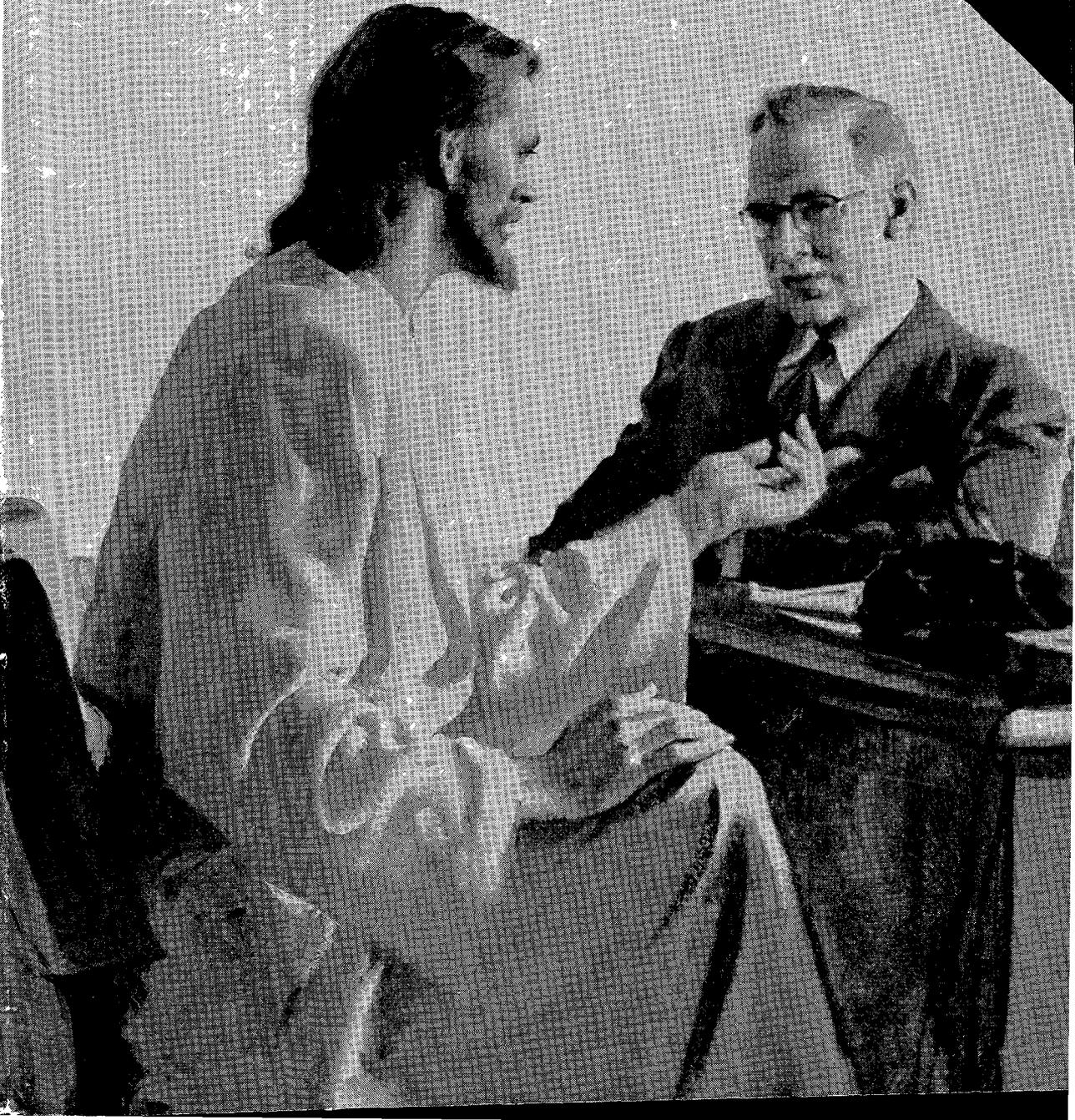


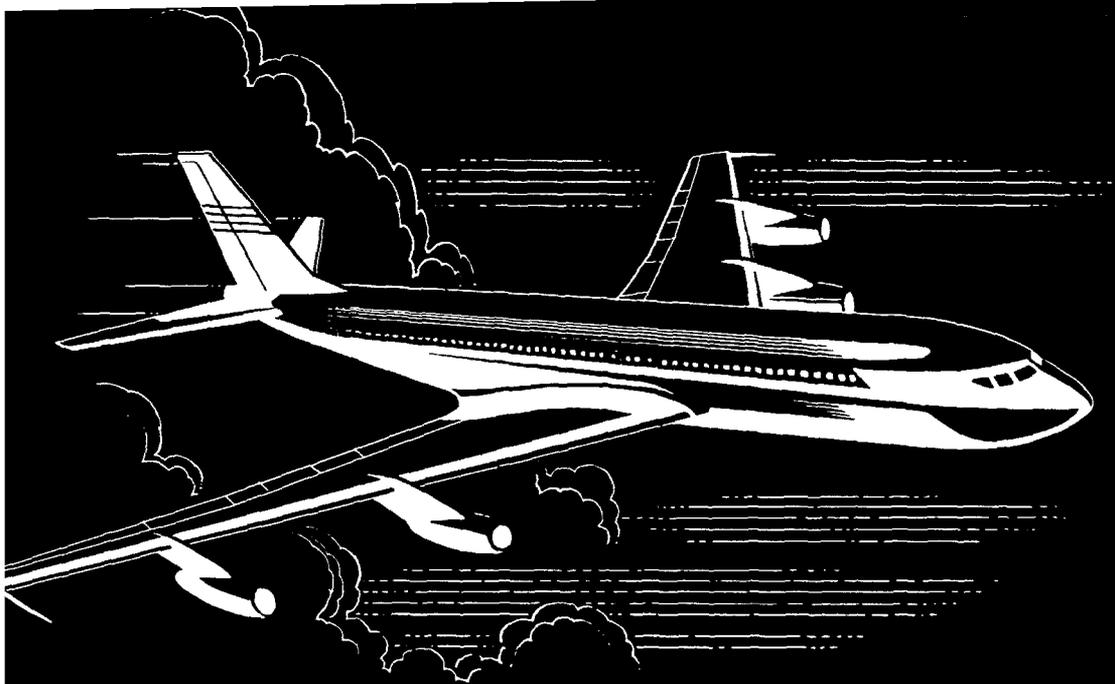
The
MINISTRY

MAY

1964

SPECIAL FEATURE
CHANGING MEN'S MINDS





Musing on a Jet Plane

Today I traveled through the trackless sky in just one hour
A space that would for early pioneers have taken weeks.
The difference in time and task was mainly one of power.
'Tis power to conquer time and space that eagerly man seeks.

I thought: how marvelous that on the jet plane's flaming surge
May ride the world's broad commerce and progressive gain and good.
And then I felt within my soul a restless, longing urge
To pray for jet-age power to do what God has said we should.

We herald to the world the news that Christ is soon to come;
Our ranks are small, the task is great, and late the trying hour.
And yet our problem's not of men, nor means in staggering sum,
Nor time, nor space, nor magnitude—but simply one of power.

Thank God that in His Word He offers boundless power and grace;
Then let us take Him at His word and humbly, boldly ask,
Nor longer strive in human impotence, but seek His face
For power divine to hasten and complete our mighty task.

R. Curtis Barger

Decisions

EDITORIAL



A. C. FEARING



Associate Secretary
Ministerial
Association

We do not know his name. Before him was an upright panel of many buttons, lights, and switches. The operator of controls was carefully intoning the countdown. Years, months, and days of intense work had passed in carefully preparing the way for this great moment in history. Intently he listened—5, 4, 3, 2, 1, 0. He touched the switch, hundreds of technical devices of scientific genius became alive. A human being and a mass of machinery were hurled into the vastness of space. What a tremendous moment for the man who made the final decision, for the one who touched the “all go” button and for the one being sent.

Indeed, that was a great experience. However, transcending that is the greatness of the hour when a human being, chosen of God, stands as God's representative to invite his fellow men to accept the offered pardon, become adopted into the family of God, and receive eternal life.

“The highest of all sciences is the science of soul saving. The greatest work to which human beings can aspire is the work of winning men from sin to holiness. For the accomplishment of this work, a broad foundation must be laid.”—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 398.

To master a science requires years of patient experimentation and study. Dealing with the human mind and pressing for spiritual decisions is not only a science but a delicate art.

Much of this issue of THE MINISTRY is given to the study of the vastly important skill of how to obtain decisions for God.

Roy B. Thurmon states that general sermons and general calls seldom produce

effective decisions for Christ. Read what he says about the Sabbath service sermon and what should be the aim of the preacher.

You will want to read the experience and decision methods used by our pioneers among the early Seventh-day Adventist churches. Many appeal sentences are suggested here. “A specific call each Sabbath, with the singing of an invitation hymn, is an open door into the church.”

J. L. Shuler, with his many years of successful evangelism, shares with us effective steps in obtaining decisions, giving good examples and valuable suggestions. This is a “how” article.

L. O. N. Cummings discusses how Jesus dealt with men. “Our Saviour knew that for them to make a decision on any other basis than complete death to self would leave them unfit for heaven.”

G. H. Rainey takes us into the home in face-to-face, personal evangelism. “A home-going pastor produces a churchgoing people.” “Decision in the home” is well worth careful study.

As many of us have small churches under our spiritual care we will read with interest Walter M. Stark's ideas on how best to secure decisions when working with small groups. He relates one man's rather unique approach to a list of seventy names. Read about it in his interesting article. I think it is a good suggestion.

Roger Holley presents a description of the visiting techniques that he and his evangelistic team follow in diagnosing the degree of interest of a person, and when that interest is found how best to lead him to a full surrender.

In a brief, crisp style E. C. Ward emphasizes the value of progressive decisions—the ones obtained by going step by step into fundamental truths, the type of people with whom we deal, what we desire them to do, and how to get them to do it.

Every preaching service, each personal contact, presses upon us the solemn responsibility to challenge men, women, and children for the kingdom of God. What a privilege to share with them His love, and the assurance of His power, and of His will to save! Progressively, we are to lead them into the truths that pertain to eternal life. Many are as little children learning how to walk spiritually, and we must help them not only to give assent to truth but to make decisions that will allow the Master to transform them into beautiful sons and daughters of God. As they take the more simple steps, they will be strengthened and prepared to accept such major steps as the Sabbath truth, Christian stewardship, church membership, et cetera.

No experience in history is fraught with greater potential than the moment of decision. Yet we often have not because we ask not. A conference president was pre-

senting a series of meetings in one of our churches. He noticed a couple in attendance who were obviously not members. On inquiring who they were he was told, "Oh, don't concern yourself with them. They have attended meetings here for years, but they do nothing about it. They just enjoy religious meetings." Nevertheless, this couple was baptized. What made the change? During a social gathering at the close of the campaign the man bore his testimony. He smiled courteously as he looked toward the one who had been the speaker and said: "I trust you will forgive me, Elder, but I have heard better preaching than yours, so that is *not* why my wife and I are here tonight. But you hunted for us. You sought us out. You were so intense and so persistent, and you invited us to come." Then his face grew thoughtful and he continued, "No one asked us before."

Shall we not re-examine our hearts to make certain that the Holy Spirit of God can guide us, speak to us and through us, to others. "Without the presence of the Spirit of God, no heart will be touched, no sinner won to Christ." May God give us a holy boldness as we do the King's business.



VIEWPOINT

A Double Standard?—"I am a district pastor who faithfully upholds the principles for which we as a church stand. But I am having a real problem with the wedding ring question. . . . This arises not because I see any virtue in wearing a ring but because of the custom of our women wearing large decorative brooches or pins. I cannot think of any logical answer as to why a person should not wear a plain, simple wedding ring but is free to wear brooches that are not so plain or simple. . . . It appears to me that we have

almost a double standard in this matter."

D. H. S.

Can you give him an answer?

Shortage of Ministers—"I feel that if we are to recruit ministerial material it must be done early. I would like to suggest that representatives from the General Conference on down to the local pastor make it a point to visit our elementary schools and academies for the purpose of promoting the ministry as a lifework. The call to be a minister comes from God, but His call is usually conveyed through a human instrument.

"I would also like to suggest that it might be a workable idea to have promising youth help during the summer months in evangelistic or pastoral work. If they could observe the satisfied look on the face of someone who has just been greatly encouraged by a visit from the pastor or watch a soul take his stand and go through the waters of baptism, I think they would be inspired to choose the ministry as their profession. However, most youth would be unable to spend a summer without some financial remuneration. This would involve careful planning to ensure financial expedience."

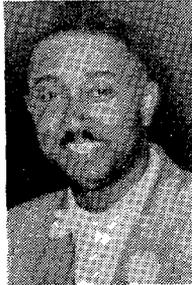
L. C. B.

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Pulpit Preaching *for Decisions*

E. C. WARD



Evangelist, San Diego
California

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve" (Joshua 24:15). Gaining decisions for Christ is the most important motive, directive, and aim of the gospel minister. The minister who is an able speaker, a good organizer, an astute financial manager, and even an outstanding goal getter, but who fails to gain positive decisions for the message he delivers, is like a pilot who knows the laws of aeronautics, navigation, and weather control, but who crash lands at every attempt to bring himself and his passengers to a safe landing. No commercial pilot can afford a record on his log of a series of crash landings, nor can the gospel minister afford to preach series of sermons for years, months, or even weeks or days and come up with little or no results. This type of repeated performance can prove disastrous both to pilot and passenger, the pulpiteer and the potential parishioner.

