1-13 and James 5:13-18. What insights do these passages on prayer have for your understanding of Moses as an intercessor? (3) Make a list of people for whom you would like to "put in a good word" to the Lord. Try to remember to pray for them each day this month.

*Scripture quotations are the author's own translation.

LIGHTING CHRISTMAS CANDLES

by Venus E. Bardanouve

I know our children have a hard time thinking of something to buy us for Christmas," I said to my husband. "We are like many grandparents who really have few needs."

Even though we were blessed and amply provided for, we knew this was not true of countless others in the world. Therefore, some months before Christmas last year, we wrote our family and friends expressing our appreciation for all they had done for us in past years, but asking them to do a "new thing" for the upcoming holiday season.

We said, "This year we are asking you to begin planning to make our next Christmas a special time for us and others. We are suggesting you give a gift in our name to a charity, person, organization, or any cause that you feel helps meet a need in the world. Then send us a card telling what you did. We will open these messages on Christmas Eve, and we will hope that your gift, in our name, will 'light a candle' in a dark world."

Christmas came, and what joy we had as we opened many cards and letters under our tree! And what a variety of responses—as varied as the people who sent them!

Concrete blocks (actually money donated to buy them) were given to Habitat for Humanity in our name. A nine-year-old girl and a six-year-old boy each received a

book through the Reading Is Fundamental Program. Someone gave to the Nicole Brown Simpson Charitable Foundation to help battered women's shelters and promote educational programs on spouse abuse.

A flock of chickens and a "share" of a pig was another of our presents, given to a third-world family through the Heifer Project, International.

Our daughter knew of an East Indian missionary family of five who were studying in the United States and had many needs. Her church was helping them, and our daughter joined others in donating many useful items to add to those the church was gathering.

A granddaughter's family had become acquainted with a couple who were returning to Japan as missionaries and gave them a donation for their work as our Christmas gift.

A friend knew of a 70-year-old woman in Montana who has a ministry to the needy in her town and a nearby Indian reservation. The friend knew that she provided

**How would
you like
a flock
of chickens,
a pig, and
50 coats
for Christmas?**



Shelby Naughton

"It is better to light a candle than to curse the darkness." Old Chinese proverb

clothes for many, once taking 50 coats, 70 pairs of new shoes, and a truckload of frozen and canned food to the reservation. She received a donation for her work in our name too.

There were several gifts to buy meals for the homeless and needy on Christmas. One gift was to an organization that goes into homes of disadvantaged people and helps them develop skills that will aid them in handling their lives. At Christmas, they had a project in which they went into these homes with supplies and helped the families make cookies, rather than taking boxes of cookies already baked.

The idea of Christmas sharing inspired others who heard of it also. A group of my daughter's friends in another state became interested in our request and contributed clothes, toys, books, and

other gifts to a safe house to be given to women and children who were living there on Christmas Day.

WHAT DO WE WANT NEXT CHRISTMAS? MORE CANDLES, OF COURSE.

Christmas is over. We received no new slippers, no candy, cosmetics, or books, but the gifts we received warmed our hearts in a special way. We can think of a child with a new book; Japanese and

East Indian people who will hear of the Christmas Babe; a third world family who is rich with a flock of chickens and a pig; hurting women and children in a shelter who received Christmas gifts; a new home for a family; many people receiving holiday dinners, clothes, and food; and a family munching on cookies they baked themselves.

What a glorious Christmas it was! And what wonderful gifts we were given! Our Lord said, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40, NIV). The gifts were given in our name, but may He accept each of them as given in His name too!

And next Christmas? After thinking about all the small candles burning in the darkness this past holiday, how could we ask for anything else but more candles! ❧

“Mother always loved this season. Would You, Lord, do something special for her this year?”

A Tree for Happiness

by Marilyn Fanning

The doctor's words echoed in my ears as I opened the door to the medical care center: "You can provide for your mother's comfort, but not for her happiness."

I had provided for her comfort. Both my parents, frail and in their 80s, moved from New York State to Virginia, where my husband and I could help them. Though they managed well in an apartment near us for 2 years, my father broke his hip at age 91 and needed nursing home care. Mother lived with us for a year and then became Dad's roommate.

After Dad's death, my husband and I and a caring staff at the center continued to provide for Mother's comfort. But as her only child, I wanted more than comfort for this once vivacious lady who sang in the church choir, hooked rugs, gardened, canned, and welcomed friends into her hospitable home.

"I know I can't change these circumstances, Lord," I told Him, "but it's Christmastime, and Mother always loved this season. Would You, Lord, do something special for her this year?"

Closing the center door, which was festooned with silver garlands, I spotted the Christmas tree. Maggie and Sylvia, the recreation leaders, were decorating it while Sam, head of housekeeping, admonished, "Stand on the stool now—and call me if you can't reach the top."

It was a tall tree, artificial and symmet-

rical. Maggie opened a box of one dozen look-alike balls. Mrs. Lyons, a resident with a walker, stopped to watch. I took the stairs instead of the elevator, thinking of past Christmases with every step.

Mother was curled up on her side in the bed, eyes closed. Bathed, fed, and lying under freshly laundered sheets, she did indeed look comfortable. When I took her hand, she opened only one eye. "Oh, it's you," she said, unsmiling.

Heaviness settled in my chest as I fought back tears.

Where was the lady who sang "It's a long way to Tipperary" as she picked strawberries? Memories flashed by like slides in a projector: Mother working in their wholesale greenhouses, planting cuttings; Mother feeding hungry men on our porch during the depression; Mother accepting a blue ribbon for her "Best in Show" African violet.

"Mom," I said firmly, "let's get you up. They're trimming the tree downstairs. We'll go watch."

"Trimming what tree?" She was awake now, reaching for her glasses.

"Why, the Christmas tree!" I pretended an excitement I didn't feel.

"Oh, what's the use? I can't see very well, and I can't walk."

Was Mother's attitude from depression? Of course she missed Dad, and her days formed a pattern of sameness. Sometimes, though, she brightened after

Please turn to page 24





MILLER

"Yes, I like the bird," I agreed. "And the angel too."

YES, THAT
LOOKS
GOOD. AND
PUT BABY
JESUS
RIGHT OUT
IN FRONT.
THAT'S
WHERE HE
SHOULD BE,
ALWAYS!"

she told me about the "pictures" she saw on the wall. "Today I saw a horse and buggy and then a beautiful flower," she would tell me. "And yesterday the Muppets! They come over there, on that wall. See, there's a new rug design!"

"Senile hallucinations," the doctor explained, dismissing them lightly. Whatever they were, they brightened and blessed Mother. That was enough for me.

Right now, however, Mother looked neither bright nor blessed. "Do I have to go?" she asked.

"Yes, let's go," I encouraged. "We'll use the wheelchair."

I brushed her soft white hair and covered her with the afghan she had made one cold New York winter.

"Please, Lord," I whispered as we rode down in the elevator. "It's a time of celebration. Help us celebrate!"

I pushed Mother's chair close to the tree, which now sported satin and plastic balls. Maggie unrolled yards of golden trim. "I think we used this last year," she said, pulling it from a red cardboard box.

"No, we didn't use it last year. Daddy and I decided to use icicles, don't you remember?"

I stood frozen to the floor, a strange lump rising in my throat. The voice came from Mother—her old voice—or should I say her *young* voice?

I pulled up a chair and sat beside her. The faded blue eyes sparkled as she reached for my hand. "Last year, remember, Marilyn? Daddy brought home a tree that was three feet too tall, and we cut it off right there on the carpet. What a mess!" She laughed and shook her head. Maggie quietly strung the garland. Mrs. Lyons fell asleep.

"And then Grandmother Pfleeger gave us those wonderful German ornaments she had stored away. The bird with the pretty tail—you liked that one the best, didn't you? I think we broke it. Oh no, there it is!" Gleefully Mother pointed at a round satin ball on the tree. "And there's the little angel, that gold one, right there."

A surge of joy rose in my heart. "Yes, I like the bird," I agreed. "And the angel too." I sensed Mother's excitement, remembering a special Christmas when I was seven. I could see that tree, smell its aroma, picture icicles shining, carelessly hung over pine branches.

"We haven't made Grandmother's German cookies yet," Mother went on. "That dough is so hard to knead! But Daddy can do it with his strong hands."

Caught up in a Christmas of years ago, I squeezed her hand. "He certainly can."

"But first, we need to finish the tree," Mother nodded. "What would Christmas be like without Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus?"

"There wouldn't be any," I agreed.

"Oh, smell that tree! It's just like taking a trip through the Adirondacks!"

Mother leaned forward to address Maggie, who couldn't smell the tree at all. "Esther, hang a ball there on the left." Esther was Mother's sister. "How about the one shaped like a pinecone?"

"Yes, ma'am," said Maggie, hanging a slender plastic ball on the left. "Is that better?"

"Yes, that looks good. And put Baby Jesus right out in front. That's where He should be, always!"

"Yes, ma'am." Maggie obediently moved the little manger and baby toward the front of the tree among the wrapped packages.

"Could we turn the lights on?" asked my mother.

By now Sam, several nurses and orderlies, the administrator, and a group of residents had joined us.

Sam snapped on the switch, and the tree showed off its strings of tiny colored lights. Outside the window, snow fell softly. Silently, the little gathering of people admired the tree. It wasn't a Balsam pine, and it didn't smell like the Adirondacks. There weren't any glittery icicles, and the packages under the tree were just empty decorations. But the snow was real, and the Nativity scene had been given its proper place.

As I looked at my mother, I knew the Lord had answered my prayer. He had done something special for Mother this Christmas.

In the back of the room, a sweet voice sounded the carol, "Hark! the herald angels sing." Other voices added, "Glory to the newborn King!" Then a voice that used to sing in the church choir joined in, loud and clear. "Peace on earth, and mercy mild— / God and sinners reconciled."

It was the voice of my mother.

HH



24th GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

HOUSING INFORMATION

GREETINGS

The San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau is serving the church by handling all housing reservations for both delegates and visitors. Your request for housing should be made on page 2 of this form. The Housing Bureau will process these forms for housing delegates and visitors and will confirm the reservations within three to four weeks after the reservation has been received. The San Antonio Convention and Visitors Bureau is the only one authorized to process reservations for the General Assembly. Please do not contact hotels directly, for this will delay the service. The Housing Bureau and local hotels have been most helpful in providing sufficient rooms exclusively for the 24th General Assembly and Conventions of the Church of the Nazarene. As you plan for the General Assembly, please also pray for a special visitation of the Holy Spirit on our gathering.

General Assembly Arrangements Committee
Jack K. Stone, Secretary

HEADQUARTERS HOTELS

The Marriott Rivercenter and Hyatt Regency have been named the Headquarters hotels for the 24th General Assembly and Conventions. The Hilton Palacio del Rio, the Marriott Riverwalk, and other nearby hotels have been designated to be used in conjunction with headquarters hotels for preferential housing consideration for officially elected General Assembly and Convention delegates.

SPECIAL NOTES ABOUT YOUR HOUSING RESERVATIONS

1. Housing forms are released to the Nazarene public December 1, 1996. Reservations should be received by May 1, 1997.

TELEPHONE REQUESTS WILL NOT BE HONORED.
ALL REQUESTS MUST BE IN WRITING.

2. Prior to May 28, 1997 any cancellations or changes in arrival and departure times must be made directly with the Housing Bureau. After May 28, all changes must be made directly with the hotel.
3. Please allow three to four weeks for the Housing Bureau to process your reservation request.

Complete Your Housing Form and Mail Today

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

Mail to: Housing
P.O. Box 2426
San Antonio, TX 78298
OR
Fax to: (210) 270-8702

24th General Assembly

HOUSING APPLICATION

Reservation cutoff date:
May 1, 1997

I am a delegate to: General Assembly NWMS NYI Sunday School I am a visitor

RESERVATION WILL NOT BE PROCESSED IF FORM IS INCOMPLETE. TELEPHONE REQUESTS ARE NOT ACCEPTED
Keep a copy of form for your records. **DO NOT MAIL AFTER FAXING.** Acknowledgements are mailed or faxed only to the name listed in field #8. Photocopy this form if you need more than one room.

1. SELECT SIX HOTELS: Rooms are assigned first come/first served. If choices are not available, a room will be secured at a hotel based on your preference of rate or proximity and availability. **USE CODES ONLY/NOT NUMBERS.** See _____ for codes.

1st Choice	2nd Choice	3rd Choice
<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>
(HOTEL CODE)	(HOTEL CODE)	(HOTEL CODE)
4th Choice	5th Choice	6th Choice
<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>	<input style="width: 40px; height: 20px; border: 1px solid black;" type="text"/>
(HOTEL CODE)	(HOTEL CODE)	(HOTEL CODE)

If hotel choices are sold out, which is more important? Room Rate Location

2. ARRIVAL:

DAY/DATE: _____ TIME: _____ **AM**
PM

3. DEPARTURE:

DAY/DATE: _____ TIME: _____ **AM**
PM

Requests for 2 or more days pre or post-convention may not be available through the housing department. Acknowledgement will advise you to check hotel direct for additional nights (not always available at convention rates).

4. CHECK APPROPRIATE BOX:

<input type="checkbox"/> ONE BED	<input type="checkbox"/> TWO BEDS
<input type="checkbox"/> SUITE + 1 BEDROOM	<input type="checkbox"/> SUITE + 2 BEDROOMS

The housing department will request room type, hotel will confirm if available.

5. TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN ROOM: _____

6. ROOM GUARANTEE: Hotel will send confirmation with rate, policies and room type. All rooms must be guaranteed. **Do not send checks to the Housing Department.** Complete credit card information or send check directly to the hotel upon receipt of confirmation slip.

Type of Card (i.e. AE, MC, VS)	Credit Card Number	Expiration Date	Name on Credit Card
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7. LIST ALL OCCUPANTS: First name first.

1. _____	2. _____
3. _____	4. _____

8. SEND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO:

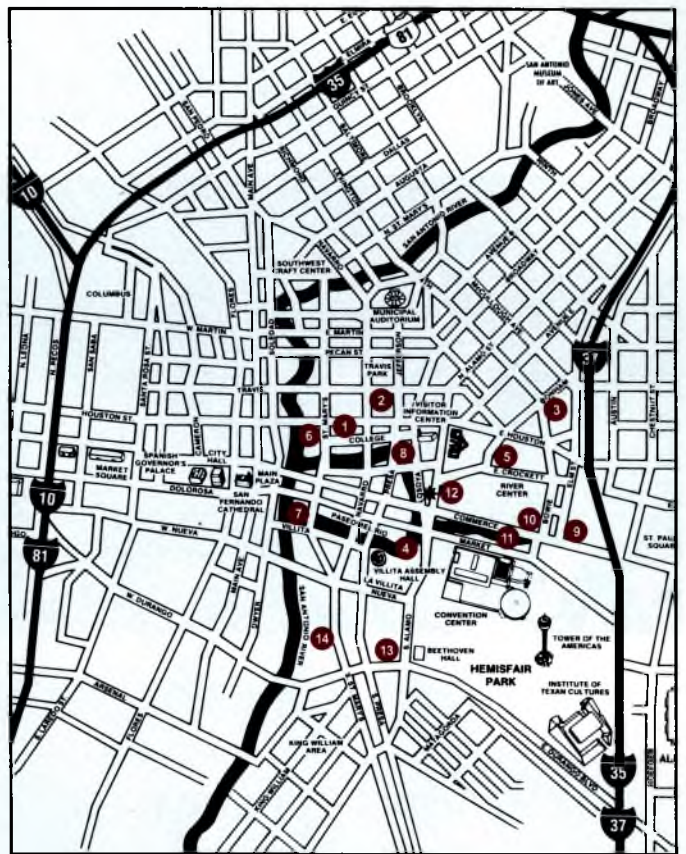
FIRST NAME	MI	LAST NAME
AFFILIATION/COMPANY		
STREET ADDRESS OR P.O. BOX NUMBER		
CITY	STATE	COUNTRY
DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER		FAX NUMBER

9. SPECIAL REQUESTS: NON-SMOKING Check here for disability

List special or other needs: _____

CANCELLATIONS/CHANGES: Before May 28, 1997 in writing to Housing Department. After May 28, 1997 direct to hotel.

San Antonio Metropolitan Area



SAN ANTONIO HOTEL/MOTEL RATES

DOWNTOWN	CODE	SGLE.	DBL.	TRPLE.	QUAD.
1. Camberley Gunter	CAM	\$99.00	\$99.00	\$114.00	\$114.00
2. Crowne Plaza St. Anthony	CWN	\$98.00	\$108.00	\$118.00	\$128.00
3. Hampton Inn	HAM	Reserved for International Delegates			
4. Hilton Palacio del Rio	HPR	\$112.00	\$112.00	\$132.00	\$152.00
5. Holiday Inn Crockett	HIC	Reserved for International Delegates			
6. Holiday Inn Riverwalk	HIR	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00
7. Homewood Suites	HOM	\$129.00	\$129.00	\$129.00	\$129.00
	2/BR	\$239.00	\$239.00	\$239.00	\$239.00
8. Hyatt Regency	HYR	\$107.00	\$107.00	\$128.00	\$128.00
9. La Quinta Convention Center	LQC	\$85.00	\$85.00	\$85.00	\$85.00
10. Marriott Rivercenter	MRC	\$119.00	\$119.00	\$119.00	\$119.00
11. Marriott Riverwalk	SAM	\$103.00	\$103.00	\$123.00	\$123.00
12. Menger	MEN	Reserved for International Delegates			
13. Plaza San Antonio	PLZ	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00	\$105.00
14. Sunner Suites	SUM	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$88.00	\$88.00

AREA HOTELS	CODE	SGLE.	DBL.	TRPLE.	QUAD.
15. Club Hotel/Doubletree	CLUB	\$79.00	\$89.00	\$99.00	\$109.00
16. Drury Suites Airport	DRUS	\$87.00	\$87.00	\$87.00	\$87.00
17. Embassy Suites	ESA	\$109.00	\$109.00	\$109.00	\$109.00
	2/BR	\$129.00	\$129.00	\$129.00	\$129.00
18. Hampton Inn Airport	HAMA	\$86.00	\$86.00	\$86.00	\$86.00
19. Hilton Airport	HILA	\$89.00	\$89.00	\$89.00	\$89.00
20. Holiday Inn Express Airport	HIJM	\$87.00	\$87.00	\$87.00	\$87.00
21. Holiday Inn Select Airport	HIA	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00	\$80.00
22. Pear Tree Inn Airport	PEAR	\$67.00	\$67.00	\$67.00	\$67.00
23. Red Lion Airport	RED	\$86.00	\$86.00	\$86.00	\$86.00
24. Seven Oaks Resort	SOH	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00	\$49.00

Normal check-in time is 3 p.m. and checkout time is noon for all hotels.

Shuttle service will be available from the airport hotels to the Convention Center and Alamodome as well as within the downtown area.

For reduced airline fares contact:

American Airlines—1-800-433-1790, File No. S0467AJ

Delta Airlines—1-800-241-6760, File No. XA197

Or you may access these discounted fares by contacting your local travel agent directly.

Information regarding Recreational Vehicle Campgrounds should be addressed to:
Church of the Nazarene International Headquarters
General Assembly RV Information
6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131

24th GENERAL ASSEMBLY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS



June 18-27, 1997 San Antonio Texas

FACILITIES:

The city of San Antonio will host Nazarenes from around the world. The Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center and Alamodome will be ideal locations for this inspirational event. Join us as we enjoy the beautiful atmosphere of San Antonio!

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Wednesday	7:00 P.M.	June 18	NYI-sponsored
Thursday	7:00 P.M.	June 19	NWMS-sponsored
Friday	7:00 P.M.	June 20	Dr. James H. Diehl
Saturday	7:00 P.M.	June 21	Dr. John A. Knight
Sunday	10:00 A.M.	June 22	Communion Service Dr. Jerald D. Johnson
Sunday	5:00 P.M.	June 22	Dr. Donald D. Owens
Monday	8:30 A.M.	June 23	Quadrennial Address Dr. William J. Prince
Monday	7:30 P.M.	June 23	Dr. Paul G. Cunningham
Tuesday	7:30 P.M.	June 24	Challenge for the Future
Wednesday	7:30 P.M.	June 25	Installation of General Superintendents

CONVENTIONS, WORKSHOPS, CONFERENCES:

- NWMS Convention and Workshops June 18-20
- NYI Convention and Workshops June 18-20
- SSM Convention and Workshops June 18-20



EXHIBITION CENTER:

Hours:

- Wednesday, June 18 2:00 P.M.-5:30 P.M.
- Thursday, June 19 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.
- Friday, June 20 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.
- Saturday, June 21 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.
- Sunday, June 22 1:30 P.M.-4:30 P.M.
- Monday, June 23 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.
- Tuesday, June 24 9:00 A.M.-5:30 P.M.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

- Delegate Registration June 19-20
- ☪
- Caucuses June 21
- ☪
- Plenary Meetings June 22-27

GOD WITH US

He who "flung out the starry host" one by one and gave them each a name
refused to come clothed in the splendor of the heavens.

The One who created the world with all its hidden treasures refused to enter
as King, wearing a golden crown set with diamonds or rubies or emeralds.

The Creator of worlds and universes, stars and galaxies and space;
The Creator of fish and birds, creeping things and animals and mankind;
Chose rather to become one living cell and to grow and to be born as a baby.

God became one with the human race.

He became "one of us."

He suffered; He rejoiced.

He knew pain, and laughter.

He saw sorrow, and joy.

He experienced death, and life.

This God-man did in life as He did in death—HE GAVE! He gave His blood as a
sacrifice for our sins. He gave His purity for our guilt. He gave His love to
bring the lost children back to the sorrowing Father. He gave all that He had
to give us—all that belongs to the Almighty God.

Immanuel—God with us . . .

to share our deepest heartache and sorrow;

to share our temptation and trials;

to share in our suffering and death

And to prepare us for the place He has made ready for us in the

Father's house.

JESUS

Our Creator

Our Savior

Our Big Brother

The One who came to show us the Father.

—Linda Kay Mowery

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS

by Sheila Sinn

Nearly 2,000 years have passed since the birth of Jesus in the small town of Bethlehem. Each generation and country have added their own traditions, stories, and legends to those preceding them. The Christmas we celebrate today is a rich compilation of this past.

Christmas Music

Christmas hymns were originally sung in Latin. Because they were sternly theological in nature, there was little joy in their words. An Italian named Jacopone da Todì was the first known person to write popular Christmas songs with warm, tender words. In his songs, the Christ child was sweet, Mary gently rocked her Boy, and the angels sang. The common people loved this different view of Christmas. Soon every country in Europe had joyful songs in their own language.

Christmas bells were first used to call worshipers to Christmas services in Campania, Italy, around the year 400.

Flowers and Holly

The most popular Christmas flower, the poinsettia, is not a flower. The bright red petals are actually leaves. It is named after Dr. Joel Poinsett, an American minister to Mexico in the early 19th century.

Holly trees are found in several hundred varieties around the world. The holly wreath reminds

us of the crown of thorns placed on Christ's head. The red berries remind us of His blood.

Gift Givers

Reindeer did not always pull Santa's sleigh. St. Nicholas rode a horse. It was only when he traveled to Scandinavia that he was given a sleigh. Clement Moore, who wrote "Twas the Night Before Christmas," popularized the reindeer and named them.

In Hawaii, Santa comes by boat. In one part of Australia, he rides on water skis. In Ghana, Africa, he comes out of the jungle.

In Syria, according to tradition, a small camel traveling with the magi was too tired to continue. When he fell down, the Christ child blessed him. Today, the youngest camel delivers gifts to Syrian children on Three Kings' Day.

In much of the Spanish-speaking world, the children receive gifts from the kings who rode camels. Children leave gifts of hay or grass for the camels under their beds, on the roof, or by the door.

Tree Decorations

The first recorded Christmas tree was decorated in Germany in 1604. German settlers brought the custom to America and set up trees as early as 1746. England's Queen Victoria married the German Prince Albert, and he displayed the first Christmas tree in Windsor Castle in 1841.

Tinsel on the Christmas tree supposedly comes from spiders



Holiday Sleigh Ride, a painting by Jane Wooster Scott.

that spun webs on Christmas trees one night. At a touch from the Christ child, the webs turned to silver or gold. Tinsel is hung each year to remember and receive blessings.

Africans in Liberia who celebrate Christmas decorate cut oil palm trees with red bells. Ukrainians hang a spider and web on their trees.

Twelve Days and Three Men

Twelfth Night, or Epiphany, is the day the magi arrived and worshiped Jesus, according to one legend. Since the magi arrived 12 days after Jesus was born, the period between His birth and Epiphany is known as the Twelve Days of Christmas.

According to St. Bede, an 8th-century English historian, there were three wise men. The oldest was Melchior, king of Arabia. He brought the gift of gold. Balthazar, king of Ethiopia, gave frankincense as a gift. Caspar, king of Tarsus, gave the gift of myrrh.

continued on page 33



Superstock

CHRISTMAS TRADITIONS FOR YOUR FAMILY

by Paul Lewis

threads from which our most valued memories are woven—the customs and practices that call us aside from the ordinary routines to focus on someone or something precious to us. Family traditions are enormously important because they help stabilize and hold a family together from year to year and generation to generation. They help children absorb the beliefs

list those activities that he or she regards as traditions in your family. The answers may surprise you and will likely range beyond holiday times to encompass many regular facets of family living.