Types of Decisions

Pulpit decisions are generally divided under two classifications. First, there is the impromptu decision—used generally by the popular evangelists and healers of our day, who demand a decision *now*.

Such expressions as "Come, give the preacher your hand and God your heart," "Come, be saved tonight," "Become a Christian right now," et cetera, are characteristic of the impromptu decision.

Pulpit Preaching for Decisions

We do not condemn pulpit preaching for decisions, for one must ask if one expects to be given a decision. The major factor that should be equated with all de-

isions is *preparation* of the candidate for that final decision.

This brings us to the second type of decision known as *progressive decisions*. These are decisions made step by step upon basic, vital, and fundamental truths, presented by the preacher to the prospective believer.

The *progressive decision* format was the type most generally used by Christ and the apostles.

Examples of these are abundant in the Scriptures. The Sermon on the Mount was a series of progressive decisions requested by Christ of His listeners, that climaxed forty-two months later in three thousand baptisms in one day.

The conversion of Nicodemus to Christianity was begun by a series of decision lectures given by Christ at the evangelistic centers in and around Jerusalem. Nicodemus' decision was climaxed as the result of these series some months later on an April Friday afternoon in A.D. 31 (John 19:39).

In John 4:6-12 Jesus presented the woman at the well with at least ten progressive decisions to make before He announced to her the supreme "present truth" for that time, that she was now face to face with the Messiah (verse 26).

I. Four Major Progressive Decisions

There are four major progressive decisions that Seventh-day Adventists have always maintained as basic in making a decision for Christ.

1. To be a real Christian.
2. To keep the Sabbath of Christ (in the setting of Creation and the Ten Commandments).
3. To abstain from alcohol, tobacco, un-

clean meats, coffee, tea, et cetera, and the acceptance of the message of healthful living—as part of necessary preparation to meet Jesus.

4. To come out of spiritual Babylon into Christ's remnant church in response to the final call of God to the world, as based on Revelation 14:6-12.

II. *Four Things We Want People to Do*

1. To be saved from both conscious and unconscious guilt of sin.

2. To establish a willingness to forsake everything to follow Jesus.

3. To maintain the conviction that one should obey every Bible truth.

4. To be a true Christian by doing right as fast as one learns the truth from the Bible.

III. *There Are Three Classes the Gospel Minister Is Conscious He Is Preaching to When Requesting Decisions*

1. Those who have never followed Christ.

2. Those who have wandered from Jesus.

3. Those who have followed Jesus as far as they have understood His Word and want a closer walk with the Lord. (Great tact should be used in appealing to this class, who are already Christians. They should be frequently reminded that they are not rank sinners, but sincere Christians walking in advance truth.)

The basis of all our pulpit as well as personal appeal is to accept God's message rather than uniting with the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The former is primary, the latter secondary.

The best method of gaining decisions is as the gospel preacher Isaiah stated, "And ye shall be gathered *one by one*." The pulpit preacher should emphasize the importance that *you* (the prospective parishioner) are making up your own mind in taking this step.

IV. *Types of Appeals and Altar Calls*

1. The appeal to accept Christ.

2. An appeal to maintain and improve good home relations.

3. To get ready to go to heaven.

4. To strive to gain the victory over specific sin.

5. An appeal for wanderers or backsliders to return to the fold.

6. An appeal for the willing spirit that will accept distinctive doctrines.

7. And the appeal to be prepared for the coming of Jesus.

V. *Ways and Means of Helping People Respond to Appeals*

1. By standing publicly by their pew or seat.

2. By raising their hand while the head is bowed.

3. Help them to come to the altar to confirm a decision already made. Never ask people to come to an altar to make a decision. Tell them that they have already made their decision for Christ or for affirmative truth and they now come to the altar to confirm what they and the Holy Spirit have already decided.

4. By kneeling right where they are.

5. By signing their name on a prepared card.

6. By being present at the first and all Sabbath services in connection with a public series of meetings.

7. By bringing the baptismal garment (it being assumed that the number to be baptized will exceed all provisions for same) to the meeting place or by having it available when visited.

VI. *The Ten Major Doctrinal Truths That Should Be Presented Before the Sabbath Is Preached Are:*

1. "Christ crucified for our sins."

2. "Christ risen from the dead."

3. "Christ, our Intercessor before God."

4. "The office work of the Holy Spirit."

5. "His coming the second time in glory."

6. "His personal dignity."

7. "Prophecies of Christ as the true Messiah."

8. "His pre-existence."

9. "Christ's divinity."

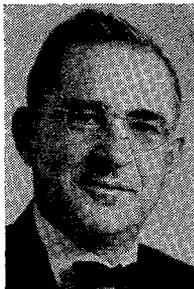
10. "God's grace" (in the setting of the Ten Commandments). (See *Evangelism*, pp. 187, 246.)

These doctrines should be presented under varied and sundry titles by the minister who preaches for decisions.

Conversion the Result of United Effort—In the recovering of lost, perishing souls, it is not man that effects the work of saving souls, it is God who labors with him. God works and man works. "Ye are laborers together with God." We must work in different ways and devise different methods, and let God work in us to the revealing of truth and Himself as the sin-pardoning Saviour.—*Evangelism*, p. 291.

Steps in Decision During the Short Evangelistic Campaign

J. L. SHULER



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The science of securing decisions and the art of persuading men are exceedingly broad. It would require a number of volumes to expound their underlying principles and the application of these in evangelism. It is our purpose here to give a synopsis of some of the techniques that may be used for securing decisions in the short reaping campaign.

All sermons in the series, all the personal work with the interested, should be built and directed toward a final decision to accept Christ and unite with the Advent Movement.

All decisions stem from the interplay of desire and conviction in a person's mind and heart. Therefore all the sermons and personal talks with the interested should be a wise interweaving of the factors of desire and conviction, with the major emphasis on the side of desire. This is what it takes to prepare the way for the desired decisions.

We should not hesitate to make calls at the close of our sermons. We are God's men charged by Him to extend His invitation.

Some ministers refrain from making calls because they fear that no one will respond. If this is the case with us we should ask ourselves, "Why should we be embarrassed for God?" After all, it is not our call. We are extending the call of God. The entire Bible is saturated with God's calls. Here are some examples: Isaiah 1:18-20;

Matthew 11:28; Hebrews 4:7; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Revelation 18:4; 22:17.

The following are some methods that will secure the desired response:

1. The easiest response comes when the call is to raise the hand as expressing one's desire for help from God in the midst of the minister's prayer, while all eyes are closed and heads are bowed in silent prayer.

2. Judicious and appropriate calls for the raising of the hand during the sermon, or at its close, in an acknowledgment of belief in points of truth as they are presented from the Scriptures.

3. Making a general call at the close of the sermon for the raising of the hand on some easy step of universal appeal. Then make a specific call for opening the heart to receive Jesus, for having Jesus change one's heart, for victory over bad habits, for returning to the Lord in the case of backsliders, for help on some problem in reference to keeping the Sabbath, or for help to endure trials which one is facing in making a decision, et cetera.

4. The proper use of the aftermeeting. See *Evangelism*, pp. 151, 152; *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 65; Dr. H. C. Trumbull, "Individual Work for Individuals," pp. 151, 152; Gamaliel Bradford, "D. L. Moody: A Worker in Souls," p. 268.

5. The use of a card in an aftermeeting early in the series, which will serve to pin-

point the spiritual needs of each interested person, thus preparing the way for a more effective personal work later.

6. Early in the short series set in operation a Bible class on "Better and Happier Christian Living." This will serve to prepare some of the interested for baptism at the close of the series.

7. In the general call appeal to those who have wandered away from the church and desire to return, and for surrender and obedience on the part of these non-Adventists who have sufficient acquaintance with our doctrines.

8. Unless the audience is very small, and the speaker knows each one by name, decision cards should be given to those who raise their hands in the aftermeeting, to indicate their surrender to the claims of God's truth and their desire to return to the way of Jesus.

9. On the nights when the Sabbath truth is presented it is good to use specially prepared address cards in connection with the offer to send a free copy of the sermon, on which decision for the Sabbath at the close of the sermon may be recorded by the interested.

In connection with the sermon on the Sabbath truth under the title, "The Strange Sign of God," we have a decision item on the back of the address card, which we use to offer a copy of the sermon. In this case the cards are distributed after the offering has been taken but are not collected until after the sermon. When the appeal is made at the close of the sermon on keeping the Sabbath, those who are determined to keep the Sabbath are requested to check a square on the back, where it says, "I am purposed by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ from this time forth to have His sign in my life as has been set forth from the Scriptures tonight."

The decision to keep the Sabbath is the key decision for becoming a Seventh-day Adventist, and the sooner we can lead the interested person to make a definite decision to keep the Sabbath, the greater will be our progress in leading him into the Advent Movement.

10. A specific altar call should be made for surrender to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and to unite with God's people, followed by some general call, which should bring a response from nearly all of those who do not come forward.

11. Address cards may be placed in the hands of each person on which he may write his name and address if he wishes to take advantage of the offer of a free copy of the sermon that covers the seventeen items of the religion taught by Jesus, according to His statements as recorded in the four Gospels. These seventeen items correspond to the essentials for baptism and membership into the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The people retain the card in their hand during the sermon, and check their approval as one by one of these essentials are discussed.

If some items are not clear, they are asked to write "need study" after these. During the prayer at the close of the sermon an appeal is made for those who are willing to accept these truths and follow Jesus all the way to put a cross at the top or the bottom of their card. The cards are then collected and brought to the front. The minister should hold the cards in his hand and pray that the Lord will help each one according to his need.

This secures a decision from some who do not like to raise the hand or come forward. It is therefore a quiet method of securing the decisions.

12. A card can be used containing certain points of the sermon in the form of questions. These are to be answered by Bible texts as the sermon proceeds, and the people are to list the texts after each question, as the minister presents them.

They have already filled in their names and addresses at the bottom of the card before the sermon begins. During the prayer at the close an appeal is made for every one who wants to be one of those whom God is gathering into His remnant (Isaiah 27:12; 11:11, 12), to place a check mark in a square at the end of the line where their name appears. The card is perforated a little above where the name appears. Then they are asked to detach the stub on which their name and address has been written. These are collected and brought to the front. While the minister holds these stubs up before the Lord, he prays that God will reach into the life of each one, and make him one of His jewels.

Before we ask the people to place the check mark in the square, we state that we are not planning to take anyone into the church that night. We tell them it will take time for some to get their affairs arranged for entering the church, but that it

is a good time for them to make their decision and give the Lord a chance to work in their lives to prepare them to be one of His children.

It is a decided advantage in winning people to the Advent Movement to lead them to signify in the public meeting their determination to become one of God's remnant. Then you are on vantage ground in your personal work with them thereafter.

They have settled the matter that they want to be a Seventh-day Adventist. From this point on, you go to their home, not to get their decision but to help them to get ready to do what the Lord expects of them. This is one of the finer points of the science of persuasion.

Keep in mind that without such a decision on their part in the public meeting, you might go to their home many times and not get them to make a real decision.

It is of the utmost importance that the ones who have made decisions publicly be reached personally at the earliest possible moment. This is where the right kind of preaching plus the right kind of personal work is a winning combination in seeking souls for God.

Many have been lost to our cause because they were not visited immediately after indicating their decision in the public meeting. Notice this counsel: "When persons who are under conviction are not brought to make a decision at the earliest period possible, there is danger that the conviction will gradually wear away."—*Evangelism*, p. 298.

13. During your visits plan to guide the conversation to the place where the person of his own accord declares his purpose to follow the truth. This presents your opportunity to secure his commitment. Take a decision card from your pocket or your Bible case and read as follows:

"It is my purpose to make a full surrender to Jesus, and to obey His call of Revelation 14:12, to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and to unite with His remnant church of Revelation 12:17."

Then ask the person, "Doesn't this express your purpose? Isn't this what you have been stating in your own words?" When he answers in the affirmative, say, "Wouldn't it be good to seal your good decision before the Lord just now, by placing your name to this purpose?" Then read Isaiah 44:5 where we are told to subscribe

with the hand unto the Lord. Next ask him to bow with you in a word of prayer, making it a prayer of surrender and commitment for following Jesus all the way. Then let the person fill in his name and address.

14. There are numerous principles that need to be followed in securing decisions in personal work, but here are some important ones. Discover the precise needs, the objections, the hindrances to decision, and meet them by a skillful use of the right texts from the Word, rightly timed effort, or prompt work when the soul is under conviction. Build on the person's own statements and admissions to lead him over the line, as Jesus did with the woman at the well in John 4; and then make a direct personal appeal (Acts 26:26-28; John 4:10, 14, 15, 26).

A study of the direct, personal appeal that Paul made to Agrippa, as recorded in Acts 26:22-28, reveals five guiding principles on how to use and formulate them.

a. Prepare the way for making the appeal by an effective use of the Word. The appeal must be based on the teachings of the Scriptures (Acts 26:22, 23).

b. The appeal should be connected with, or grow out of, the person's own knowledge of the truth of the Word (Acts 26:26).

c. It is addressed directly to the individual's convictions (Acts 26:27, first part), and may take the form of a question. It is designed to bring home to the person a realization of his personal responsibility.

d. The appeal is concluded by expressing that the individual will respond (Acts 26:27, last part).

e. It should be introduced at the opportune moment.

Let us not be one- or two-method men, one- or two-track men, but under God study to place into operation every possible method for gathering souls.

15. Suggestive texts for urging immediate decision: Psalm 119:60; Acts 22:16; Hebrews 3:15; 2 Corinthians 6:2; Genesis 6:3; 1 Kings 18:21; James 4:17.