Once you've pooled your answers, evaluate what you find. Two criteria are: (1) Do these traditions usually involve everyone in the preparing as well as the participating? Those that do will more likely be valued and preserved into the next generation. (2) Does the tradition emphasize authentic spiritual and human values rather than expensive gifts and activities? Traditions worth keeping are usually expensive only in terms of time.

Be sure that several of your family's important traditions include church activities and times with other friends in the Body of Christ. Many traditions can meet the needs of the sick or elderly, missionaries, and single parents and their children.

Family traditions can't be bought no matter how wealthy you are. These treasures are acquired simply, installment by installment, as time passes. The strength of values and the warmth of memories they carry will help you and your descendants through good and bad times. Meaningful family traditions, holiday or otherwise, are worth the effort!

✠

Courtesy of David C. Cook Church Ministries.

On a cold—10-degree cold—Christmas Eve, the Walchushauser family spread a bale of straw on the porch and wiggled into their sleeping bags to spend the night. Huddled together, they discovered that the story of how Jesus first entered the world took on warm new dimensions. The multi-sensory drama was so vivid that they've slept on the porch every Christmas since.

Several states away, the Simpson children are nervously singing, reciting their poems, and presenting "minipageants" prepared again for this year's family Christmas gathering.

In yet another home, the Carters return from the annual Christmas cantata at church to light the eight candles surrounding the carved, miniature Nativity scene on their coffee table. As the rising heat from the candles makes the small figures turn on their base, the family joins hands and sings, "Happy birthday, dear Jesus . . ." The birthday cake is cut and enjoyed in honor of His birth.

Traditions like these are the

FAMILY TRADITIONS CAN'T BE BOUGHT NO MATTER HOW WEALTHY YOU ARE.

and values we want them to enjoy and pass on.

Some family traditions occur more frequently than just the holidays. The Sunday evening dinner menu at the Schaffers' is always cinnamon toast, hot chocolate, and conversation. No one misses it. It's a cherished family tradition, and simple joys like these help keep families stuck tightly together.

A helpful family exercise some evening would be to clear away the dinner dishes, provide paper and pencils, and ask each person to

MY MOST MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS

by Liz Pfeifer



Every twinkling light looked like the star of Bethlehem to me.

Shirley was ecstatic when the tests showed that she was a perfect match. That's the kind of person she is.

Christmas has always been the highlight of the year for me. I grew up in a family of seven children, and this was one time of the year when all of us were in harmony! It was a rule that dishes were to be done without fussing before we could celebrate on Christmas Eve. We were told how Christ came to earth as a baby almost 2,000 years ago, which made the holiday even more magical for me. As I grew up, married, and had children, Christmas became even more fun. But Christmas has become much more than just a highlight of my year.

It was the summer of 1974, and I remember thinking about how good life was for me. I had a wonderful husband, Len, who was diligent in his work, which enabled me to be at home with our two children. Angie was seven and Jay was three. Being a mother was a joy to me, and life overall just seemed too good to be true.

That same summer, I made an appointment with a doctor because I noticed unusual amounts of hair loss. After working in the garden or taking a short walk, I felt very weak and tired. I thought I was just out of shape. But I went to the doctor—again and again, as it turned out. After three specialists and a dozen tests, I got the bad news—lupus. There is no known cure for lupus. The Lupus Foundation of America, Inc., defines lupus as a chronic inflammatory disease that affects connective tissue and may also affect virtually any organ of the body. Lupus had attacked and all but destroyed my right kidney. Dialysis for sure and

maybe a kidney transplant loomed in what future I had left.

I now had to choose carefully how I would budget my time and energy. My first priority was my family. Many hours were spent with my children, and I have watched them grow into two young adults that Len and I thoroughly enjoy.

ACCORDING TO MY MOTHER, THE CLOCK IN THAT ROOM HAS HANDS THAT NEVER MOVE.

As my faith in God grew stronger, I learned how to let Him take care of my health. I gradually came out of my depression and decided that this was the time for me to cherish life. I discovered that even when you are sick, you can find true joy and peace.

I managed without dialysis for the next 12 years, although I felt more and more fatigued. Christmases came and went and I loved them, although Len was doing more and more of the shopping. I wanted the Christmases to come, but part of the pleasure was gone because my energy level was so low.

In March of 1986, I was hospitalized for surgery to place a graft in my left arm through which dialysis would be done. Two weeks later, I began dialysis. This was a

time of real grieving for me, as I was losing a function of my body. My lifestyle was changing fast. I now spent many hours each week on dialysis.

My family really came through for me. Len trained with me so we could do the dialysis treatments at home. Angie and Jay helped with the housework. Most of all, just having them around gave me moral support.

By this time, I was feeling nauseated and drained of energy. My doctor had already started talking to me about the possibility of a kidney transplant and suggested I talk with my siblings about this. But I knew I couldn't ask for an organ from one of my sisters.

Shortly after I started on dialysis, my younger sister Shirley came for a visit. She told me she would like to give me one of her kidneys if we were a match. She wanted to lose some weight first, and I wasn't very excited about another surgery. But I did keep the thought in my mind, and Shirley spoke of it often.

One day Shirley called and told me she had talked to her doctor, and he felt it was fine for her to pursue testing to see if she was a match for me. Dialysis treatments really wore me out, and sometimes I felt I could not endure another one. I was ready to consider Shirley's loving offer, and we began the testing. Shirley was as ecstatic as I when the tests showed she was a perfect match. That's the kind of person my sister is.

Shirley lives about 180 miles from us. It was Thanksgiving when she came to our home to undergo some final testing. Our surgeries were scheduled for the eighth

of December. I can't describe my feelings. There was so much hope and yet a realization that my body might not accept her kidney, even though we were a perfect match. As my doctor said, "Only God can make a kidney work."

Overall, we were in high spirits, really enjoying each other's company and that of our family. Len's family and mine were all so involved in this experience. How I thank God for them and their love and support.

The day of surgery came, and Shirley and I were wheeled to the operating room with hugs and kisses from our family. We were laughing and joking. My mind cannot fathom how it was for my family as they waited during those long hours. I can only guess how it was for my mother to see two daughters go into surgery at the same time. I have meditated in that room where they waited. According to my mother, the clock in that room has hands that never move.

They have told me how wonderful it was when the surgeon came out and told them the surgeries had gone well. Within the next few hours, we knew Shirley's kidney

**Liz Pfeifer and
Shirley Baker**



was beginning to function in my body.

There was so much excitement watching my progress in the days that followed. My mother's eyes just sparkled above the sterile mask she had to wear when visiting me. Shirley was recovering well, and we visited each other in person and by phone. In a week, Shirley was dismissed and went to our home and a few days later went to my parents' home. I had to stay in the hospital longer because I had to be closely monitored.

Can you believe it? That Christmas in the hospital was the greatest Christmas of all. I could look out my hospital window and see Christmas decorations and lights. My heart soared! I was feeling better. I didn't have to take any more

dialysis treatments.

As I lay there in the hospital enjoying my most special Christmas, it dawned on me that what my sister had done for me was such a picture of what Jesus has done for all of us. My sister went into the hospital healthy and suffered so that I could have a better quality of life (and believe me, it is!). Every twinkling light looked like the star of Bethlehem to me. Jesus was willing to give His life so that we can have a better life here and in eternity. That gives us so much to look forward to. And now every Christmas is even more special than those magical childhood holidays. I celebrate Christ's birth and also celebrate my most memorable Christmas—the Christmas when my sister gave me the gift of life. **H**

The Power Outage

Last week, without warning, a power outage struck my side of town, plunging us into total darkness. Secure in the knowledge of where my light was, I felt no panic as I lit that rarely used oil lamp. The outage lasted nearly four hours! In that time, my children and I were amazed at how far that single light shone.

Since Christmas was almost upon us, we began thinking about how God delivered Jesus, His Light of the World. Jesus, the "indescribable gift" was unwrapped, rejected, and tagged "Return to sender" by His people. Yet, that "gift" shines on, and spiritual illumination comes through Jesus in the darkest hours. I am thankful in my dark hours.

During that power outage, I experi-

enced a fresh appreciation, both physically and spiritually, for the light. You see, to get around safely in total darkness, I had to carry my light beside me. I was reminded that as Christians we, too, must carry our light through Jesus Christ, the indescribable gift.

**WE SEALED THE BOX,
WRAPPED IT, AND PLACED IT
ON THE ALTAR DURING
FAMILY PRAYER TIME.**

This renewed realization created a new family Christmas activity. On Christmas, after all the packages were opened and the bows untied, we placed a "birthday present for Jesus" under our tree. Throughout the day, my family and I wrote down on slips of paper all the reasons why we were thankful Jesus was "born" in our life, and put them in a box. On Sunday, we sealed the box, wrapped it, and placed it on the altar during family prayer time as a present to Jesus.

If the power outage had not happened the way it did, we could have very well missed this special opportunity to turn on our light a little brighter for Jesus.

—Kathy Dennison
Kewanee, Illinois

December's

10-Point Quiz

- 1. The person who, falsely claiming to have a doctorate in religious studies from Columbia, led Hillary Clinton in "visualization" dialogues with Eleanor Roosevelt and Gandhi is:**
A. Jeanne Dixon B. Jean Houston C. Gene Dalton
- 2. The fastest-growing segment of Christian publishing is:**
A. Sunday School curriculum
B. Bibles
C. Computer media
- 3. The U.S. government spends the least tax money on which of the following?**
A. Food Stamps and Aid to Dependent Children
B. Social Security
C. Medicare
- 4. The new book *The Jesus I Knew*, which affirms the traditional Christian belief in Christ, was written by:**
A. Robert Fulghum B. Robert Martin Walker
C. Robert Goodall
- 5. Which of these Olympic basketball stars called his third trip to the Olympics "a great opportunity to model Christ in front of a lot of people by the way I play"?**
A. David Robinson B. Scottie Pippen
C. Anfernee Hardaway
- 6. The member of the gold medal U.S.A. women's gymnastics team who participates in regular Bible studies with her coach, Mary Lee Tracy, is:**
A. Kerri Strug B. Michelle Akers C. Amanda Borden
- 7. In Dadeville, Alabama, Gabel Taylor, 38, was shot in the face and killed by a man whom he had just proved wrong about:**
A. How to spell "hazard."
B. What a certain Bible verse said.
C. The author of *Poor Richard's Almanac*.
- 8. A Tyndale House survey showed that the second-ranking reason for not reading the Bible was "too hard to understand." What was the top-ranked reason?**
A. Bible makes me feel guilty.
B. Not enough time.
C. Bible is irrelevant.
- 9. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops launched an 8-million postcard campaign on behalf of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban act. According to Focus on the Family, who was ordered not to participate in the mailing?**
A. Military chaplains, by the Pentagon
B. Baptist pastors, by the Southern Baptist Convention
C. The faculty of William and Mary, by the chancellor
- 10. Which of the following telephone companies recently increased their porn lines by 400 percent?**
A. AT&T B. Sprint C. MCI D. Bell South

Answers:

1-B; 2-C; 3-A; 4-B; 5-A; 6-C; 7-B; 8-B; 9-A; 10-C (MCI now has 10 times as many porn lines as AT&T).

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A TALISMAN OF HOPE AND FAITH

Fortieth wedding anniversaries should be celebrated with something special. Don't you agree? Well, Ivan and Evelyn Beals thought so too. Both recently retired from editorial duties at Nazarene Headquarters. Evelyn edited children's Sunday School curriculum, and Ivan worked with intercultural English curriculum for adults and was formerly assistant editor of the *Herald of Holiness*. They scheduled a trip to England to see the sights—especially the historic sites of our Wesleyan heritage, such as the Epworth parsonage, the Foundry, City Road Chapel, Kingswood School, and the Aldersgate Museum.

Upon embarking from Ireland to sail across St. George's Channel, Ivan was stricken with a virulent attack of pneumonia, which led to congestive heart failure. Evelyn rushed him to Glan Clwyd Hospital near the resort village of Rhyl in north Wales. The doctors in intensive care were not optimistic. For several days, Evelyn did not know whether Ivan would make it through one more night. The tour went on without them.

About 9:30 each evening, Evelyn would walk back to the bed and breakfast a half mile from the hospital. Each morning and evening, she would walk past the Marble Church. It became what Evelyn called "my talisman, my symbol of hope and faith in the God I trust."

The tour went on without the Bealses, but God's family did not desert them. Son-in-law Maj. Herb Heavener, serving as a chaplain in Germany, traveled to north Wales and spent two days with them. Kent and Francene Brower, from

Nazarene Theological College, Manchester, made three trips to call on Ivan and Evelyn. Rev. Douglas Cooney, pastor of the Church of the Nazarene in Dids-



THE SPIRE OF THE MARBLE CHURCH, BODELWYDDAN, WALES, BECAME A SYMBOL OF THE GOD WHO CAN BE TRUSTED IN TOUGH TIMES.

bury, also ministered to the Bealses. The vicar of the Marble Church also served as chaplain in the hospital, and he, too, called on the Bealses. Pastor Jesse Midden-dorf of Kansas City First Church, where the Bealses are members,

kept in touch by telephone.

"We were totally surprised one day when Wes and Bettye Tracy walked into the hospital," Evelyn said. They were working at the British Isles North District Family Camp, about a two-hour drive away. With the help of Ian Crowe (a Nazarene Renault dealer from Northern Ireland) and the police department, the Tracys found the hospital in which Dr. Beals was being treated and managed to pilot their rented Ford safely into the parking lot. Evelyn pointed out the Marble Church, her "talisman of hope and faith," to the Tracys, and they photographed the church, constructed totally of marble, and later, back in Kansas City, presented Evelyn with a color 8" x 10" print of it as a souvenir of those days of fear and faith in Wales.

"We really appreciated the helpful calls, and we could feel the prayer support of family and friends," Evelyn said. "Our heartfelt thanks to everyone."

Under the care of an accompanying paramedic, Ivan was able to fly home on July 31. He was admitted to Shawnee Mission Hospital and finally was able to return home on August 13.

Nineteen days in the Wales hospital and 13 more in a Kansas hospital both tested and strengthened the vows and pledges that the Bealses made 40 years ago. The hospital time also brought them many opportunities to share their faith with many caregivers.

"The beautiful marble steeple, visible throughout the village of Bodelwyddan, was a stabilizing reminder," Evelyn said, "that God's presence is real in any part of the world."

—Derek Wright H



Forty years later they were all baptized by Thomas as believers in Christ.

It's Greek to Me!

When people use the abbreviated spelling Xmas for Christmas, they are not replacing Christ with the nondescript letter X. Instead, they are following the age-old tradition of using the Greek letter X to represent Christ's name. In Greek, the letter X (Chi) represents the first two letters of Christ's name.

Germany's Kris Kringle

Kris Kringle is a variation of the German name for the Christ child, *Christkindl*. During the Reformation, Kris Kringle became the Protestant gift-bearer, replacing the Catholic St. Nicholas.

English Traditions

King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table were, according to legend, the first people in England to celebrate Christmas.

Boxing Day in England is celebrated on the day after Christmas. On that day, the village priests used to open the poor box and distribute money to the needy of the village. Today, people celebrate by giving gifts to servants.

Centuries ago, English subjects were expected to give gifts to their monarchs. Queen Elizabeth I received clothes for her wardrobe. Even the palace servants were required to give gifts according to their financial ability.

American Contributions

Cranberries are one of the few foods we eat that are native to America. Most of the foods we eat were already native to Europe. Turkeys are also native to America but not to Europe.

Alabama was the first state in America to make Christmas Day a legal holiday, in 1836. Oklahoma was the last, in 1890. ❧

WHEN YOU PRAY

The Power of a Thankful Spirit

E. DEE FREEBORN



E. Dee Freeborn teaches spiritual formation at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

JUDGING BY THE CONTINUOUS flow of popular articles and news-bite interviews, it would seem that attitudes have a profound effect on our health. A good portion of this growing interest appears to be based on mounting scientific evidence that suggests what is important to our well-being is not *what* happens to us but how we *respond* to what happens.

Paul put it this way: "Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, NIV). To give thanks in all circumstances is to live a life of appreciative attention to God's surprises in our lives each moment of the day. It is a mistake to look to Sunday services as "filling the tank for the week." It is during the week, in the mundane and the ordinary, that God continually breaks into our lives. God is ever present to grace us with the beauty of His holiness. Our problem is learning to discern those moments. Living life with a thankful heart helps. Then, after a week of appreciative attention to God's quiet and powerful work in our lives, we can enter Sunday as a day of worship, celebration, and joy. It is the capstone to a week of thankful awareness of God's goodness and

grace, not a "recharging" station for making it through another seven days. The difference in perspective here is crucial.

How can we live with a grateful spirit in spite of the circumstances? Sometimes it is just a matter of awareness. One suggestion would be to actually make a list of all the things for which we are thankful, to "count our blessings," as the old song encourages. If you keep a spiritual diary or prayer journal, this could be a separate section of its own. Take time to list all the things for which you are grateful. Don't be in a hurry. Let the Spirit bring to your memory those items that you may have forgotten. On a consistent basis, review your list and add to it as the Lord leads. Then, pray your list back to God with a thankful heart.

Another suggestion comes from a particularly dark time in my life when I discovered I had fallen into a pattern of gloomy, pessimistic thinking. I began to ask myself, "Is it really as bad as I think it is?" I started carrying a 3" x 5" card and, as an experiment, listed anything good or positive that happened during the day—a meaningful conversation with a student, an encouraging phone call, a work assignment that went well—anything. I thought one a day would

be pretty good. To my surprise, after 14 days, every day had several entries. Because my spiritual eyes had become clouded with gloom instead of radiant and expectant thanksgiving, I had missed them!

Learning to live in appreciation of God's continual presence in the midst of the mundane is a lifelong journey. Maybe the suggestions above will help. What counts is to learn to give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for *you—and me*. ❧

**To give thanks
is to live a life
of appreciative
attention to God's
surprises in
our lives.**



THE QUESTION BOX

CONDUCTED BY WESLEY D. TRACY, *Editor*

Q. My friend and I are Master Masons. Our wives have joined the Church of the Nazarene, but we cannot. What does the Church of the Nazarene have against Masons? We think that they just don't know what Masonry is all about. Read the enclosed leaflet, and see if you do not agree.

A. I read the leaflet that you sent, along with similar materials from the Masonic Center in Maryland and the United Grand Lodge in England. I also conferred personally with two noted church historians and gathered other information from the Internet, including materials from Christian Research Institute about the 1992-93 Southern Baptist debates on this issue. From these sources, I will summarize the reasons that the Church of the Nazarene, the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, the Presbyterian Church in America, the Greek Orthodox Church, the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Church of the Brethren, the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, the Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Assemblies of God, the Roman Catholic Church, and other Christian groups have either forbidden Masonry or warned their people against it.

Let me start by saying that there is no doubt that there are many good people who are Masons. Their works of charity and philanthropy are well known. But many Christians still have grave concerns about Freemasonry.

1. Secrecy Versus Openness. There has always been in America a concern, even suspicion, of the secret rites and oaths of Masonry. This became even more pronounced in 1827 when William Morgan of Batavia, New York, was apparently murdered for revealing Masonic secrets. The uproar that followed is mentioned even in the Book of Mormon. It appears that Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, was quite fascinated by the secret rituals of Masonry and adopted or adapted some of them.

Granted, a lot of anti-Masonry talk at that time was fed by rumors, but the caution about secret orders was, many believe, appropriate. You see, all the rites and ceremonies of Christianity are public. Conversion, baptism, joining the church, ordination, and marriage all involve public promises, commitments, and pledges. The secrecy of Masonism, it is felt, is at odds with the very essence of Christian openness. Christians have nothing to hide. Thus, they have serious misgivings with secrets, blood oaths, and hidden vows. This is one rationale cited in the Nazarene *Manual* proscription: "their secrecy contravenes the Christian's open witness" (34.3).

2. A Religious Alternative to the Church. There can be little doubt that for many of the 4 million American Masons, the lodge functions as a religious alternative to

the churches. And according to historian Sydney Ahlstrom, this has been the case in America for nearly 200 years. Current exponents of Masonry are quick to declare that the lodge is not a religion and not a substitute for religion, but it does function that way for many. In fact, in some parts of the world—France, Italy, Greece, South America—Masonry has been a fierce adversary of orthodox Christianity. We see Masonism at its benign best in America.

3. Is Masonism a Religion? If it is, it would make perfect sense to say that one could not be a Mason and a Lutheran at the same time. One could not be a Lutheran and a Hindu or even a Methodist at the same time. American and English Masons today deny that Masonry is a religion. The problem with this contention is that many of the leading Masonic writers (whose texts you, as a Master Mason, have probably studied) call Masonry a religion. "The religion of Masonry is cosmopolitan, universal," writes Albert G. Mackey. Henry Wilson Coil declares, "Freemasonry is undoubtedly religion. . . . Many Freemasons make this flight [to heaven] with no other guarantee of a safe landing than their belief in the religion of Freemasonry." Albert Pike wrote, "Masonry . . . is the universal, eternal, immutable religion." (These quotes are from the Christian Research Institute [CRI] document that catalogs some of the 1992-93 Southern Baptist debate.) The Nazarene General Rules (*Manual*, 34, 34.3) cites this concern: "We hold specifically that the following practices should be avoided: . . . Membership in oath-bound secret orders or societies. The quasi-religious nature of such organizations dilutes the Christian's commitment."

4. The Masonic God. The first requirement of Masonry is to believe in God. Americans are apt to think upon reading such a statement that the Masons worship the God of the Bible, the Christian God. Evidence, however, seems to indicate otherwise. The God of the Masons is called the Almighty Parent, the Supreme Being, and the Great Architect of the Universe. The pro-Mason documents on my desk declare that a Mason's first duty is "to God, by whatever name he is known." A Mason may worship Allah, Shiva, Ellegua, Buddha, or the Great Spirit. The Masonic God seems to look down from a superior vantage point on all the gods of the world's religions.

John Weldon, in the CRI article "The Masonic Lodge and the Christian Conscience," quotes from a Masonic Bible (King James Version with a lengthy introduction about Masonry). He cites "The Great Light in Masonry" by Joseph Fort Newton: "For Masonry knows, what so many forget, that religions are many, but religion is one . . . therefore it invites to its altar men of all faiths, knowing that, if they use different names for 'the name-

less one with a hundred names,' they are yet praying to the one God and Father of all." Weldon asks, "When a Hindu prays to Vishnu or Shiva, is he really praying to Jesus?"

The Baptist task force noted that "the Masonic Great Architect of the Universe appears more like the Aristotelian 'First Cause' than the personal God who has revealed Himself in the Bible."

In this way, Masonry becomes guilty, many believe, of an arrogant theological minimalism. Henry Wilson Coil, in his encyclopedia on Masonry, calls the God of the Bible a mere "partisan, tribal God," implying that He is dramatically inferior to the God of Masonry, which is "a boundless, eternal, universal, undenominational, and international, Divine Spirit, so vastly removed from the speck called man, that He cannot be known, named, or approached. . . . As soon as man begins to . . . endow Him with the most perfect human attributes, such as justice, mercy, beneficence, etc., the Divine essence is depreciated and despoiled."

Does this sound more like the "Unmoved Mover" of Deism or like Immanuel: "God with us"?

Coil goes on to condemn monotheism, declaring that "the very belief in one God violates Masonic principles, for it requires belief in a specific kind of Supreme Deity" (cited by Weldon).

As a Master Mason, you have probably studied the lore of the ancient Egyptian gods Osiris, Isis, Horus, and Anun. Egyptian religion is the ancestor of the pagan Traditional African Religion followed to some degree by more than 100 million people today. Please be patient with those Christians who hesitate to bring into their fellowship Masons who embrace the lore (worship?) of pagan gods.

5. Salvation. Masonry claims to be undogmatic, that is, nondoctrinal. This is part of its appeal to men of all faiths. Here again it is trapped by theological minimalism, stripping religion to an essence that is devoid of real theological content. Church historian Stan Ingersol says, "Freemasonry strips Christianity *and every other religion* of its distinctiveness." He cites P. T. Forsyth: "Christianity is a theological religion, or it is no religion at all." The Christian faith is tied to real history—the life and words of Jesus of Nazareth—Ingersol claims, as well as the interpretation of Jesus made by the New Testament writers, namely, that the Word of God was incarnate in Him.

By studying Masonic documents, one never comes to the idea of salvation by grace through faith in the Savior, Jesus Christ. The Mason doesn't even have to believe in Christ; he may be worshipping Ogun, Isis, or the First Cause. So how is a Mason to be saved? By serving whatever god he believes in, and by good character and good deeds. Even though the Mason claims to be nondoctrinal, it seems to many that Masonic teaching cannot be separated from salvation by works (see Weldon's CRI article for more on this subject). Certainly, no one would deride Masonry for encouraging good character and acts of charity. But Christians believe even these cannot save.

6. Racial Integration. One eminent historian told me that in America, though there are Black Masons, the Masonic system has been used by unscrupulous persons to maintain "white" power structures. In my research, however, I have not studied that topic, so I only list it here as a matter of concern for future exploration.

7. Different Decisions. Weldon cites the Presbyterian study, which he summarizes as follows:

a. Joining Masonry requires actions and vows out of accord with Scripture.

b. Participation in Masonry seriously compromises the Christian faith and testimony.

c. Membership in Masonry and activity in its ritual lead to a diluting of commitment to Christ and His kingdom.