For full surrender: Luke 14:33; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Numbers 32:11, 12.

For not allowing family or friends to keep one from going ahead to obey present truth: Matthew 10:37-39; Luke 12:51-53; Galatians 1:10; Ezekiel 14:20.

For encouragement in the trials that may come with decision: Acts 14:22; John 15:18-20; 1 Peter 4:12-16; Luke 6:22, 23; Isaiah 41:10; 43:2.

How I Make an Altar Call

ROLAND R. HEGSTAD

Why is the deskbound editor of *Liberty* writing on the technique of making altar calls? What does he know about this evangelistic *sine qua non*?

First, and most important, he has made them. And, as pastor and evangelist, he has baptized people as a consequence. He makes them still, during a Week of Prayer in academy or college, or a revival series, which he tries to hold once or twice a year.

Further, he may make an altar call while promoting *Liberty* magazine on Sabbath morning. In one of our largest churches recently he made a determined appeal at the close of the Sabbath school lesson on justification. And some much-needed decisions were made that morning.

Now let's dispose of the third-person approach and get to the I-you state of acquaintance. Please understand, I am not doing a comprehensive study on altar calls. I am simply going to mention convictions I follow in making appeals, and stress the fact that successful altar calls need the personal touch.

1. *I seek never to forget that the Holy Spirit should be the agent that brings souls to the altar.* Should be, I say, for an inspired pen tells us that Satan, too, has his converts in every meeting! When we use Satan's techniques—humor, flattery, cajolery, social pressures, appeals to pride, avarice, status, fear—we can expect to swell *his* congregation, not the Lord's.

Essentially we must stand in Christ's stead, using His methods—earnestness, forthrightness, tenderness, love, assurance, encouragement, reason, sensitivity—and plead, "Be ye reconciled to God." If ever there is a place for humor in a sermon, it is not during the altar call. *Earnestness,*



Editor, *Liberty*
Magazine

please. Decisions of universe-shaking import are taking place. Spectators from other worlds are watching with breathless interest. The Son of God is interceding before the Father. The Holy Spirit is interceding in hearts. As ambassadors of Christ, we must give the invitation, bring the listener to the "threshold," and help him open the door to the Saviour's knock. In this work we must not use the Spirit, but let the Spirit use us as we work in cooperation with Him.

2. *I do not follow a rigorous after-this-sermon-I-make-an-appeal, after-this-one-I-don't, approach.* Nor do I always determine that the response will take one form and not another. Of course, I do prepare—I have organized my sermon to get a specific response. Experience tells me that I can expect that response. But God alone knows hearts; at times I have had to abandon my plans for an altar call—and even the sermon I had intended to preach—because I have sensed that a call would not be propitious.

Sensitivity to the need of a congregation comes with experience, experience with God and with preaching. Early in my ministry I was unadaptable; as when giving filmstrip Bible studies, I was bound to a rigid approach. Now I seek to sense readiness and to capitalize on God's providences.

In a large western church a while back, I found the people shivering in overcoats. The oil tank had been filled during the week, but the church was cold. Just before the sermon an elder whispered to me that a leak had been discovered in the tank. It was empty. The people had come to meet with God in a warm church; they met with Him in a cold one. I had come to

preach on religious liberty, and I did. But I approached my material through the parable of the foolish virgins, to a congregation uncomfortably conscious of the need for having oil in their lamps. Would you have missed the opportunity for an altar call?

Just before Sabbath school in a Southern church a member's car was hit broadside as he turned into the parking lot. He, his wife, and children were taken away in an ambulance, extent of their injuries unknown. (They were not seriously hurt.) That morning I was to preach. I did not preach the sermon I had prepared. Instead I spent the Sabbath school hour putting a new subject together. Perhaps the expectant congregation will never again be so receptive to the lessons of my text: "To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3:15.) An appeal followed naturally.

In other words, an altar call should not be simply a routine affair, a perfunctory obligation imposed on the congregation, but rather the consequence of sensing God's providence, of observing the work of the Holy Spirit on hearts.

We must recognize, however, that the preacher has a vital part to play in preparing the congregation for an altar call. Here is one method I have used with success.

3. *I state at the beginning of my sermon what response I am going to ask for.* I began this after noting that it is effective in fund raising. "People need time to overcome pocketbook resistance," Cyril Miller, now president of the Chesapeake conference, and a very successful fund raiser, had told me. "Let them know early in the sermon what you expect from them."

Why wouldn't the same method work for altar calls? It does. Try something like this: "Tonight you are going to leave this auditorium a new person, walking with lightened step, the burden of sin you bear, gone. Like Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress*, you will leave your burden at the cross. And as Bunyan wrote: 'Then was Christian glad and lightsome.' Tonight I am going to invite you to the altar. The Holy Spirit will impress your heart and you will respond." I refer to the response I want several times during the sermon.

I have found this preparation a decided help when I am preaching against the clock—especially on Sabbath mornings. In a sense your whole sermon becomes the

altar call. A protracted appeal is not necessary.

I have heard Elden Chalmers, of the Kentucky-Tennessee Conference, do something similar. Before the sermon, he tells the people, in a few well-chosen, confidently spoken words, the blessing that they will receive from that night's subject. Words of assurance condition the audience to expect a blessing. Why leave them in doubt for the first half hour of your sermon what blessing you want them to receive and in what manner you want them to indicate its reception?

4. *I do not always state at the beginning of my sermon of appeal what I am going to ask for.* This is true when time is no factor and when spontaneity is desirable, or when I make a progressive appeal. The progressive appeal is particularly effectual in that it carries the listener from an initial (he thinks *final*) easy response to the altar. Reuben Engstrom of our Mountain View, California, church—and a veteran evangelist—is a master of this. After carefully preparing the people and leading them into prayer, he may suggest, almost casually, that some might desire to be remembered for victory over some specific problem. "Are there those who would slip up a hand?" Then: "And would you not like to show God your need and determination by standing quietly where you are?" Then: "I would like to pray especially for you who have indicated this awareness of your need and of God's power to deliver. Will you not slip quietly down the aisle to the altar?" It was after watching Elder Engstrom in action, earlier in my ministry, that I saw how jarring and abrupt some of my appeals were.

Occasionally I do just the opposite: I stress how difficult public commitment is: "To stand alone, to dare to bear public testimony takes courage; but can we say, in the light of Calvary, that any testimony is too hard to make for our Lord?" I find this approach especially good for academy youth toward the end of the Week of Prayer.

5. *I take care not to embarrass either members or nonmembers by putting them on the "spot."* I recall a meeting I attended in a Protestant church at which the evangelist ordered his listeners to close their eyes. "I can embarrass you if you don't," he threatened, and then directed the deacons to lock the doors so that no one could

leave while he was making his call! I sat through his call, all right, but I didn't listen. Nor did I return.

We can embarrass nonchurch members by singling them out for special attention—having someone urge a visitor to go forward is dangerous. Judiciously done, it may get a decision. I do this only in the case of a visitor I know well, and whom I feel impressed will respond favorably. Too often I have seen one approached this way refuse to come again.

Our church members, too, can become embarrassed if we pressure friends whom they have encouraged to attend. A professional man told me recently that he would never again invite anyone to Elder _____'s meetings. "The effort was not well attended, and he seemed to feel his reputation was at stake," the member said. "He pressured people unmercifully. My friends resented his calls." Other church members gave the same report.

I would rather see a man go home uncommitted but still friendly and receptive to my visits and appeals, than with a stop sign erected on the avenue to his heart.

6. *I do very little talking during an altar call.* In this day of frenetic action, of radio and TV announcers to whom a dead spot is anathema, we are inclined to feel that silence is a sign of incompetency on the preacher's part. Don't you believe it! Watch George Vandeman during a protracted appeal—the kind all of us should make once or twice during a campaign. You will forget that he is in the pulpit. But during the quietness you will see evidences that the Holy Spirit is working. A "Bless you, son" or "Yes, come; God sees your tears and walks with you," will serve to let those who are praying their way to victory know that others are going forward. Spend three-four-five minutes without a word. Appeal hymns played softly—and I mean softly—are effective. Read a

few verses of Scripture (Hosea 11:1-4; Isaiah 53) slowly, solemnly, and well. A verse of Scripture is worth a thousand well-reasoned words.

7. *I make altar calls.* Yes, here is the irreducible minimum, for the way to make an altar call, after all, is to make it. I would like to invite you to join me in the ministry of the altar.

As I have listened to you speak in your church, I have wondered whether many golden opportunities to call men and women to new decisions are not passed by.

"There are souls in every congregation," says Mrs. White, "who are hesitating, almost persuaded to be wholly for God. The decision is being made for time and for eternity; but it is too often the case that the minister has not the spirit and power of the message of truth in his own heart, hence no direct appeals are made to those souls that are trembling in the balance. The result is that impressions are not deepened upon the hearts of the convicted ones; and they leave the meeting feeling less inclined to accept the service of Christ than when they came. They decide to wait for a more favorable opportunity, but it never comes."—*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 447.

Yes, there are souls suffering defeats. Souls wearied with the struggle. Souls who have found the cross too heavy and painful to bear, and who have put it down. They are still attending church. Still looking up to you, praying, hoping for encouragement and, yes, an invitation to start over. There have been times when I, too, have needed your altar ministry. And I have prayed, "Lord, help him to make a call. I need to make a new decision."

Look at your flock next Sabbath. How long has it been since you answered their prayers for the therapy of public commitment? I may be there in the congregation, praying with them. Will you let us go without commitment at your altar?

CHRIST DEMANDS OUR BEST AND DEAREST

¶ The pastor of a large, urban church preached an eloquent, moving missionary sermon on Sunday on the theme, "Here am I, send me." After the service was over and the family had returned to their home, the minister's lovely young daughter came to him and said: "After that sermon, Dad, I have decided to go as a foreign missionary." Without realizing what he was saying, the minister exclaimed, "But, darling, I didn't mean you!" Christ challenges us to give our nearest and dearest. Only so can we be worthy of Him.

HELEN KINGSBURY WALLACE
in *Meditations on New Testament Symbols*
(Fleming H. Revell Company)

Sabbath Worship Calls

ROY B. THURMON

Sabbath by Sabbath good sermons are preached by godly ministers in Seventh-day Adventist churches, but seldom is a specific call made for unbelievers to accept Christ and become members of His church. Too often the preacher will finish his discourse with a brief benediction and then sit down. Or it may be that all are invited to raise their hands if they love the Lord and want to be ready when He comes. Of course, every hand usually goes up, but seldom has a real decision been made.

"In every congregation there are souls who are hesitating, almost decided to be wholly for God. Decisions are being made; but too often the minister has not the spirit and power of the message, and no direct appeals are made to those who are trembling in the balance."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 151.

Think of it! If in every audience there is at least one person hesitating, almost persuaded, then how can a minister of the gospel close a sermon without giving that one an opportunity to publicly express his desire? The casual raising of the hand by all those who want to be remembered in the closing prayer is hardly specific enough. Almost invariably the whole congregation responds to these general calls. How much better it might be if fewer responded but with a definite purpose in mind.

Visitors have often attended our churches for months at a time without hearing a call extended by the pastor. Some have been led to inquire just how one can become a member of the church. This is pathetic. Think how many others there may be who never ask.

General sermons, like general calls, seldom produce effective decisions for Christ.



Pastor, Collegedale
Tennessee

"Never should he [the minister] preach a sermon that does not help his hearers to see more plainly what they must do to be saved."—*Ibid.*, p. 153. "There are many who want to know what they must do to be saved. They want a plain and clear explanation of the steps requisite in conversion, and there should not a sermon be given unless a portion of that discourse is to especially make plain the way

that sinners may come to Christ and be saved."—*Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 157.

This means that when a Sabbath sermon is presented on any subject, whether it be on the atonement, signs of the times, temperance, health reform, religious liberty, or Ingathering, it should awaken in the sinner's heart his need for Christ, and at the close of that sermon a call should be extended and an invitation hymn should be sung. The unsaved ought then to be invited to step forward and thus silently announce that it is the desire of their heart to follow the Saviour.

Occasionally, a general call could be made so that the whole congregation would have an opportunity to respond, but more tangible results will be seen when a specific call is made after each sermon, inviting non-members to affiliate with the church and backsliders to publicly rededicate their lives to God. It can be made clear that those who come forward will have opportunity to receive personal studies in preparation for baptism.

Among the evangelical churches it is a common practice for the minister to close his sermon with a definite call for all the unsaved who wish to accept Christ as Lord and Saviour to come to the front while an invitation hymn is being sung. There is something appealing when the minister

leaves the rostrum and stands on the level with the congregation while "I've Wandered Far Away From God," "Come, Every Soul by Sin Oppressed," or "Just as I Am," is being sung. The fact that the minister is there eagerly waiting to extend a hand of welcome is an encouragement for one to make a decision. People of other churches often attend our Sabbath services and it would be no unusual experience for them to hear a gospel call extended at the close of each service.

Another interesting fact about making a call every Sabbath is that the people soon become accustomed to it and expect it. It is not uncommon at all for some to have their minds made up to take their stand even before coming to church. What a disappointment if the minister, for some reason, fails to extend the invitation on that Sabbath! And what a blessing it is to the faithful members when they see a person for whom they have been praying walk down the aisle to make that full surrender. Extending a call every Sabbath helps to keep a strong spiritual tone in the worship service.

Preaching for a decision also helps the minister. Regardless of what his theme may be, he knows that primarily he is preaching for a decision for Christ. He knows that to turn souls to Jesus, he must exclude all levity and witticisms from his message. He sees himself standing between the living and the dead. He visualizes himself standing in the place of Christ, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." Soon, however, a new freshness will come into his ministry, the Spirit of God will touch his own heart, and the people will discern that he has been with Jesus.