The Southern Baptists, on the other hand, after an 18-month study and debate, voted that they "could not frankly state that it is wrong for a Christian to join the Masonic Lodge." Thus, one can now be a Baptist and a Mason at the same time. Many, however, believe that the decision came because more than half a million Masons were already in Southern Baptist churches, boards, committees, and pulpits. The vote, many fear, was not based on sound biblical or theological judgment, but was merely a vote to legitimize what had already taken place. The *Scottish Rite Journal*, August 1993, called the Baptist vote "a historic and positive turning point for Freemasonry."

It cannot be denied that many notable men have been Masons—Ben Franklin, George Washington, and Bob Dole, to name three. Therefore, a vote to exclude Masons from membership in a certain denomination due to their prior allegiance to a quasi-religious system is not the same as saying that Masons are bad people.

If you wish to further explore the relationship between Masonry and Christianity, let me refer you to:

Christian Research Institute
P.O. Box 500—TC
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92693
714-855-9926

Really, the dilemma that you face in wanting to join the Church of the Nazarene is quite simply solved. The pro-Mason materials that you sent, as well as the materials I received from Maryland and England, declare with one accord the priorities of the Mason. First is duty to God (by whatever name He is known). Second is his duty to his country; third, to his family; and then duty to his fellowman. All these come before his duty to Freemasonry, according to the Masonic documents sent to me. If allegiance to Masonry is really no more than a fifth-level loyalty, why don't you and your friend simply leave the Masonic lodge and join the Church of the Nazarene? And I do not ask this flippantly, but sincerely.

The views expressed in the responses in this column are those of the editor and do not constitute official statement by or for the Church of the Nazarene. The editor is not able to send replies to questions not selected for publication. Address: Herald of Holiness, 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131.

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the LORD (Isaiah 55:8, NIV).

I am supposed to take Mondays off—most pastors do. But on this Monday, I climb over the usual Sunday leftovers—deflated emotions, anticlimaxes, aching mind and muscles—and go to work anyway. I’ll try to work in a day off later.

My first encounter of the day is with a cup of Folgers. My second is with Mary. She knocks on the office door. “Hello, Mary.” I smile. Mary doesn’t. I remember that she has been through years of therapy. I think about her recent progress. Emotional and physical health on the improve. She now affirms, though weakly, that God does love her. She even admits that she is created in God’s image. She has begun to see that there may even be a purpose for her life. But from her face I see that the progress is in jeopardy.

“Why, Pastor? Why would God let this happen to us?”

I look into her eyes. “Let *what* happen?”

**WHY, PASTOR?
IF GOD
LOVES US LIKE
YOU SAY . . . ?**

“In exactly three and one-half months, all our savings will be gone. We’ll be dead broke—out on the street.” I begin to catch the drift. “Brad got laid off. ‘Involuntarily leisured,’ they called it. Brad called it fired. Why, Pastor, would God let that happen to us? If He loves us like you say, why . . . ?”

Though I try to answer, most of the morning is gone, and I haven’t said much that’s helpful.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:9, NIV).

I head for the Broadway Café, where my scribbled datebook says I’m to meet Bill. He is a gifted, educated, proud man with a successful professional career behind him. I phone to double-check the appointment. He is en route. He will probably be early. Well, he has plenty of time on his hands. He has been dismissed from two jobs in the last three

BIG QUESTION— ELUSIVE ANSWERS

by Kevin M. Ulmet, *pastor,*
First Church of the Nazarene,
Greenville, South Carolina

months. I wonder what he wants to talk about—as if I didn't know.

"How's Barbara?" I ask Bill as he waves me back to the booth where he is already sipping tea.

"Not well, not well."

I know this, but I hoped to get him thinking about others instead of himself. Bad idea. Barbara has had a long battle with cancer. We hope she won. But when Bill got fired twice, she went back to her old job—which she can't quite handle in her weakened condition. Bill begins to openly weep right here in the Broadway Café.

"Our lives are falling apart," Bill says.

I nod in sympathy. He tells me about the abdominal pain. The doctor can't find what's wrong. Then came the big question.

"Why me? Why us, Pastor? We've been good Christians. The tithe is paid up. You know that we've even borrowed money to give to the church."

"I know," I mumble, "I know, Bill."

I RELIVE
THE NIGHTMARE
THAT CHANGED
HER LIFE
FOREVER.

"I've even served as a church staff member at no salary. And now I don't even have the basic necessities of life. My wife deserves better—I deserve better. Why . . . ?"

My heart is beginning to ache. It's turning into a long, hard Monday.

"As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:10-11, NIV).

My wife has an afternoon of appointments, and I'm to take care of the kids. After all, it's supposed to be my day off. So I watch the kids and a *Columbo* rerun. I'm feeling a little better. Dinner—we decide that all the tacos you can eat for \$5.95 (\$2.95 for kids) at



Los Hijos is an offer we can't refuse. I'm feeling a lot better.

Monday night. Hospital calls. I have two to make. I show my clergy ID at the desk and head for Ruth's room. On the elevator, I relive the nightmare that has changed her life forever.

She was leaving work one evening after her shift at the discount store. She turned out of the parking lot onto a main thoroughfare, as she had done thousands of times before. Except this time a police vehicle was on the way to a call, with no siren or blue lights flashing, racing down the highway. She never even saw him. Her car traveled over 100 feet after impact and expelled her onto the pavement with broken seat belt dangling around her. The horror of that scene plays out again in my mind. On this visit, I will try to encourage her. She has endured two consecutive days of emergency surgeries to graft skin onto her nearly severed ankle. Each surgery lasted eight hours, and two were necessary because of blood clot-related complications.

I make my way to room 416. There she lies, racked with pain, and I ask the big question silently before she does: Why?—WHY? Why Ruth? She and her husband love the Lord. Here they were, retirement age, and still working. They had planned to leave on a much-needed week's vacation the next day after the accident and had been so looking forward to it. We talk about the financial burden this accident creates, the plans for their "golden years" now wrecked. We talk about why so many who are so wicked seem to prosper so much, while so many who are so righteous seem to suffer so much. I have no answers. No explanation. I admit to Ruth my own struggle to figure it all out.

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands" (Isaiah 55:12, NIV).

Monday is coming to an end. Only one more visit, then on to the grocery store and home to prepare for a long Tuesday, which begins with a 6:30 A.M. prayer meeting. But before that, I will visit my friend John. God called him just a few years ago to give up a burgeoning career, with money in the bank and all the material possessions he'd ever want, to enter a field of ministry. He "gave it up." He even moved across the country to a church institution to study and prepare. Sure, it was rough on the family, the youngest child already in high school. But God had called. It was decided his wife would join him a year later. But the house never sold. The savings quickly emptied. The investments were cashed in. And problems mounted back home. In fact, after only one year, he had to return, feeling personal disgrace and failure.

"Maybe God has something for us to do locally, right here," John said. It worked for a while, but then demand for his services diminished, his ability to serve consistently threatened by physical and job-related interruptions. And finally, open-heart surgery, just to top it off.

Tonight I find him back in the hospital with more chest pain, another heart catheterization, another small blockage. By this point on this black Monday, I am tired of asking or trying to answer the big question. But unspoken, it is still all we can think about "between the lines" of our dialogue. Why? Why?

I AM TIRED OF TRYING TO ANSWER THE BIG QUESTION.

Night Songs

Life's harmony on sunlit days,
In pleasant pastures, quiet ways,
Becomes a lilting melody
That lifts and thrills the heart of me.
God also promised songs at night,
When life's dark hour contains no light,
And minor chords reverberate,

As on my knees I pray and wait.
The night will come as sure as day;
The sun will cease to light the way;
But though the midnight hour is long,
Our hearts can have God's promised song.

—Christina Lovin
Thomaston, Maine

"Instead of the thornbush will grow the pine tree, and instead of briars the myrtle will grow. This will be for the LORD's renown, for an everlasting sign, which will not be destroyed" (Isaiah 55:13, NIV).

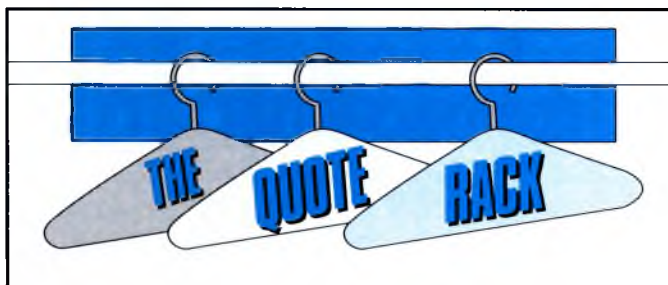
I walk the aisles of the grocery store and head home to try to sleep. I reflect on a rough day. The words of Isaiah 55 keep coming back. I preached from that chapter two Sundays before. Can I now believe it?

You see, somewhere in this great God of ours are ways that are higher than our ways. Thoughts that are higher than our thoughts. Somewhere in this great God is a process of rain that comes down, waters dry ground, produces harvest, and returns again only to come down once more, but seasons have to pass first. Seasons of planting, cultivating, preparing, then harvesting. In fact, the promises of God through the prophets of old often

I'M LEARNING TO GIVE LESS DIRECTION AND ENCOURAGE MORE WAITING.

took more than mere seasons to be fulfilled; sometimes they took generations! Imagine the impatience, the questioning, the sense that God had abandoned His own people! But eventually, ultimately, the people went forth in joy, in peace! The thorns were replaced by pines. And all for God's glory.

I'm learning in these years of ministry, of identifying with hurting people, of seeing injustice and unfairness among the righteous, to give fewer answers, to give less direction, and to encourage more waiting. On these tough days of ministry, I'm learning to go ahead and admit my questions and listen to theirs, but take their hands and remind them both of us have nowhere else to turn and nowhere else to wait but for Him and on Him! And to remember that somewhere in this great God of ours is a purpose that will be accomplished. His purpose. Help my unbelief! Lord, I believe. **H**



"MANY people who marry don't want to change their lifestyle at all. They're married singles. They don't . . . nurture seeds of shared vision, selflessness, caring, tenderness, and consideration, yet they are surprised at the harvest of weeds."

Stephen R. Covey

*"THE future is Thy gift, I would not lift
The veil Thy love has hung 'twixt it and me."*

John Oxenham

*"TO gild refined gold, to paint the lily
To throw perfume on the violet, . . .
Is wasteful and ridiculous excess."*

William Shakespeare, *King John*

*"YOU should link yourself to a great cause. You may never do
the cause very much good, but the cause will do you a great deal
of good."*

James Bright

"I can't afford to be anything but grateful that He [God] thought enough of me to give me this period at the end of life to be a proof that what I've spoken about—the unshakable Kingdom and the unchanging Person—is true because I'm showing it to be true by His grace."

final testimony of 89-year-old stroke victim E. Stanley Jones

"TO wave a wand over religions and declare that they are all saying the same thing is nonsense. This is sloppy pluralism, false tolerance, and indifference to truth. . . . What we are up against is Enlightenment dogmatism masquerading as toleration."

Clark H. Pinnock

"FOR those who trust God, this gate [death] has the marvelous property as you get closer to it of looking less like an exit and more and more like an entrance."

Donald Grey Barnhouse

"SECRET nostalgia for the old . . . life . . . is a great obstacle. . . . Imprisoned by his past, the retired person is not free enough in his mind to construct a new future."

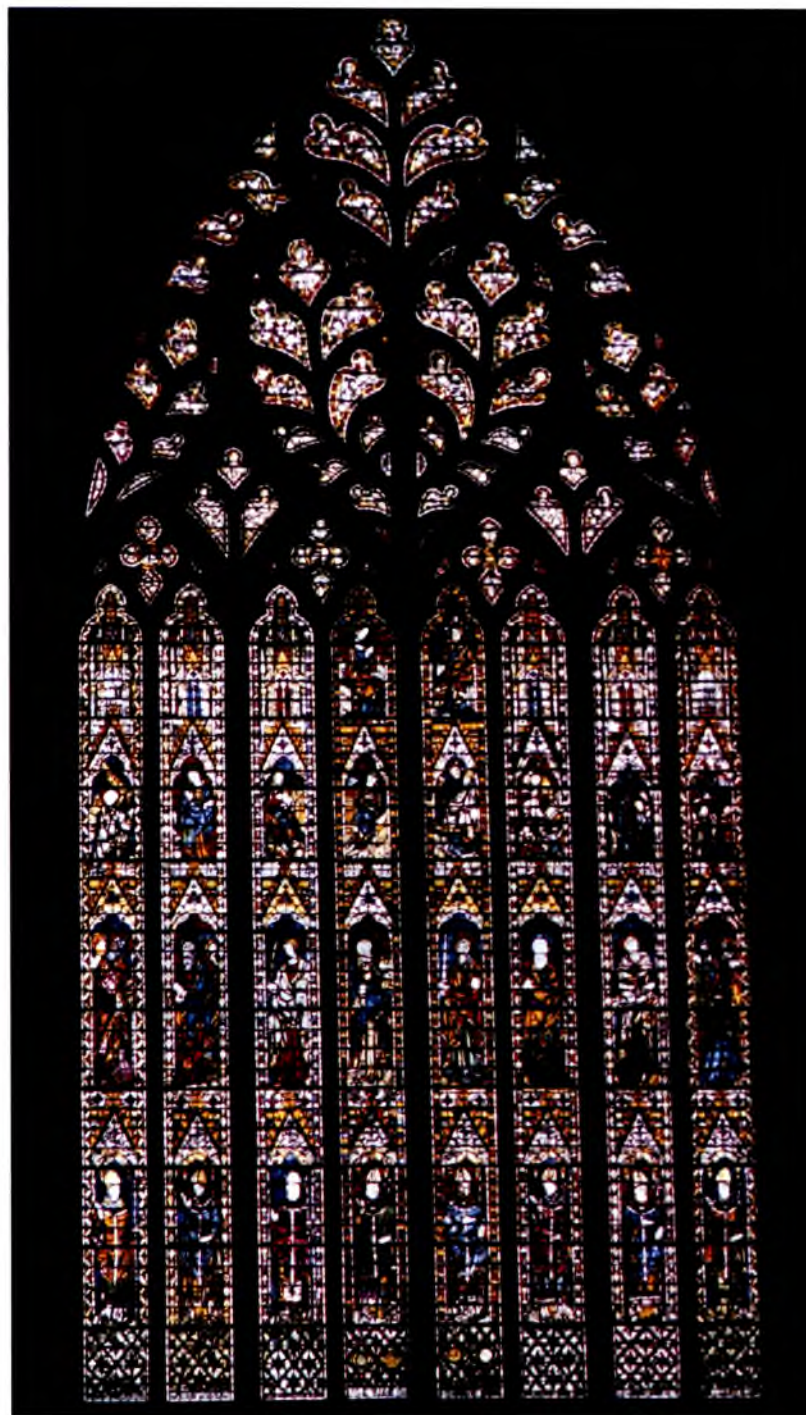
Paul Tournier

"NEW winds of the Spirit seem to be blowing today, the chief reason being that we no longer feel caged by science."

Huston Smith

"FAR from being conceited, you ought to be all the more humble and devoted to your heavenly Lord when you consider that he, the Almighty God . . . has stooped so low as to call you. For . . . he has lovingly chosen you to be one of his special friends."

The Cloud of Unknowing



Kingswood Images

WHAT DO YOU MEAN YOU WANT EXCITING WORSHIP?

Once all it took was a preacher and a song leader. It was easier to plan worship then. Now voices across the church are saying, “Give us exciting worship!” For some, exciting worship means a captivating preacher, a favorite kind of music, or the

EVEN IF WE DON'T DO AS OTHER CHURCHES DO, HOW MIGHT OUR WORSHIP CELEBRATE THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST?

freedom to do and say whatever they want. Others want more banners, more drama, more music, more fellowship, more children's stories every Sunday. For some, the key words are "spontaneity," "participation," "inclusive," or "friendly." Others demand that the Scriptures be read beautifully, that there be a time of "worship and praise," that a certain style prevail.

Group events are exciting in their own right. And we have come to expect the same excitement from our corporate worship. We forget worship is not meant to compete with choral concerts or basketball games. It is not meant to be more engaging than theater presentations or art shows. It is not meant to be more fun than quilt auctions or birthday parties. Said one person recently: "We all get enough entertainment. I think people are bringing some deeper needs to worship."

Our desire for what we call exciting worship might be telling us that something is indeed lacking. We may be looking for worship that is meaningful, but we do not know how to get it. When we try to make worship exciting or friendly or some other quality, we plan and judge worship by inappropriate goals: its entertainment value, its skill of production, our personal and individualistic yardsticks, our subjective likes and dislikes.

What is worship, then, if it is not a new, exciting, friendly, attractive program every week? Who wants to attend a dull, poorly organized, impersonal gathering every Sunday? But to ask those questions is to miss the point. Effective worship, in its own way and its own time, is exciting and attractive. But we can't start there.

Worship represents the presence

of Jesus Christ among His people. Romans 8 describes how God's Spirit lives in a congregation. Ephesians 2:21-22 (NIV) says we are a "holy temple in the Lord . . . a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit." When Jesus took the bread and cup, He said, "Do this in remembrance of [to recall] me" (1 Corinthians 11:24, 25, NIV).

When we worship, we celebrate what God through Christ has done, is doing, and will do. The ancient acclamation rings out, "Christ has died! Christ is risen! Christ will come again!" In worship, God speaks and acts. God's Spirit reveals and renews, and we respond.

Do we want excitement? Do we want meaning? Then let us start with this outpouring of divine love, God's creation and re-creation. Let us tell and retell the gracious and saving acts of God in Christ. Let us preach, pray, and sing the life and mission of the One who came that we might have life, that prisoners be released, that the hungry be fed.

In our tradition, we have not taught worship very well. We look askance at churches who focus on corporate worship (liturgy) but who, in our view, lack other qualities we possess. We are suspicious of weekly Communion, written prayers, and prescribed colors and vestments.

If we looked further, we might see how the service of Word and table is based on a worship pattern of New Testament times. We might see how congregations honor the presence of Christ when they stand for the reading of the Gospel each Sunday. We might see how small children are blessed (but not served) by the ministers when families go to the altar to receive Communion.

As we search for meaning in worship, for exciting things to happen, we may have to reclaim and renew various worship practices our tradition has discarded. Even if we don't do as other churches do, how might our worship celebrate the presence of Christ?

Does God in Christ speak and act? Does the Spirit of Christ move among us? Does Christ's mission become ours? These are questions of focus, not style. In worship like this, preaching, prayer, Scripture, offering, Communion, music, visual art, drama, verbal response, physical movement, emotion, spontaneity, imagination, silence, children, adults, women, men, ethnic distinctions—all can find their rightful places and appropriate expressions in every congregation.

As a church, we may need to rethink our ideas about worship and examine the reasons we gather on Sundays. We so easily get caught up in our goals and objectives that we lose sight of genuine worship and focus on other things. We design our worship services, church signs, and parking lots to attract visitors. We organize greeters, Sunday School classes, and mission programs. We arrange for small-group fellowships and neighborhood care groups. But behind all of this activity, as its basis and its source, must be the body of Christ at worship.

Healthy worship attracts visitors, generates service and mission, feeds the poor, and cares for the sick. For at the center of worship is the Christ, the incarnate God, who invites, who proclaims, who feeds and heals and serves. And Christ's body is those who gather to worship the One who came, is come, and will come.

If it truly is worship, then it is exciting!

—Philip K. Clemens

HH

Gambling Commission Set

Evangelical Christians applaud the action of the U.S. Congress to approve a two-year project to study the effects of gambling. Under the leadership of Rep. Frank Wolf (R-Va.), Congress passed the National Gambling Impact Study Act of 1996.

James Dobson, founder and president of Focus on the Family, was nominated to serve on the commission by Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott on the recommendation of Sen. Dan Coats (R-Ind.). Dobson will serve with eight others on the commission.

Revival in Latin America

The revival that increased the number of Latin American Protestants from 18.6 million to 59.4 million during the last decade continues. Every hour some 400 more Latin Americans convert to Evangelical Christianity. In Rio de Janeiro, new churches are being born at the rate of one a day. In Peru, a new church is started every eight hours. About two-thirds of Latin Protestants attend a Pentecostal church. The Church of the Nazarene in Latin America is also seeing remarkable growth during these days.

TWR Report from China

The Chinese ministry staff of Trans-World Radio (TWR) report that 77.5 percent of China's population has access to radio broadcasts. One source estimates that there are more than 500 million radios, one for every 2.4 persons. In 1995 alone, TWR received over 14,000 letter responses from Chinese listeners in the Asia-Pacific Region, with most of them from China.

TWR received one letter from a lady in China in which she told about her conversion to Christ and that she had walked 200 miles to mail the letter. Such is the impact that the gospel is having on this nation, still gripped by atheism and other religions.

Congress Approves DOMA

In a decisive pro-family vote, the U.S. Senate approved the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) by a margin of 85-14. This action followed a House vote of 342-67 and sent the bill to President Clinton's desk. Clinton said he would sign the bill in its current form.

This vote came as a Hawaiian Circuit Court resumed deliberation on a challenge by three homosexual couples to Hawaii's law stating that marriage is re-

served for one man and one woman. Many observers believe that the Hawaiian case will eventually legalize same-sex marriage. DOMA, which was sponsored by Sen. Don Nickles (R-Okla.), and Reps. Bob Barr (R-Ga.) and Steve Largent (R-Okla.), defines marriage for federal government purposes as "the union of a man and woman as husband and wife." Christians hail this action, which they believe is based on the Word of God.

World Relief Staff Killed

Two staff members of World Relief were shot and killed in Kompong Cham, Cambodia, as they were leaving the neighborhood in which World Relief works. The two women, both of Kompong Cham, had been meeting with a group of women who receive small loans to start businesses to earn income to provide for their impoverished families.

Over 8,300 women have received loans through this innovative program, and the on-time loan repayment is 94 percent. The murder is the first crime connected to the four-year program.

World Relief is the international assistance arm of the National Association of Evangelicals.

WHERE THERE IS A WILL



THERE IS A WAY

- 1 For YOU to name guardians for minor children.
- 2 For YOU (not the State) to say to whom and how your estate shall be distributed.
- 3 For YOU to exercise a final act of stewardship over the things you leave behind.

Send for your FREE WILL KIT today!

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 Dr. _____
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(Month) (Day) (Year)

Spouse's Birth Date _____
(Month) (Day) (Year)

Better yet, your church may wish to have our representative conduct a Wills Seminar. Call today.

1-800-544-8413



J. DEAN McNAMARA, from Welch, W.Va., to Troy (Ohio) First
 DWIGHT E. MEAD, from pastor, Farmington, Ill., to evangelism
 J. BRET METCALFE, from student, Nazarene Bible College, to pastor, Greenville (Pa.) First
 CLARENCE MOORHOUSE, from Marine City (Mich.) Bluewater, to Flint (Mich.) Westgate
 ERIC MULDOON, to Snyder, Okla.
 J. GREGORY MUSIC, to associate, Bangor, Maine
 BRIAN NOLLENBERGER, from associate, Junction City (Kans.) First, to associate, Arlington (Tex.) First
 TIM ODOM, from Vivian, La., to Little Rock (Ark.) Rose Hill
 JAMES E. PEARL II, from student, Nazarene Theological Seminary, to pastor, South Haven, Mich.
 KEVIN W. PITTMAN, from student to pastor, Frederick, Okla.
 DAVID K. POWERS, from Ruston, La., to Laura, Miss.
 DANIEL PRESSON, to associate, Fredericktown, Mo.
 DWIGHT E. PRESSON, from St. Louis (Mo.) Manchester Community, to Fredericktown, Mo.
 M. TODD RAYNES, from Handley, W.Va., to Griffin (Ga.) First
 BRIAN A. SMITH, from Waco (Tex.) South Manor, to associate, Hutchinson (Kans.) First
 MERVIN C. SMITH, from pastor, Charleston (W.Va.) Southeast, to superintendent, West Virginia South District
 EDWIN A. SPANGLER, from Masontown, W.Va., to Greentown, Ohio
 JOHNNIE R. SPELLMAN, from minister, Kansas, to Hutchinson (Kans.) Westside
 JAMES R. SPRUCE, from pastor, Flint (Mich.) Central, to superintendent, Nebraska District
 ALAN STOKES, from Tilden, Ill., to Pine Bluff (Ark.) Oak Park

SAMUEL A. STONE III, from Roseville, Ill., to Williamston, Mich.
 WALTER W. THOMPSON, from Seagraves, Tex., to Andrews, Tex.
 MARTIN T. TREADWELL SR., to pastor, Detroit (Mich.) Faith
 JOHN TROTTER, from evangelism to pastor, Princeton, Ill.
 DAVID W. VOLKER, from associate, New Albany (Ind.) Eastside, to associate, Lenexa (Kans.) Central
 RICHARD D. WAGONER, from associate, Charleston (W.Va.) Davis Creek, to associate, St. Charles (Mo.) Harvester
 THOMAS E. WALLER, from student to pastor, Gregory (Mich.) Southwest
 ROBERT (Bob) WRIGHT, from Artesia, N.Mex., to Lamesa, Tex.
 DARRELL YEAGER, from Evansville (Ind.) Diamond Valley, to McComb (Mich.) Bethel

JONES, DANIEL and ANNETTE, Swaziland, Furlough Address: c/o JAARS, Box 248, Jaars Rd., Waxhaw, NC 28173
 KOMMEL, CHERI, Swaziland, Field Address: P.O. Box 14, Manzini, SWAZILAND
 SAVAGE, KATHRYN, Swaziland, Furlough Address: 1471 N.E. Ninth Ct., Homestead, FL 33033
 SEALE, NANCY, Papua New Guinea, Furlough Address: C/-70 Tallowood Ave., Cherrybrook, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA 2126
 TRESSLER, VEORA, Guatemala ITN, Field Address: F-160, P.O. Box 59-1828, Miami, FL 33159-1828

Recommendations

The following have been recommended by their respective district superintendents:

J. D. BAILEY, evangelist, 6760 Live Oak Ct., Indianapolis, IN 56214, by Gene C. Phillips, Iowa District.

DON CLEVELAND, evangelist, 1325 Bowdoin S.E., Kentwood, MI 49508, by C. Neil Strait, Michigan District.