Without doubt, baptisms in all our churches would be increased if all our ministers preached for a decision each Sabbath and made a call for surrender while singing an invitation hymn. It could well be one of the cheapest and most productive investments in evangelism. After all, there is no better way of ending a service than by singing a heart-warming hymn, and what is more soul stirring than a hymn of invitation? If no one responds, the service is then concluded with a benediction as usual. No one is ill at ease, for it is a perfectly normal way of ending the worship hour. On the other hand, when there is a response, the minister can kindly greet

them with a few comforting words, record their names, and then follow through with personal visitation in their homes. The individual has made his commitment, and it is a simpler matter to follow through with the preparation for baptism.

Calling people forward is not the only way of getting a decision for Christ, but it has become a recognized and acceptable method by most churches. This was true among the early Seventh-day Adventists.

"In meeting that evening we called those forward who had a desire to be Christians. Thirteen came forward." "We called forward those who wished to start in the service of the Lord. Quite a number came forward." "After I had spoken one hour, I invited those who wished to be Christians to come forward. Between thirty and forty came forward quietly without excitement and occupied the front seats." "I called those forward who wished to seek the Lord most earnestly and for those who wished to give themselves to the Lord a whole sacrifice." "At the close of the discourse an invitation was given for all who desired to be Christians, and all who felt that they had not a living connection with God, to come forward." "We then called for those to come forward who would take a decided position on the Lord's side. Many responded." "At the close of my discourse, I felt impressed by the Spirit of God to extend an invitation for all those to come forward who desired to give themselves fully to the Lord. About thirty came forward." "We called all to come forward who felt that they were unready for Christ's coming and had not an evidence of their acceptance with God." "After I had finished speaking, all who desired to give themselves to the Lord were invited to come forward. A large number responded." "The Lord would be pleased to have a work similar to this done in every church." —*Selected Messages*, book 1, pp. 144-152.

Many times, young people under the inspiration of the moment will make their decision for Christ. This is better than the mass psychology of the baptismal class, usually organized in the church school at the close of the Week of Prayer. It adds strength to the decision when it is made personally and independently. Often former Seventh-day Adventists attend church and are impressed by the Holy Spirit to return to the church when the invitation hymn is being

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Decision Methods in Small Churches

WALTER M. STARKS

In a day of mass production, mass media, and spacious arenas, filled to capacity by overflowing crowds, it is not too difficult to lose the personal appeal and the personal touch. The label, "handmade" on a garment or other product, which indicates meticulous care and personalized service, has all but given way to the assembly line of mass production so common in our age. The grand scale, the gigantic demonstration, captures the imagination and very often carries the day.

Yet behind every success are many personal and individual contributions. The great demonstration and tremendous results realized at Pentecost were not brought about by mass appeal. "The disciples were astonished and overjoyed at the greatness of the harvest of souls. They did not regard this wonderful ingathering as the result of their own efforts; they realized that they were entering into other men's labors."—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 44, 45.

The Personal Touch in Securing Decisions

While Jesus spoke to multitudes, His most effective and successful work was done with the small audience. It was personal contact with the twelve that welded them into an organization that went forth to evangelize the world. Jesus worked for and with them, personally, individually, and led them to decision. Philip "joined himself" to the chariot of the Ethiopian and received his decision to follow his Lord in baptism. God said to Peter, "Arise therefore, and get thee down." He was to make personal contact with Cornelius.

All this simply reveals the fact that decisions are brought about by coming close



Pastor, Washington
D.C.

to men in a personal way, whether by heavenly or human agencies. Contact must be established and the fallow ground broken up before decisions for Christ can be secured. The pastor-evangelist, therefore, must effect a personal closeness with the prospective convert.

The closer we come to the individual the more lasting will be his decision for Christ. This is where the small church offers better opportunity than the large congregations. It lends itself readily to informality and a family atmosphere, thus effecting a more relaxed at-home feeling. It is not difficult to identify with the group, and the warmth of welcome, friendliness, fellowship, and rapport are easily discernible. However, in a small church it is much easier for opposition to arise and hinder decisions from being made. This is because of the fact that almost everyone knows everyone else and what he is doing.

Predecision preparation is most important to the final response of the prospective convert. Ofttimes we hear of one in the valley of decision. But he must be brought there by some means. He will not arrive of himself. And he must have some basis on which to predicate his decision. He must be informed, convinced, convicted, and persuaded. Pre-eminent in this preparatory work are Bible studies, cottage meetings, Bible school enrollments, and personal social contacts.

Analyzing the Congregation for Decision

To know when to press a point, when to let up, when to bind up, when to exhort, when to rebuke, when to reprove,

when to be long-suffering, when to appeal for decision, requires more than human wisdom. However, God will not do for us what He has qualified us to do. To know the audience, and to be able to analyze the congregation, helps in securing decisions. Our Lord was adept in this regard. We are told, "Jesus watched with deep earnestness the changing countenances of His hearers. The faces that expressed interest and pleasure gave Him great satisfaction. As the arrows of truth pierced to the soul, breaking through the barriers of selfishness, and working contrition, and finally gratitude, the Saviour was made glad. When his eyes swept over the throng of listeners, and He recognized among them the faces He had before seen, His countenance lighted up with joy. . . . When the truth, plainly spoken, touched some cherished idol, He marked the change of countenance, the cold, forbidding look, which told that the light was unwelcome. When He saw men refuse the message of peace, His heart was pierced to the very depths."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 255.

Here is illustrated the effective use of our physical arsenal, consecrated and sanctified by the Spirit of God in the ministry of decisions. Christ used His total personality in His appeals. And this was usually done before an audience of a size that made it possible for Him to scan every face and analyze every countenance. So effective was the appeal of His eyes, so evident the love, compassion, pity, and forgiveness upon His countenance, that it was almost impossible to resist His invitation. As His eyes met the eyes of Peter after the denial, we are told: "In that gentle countenance he read deep pity and sorrow, but there was no anger there. The sight of that pale, suffering face, those quivering lips, that look of compassion and forgiveness, pierced his heart like an arrow."—*Ibid.*, p. 713. The Scripture says, "And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." Yes, the consecrated, sanctified, eye-to-eye spiritual confrontation can be effectively used in the small church setting, where the pastor-evangelist is close to and well acquainted with his flock.

The Relationship of Background to Decision

Jesus "spoke directly to every mind and appealed to every heart" (*Education*, p. 231). Here is brought to light the great scope of knowledge that Jesus had of His

audience. He knew something of their background, their struggles, their sorrows, and their joys. In no other way could He suit a message to every mind and appeal to every heart. After the denial, his look at Peter would have been practically meaningless, had He not known Peter so well. But as Christ looked at His disciple "a tide of memories rushed over him. The Saviour's tender mercy, His kindness and long-suffering, His gentleness and patience toward His erring disciples,—all was remembered."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 713. It was these precious memories that made the look of Christ so meaningful. The appeal of the eye and the countenance cannot have its full impact unless we are able to communicate, and this communication is based largely upon previous contact. An appeal for decisions "cold" or without this background of knowledge or contact very seldom succeeds.

It was Christ's knowledge of the woman at the well that gripped her and held her attention while He was driving home the message of truth. Because He knew all about her and understood her problem so well, she was easily led to a decision. Her witness to the community was, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ? Then they went out of the city, and came unto him" (John 4:29, 30).

Jesus always knew His audience. To the farmer He could talk of the sower who went forth to sow. To the fisherman He spoke of ships and nets. To the collectors of revenue taxes, heavenly treasures were His subject, and to the poor He talked of sparrows, lilies, and grass.

The small church lends itself most favorably to a knowledge of backgrounds and close relationships, and thus gives a sense of rapport that makes it easier for the pastor-evangelist to communicate as he stands before his audience.

Christ Did Not Expose

When making his appeal for final decision, the pastor of the small church has to be careful or he may embarrass the prospective convert.

It is of vital importance that he reach the individual and get him to make a decision; but he must do so in such a way that the prospect will be drawn to Christ and not driven farther away. Jesus set for us a wonderful example. We are told, "The

disciples knew nothing of the purpose of Judas. Jesus alone could read his secret. Yet He did not expose him. Jesus hungered for his soul. He felt for him such a burden as for Jerusalem when He wept over the doomed city. His heart was crying, How can I give thee up? The constraining power of that love was felt by Judas. When the Saviour's hands were bathing those soiled feet, and wiping them with the towel, the heart of Judas thrilled through and through with the impulse then and there to confess his sin. But he would not humble himself."—*Ibid.*, p. 645.

Identifying With the Audience in Securing Decisions

One way this might be done may be illustrated by the prayer of Daniel the prophet. While no charge of known wrongdoing could be placed against Daniel, yet he identified himself with the transgressions of his people. His prayer was: "We have sinned, and have committed iniquity and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgments: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets. . . . Neither have we obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in his laws, which he has set before us by his servants the prophets" (Dan. 9:5, 6, 10).

The apostle Paul called himself chief of sinners. And in subsequent efforts to lead men to Christ declared, "For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. . . . To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:19, 22). Scripture says of Jesus Christ, "And he was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa. 53:12).

In the small church the call to decision must identify not only the pastor but the entire congregation with the one to be led to Christ. Then in the midst of this general identification, and in an atmosphere charged with the presence of the Holy Spirit, a call may be made for a more individual and definite surrender. This may be done in an appeal to the congregation to stand; *all* standing takes the pressure off the prospective convert, and makes it easier for him to make his decision to walk with Jesus all the way.

Each united congregational appeal

strengthens and lays the groundwork for the more personal and definite call.

The Positive Approach in Securing Decisions

A positive approach, expressing faith that the prospective convert will yield to the will of God, is often effective. In appealing to men for decision, Christ was positive. He indicated no doubt whatever as He summoned men to the gospel colors. His appeal to Andrew and Peter was, "Follow me." Even to the rich young ruler who turned Him down, the appeal of Christ was positive, "Sell all that thou hast . . . : and come, follow me." So we might say, "I am sure we all love Jesus, and I am certain that not one of us will want to disappoint our Lord. I know every heart will respond to the great love of God in positive terms."

An evangelist in a small town made a list of those in the valley of decision. The list came to seventy prospects. He personally visited every one, using a positive approach. He said, "I know that you love the Lord Jesus. I know that as a Christian you are determined to follow Him fully and completely. I have in my hands a list of seventy people whom God has impressed me will obey Him fully. I have included your name, and I know that you do not desire me to remove it from the list." Usually the answer was not to remove the name. Sixty-five out of the seventy were baptized.

The Personal Commitment

There is nothing so powerful and effective in securing decisions, as the outshining of the Spirit and power of God in one's own life. Moses, descending from the mountain, reflected the power and the glory of God. Israel was affected and moved by this evidence of heavenly connection. Jesus described John the Baptist as "a burning and a shining light." The powerful force of his message, the sacred holiness of his countenance, the blazing animated gleam of his eye, burned his message into the very soul of his hearers, bringing conviction and conversion. Inspiration says of him, "with the spirit and power of Elijah he denounced the national corruption, and rebuked the prevailing sins. His words were plain, pointed, and convincing. . . . Princes and rabbis, soldiers, publicans, and peasants came to hear

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Decisions in the Home

G. H. RAINEY



Associate Ministerial
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When Napoleon was leading his troops across the snowy peaks of the Alps to the sunlit plains of Italy a little drummer boy was caught by an avalanche on the mountain and knocked into a crevice. He landed on a ledge unhurt. Far above him the soldiers continued their march. Those who had witnessed the accident looked back, but they dared not turn aside.

The little lad began to play the relief call on his drum, and they heard him. Many a father in that French army may have wished the order would come to relieve the lad.

Napoleon was told what had happened, but what was the fate of a little drummer boy compared with his great task of getting the army over the Alps? And so instead of giving the order to save the lad, he cried, "March on!"

The boy heard the tramp of the feet of his comrades becoming fainter and fainter and when he realized that there was to be no rescue, that he had to lie down and die, he began to beat his own funeral march. The veterans in that army heard it and wept. And as they told of the incident years after by the campfires, they wept again.

Thousands in our cities today will be beating their own funeral march unless we take the gospel to them. This can never be done by preaching alone. We ministers must bring the streams of living water to those who are perishing. We may choose to do this by holding public meetings in tents, halls, churches, or in the open air. But a large percentage of the decisions made by the people who attend our public meetings are made in the homes. Paul went from house to house and taught the people (Acts 20:20).

When a minister is transferred to a new field of labor, one of the first places he visits is the church. Then in order to get the feel of the city and learn something of its people, he may drive along the main streets and on through the residential section. But we can learn about people best by getting into their homes and seeing how they live, by visiting the hospitals, praying with the sick, saying words of comfort to those who are bereaved, and thus getting

close to them. We are told: "If one half of the sermonizing were done, and double the amount of personal labor given to souls in their homes and in the congregations, a result would be seen that would be surprising."—*Evangelism*, p. 430.

What are the advantages of home visitation? The purpose of all home visitation is to lead souls to make a decision for Christ. The public meetings do not afford the opportunity to get to know people personally. The home visitation plan has proved to be a match that kindles the flame that burned in the heart of the person eventually baptized.

If a minister never held a public meeting as such, he could lead people to a decision to follow Christ by house-to-house labor. A home-going pastor produces a churchgoing people. You can be assured of a good attendance on Sabbath when you visit in the home, where you are given the opportunity to meet those of the family who do not belong to your church and have a chance to invite them to it. These relatives, for the most part, know something of our message, and as a result of personal visitation and by being friendly, they can be led to follow their Lord in baptism.