HUGH GORMAN, evangelist, 125 Wiltshire Blvd., Red Deer, AB T4N 6B4, 403-346-2633, by Daniel R. Gales, Canada West District.

CHAD E. HOGUE, evangelist, 16001 Glen Rd., Mount Vernon, OH 43050, 614-397-1105, by Jack R. Archer, North Central Ohio District.

MARILYN M. STARK, song evangelist, 6111 N. Meridian, Apt. 237, Oklahoma City, OK 73112, by Jerry W. White, Northwest Oklahoma District.

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 BLOWERS, DAVE and CARISSA, Haiti, Field Address: MFI-NAZARENE, Box 15665, West Palm Beach, FL 33416
 CALHOUN, RONALD and SHELVA, South Africa, Field Address: P.O. Box 668, 2040 Honeydew, SOUTH AFRICA
 JAKOBITZ, ARLEN and JOYCE, India, Field Address: Sharan Apts., Flat 3, 1, High St., Cooke Town, Bangalore 560 005, INDIA



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ABBOTT, DAN: Beaverton, OR, Jan. 31—Feb. 1

⊙ **ARMSTRONG, LEON AND LINDA—THE ARMSTRONGS:** Williamsport, PA, Dec. 1-4; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11

BELZER, DAVE & BARBARA: Tucumcari, NM, Dec. 3-8

BENSON, MICHAEL W.: Austin, TX (Grace), Jan. 26-29

BOCK, DON: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Rubyville, OH, 31*

BROWN, ROGER N.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Lakeland, FL (Fort Meade), Concert, Jan. 19; Lakeland, FL (Central), Concert, 26; Eustis, FL, 28—Feb. 2

BURKHALTER, PAT AND DONNA: Post, TX, Dec. 6-15; Plainfield, IN (Trinity), Jan. 22-26; Beebe, AR (First), 29—Feb. 2

⊙ **CANEN, DAVID:** Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

CERVANTES, RUDY—HEAVENLY TRUMPET MINISTRIES: New Albany, OH (First), Concert, Dec. 1 A; Sandusky, OH, Concert, 1 P; Redmond, WA, Concert, 8 A; Auburn, WA, Concert, 8 P; Danville, IL (First), Concert, 15 A; Tilton, IL (Danville Southside), Concert, 15 P; Antioch, CA (First), Concert, 22 A; Renton, WA, Concert, 29 A; Kent, WA (First), Concert, 29 P; Oak Lawn, IL (Chicago Oak Lawn First), Concert, Jan. 5 A; Portage, IN (First), Concert, 5 P; Irving, TX (First), Concert, 18-19; Bremerton, WA, Concert, 26 P

CLAY, D. E.: Arcadia, FL, Dec. 22*

⊙ **COFFEY, RUSSELL E.:** Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

COLDIRON, WILLIAM T.—PREPARED HEART MINISTRIES: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

COVINGTON, NATHAN: Yuma, CO, Dec. 4-8; Antlers, OK, Jan. 15-19; Mesa, AZ (First), 22-26; San Antonio, TX (Valley High), Zone Holiness Crusade, 28—Feb. 2

CRABTREE, J. C.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

CURRY, RICK: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

DELL, JIMMY: Phoenix, AZ (Desert Hills Fellowship), Dec. 4-8; Coolidge, AZ (Valley Community Fellowship), Jan. 5; West Columbia, SC (Central), 8-12; Kingman, AZ, 15-19; Santa Maria, CA (First), 25-29

DENNISON, MARVIN: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

DOVE, KENNETH: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Dickson, TN, 15 A*; Old Hickory, TN, Jan. 11-15

ERICKSON, DAVID AND CAROL—TRI-LOVE MINISTRIES: Casey, IL, Family Crusade, Jan. 15-19; Charleston, WV (Davis Creek), Family Crusade, 22-27

FADER, WES AND MARY: Huntingdon, PA (McConnellstown), Dec. 4-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Cocoa, FL (Crossover), Jan. 15-19; Clearwater, FL (First), Zone Camp Meeting, 22-26; Lexington, SC (Shepherd Community), 29—Feb. 2

GESSNER, DON AND SHIRL: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Birmingham, AL (Centerpoint), Jan. 8-12; Sikeston, MO (First), Zone Crusade, 21-26; Lancaster, PA, 28-30*

⊙ **HAINES, GARY:** Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Colorado Springs, CO (First), Dec. 24 P

HICKS, JOHN DAVID: Anaheim, CA (First), Jan. 5-8; Seattle, WA (North), 19-22

JACKSON, PAUL AND TRISH—JETSTREAM MINISTRIES, INC.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

JACOB, THOMAS J.—CHURCH WITHOUT WALLS: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

JESTER, ELLERY: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

JOHNSON, BOB: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

JUNEMAN, JOHN AND TRINA: Belen, NM (Rio Communities Lighthouse), Dec. 8-11

LAXSON, WALLY AND GINGER: Oklahoma City, OK (Shields Boulevard), Dec. 4-8

⊙ **LECKRONE, LARRY AND TAMLA:** Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

LEIDY, ARNOLD—UPWARD CALL MINISTRIES: Panama City, FL (First), Dec. 1; Live Oak, FL, 4-8; Los Lunas, NM (Valencia Valley), 13-15; Lawton, OK (First), Jan. 10-12; El Paso, TX (Open Gate), 19 A; Deming, NM, 26-29; Sun Valley, AZ, 31—Feb. 2

LEWIS, JOHN—WHITE DOVE MINISTRIES: Oklahoma City, OK (Capitol Hill), Dec. 8-11; Pilot Point, TX, 15-18; Duncan, OK (Oak Avenue), Concert, 29 P; Brandon, FL (First), Jan. 5;

Zephyrhills, FL (Wesley Chapel), Concert, 15; Geneva, FL, 16-19; Saraland, AL, 22-26

⊙ **MANLEY, STEPHEN—CROSS STYLE PROCLAMATION:** Orlando, FL (United), Dec. 1-8; Newport, KY (First), 11-15; Gas City, IN, 18-22; Marion, IN, 22*; Midwest City, OK (Bresee), Zone Revival, Jan. 7-12; Vancouver, WA (Central), Zone Crusade, 15-19; Columbus, OH, 22-26*; Pensacola, FL (Ensey), 29—Feb. 2

MEAD, DWIGHT E.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

⊙ **MILLHUFF, CHUCK R.:** Fountain Valley, CA, Dec. 4-8*; Pompano Beach, FL, 11-15; Ashburn, VA, 29*; Newport, KY, Northern Kentucky Indoor Camp, Jan. 15-19; Lincoln, NE (First), 24-26

MILLS, CARLTON—SECOND TOUCH EVANGELISM MINISTRIES: Zephyrhills, FL (Wesley Chapel), Dec. 1; Radcliff, KY, 8-12; North Haverhill, NH (Trinity), 15-18; Naples, FL (Faith Community), Jan. 8-12; Walton, WV, 21-26; Marietta, OH, 31*

MONCK, JIM: Live Oak, CA, Pulpit Supply, Dec. 1 and 7-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Live Oak, CA, Pulpit Supply, 14-15, 21-22, and 28-29

MOORE, NORMAN: Watsonville, CA, Dec. 1-4; Eugene, OR (Fairfield), 8-11

PALMER, MIKE: Defiance, OH, Dec. 1-4; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11

PARKS, TOM AND BECKY: Decatur, IL (Oak Grove), Dec. 4-8; Benton, IL (First), Concert, 15 A; Mount Vernon, IL (First), Concert, 15 P; Joliet, IL (Crystal Lawns), Jan. 18-22; Springfield, IL, Youth Retreat, 24-26

⊙ **PERDUE, NELSON S.:** Uhrichsville, OH (Rush Community), Dec. 1-4; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11

PETTIT, ELAINE C.—EVANGELIC MINISTRIES: Augusta, GA (First), Dec. 1-4; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Ortonville, MI (Lake

Louise), 15-18; Vicksburg, MI (Chapman Memorial), Prayer Weekend, Jan. 10-12; Payne, OH, 19-22; West Harrison, IN (Southwestern Ohio District Campgrounds), Prayer Seminar, 24-25

POWERS, E. CARL—PROCLAMATION MINISTRIES, INC.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

ROACH, JERRY: Demott, IN, Dec. 1 A; Danforth, IL, Dec. 1 P*; Roberts, IL, 4*; Lafayette, IN (First), 8 A; Logansport, IN (First), 8 P; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11

⊙ **ROSE, WAYNE:** Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11; Pinellas Park, FL, Jan. 19-23; Punta Gorda, FL, 26—Feb. 2

ROTH, RONALD W.: Baxter Springs, KS, Dec. 1-5

SHERWOOD, SCOTT AND SHERRY: Freeport, IL, Dec. 1-6; Rushville, IL, 8-12; Tipton, IN, 29 A*; Lake Jackson, TX (Youth Evangelistic Project), 30—Feb. 13

SMITH, MICKEY G.: Oklahoma City, OK (Shields Boulevard), Dec. 4-8

⊙ **SMITH, DUANE:** Newell, WV (Glendale), Dec. 4-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Canton, OH (Calvary), 11-15; Myrtle Beach, SC, Jan. 15-19; Bellville, GA (Trinity), 22-26; Chester, SC, 29—Feb. 2

TAYLOR, ROBERT: Stonewood, WV (Clarksburg), Dec. 1-4; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Apopka, FL (Calvary), Jan. 19-22

ULMET, BILL: Clearwater, FL (Tarpon Springs Community), Dec. 4-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; North Huntingdon, PA (Norwin), 11-15; Manteno, IL, Youth Revival, Jan. 2-4; Seneca, SC, 12-15; Dayton, OH (Huber Heights), Youth Revival, 17-19; Sebring, FL, 22-26

VECCHI, PETE: Fremont, OH, Dec. 15*

⊙ **WELLS, LINARD:** Paris, TX (First), Dec. 1-5; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Brownwood, TX (First), Jan. 7-12; Garland, TX, 14-19; Cisco, TX, 21-26; Las Cruces, NM (First), 28—Feb. 2

WILLIAMS, LAWRENCE: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 9-11

WOMACK, PAUL W.: Astoria, IL, Dec. 4-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Flint, TX, Jan. 12-15; Sherwood, AR (First), 19-22; Troupp, TX (Martin's Chapel), 29—Feb. 2

YOUNG, TIM: Kankakee, IL (Westbrook), Dec. 4-8; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 9-11; Kankakee, IL (Eastridge), Jan. 22-26

⊙ Tenured Evangelist is recognized by the church as a lifetime assignment. See *Manual* 407.3.

*Denotes Non-Nazarene Church

Christmas is the "lean season" for many of our evangelists. This Christmas, remember the evangelists who served your church this year.



Gift Exchange

It was the day after Christmas at a church in San Francisco. The pastor of the church was looking over the crèche when he noticed that the baby Jesus was missing from among the figures. He hurried outside and saw a little boy with a red wagon, and in the wagon was the figure of the little infant Jesus. So he walked up to the boy and said, "Well, where did you get your passenger, my fine friend?"

The little boy replied, "I got Him at church."

"And why did you take Him?"

The boy said, "Well, about a week before Christmas I prayed to the little Lord Jesus and I told Him if He would bring me a red wagon for Christmas I would give Him a ride around the block in it."

—Michael Hodgin

Not So Silent a Night

JOHN C. BOWLING



John C. Bowling is president of Olivet Nazarene University.

WE LIVE IN A WORLD OF NOISE. From motorcycles to Muzak, our ears are bombarded daily by distracting sounds.

I was in a store recently when a cashier said to me, “You had some excitement on your street last night.”

“Oh?”

“Yes, there was an accident. I heard it on the police scanner—we leave it on all the time.”

This cashier is typical of many people who surround themselves with noise—a television, a radio, or even a police scanner left on “all the time.” Our culture seems to need noise. We have lost our appreciation for the sounds of silence. We’ve forgotten that the word *noise* comes from the same French root word as the term *nausea*, meaning “unpleasant.”

It is a noisy world, and Christmas is a particularly noisy time of the year. Loudspeakers play carols, announce sales, and page people. Bells ring. Increased traffic and crowds hurry stridently past us.

Occasionally, in the midst of this cacophony, one will hear the melody and a word or two of the carol “Silent Night.” That song propels our minds back across the years to the stillness of the first Christmas night. We imagine a peaceful, quiet moment. Howev-

er, in Bethlehem on that first Christmas Eve, it was probably not so silent a night.

It was a crowded village, so overflowing that the inns and guest rooms were filled. There was the noise of people coming and going, the noise of the animals, perhaps the noise of soldiers and Roman officials keeping the peace during the census taking, and, of course, the noise of a birth.

“Silent night! holy night! / All is calm, all is bright.” I am not so sure. Our Nativity scenes may give us the wrong impression, implying that the whole world stood quietly in place for that beautiful and meaningful moment. But it didn’t happen that way. Only a few even knew that the Baby had been born; the rest went on their noisy way.

This reminds us that God comes not only in moments of quiet reflection and prayer but also in the midst of our noisy world and busy lives.

The angels’ song is sung over the dissonant sounds of humanity’s sin. It’s like a church service in which an antiphonal choir is featured, one group of singers in the balcony and another on the platform. The music flows back and forth, sometimes together, but more often responsively.

That was the scene at the first Christmas. The angels sang their songs of good tidings, but most of the world answered back with noise. Only a few—Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds—echoed back the song of peace and love.

A verse in the Christmas carol “It Came upon the Midnight Clear” speaks of the angel song: “They bend on hov’ring wing, / And ever o’er its

babel sounds / The blessed angels sing.” Its babel sounds? Babel was the place where the noise of different languages began to block out human communication.

The good news is that God comes even if all is not quiet. He makes His way into our noisy lives.

However, God does not shout the noise. There were no sonic booms when Christ came, no loudspeakers from the top of the Temple, no “May I have your attention, please?” On the contrary, God sought the attention of the world by speaking in hushed tones: “How silently, how silently / The wondrous Gift is giv’n.”

God is in the midst of the noise, but He doesn’t try to compete with it. He will not overpower the TV, radio, disc player, or police scanner. If we don’t hear God, that doesn’t mean He isn’t talking; it means we’re not listening. In the noise, God speaks in silence. He will be heard by those who will take a moment to listen.

As we listen, we can learn the words and pick up the tune. We can be filled with the Spirit of Him who inspired the angel chorus that first Christmas night. It was God who gave the psalmists their songs. He directed

The good news is that God comes even if all is not quiet.

the creation hymn and listened as the morning stars sang together. It was God who sounded the pitch for Paul and Silas so that they might sing prison bars from their hinges.

Christmas is an invitation to join the heavenly chorus, to sing the message of love and joy in response to the dissonance of the world around us, and to experience once more the reality and wonder of the first not so “Silent night! holy night!”

H

Christmas Thrift

C. ELLEN WATTS



C. Ellen Watts is a freelance writer living in Nampa, Idaho.

IT TAKES A LOT OF TISSUE and glitz to wrap Christmas gifts for a family the size of ours. When our girls were small, sometimes we barely got the paper peeled off the last stick-on bow and ourselves into bed before the whisper of fluffy slippers announced time to unwrap.

Since our daughters all married and multiplied, wrapping has increased until it has now reached an all-time high. Not to worry. We have it well in hand. Norm wraps all presents equipped with four corners, while I tie bows and wrestle with what's left. Further, we no longer wait until past bedtime on Christmas Eve to start.

Still, to witness the crumpling and discarding of all that beautiful paper on Christmas morning rips holes in my thrift gear.

"Please—save the bows!" I beg as a tangle of red satin hits the garbage bag.

When they start stomping perfectly good boxes, I say in my best Great Depression child voice, "When I was a kid, we saved all our wrap—ironed it sometimes—kept it in a cardboard dress box to be used again. A *small* dress box

at that. If we had ribbon at all—"

A teenage upstart interrupts. "Was that back when you walked a kazillion miles to school, dragging your chinny-chin-chins through the snow? Just kidding, Grandma."

While I am trying to decide which he is kidding about, miles or the plural chin, his tone changes. "What kinds of stuff did you get in your wrinkly little packages?"

He couldn't have related if I'd told him.

Having seen a giant Hershey candy bar, CD, \$10 bill, and more spewing from his, I said, "Let's start with my stocking."

Surrounded suddenly by a great cloud of little and big witnesses, I began my tale. "When we got home from church on Christmas Eve—"

"I thought your folks didn't go to church."

"They didn't. Like everyone else in town, they went to the program. Their kids were in it."

"Even if they didn't go to church?"

Kids reared on musicals, multi-mikes, and spotlights weren't going to grasp this one either.

"Look. In our town, if you even hoped to spell 'Merry Christmas!' in big letters across a platform, you grabbed every kid. But back to my stocking.

"The minute we got home, I would peel off one long brown-ribbed stocking, grab a clothespin from the kitchen clothesline—"

"You hung up a dirty sock? Yuk!" They had heard my "olden days"

laundry lecture before, usually while demanding the immediate cleansing and drying of a favorite T-shirt. I stuck to the subject.

"I always knew what I would get: a big Red Delicious apple from Washington State, one orange, and the exact same number of mixed nuts and chocolate drops as my brothers and sisters."

A slight pause. "That's all?"

Later, after the door had slammed behind kids trying out new in-line skates, I got to thinking. Our grandkids had known almost from the start that wrappings and stocking loot had nothing to do with Jesus. And that this real Gift of Christmas had come wrapped in swaddling clothes.

Not one had ever stood before a crowded church and recited "C is for the Christ child" without having a clue as to who they were talking about. Most knew Luke 2 well enough to rattle it off before Grandpa could get his Bible open on Christmas morning.

Still, there was no need to be wasteful, I decided, as I thanked God for the Unspeakable Gift that

Discarding of all that beautiful paper on Christmas morning rips holes in my thrift gear.

had made such a difference in our family.

Then an ornery son-in-law deposited a neatly tied garbage bag beside my chair, changing the narrow half of my perspective.

"Sorry about the wrinkles," he said. "Maybe when your time comes to go, these handle ties will make this wad of glitz easier to take with you."

HH

Cork Appointed Editor of NCN News

Jacque Cork, interim editor of Nazarene News, was appointed senior editor of Nazarene Communications Network News, effective October 2, according to Michael R. Estep, Communications Division director.

"Jacque will do an outstanding job in the newly expanded news assignment," Estep said.

Cork's responsibilities will include researching, writing, and producing the *Weekly Summary*, as well as assisting in the division's plans for future news expansion to broadcast over the Internet.

Cork brings a broad range of experience to the position. She has a business

administration degree from MidAmerica Nazarene College. Her experience includes the field of education and freelance writing.



Estep remarked, "As we move into the 21st century, telling our global 'story' of what God is doing has never been more important. Jacque is the right person to help us do just that."

Cork's husband, Mark, is the 1997 General Assembly local arrangements coordinator. They have three children: Jessica, 14, Ryan, 10, and Aimee, 9. Cork is the daughter of Franklin Cook, Eurasia Region director, and his wife, Maylou.

Nazarene Communications Network Premieres Webcast



The Nazarene Communications Network (NCN) announces the premiere of the NCN News Webcast. Featuring late-breaking stories and updates, it is now available at www.nazarene.org.

The Webcast broadcast will be updated twice weekly or anytime there is breaking news. Kim Meek, program manager, said, "It's exciting for us to

be one of the first churches to enter the audio Internet world. This will expedite the dissemination of up-to-the-minute news to our Nazarene family around the world. It can also provide encounters with our denomination for non-Christians browsing the Web."

NCN developed the Webcast jointly with the Information Technology (IT) department of the International Center in Kansas City. Chuck Smith, IT administrative director, said, "We are committed to maximizing the opportunities that technology offers. The Webcast is one way to do that."

Hockensmith Selected for Social Work Program



Jan Hockensmith, associate professor of social work at ONU, was selected to participate in the Hamburg Social Work Immersion Program in Germany, October 26 to November 8. Out of 13 participants, she was one of only two social work educators. While in Germany, she was matched with a German counterpart for in-depth study in her area. Her primary focus was on child abuse and neglect, children with disabilities, and the German medical system.

"I was excited about the opportunity to travel to Germany and work with other social workers who are providing direct services to individuals," Hockensmith said.

Iberoamerica 2000 Conference Held

Iberoamerica 2000 was held in Pilar, Argentina, the first week of October. Iberoamerica is a term used for joint ventures between countries in the Iberian Peninsula in Europe and the western hemisphere. The conference's purpose was to help the participants catch the vision and acquire the tools for spreading the gospel worldwide by the year 2000.

More than 250 people from 28 countries in South and Central America, Europe, and Africa attended. Plenary sessions and workshops, coordinated by regional directors Bruno Radi and Mario Zani, filled the day. Louie Bustle, World Mission Division director, spoke each evening.

"It was thrilling to see people from such diverse cultures come together in a spirit of unity and common purpose," Bustle said.

Herald of Holiness

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Christmas Contrasts

No bright city lights—

small-town Bethlehem.

No daylight for all to see—

darkness and obscurity.

No dazzling horses on parade—

donkey, man, and wife.

No blast of trumpets—

breathing of stable animals.

No regal, flowing flags—

strips of cloth.

No cheering crowds—

people traveling to be taxed.

No waiting palace—

The King of Heaven wants my heart—

for His home.

Welcome, Savior of the World!

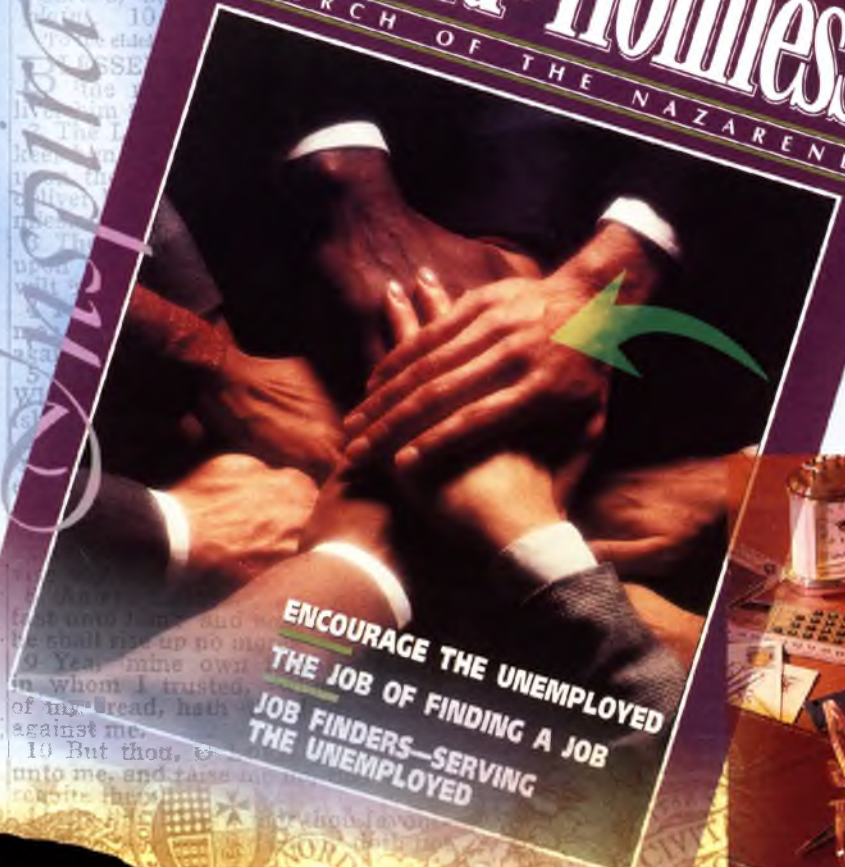
—Paula Powers Church

DISCOVER the HERALD

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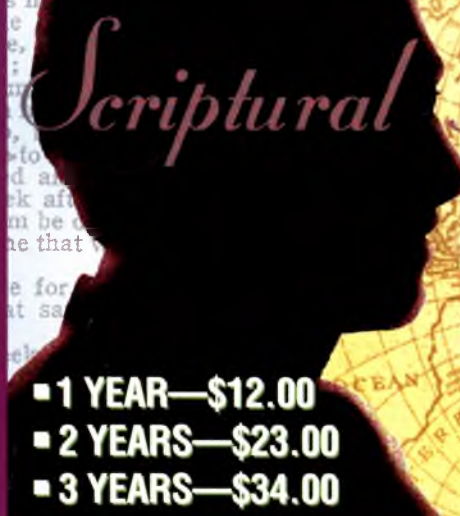
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