The minister and Bible instructor

should begin to get decisions and create an interest in future meetings from the first visit. A person makes a series of decisions during a campaign. The important thing is to get a decision after each meeting. This can be best done when we visit him by asking how he enjoyed the meeting. We want to know if he has decided to accept what we have tried to make clear in the sermon he heard. When the nightly decision plan is followed, the candidate makes one step at a time, and the final decision for baptism is therefore made easier.

The first indication of progress by the candidate is when he keeps his first Sabbath in our church or place of worship. When the person comes out on the Sabbath it is a good sign that he will follow through to baptism. Here again, the worker must do a convincing job in the home.

The candidate must be assured that this is the most important decision that he will ever make. Here I would urge the positive approach. Mention the fact that already indications are that a large number will be there to keep their first Sabbath and that you know he is making plans to be there too. People like to hear what others are doing. If decisions to attend the Sabbath meeting have been made by some of his acquaintances, mention their names, for this will help. Let him know we have been praying that God would impress him to be present for this first Sabbath celebration. Usually the person will tell us that he will plan to be there. A personal letter thanking him for his decision and assuring him of God's blessing as he keeps his first Sabbath, will be appreciated. A warm handshake and a few well-chosen words after the Sabbath morning meeting will do much to encourage him and bring him back the following Sabbath.

Another decided advantage of personal visitation is to get to know the person so well that you can win your way into his heart by love. This close acquaintance will help lead him to a decision because he has learned to appreciate you. A worker must be the very essence of love and kindness. You also get to know his habits and weak points beforehand, thus you can prepare to help him with his problems. This may be the reason why people who come into the church never tire of talking about the one who led them to Christ.

To help a person to make a decision to stop smoking or drinking requires that the worker show reasons why he should quit these habits. Reasons of health, family, and money are all good, but to show that his body is God's dwelling place, and that God will not dwell in an unclean temple, is a better approach to some (see I Corinthians 3:16, 17). Try to get the candidate to enter into a contract with Jesus. If he states that he wishes to stop his habit, tell him that Jesus has heard his wish and is willing to help. Show him that he has to do his part. He must be willing to keep tobacco out of his mouth and to keep his promise with God. God's part will be to take away the desire. Show that God cannot do His part unless he does his. The contract can then be sealed by prayer, asking help from heaven. The person is then called or visited each day until he gains the victory.

The personal visitation program creates a love for souls. Those who are on our visiting list are not just names; they are individuals who become a part of us. Our bedside should become a closet of prayer as we wrestle with God nightly for them. I would suggest that we spread these names upon our bed and pray over each name as Hezekiah did the letter he received from Sennacherib. God still answers prayer. John Knox prayed for Scotland, "Give me Scotland, or I die." We need to pray, "Give me souls, or I die." As we pray for a particular family, call them by name. This is personal work of the highest order. When we visit the person, tell him that we believe God has led him to a knowledge of this truth and that He has chosen him for a purpose. Since he is an honest soul, he would not want to say No to God and thus disappoint Him.

Every worker should know when to secure the decision. We should not try to get it until the person is ready. When the testing truths have been presented, and we feel the person is ready to take the important step, then move for a decision. Remove every objection by showing him the right step to take. If we do not get a decision at first, we should suggest praying about the matter. When we rise from our knees, clasp his hand, saying, "I know you will do the right thing for God. I will make your decision a matter of prayer tonight, and will come back tomorrow to see what your answer will be." The chances

are you will have the answer when you return.

During the Civil War an Indiana regiment was sent into battle before the recruits had received any training. They were ordered to charge. When they had encountered the fire of the enemy, wavered, broken, and fallen back, one young soldier kept straight on. He had heard the order to capture the entrenchment. When he reached the trench and climbed in, he encountered a gunner ready to fire. He instantly seized him, whirled him about, and finding him alone, started for his regiment with his prisoner. The enemy did not shoot, fearing to kill their own man, and the raw recruit came safely back. To the astonished questioning of his comrades as to where he got the man, he replied: "Why, up there! And there are many more of them there. All of you fellows could have had one if you had only kept on." Saving souls, my fellow worker, is personal work and is the kind that must be carried out to get decisions for Christ.

No matter how great a preacher may be in the pulpit, his work will be weak unless he can sit down in the home and win some soul to Christ by personal endeavor. "It is not preaching that is the most important; it is house-to-house work, reasoning from the Word, explaining the Word. It is those workers who follow the methods that Christ followed who will win souls for their hire."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 468. "By being social and coming close to the people, you will turn the current of their thoughts more readily than by the most able discourse. The presentation of Christ in the family, by the fireside, and in small gatherings in private houses, is often more successful in winning souls to Jesus than are sermons delivered in the open air, to the moving throng, or even in halls or churches."—*Ibid.*, p. 193.

Remember, Christ used the personal touch to get decisions. Some of the greatest lessons He ever taught were spoken to one person alone. If a woman of Samaria could be used to obtain decisions for Christ, surely we as workers should try the personal touch. If you try, you may have someone say to you, "This day is salvation come to this house" (Luke 19:9).

Like the drummer boy in Napoleon's army, we will either play the rescue or the funeral march. We have the drums. Which will it be?

Decision Methods in Small Churches

(Continued from page 17)

the prophet. . . . Many were brought to repentance, and received baptism."—*Ibid.*, pp. 104, 105.

It is said of Jesus, "What He taught, He was." In this lies the greatest power of all. "The silent witness of a true, unselfish, godly life carries an almost irresistible influence. . . . When those who profess to serve God follow Christ's example, practicing the principles of the law in their daily life; when every act bears witness that they love God supremely and their neighbor as themselves, then will the church have power to move the world."—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 340.

Motives and Calls for Surrender

(Continued from page 21)

fessors. After Pentecost we see fruits of Christ's wisdom in calling His converts into this experience of complete self-sacrificing love, for these mighty men of God gave their lives unflinchingly to preach His truth, and thousands were converted.

Gideon's army is another example of God's longing for total consecration in His followers. In neither case could God have worked so mightily if Jesus or Gideon had compromised and lowered the standard for the sake of large numbers.

As we study the methods of Jesus we should desire to be like Him as we challenge souls to accept the highest Christian experience. In doing this our public calls will bring eternal results, and even though for a while they may be less in number, those that respond to this challenge will be men and women of God and will strengthen Christ's church. They will also inspire the older members to a deeper consecration. This will prepare the church for the outpouring of the latter rain, which will be much greater than Pentecost. Then we shall have public decisions by the thousands. These new believers will determine to live only for Jesus and to reflect His image fully.

There is only one path that leads from darkness upward to the light until it touches the throne of God,—the path of faith.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 160.

To read without reflecting is like eating without digesting.—*Burke*.

Motives and Calls

for Surrender

L. O. N. CUMMINGS

"For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2). Only with this thought as our primary motive and desire will we have true success in obtaining public decisions. Every call, every appeal, should draw someone closer to Christ.

The first and perhaps the most important step in obtaining the right kind of public decision is the preparation of the evangelist's own heart to make sure that his life and motives are right with God. Paul says, "Let a man examine himself" (1 Cor. 11:28). We may ask ourselves, "What is my real motive in obtaining public decisions? Is it to get as many to come forward as possible so that it will impress the church members and the brethren what a great evangelist I am?"

If we are primarily interested in quantity rather than quality, we will use un-sanctified psychological techniques to persuade people to do what we want them to do; therefore because of our persuasion they may not choose Christ willingly. At other times the temptation may come to refrain from making a call. The time, the conditions, do not seem appropriate and we do not want to suffer public defeat and loss of personal prestige. We may feel it is up to us to do the winning and persuading, forgetting that "the battle is the Lord's" and that we must trust in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring fruitage. These and many other temptations must be overcome if we would be successful in obtaining truly lasting and sincere public decisions.

Jesus Christ, the greatest evangelist, should be our example in obtaining public decisions. By materialistic standards of suc-



Evangelist, Montana Conference

cess, Jesus was a failure. Few made public decisions in His meetings and asked to be baptized. It wasn't His speaking ability or power to hold crowds that was lacking, for He attracted and held thousands spellbound by the power of His discourses. It was the way in which He made His public calls that seemed to hold so many back. Let us examine one of these calls made in Luke 14:25-35. Here we find that instead of promising a

crown or reward Jesus paints a picture of a cross. Sacrifice would be the lot of the one who would be His follower. He challenged the very seat of sin, the selfish carnal nature, demanding its death and replacement by the Godlike characteristic of complete self-sacrificing love. Jesus made it clear in His call that it is not sufficient to strike down the outward symptoms of sin as did the Pharisees. He showed that sin is not so much what we do as what we are. Sin wants to kill God so that the false god of self can do what it wants to do, whereas righteousness reveals the will to die to self that only God's will may be done. This was the standard Jesus presented in His calls to sinful men.

Our Saviour knew that for them to make the decision on any other basis than complete death to self would leave them unfit for heaven. Heaven and the presence of God became unbearable to Lucifer and his rebellious companions because they chose to serve self. Christ undoubtedly could have baptized thousands if He had made an easier way for them to accept Him. But He knew that one man fully dedicated and consecrated to God's service is worth many times more than a thousand lukewarm pro-

(Continued on page 20)

Evangelistic Visiting

ROGER HOLLEY

The minister who would bear fruit for the kingdom is wise to recognize that his work in the desk is less than half effective unless the people he preaches to are visited and prayed with personally.

We here present the visiting technique we follow in our evangelistic meetings. All the principles described will not apply to a pastoral call, but some will. If I had known these simple principles when I was in pastoral work, I could have saved endless hours and my visiting would have been immeasurably more effective.

I didn't devise the plan. But it is so simple and it works so well that I would be proud to claim it as my own brain child. However, I learned it while working as campaign manager with Fordyce Detamore, the man who pioneered the techniques of short campaign evangelism.

One of the first things the worker who follows this type of a program should aim at is brevity. When we have from two to three hundred names of people who need to be visited within three weeks, we will obviously have to keep right on the move to get around to them. But we should not let the pressure hurry us or force us into a briskness that might be interpreted by the person we visit as unfriendliness. If we take charge of the visit from the moment we step inside the home, it is possible, in a smiling, easygoing manner, to determine the degree of interest, learn something of the religious background of the person, have prayer, and be out of the home in from four to eight minutes.

In the first place we need to get into the home. If we have had canvassing experience we will have our own method of doing this. When a person responds to my knock at the door, and I ascertain that this is the Mr. Brown I want to talk to, I



Evangelist, Ohio Conference

smile happily and extend my hand, saying, "Well, I am Brother Holley, Mr. Brown, from over at the church." I want him to know I'm from the church and am therefore not a dangerous character. Usually he doesn't think to ask what church until after I'm inside. Then I answer very matter of factly, "Seventh-day Adventist church," just as though that were the only church in the city.

Then I come right to the point. Usually before I am seated I ask the question, "Did you receive the invitation we sent out for the meetings we are holding over at the hall?" Usually they have received the invitation and are acquainted with the fact that the meetings are going on.

"Have you ever attended any Adventist meetings?" If the answer is "No," I ask him, "Have you ever taken any of our Bible courses—either the Voice of Prophecy or Faith for Today, or It Is Written?" A great many of the people we visit, although never having attended any of our formal meetings, are well acquainted with our doctrines by having taken these excellent Bible courses of our network programs.

Usually I ask the question fairly early, "What church do you attend?" The answer to that question opens up to me a whole field of understanding of the religious thinking that is going on in the person's mind. Of course all of these questions are asked in a very casual, friendly way.

"I suppose you found in your study that the main difference of the Adventist teachings from those of your own church is the Sabbath. You know we keep the seventh-day, Saturday, as the Sabbath." Usually the person will agree that the Sabbath is the main difference between our churches.

The next important question is "Do you believe the Sabbath?" If the person hesi-

tates, I add, "Have you studied the Sabbath enough to know if it makes sense to you?" You would be surprised how often the answer to that question is in the affirmative—something like, "Yes, I really believe you people are right on the Sabbath."

Be careful right here that you don't get a glint in your eye and treat him as though he should join the church next Sabbath. Pass the admission off very casually. Agree with him, and keep your tone and manner matter-of-fact as though you were talking about the weather.

Well, it is there, isn't it? right in the Ten Commandments. Personally, I keep the Sabbath for the same reason I wouldn't steal or lie, or worship idols, or commit adultery, or murder. [Smiling] I didn't put the Sabbath there. God did. And frankly, I don't know what to do with it but try to keep it."

The next question is even more important but still very casual. "Have you ever thought of keeping the Sabbath?" The conversation has been going steady with no lull or lag; we have been asking the questions. He has been talking about the things we have wanted him to talk about and because of the friendliness of the atmosphere it hasn't been painful to him. Now, with this question coming right on the heels of the others, the chances are that if he has ever considered keeping the Sabbath, he will admit it.

If the answer is "No," and he indicates he has never thought of keeping the Sabbath, we conclude immediately that here is a person with whom the message has not made enough headway for us to do much with him. Your rating of him will depend upon his general attitude. If he is friendly and unprejudiced and receptive he should be rated as a good future prospect, and a follow-up program should be carried on for him after the short series is over.

If the answer is in the affirmative—he has given thought to keeping the Sabbath—we know immediately that a lot of groundwork has already been done in this person's mind. He believes the Sabbath is right and has thought about how he might keep it. Here is an excellent opportunity to sermonize and expound to him about the need of an immediate surrender. *Be sure to resist this urge.* He is going to think about this visit for a long time after we are gone. He will go over and over in his mind the things we said, and the way we

said them. If the visit has in any sense made him feel "on the spot" or in any way uncomfortable, he is not going to have pleasant memories of us, and he will not come out to hear us preach.

So in response to his admission, still smiling and casual and giving no indication of the importance we attach to all this, we say: "Just don't put it off too long; we wish you would make it a subject of prayer. God will help you. He has so many ways of working out these problems that are too much for us."

And that's enough. We get ready now for the prayer and departure. Usually at this juncture I show him the handbill, mark a few of the key meetings, urge him especially to be out for the meeting in which there is going to be a call for surrender (though of course he isn't told this), then I say, "I am so glad for this chance of talking with you, Brother Brown. I must hurry on. We have so many to visit that we can't stay anywhere very long, but let us have a word of prayer." And without asking for permission we begin to pray. If we ask, some may refuse.

In the prayer we can say things to the Lord in his behalf that he will appreciate, whereas if we said them to him directly as a little sermonet or exhortation, he might resent it.

"Lord, I am thankful for the visit I have had here with Brother Brown. He hasn't been able to get out to the meetings, but I am thankful for his interest in Thy Word. He has taken the Bible course and he has appreciated the great truths of the Bible he has studied there. He has learned that Saturday is the true Sabbath of the Bible and the Ten Commandments. Help him not to by-pass this. Help Brother Brown to determine soon that he will keep holy the commandments of God. What we do, Lord, we don't want to do because of a church or a denomination, but because it is taught in Thy Word. We believe that Jesus is coming soon and we want above all else to be ready to meet Him. Help Brother Brown to make haste to come in soon with those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. We ask all this in Jesus' name. Amen."

Now get out! Don't stay and visit longer, or the effect of the prayer will be largely undone. Leave the words we have spoken in prayer for him ringing in his ears.

Suppose the contact you are visiting is

from a former evangelistic series. We may know the answers to the questions we ask, but to get the person to respond, we ask anyway.

"Have you ever attended Adventist meetings before?" If the answer is in the affirmative, then we quickly get on to the Sabbath. "Do you believe the Sabbath is right?" If the answer is "Yes"; we continue, "Have you ever thought of keeping it?" The answer has to be either Yes or No. If "Yes," then once again let me emphasize it is not a time for sermonizing or exhortation, but for prayer. We should just comment on how happy we are to make his acquaintance. Show him the handbill and mark the meetings we especially want him to attend, then get right into the prayer, and say everything to the Lord *about* him that we would like to say *to* him. We are praying for him, therefore he will not resent it. When the prayer is over—again, get out.

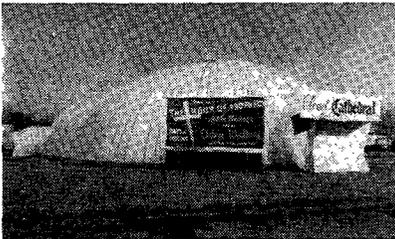
If the person we are visiting is a former member and is hateful and resentful of everything connected with Seventh-day Adventists, let him unload his bitterness on us. We should not defend anybody he's bitter against—even our own parents. If we raise one word of defense for those

whom he feels have hurt him, we are immediately classed by him as being for those he's against, and therefore against him. It won't hurt us to let him unload on us and it may help him a great deal. When he is through we can tell him honestly and simply, "Well, Brother Brown, I am sorry that this has ever happened. It has caused you to drop out of the church. I don't criticize you for it. It could be that had I gone through the same experience, I might feel the same way you do."

When talking with a former member, watch for an opportunity to ask him who baptized him. That brings to his mind a pleasant subject, because usually people have pleasant memories of the one who brought them into the church.

"Do you still believe the message?" Usually the answer is "Yes." People seldom get to the place when they are no longer believers of the message, no matter what their reason is for dropping out.

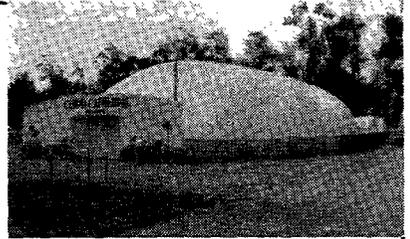
"Have you ever thought of coming back?" Usually the answer to that question is "Yes." And when we have this committal from him, please remember, since he is a former member, anything we say about what he ought to do is superfluous.



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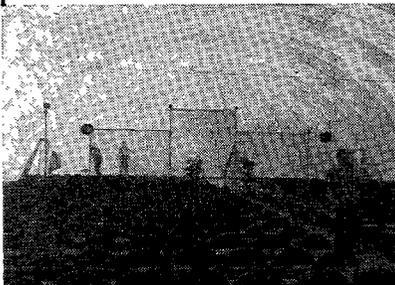


This 120' x 60' structure is being used in Michigan by Evangelist E. K. Walter.

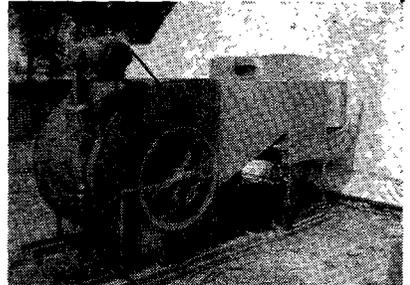
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He knows it just as well as we do. He needs his heart warmed, and prayer will do it quicker than anything we can say.

We should tell him how glad we are we found him. Point out on the handbill the meetings that will be especially helpful. Beg him earnestly to come to the meetings that we know will have a call for surrender. Then get into the prayer. Tell the Lord how glad we are that we found this brother, how sorry we are for the circumstances that took him out of the message. Ask the Lord to let him know we and the members of the church love him and want him back. Pray he will not put off the day when he makes a full surrender and comes back to the fold. Pray for the meetings that they will be a blessing to this man and that he (call him by name in the prayer) will be back in the fold before Jesus returns.

When the prayer is over, immediately clasp his hand, "Brother Brown, you don't know how glad I am to meet you. I must go now, but please try to get out to these meetings. Try to come tonight. We will be looking for you." Then be gone.

It is hard to put down on paper an actual conversation with a prospect that will convey in all respects the attitudes present. This has to be presented in an extremely warmhearted and friendly attitude, otherwise the effect of the whole visit is undone.

Any interruption during the visit is almost as disconcerting as an interruption in a sermon or a Bible study. These visits are brief but they have a purpose. And these questions are highly significant. They lead up to the proper moment when psychologically the prayer should be offered.

Some people think these short visits don't accomplish anything more than a Hello and Good-by. But here in a few minutes we have discovered an interest—a person who has taken the Voice of Prophecy or Faith for Today course, is convinced on the Sabbath and has thought of keeping it. And we have taken him to God in prayer. We asked God in his presence that he might be helped by Heaven to arrange his program so he can keep the Sabbath. That is accomplishing almost as much as we could hope to accomplish if we stayed half an hour.

Whether that person comes out to the meetings or not he is marked as a good prospect, and his name is turned over to the pastor.

Of course, the more meetings he can at-

tend before the call the better prepared he is to make his decision. But you would be surprised at the number of people there are in these cities who have had a background in the message. If they were at a meeting where a call for surrender was given, the Spirit of God could bring conviction to them and they would take their stand. We know this to be true because we have seen it happen.

When we get into the car after our visit we write up a report on it. Of course, we do not let our friend see us writing about him. We write these reports for two reasons. First, so that when the names are turned back to the pastor at the close of the effort he has a case history of the work that was done for that particular person during the meetings, whether he was visited once, twice, or more. It will help him in determining the kind of follow-up he should employ on that particular name. If we are working in our own district, it still pays to follow this practice both for our own sakes and for the sake of our successor. When he comes into our district after we have moved he will have something to go on in visiting these persons.

Second, I make these notations for my own sake. After visiting from fifteen to twenty persons a day, a week later I find their faces have become a little blurred in my memory, so I write down something that will help in bringing the person to mind. We should be careful what we write, however, for the person we are writing about might come into the church and in time might even be an officer or he might have a friend who is helping in the addressing and what we have written might conceivably get back to that person. It shouldn't happen, but if it did and you had written something like "skinny, homely-faced woman; not too intelligent," you would probably wish you had written nothing at all and let yourself forget her. I use the following terms:

Excellent—This person believes all and is under conviction. In fact, he is ready to walk right into the church.

Very Good Prospect—Believes almost all of the message. Is under conviction about the Sabbath, and if present during a call for surrender surely would take his stand.

Good Prospect—Unprejudiced. Likes what he has studied or heard of Seventh-day Adventist teachings. Inclined to believe Sabbath. If he would come out and hear

the message he would possibly take his stand during this series.

Fair—This person may believe but has little indication or desire to come. Sometimes such people do start coming, however, and then their rating jumps to *Good* or *Very Good*. Likewise some people marked *Very Good* on the first visit drop to *Fair* or *Future* before the series is over.

Very Good Future—Not prejudiced. Likes what he has heard of Seventh-day Adventist teachings but his attendance is irregular and will have to be followed up after the meetings are over. However, if he is followed up he gives very good promise of being won.

Future—A possibility of winning by follow-up and future studies.

Dim Future—Pretty much self-explanatory.

Invited Out—Prejudiced; wants nothing to do with Seventh-day Adventists. The name should not have been given to us but we had it and visited the person. NOTE: A former member may act bitter too, but I seldom, if ever, rate him in this category. He may be bitter and antagonistic, but there may be good reasons for this, and if given love and friendship he might change, even though we fail to win him in this particular series.

Our estimation of people will grow more accurate with experience, but I would like to emphasize the need of being optimistic. Remember we are working as an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Every person we meet is a prospect for the kingdom.

The type of visiting we're describing here is to get people out to the meetings where they will hear a call for surrender and make a decision. The more meetings they can attend before the call the greater their conviction will be. Yet many such people have taken their stand after attending only one meeting. Once a person has taken his stand we should believe in him with all our heart. It won't hurt us if he lets us down, but it will certainly hurt him if we let him down. He needs someone to believe in him and to encourage him. If we have unbounded faith and show by our faith that we are expecting miracles we will see miracles and we will have experiences that will make our ministry a perpetual thrill.

Let us think of ourselves as standing outside the ark, urging people to get in. They should do it *now*—not next month. They should not join the church until they are

fully instructed, but let me emphasize that once they have taken their stand and have responded to the invitation to come forward, it is positively amazing how quickly they can be prepared for baptism. The cigarettes drop off. They get their Sabbath work arranged. They throw away their jewelry and accept the principles of the message in a way that is absolutely thrilling. This is the kind of thrill we simply never get used to.

Our discussion today is on visiting for decisions, not on the call for surrender, yet these statements belong here because no one can be an effective visitor unless he carries an overpowering conviction of what God can do for the people if they will follow Him. None of us are prophets. We do not know how they will react in a call for surrender. Some of the people we are the most sure of are the very ones that can sit right through every call for surrender and will not move. We feel disappointed and let down, but the Lord usually makes it up to us by having other people respond whom we didn't think knew the doctrines well enough or had faith enough to take their stand.

This optimism or faith is an absolute must in order for us to do our best work in the home. It is far better to work hard for fifty people that we don't get than to give up on one person we might have won if we had kept after him.

These visits before the call for surrender are short visits as described at the beginning of this article. However, once the individual has taken his stand he needs another kind of visiting. He must not be left alone. He must be visited at once. All kinds of things can happen to him and very often do. He needs encouragement. He must get out to the Bible class. If he doesn't he must be studied with in the home. His faith must be strengthened. If he ever needed help in his life he needs it now. And if we ever needed faith in the power of God we need it now too. The struggle is not over for these people by any means, just because they have come down the aisle. They must give up their cigarettes right now—not next week. They must get their Sabbath work arranged now—not a week or two or a month later. Don't let them put you off. They may give you a convincing story, but remember, God doesn't call a pickpocket and expect him to

(Continued on page 42)

Don't Put It Off!

THEODORE CARCICH

Procrastination is a thieving habit that deprives us of time, success, and happiness. We procrastinate when we needlessly put off things that should be done today.

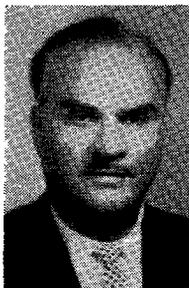
And who is not tempted to defer? We find ourselves saying, "Tomorrow I'll study the Sabbath school lesson, prepare my sermon, give that Bible study, write that letter, visit the sick neighbor, call on that discouraged member"—but all that tomorrow brings forth is a mountain of things unaccomplished.

Inspiration, planning, and decision are important, but their value diminishes unless followed up by decisive action. Do you want a branch Sabbath school? An active MV Society? A new church school? A newly painted church building? A successful Bible course enrollment campaign? A new church organization? Really, do you?

By all means plan, but do not bog down and neglect starting the job. Don't blow the whistle too long and find yourself without steam to turn the wheels. There is no better way to get things done than to start them. The first step in a mile race is as important as the last. Get going. Keep going!

Procrastination is often induced because the immediate task is unpleasant, difficult, or distasteful. Facing us today could be a menial chore, a demanding study assignment, an assigned church responsibility, a Christian duty to dissolve a misunderstanding or go the second mile, or the conviction that we must break with a sinful habit.

None of these things is easy. All require time, discipline, and just plain hard work. Accordingly, to ease our conscience we putter around with trivialities, daydream-



Vice-President
General Conference

ing and wishing that the hard task would just go away.

Life assigns to each a quota of difficult tasks and they just don't fade away by being ignored. Anything worth while—friendship, marriage, career, job, salvation, church membership—has its difficult aspects. Each blessing costs much in personal effort. Eventually we have to stop babying ourselves, roll up our sleeves, and tackle the task.

Dreading or postponing a hard job is often more wearing than doing it, and the anticipated unpleasantness has a way of adversely affecting other duties and associates. Procrastination is a prolific cause of emotional and organizational ills in the home, school, and church.

A Christian is duty bound not merely to do the things he should, but to do them when he should, whether he likes to or not. Principle and not impulse is his guide. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy make plain his duty and the manner in which it should be discharged. He does not defer carrying today's burden since shirking means a heavier load for someone else. For him, the following through to completion in any task is a matter of morality, character, and honor.

In the development of spiritual life, procrastination is fatal. We read: "Beware of procrastination. Do not put off the work of forsaking your sins, and seeking purity of heart through Jesus. Here is where thousands upon thousands have erred, to their eternal loss. . . . What we do not overcome, will overcome us, and work out our destruction."—*Steps to Christ*, pp. 32, 33.

"Yesterday is gone, today is here, tomorrow may never come."

Leader or Fork-Fighter?

H. E. RICE

(Concluded)

The very changes that the tempo of the time forces upon us bring out another trait of character that marks the badge of leadership. This is the ability to avoid running ahead of the parade. It is an easy temptation to some to see that everything needs to change and to demand change in everything we see. For such a one, life becomes one continuous battle with the existing order. Those with such an outlook on life will see much of the world because they will receive many "calls" and will move from conference to conference. Such may gender good ideas but impatience and criticism usually nullify them. Such never learn that to be two blocks ahead of the parade is to be out of it just as much as to be five blocks behind it. Such never realize that a leader can travel no faster than he can create public sentiment to support him. Such go through life observing the fallacies, the follies, and the mistakes of others and dissipating all their energies in attempting to change them. It is a real art for a leader to discover that narrow line between construction and destruction. A leader will cherish the past for the good that it has bequeathed us while exploring the future for newer methods, newer treasures, newer gold. A leader recognizes the difference between objectives and methods. Objectives always remain the same while methods are constantly subject to change.

Field Marshal Montgomery in his memoirs, recently published, stated that a German general classified all his officers into groups with four qualifications. These four qualifications were the lazy, the ambitious,



Associate Secretary
Medical Department
General Conference

the brilliant, and the stupid. He stated that all the officers in the army possessed at least two of these qualifications. He classified officers accordingly. He stated that there was a place for the lazy and stupid. They could be used to the advantage of the army. The ambitious and the brilliant made staff officers and should be so assigned. The lazy and brilliant, however, ranked highest in his estimation and ultimately became commanding officers. The reasons that he gave interested me. He said this group alone possessed the imagination to do big things and had the nerve to carry out their plans. His further comment was that the ambitious and the stupid must be separated from the army at once, for they would do only harm. Leadership in the cause of God is not parallel, but human nature is much the same in all walks of life.

There is a further trait of character that I count most important in leadership. It is the rare ability to sift the important from the unimportant. There will be a tendency as we leave these halls and return to our districts, to concentrate on a particular method to advance the work of God and bring souls into His eternal kingdom, losing sight of the total picture and confusing the important and the unimportant.

Some of us will attempt to theologize people into heaven. Our logic will be linked and strong. Our array of supporting texts will be irrefutable. Our understanding of the intricacies of salvation and of the techniques of eternal life and of certain meaning of all the obscure symbols and double-meaning texts will be most impressive. It will appear that an All-wise God has revealed to us alone the certain sequence of His mind. People will be im-

[This talk, given to a group of medical and institutional workers by a veteran administrator, embodies many principles that are common to all kinds of denominational leadership. The article is both frank and forceful. While all the comments are not of universal application, they are all worthy of careful thought by all Adventist workers.—Ems.]

pressed, but will they be saved? Some of us will attempt, as we return to our districts, to negate people to glory and the eternal ecstasies of heaven. We will see great virtue in self-denial, and conclude that by not doing certain things the world will certainly be saved and the "saints" rewarded. We will see many things that *cannot* be done and much to negate. We will be appalled at the things seemingly righteous people are doing. Seeing these things will be conclusive proof of our own virtue and of the thinness of the holy veneer of the church. We will find followers who will find comfort in lying on their own particular bed of spikes. I fully grant that there are many things that Christians should not do, but I am still reminded that salvation is not obtained by negations.

[Teamwork, keeping rank in an advancing and changing world, methodical sifting of the important from the unimportant, dogmatism, differentiating between methods and objectives, the dangers of negation, the tendency to embarrass people into heaven, the menace of mechanics, the loneliness of true leadership—all these are here discussed in the writer's frank and inimitable manner. His final comments that the rewards of leadership are unrelated to money, that God holds us accountable not only for what we do but for what we have the capacity to do, are worth long and careful meditation.]

I am thankful, and you should be too, that I am not on the admissions committee for heaven—so I do not have to make decisions on all of these things.

Others of us will return to our districts and attempt to frighten people into heaven. Remember, however, that today's society does not stay frightened very long.

Some of us will attempt to shame and embarrass people into Paradise. The exposing of the evils of our lives, of our perfidy and our vanity, of our greed, to the awful glare of publicity; the holding of our defects up to the spotlight of public disapproval; public humiliation, should surely chase a few recalcitrants through the shining portals of the New Jerusalem—and some tender souls will doubtless respond.

Some of us will return to our districts and become so confused by campaigns and so enmeshed in the machinery of the church, and so involved in form letters and reports, and so engrossed in counting the sheep faithfully in the fold and weighing their wool, that sinners will be forgotten and the stragglers on the mountain-

side and the frolicking lambs that lingered outside the door of the fold will be quite overlooked.

Some, and I hope most of us, will see all of these varying methods I have alluded to as but part of the picture, and will not allow any one of them to become the whole picture. Some will see that there is right in each of these approaches, only as it is related to the total. Some will discover the really important. Some will discover that people cannot be *frightened into heaven*, and that they cannot be shamed into heaven, nor can they be embarrassed nor theologized, nor reasoned, nor commanded, nor coerced, nor negated into heaven. They can only be loved into Paradise! This is truly God's own method. Leaders will see all of these methods but will see mostly the method the Master used long ago when He looked on the multitude and was moved with compassion and loved them, with all their faults and shortcomings, right into the kingdom of God. Leaders will love people right over their sins into paths of rectitude and devotion and dedication to God and to His work. So much for qualities of leadership. Honesty compels me to tell you that I have not named all the qualities, nor necessarily given the most important ones.

I must also remind you that there are prices to pay for leadership. There are many people who may develop in their lives all the qualifications required for leadership, who may still be reluctant to pay the price of leadership. That there is a price, no leader will deny.

A gentleman of long ago put it in a pointed way when he said, "The pinnacle of fame is hard to sit on."

The first price of leadership I suggest to you must be paid in the sacrifice of intimate friends. There is that about leadership which sets one apart from the crowd and requires that one walk alone. It requires bravery, daring, and courage to step out of the crowd and walk alone. A leader must be friendly with all, but one of the first prices that is paid is the sacrifice of intimate friends. Intimacy begets partiality, and partiality disqualifies one from leadership. A leader has many friends but few intimates, and none of these within the group to which he gives leadership. There can be no inside tracks.

The second price that must be paid for leadership is the willingness to accept ex-

traordinary amounts of criticism without rancor or rebuke or revenge. An organization becomes the lengthening shadow of a leader, and this is a fearful responsibility. To accept the responsibility of giving leadership, direction, purpose, to a religious movement, carries with it a corollary responsibility for the success or the failure of the project. Leadership implies authority, and authority can never be divorced from responsibility. Therefore, a leader must be willing to accept the responsibility for the outcome of the programs that he sponsors, and in which he gives leadership. Inevitably this carries with it the penalty of criticism, the price of being misunderstood, the premium of being misrepresented. Too frequently the leader's best intentions are misconstrued, his words misquoted, and his ideas ridiculed. A leader must be inured to much of this, and frequently he must remain silent when criticized, for frequently to give complete explanation of what is done, and why, would be grossly unfair to those with whom a leader must deal. The alternate is to accept the responsibility and the criticism without answer in the certainty that the lengthening shadows of history justify the decision made. This is not easy. Anyone not willing to pay this price is automatically disqualified from leadership. As President Truman so succinctly put it, "If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen."

A third, and very important price that must be paid for leadership is the willingness to count influence as more important than rights! There are many things you, as a leader, have a right to do, if the exercise of that right causes others to stumble and lose their way, at that point that right is forfeited. This finds application in many instances—in the field of recreation, amusement, the choice of homes, cars, and clothes, of company and of diet. We are a small and humble people. We do not always have to stay small, but we do have to stay humble. A recognition of this fact forbids ostentation and display. A Seventh-day Adventist minister has a right to have as ornate and elaborate a house, and as gaudy a car as he can afford, but when he accepts the principle that the influence is more important than the right, that modifies and limits the ornateness of the home and the amount that can be properly spent on cars without jeopardizing his in-

fluence among the members of the church. This is one of the severest prices of leadership, and one frequently we are most reluctant to pay. One has a perfect right to mow the lawn in shorts, and might be perfectly understood by the neighbors, but if it is misunderstood by the church, that right ceases to exist.

One of the most controversial matters discussed by clergy and laity alike is the matter of diet. There are those within our fold who if they had to choose between breaking the Ten Commandments and eating a piece of meat would choose to break the commandments and remain vegetarians. There are others who feel equally strongly in the other direction—and who have not accepted any limitations on their diet, or at least but few. There are some admonitions given us by the Spirit of Prophecy that I believe we would do well to heed, but it is not my purpose to touch on the righteousness or villainy of a dietary program. I believe the price of leadership requires that we rise above the matter of our rights and settle this on the basis of our influence. If the exercise of my rights causes another to stumble and lose his way, at that point my right as a leader ceases to exist.

The responsibility of leadership is well stated by the apostle Paul in Romans 14, verses 7 and 13: "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." "Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way." It is time we educate our believers to understand what is good for them. It is time we rose above the debate as to what we should and shouldn't eat. "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" (Rom. 14: 15).

Let us make our own decision not on the basis of our rights or our appetites, but on the basis of our influence. Anyone who is unwilling to do so, to that extent disqualifies himself for leadership.

I close with a statement on the rewards of leadership. There are many rewards, quite unrelated to the dollar extra that may come in the pay check at the end of the week. God holds us accountable, not just for what we do, but for what we have

(Continued on page 34)

A

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for Ministers

(Part 4)

CHARLES E. WENIGER

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Andrews University

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Now Is the Time

(Concluded)

W. JOHN CANNON

How could it be possible for a student of prophecy to live in these challenging times and not be alive to the importance of this hour? Paul reminds us that we know the time. What sedative can the enemy of souls use to lull people of God to sleep? Time itself is such a narcotic. The parable says, "While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept." This will cause the neglectful servant to say in his heart, "My Lord delayeth his coming." Then will follow the works of darkness. Time conditions us even to stirring events, until the shocking and challenging lose their edge.

The Peace and Safety Cry

We are getting used to the idea of the frightful possibilities of the nuclear age. There is something about the human organism that tends to accustom itself to impending danger over a period of time. It also tends to evade unpleasant reality. These factors are evident today. The world is full of signs of the impending conflict—the troubles in Southern Asia, China, Africa, South America, Europe, et cetera. But as the leaders of great nations counsel with each other, the slightest straw of hope fills the horizon and, for many, blots out all the signals of distress. It is wonderful to be optimistic as long as the optimism is realistically based. But knowing the time as we do we should be alert to the dangers. We are reminded, "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a



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woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness" (1 Thess. 5:2-5).

Ezekiel's reference to this "peace" cry says, "They have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace" (Eze. 13:10). The other day I looked up the "peace and safety" cry in the Spirit of Prophecy and found seven references. Five of them were attributed not to the world but to the church. God is concerned for His people. When His people are ready, the outpouring of God's Holy Spirit will come and the work will be speedily finished. However, time is running out and God cannot wait much longer.

Blow the Trumpet

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand" (Joel 2:1). The trumpet is a symbol of war. The sound of the trumpet is a call to arms. We are engaged in a mortal combat and never let us forget it. The devil is marshaling his forces for the last great battle. The signs are clear, the spirit of lawlessness is evident in our own land and across the world.

At the same time the enemy will attack through spiritual error. "Through the agency of Spiritualism, miracles will be wrought, the sick will be healed, and many undeniable wonders will be performed. And as the spirits will profess faith in the Bible, and manifest respect for the institutions of the church, their work will be ac-

A sermon preached in the Sligo church, Takoma Park, Maryland.

cepted as a manifestation of divine power."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 588.

"Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of Spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience."—*Ibid.*

Satan is also busy inciting the military forces of the world to prepare for the last great struggle. We read: "Satan delights in war; for it excites the worst passions of the soul, and then sweeps into eternity its victims steeped in vice and blood. It is his object to incite the nations to war against one another; for he can thus divert the minds of the people from the work of preparation to stand in the day of God."—*Ibid.*, p. 589.

Against the forces of darkness the Christian is called to wage total war. The urgency of time is coupled with this total commitment. Not much longer can the Lord stay His hand in destroying these evil forces. What has to be done must be done very quickly.

The End Is Near

"We have no time to lose. The end is near. The passage from place to place to spread the truth will soon be hedged with dangers on the right hand and on the left. Everything will be placed to obstruct the way of the Lord's messengers, so that they will not be able to do that which it is possible for them to do now. We must look our work fairly in the face and advance as fast as possible in aggressive warfare. From the light given me of God I know that the powers of darkness are working with intense energy from beneath, and with stealthy tread Satan is advancing to take those who are now asleep, as a wolf taking his prey. We have warnings now which we may give, a work now which we may do; but soon it will be more difficult than we can imagine. God help us to keep in the channel of light, to work with our eyes fastened on Jesus our Leader, and pa-

tiently, perseveringly press on to gain the victory."—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 22.

What can we do? The answer is given clearly. "Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light" (Rom. 13:12). This is exactly where we tend to go astray. We may sense the urgency of the time and the greatness of the task and then begin to blame others. We may say, the work is not done because the ministers, or the conferences, or the leaders, or maybe the church, has not done its part. This is not the truth, and we should know it. The application is a personal one. The message is God-given, the organization is God-directed, the question is one of personal preparation for this tremendous hour. We need to search our own hearts.

The story is told of a farmer who went to camp meeting one year. He went home miserably disappointed. He felt the meeting was a failure. He criticized the brethren, the meetings, everything about the session. The next year he was reluctant to go. After the meeting he returned home full of joyous enthusiasm. "It was wonderful," he said. His friends asked him what made the difference, "Well, last year I took the wrong implement. Last year I took a pitchfork. When something good came through I would pitch it over to someone else. I would say to myself, I hope Brother ——— is listening to that; he needs it. Then later, I hope Sister ——— is getting that point. At the end of camp meeting I had nothing at that had helped me. This year I changed all that. I took the rake. When the points were made, I raked them into myself. It did my soul good. I needed them." So it is with the urgent call to action. Let us make a personal application. *I* need to awake out of sleep, *I* need to do more in self-sacrifice and devotion to the cause.

Revival and Reformation

The threats from without the church, the impending wrath of the enemy of souls against God's people should drive us into the closest unity. "In unity there is a life, a power, that can be obtained in no other way. There will be a vast power in the church when the energies of the members are united under the control of the Spirit."—*Testimonies*, vol. 7, p. 237.

"Christians should be preparing for what is soon to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise, and this preparation

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they should make by diligently studying the word of God and striving to conform their lives to its precepts. . . . God calls for a revival and a reformation. The words of the Bible, and the Bible alone, should be heard from the pulpit. But the Bible has been robbed of its power, and the result is seen in a lowering of the tone of spiritual life. In many sermons of to-day there is not that divine manifestation which awakens the conscience and brings life to the soul. . . . There are many who are crying out for the living God, longing for the divine presence. . . . Let those who have heard only tradition and human theories and maxims, hear the voice of Him who can renew the soul unto eternal life.”—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 626.

In surrendering the heart and life to Christ we receive the power to finish the work. “When the soul surrenders itself to Christ, a new power takes possession of the new heart. A change is wrought which man can never accomplish for himself. It is a supernatural work, bringing a supernatural element into human nature.”—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 23.

This same surrender makes one brotherhood in Christ. “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples in that we have love for one another.” “The children of God, the world over, are one great brotherhood. Our Saviour has clearly defined the spirit and principles which should govern

the actions of those who, by their consistent, holy lives, distinguish themselves from the world. Love for one another, and supreme love to their heavenly Father, should be exemplified in their conversation and works.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 3, pp. 52, 53.

Brethren and sisters, we know the time, we know the need for personal preparation. He is near, even at the door. It is important that we be ready and we must see that others are ready also, so that when He comes we shall greet Him with, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him.”

Sabbath Worship Calls

(Continued from page 14)

sung. Frequently husbands or wives of Adventists regularly attend church and they, too, have the opportunity to make a commitment to Christ as they hear the Spirit of the Lord whispering to their hearts each Sabbath as the call is being made.

The pastor may not extend a call to a small audience, thinking he knows the spiritual condition of each member. However, it is often true that even our good church members have problems and habits in their lives that they wish to overcome.

A public rededication will give them strength. A specific call each Sabbath, with the singing of an invitation hymn, is an open door into the church. May it never be closed.

Leader or Fork-Fighter?

(Continued from page 30)

the capacity to do. This is clearly taught in the parable of the Talents. Those who utilize their talents to the utmost find their rewards in satisfactions that are not denominated in dollars, and that do not adapt themselves to easy description. It is obviously rewarding to see the fruitage of one's thinking, one's devising, and one's planning carried out in the work of the church. But the greatest reward of talents used unselfishly and to the maximum will be the thrill of listening to the words: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34).

Leading the Silent Sheep

A. W. GRIFFITH

Among the special classes of people in our country who are difficult to reach by ordinary methods are the estimated half million deaf who use sign language. We are not here concerned with those who are hard-of-hearing, persons who are able with hearing aids and by lip reading to lead a more or less normal life, but with those whose hearing loss has been such as to confine them to the sign language as their normal means of conversation. Sign language offers them the security of understanding and being understood. But naturally, since the hearing world knows nothing of that language, it tends to draw them together and isolate them. They seem to live in a different world.

To many ministers and laymen, the problem of getting inside that world seems to require too much effort, so little is done to give them God's message for the hour. They are wandering, silent sheep. Among them are many truehearted children of God, earnestly desiring to know His will, yet unable to comprehend His Word, for most of them have a very limited vocabulary. I have found that the first step in winning these people is to gain their confidence. That is why most Adventist deaf trace their conversion to some friend or relative. The next step is to interest them in one of our free Bible correspondence courses. This should be done at the first convenient opportunity, when the conversation comes to Bible themes. Even if you are not well acquainted with the deaf person you may find a way to sign him or her up for a course. For example, let us say you are a colporteur or lay worker distributing handbills and literature. The person at the door indicates by word or gesture that he or she is deaf. You do not waste time mouthing simple words so that the



Pastor
Battle Ground
Washington

person may read your lips. You take out your pen and write on paper something like this: "This year, all churches are putting on a drive to get people to read the Holy Bible more. America needs to know God better. I am one of many workers who are bringing information regarding a wonderful *free* Bible study course by mail to all who wish it. We want the deaf to have the same chance as those who hear. Just fill out this

card. There is no cost whatever, and you will get a beautiful certificate when you finish, and best of all, you will know your Bible much better."

If an enrollment is obtained, the caller should suggest that perhaps there are friends who would like to take the course too. Put these names and addresses in a special address book. The enrollment card should not be left but should be mailed by the worker himself, after copying the name and address in his book.

The Sabbath is the great test with the deaf as with other people, so as soon as the enrollee has sent in the sheet on this subject, a qualified Bible instructor should make a visit. Unless the worker has learned the manual (hand) alphabet well, and knows some signs, the talk will have to be on a pad. Notice the language and words used. Do not use words that you are not sure will be understood. Never refer to the deaf as the "deaf and dumb." To many deaf that means "deaf and stupid." It is important to understand the attitudes that prevail among the deaf and thus avoid mistakes that might offend.

1. They have an intense desire to be looked upon as capable persons, and do not appreciate expressions of pity.

2. They deeply resent any suggestion that it is unsafe for them to drive cars, or that they should not marry or have fam-

ilies. The question regularly asked of deaf parents: "Can your children hear?" nettles them because it implies that the questioner thinks children of deaf parents are usually deaf. (Only a small percentage of deaf children are born of deaf parents.)

3. Realizing that they might misunderstand, or be misled by someone better educated than they are, who may have designs on them, many deaf are suspicious and distrustful at first, and this attitude may prevail for some time, so patience is needed.

From Herman Leon, of Los Angeles, an earnest semideaf convert from Judaism, comes an inspiring story of Prof. Abel Sauza Aranda, of Mexico, who twelve years ago established in Monterrey what may be the first Seventh-day Adventist school for the deaf in the world. The school teaches a number of trades as well as the three R's. No less than thirty deaf people have been won by his efforts, and the astounding thing is that the professor is himself deaf. Recently he paid another visit to the Lynwood deaf group, led by Neil Davidson of the Southern California Conference. We have three licensed Seventh-day Adventist ministers to the deaf working in our denomination. The office of the *Newsletter of Seventh-day Adventist Deaf* is a clearinghouse for information. The address is: Route 2, Box 240, Battle Ground, Washington.

We earnestly request all ministers and workers to make a list of the deaf with whom they are acquainted or have met, and send it to us. These names will be compared with our master list, and if any new ones appear, we will send them our *Newsletter*. This helps to make them feel they belong and that they do not stand alone.

(Continued from column 2)

miraculous preservation of them during their journeyings from Egypt to the promised land, so should the people of God at the present time gratefully call to mind the various ways He has devised to bring them out from the world, out from the darkness of error, into the precious light of truth. . . . We should gratefully regard the old way-marks, and refresh our souls with memories of the loving-kindness of our gracious Benefactor. . . .

As we journey onward, what a blessed privilege is ours to accept the invitation of Christ, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink."—*Review and Herald*, Nov. 17, 1885.

Which Way Are We Going?

D. A. DELAFIELD

Associate Secretary—Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.

If you have ever traveled in East Pennsylvania you have noted the "hex" ornamental work (circular-shaped designs on barns, et cetera) immortalizing traditions and religious concepts of the Pennsylvania Dutch. In one such design a goldfinch—called a *distelfink* (or distelfinch) is depicted. This bird is really a goldfinch who eats thistle seeds and uses thistle-down to make her nest. The Dutch say that this *distelfink* doesn't care where she is going; she is only interested in where she has been. Consequently, the *distelfink* is always facing in one direction—backward.

Seventh-day Adventists are interested in the backward look—in the past and in the lessons that the past teaches us. We have a debt that we owe to the past and we should pay that debt by carefully reviewing Adventist literature depicting the history of the movement, by reading the *Review*, et cetera. We want to learn what the past has to teach. But we are not like the *distelfink* who is only interested in where she has been. We are interested in where we are going, more particularly where we are, as a church, today!

The Spirit of Prophecy Sabbath service, May 16, provides an allotment of time for all Seventh-day Adventists to do their memory work! The theme of the Spirit of Prophecy Day program on May 16 is "Spiritual Gifts, Why?" Theodore Carcich, vice-president for North America, answers this question in an original, dynamic sermon. Use it, brethren, in your churches on Sabbath morning, May 16. It will grip the audience. After listening to you preach the basic ideas, they will have confidence in the triumph of the movement and as a most precious byproduct their confidence in the Lord's guidance through the Spirit of Prophecy will be increased.

We are better qualified for successful work today and in advocating "the present truth," as the pioneers called it, tomorrow, if we will interest ourselves in the lessons history teaches us. Wrote Ellen G. White:

As the children of Israel celebrated the deliverance that God wrought for their fathers, and His

(Continued on previous column)



BIBLE INSTRUCTORS

Winsome Ways With Roman Catholics

DOREEN FOX



Bible Instructor
New Zealand

Unless a Bible instructor is very inexperienced, in my opinion she should not hand over to the pastor the opportunity to study in a Roman Catholic home simply because she feels that he may be able to handle the studies and problems more successfully. He may be able to, and then on the other hand he may not. I know of cases where the pastor, though well equipped with all the information necessary, did not make such a favorable impression as the Bible instructor who, going along in a more gentle manner, without compromising any point and presenting the truth clearly, secured a good response to the teachings of the church. There is a rich blessing to be gained in studying with earnest inquirers from the Roman Catholic faith and a valuable training to be had in the presentation of our doctrines; in the understanding of the Catholic mind and Catholic belief; and in the application of tact and the golden rule.

One's attitude to these dear people is most important. It must be absolutely free from all traces of contempt, bigotry, and bitterness, otherwise negative feeling will provoke a negative response. One must also realize that practically every study will tear to shreds something that the student has held very dear and leaned on for support. It is necessary to walk in the other's moccasins and think how we would feel if someone seemed to be able to prove that the 2300-day prophecy was baseless, that the Spirit of Prophecy was fraudulent, and the Sabbath was nothing more than a Jewish myth. How shaken and bewildered we would be.

If we could imagine such a thing then we understand how our Roman Catholic friends feel when they learn the jolting truth about the mass, the priesthood, confession, and infant

baptism. We need to pray that God will give us the understanding, tact, and wisdom necessary to lead them over these hard places and bring them to the other side with their hands clasped in ours. Kindness and consideration on these points can make all the difference between success or failure.

We must not take the attitude that the Catholic Church is all wrong. We must give credit where we can.

This will be appreciated. Remember, too, that while pointing out things and revealing from Scripture that many of their teachings are wrong, we must be very guarded not to give the impression that those who hold such beliefs are stupid. The teacher of truth must always be kind and considerate. Genuine praise is always fitting. So if your student is a mother, find a way of complimenting her. Maybe she has special ability in music or art, or plain good cooking to commend her. Take an interest in what she is doing. Little things like this will balance the effect of your having to prove her wrong on most of her treasured beliefs.

Take special care early in your contacts to make her your friend, knowing that she will have to pass through turbulent times in coming to a knowledge of the truth. If she gets the impression that you are just the teacher who comes to say your little piece she will not turn to you when she is upset.

Remember too, that there will be conflict in her mind for quite some time and she may naturally follow her habit of long standing and go to mass. When she discovers the mass is a form of idolatry she will naturally be torn in mind between her habit and new-found truth. The same conflict will develop over the confessional. She will feel guilty for not going and



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she will feel afraid to go lest she incur the wrath of Jesus by putting a man in His place. Encourage her to think frequently on the new truths, till they are firmly settled in her thinking and she is sure of herself.

Be particularly alert for times of marital or financial difficulties, sickness, or bereavement. All these will add to the conflict and turmoil in her mind and you will need to deal very gently with her and let her know that you are an understanding person on whom she can lean, if necessary. A young mother with a young family is one who will most likely need your discretion and your well-placed help. There may be days when she is too tired to concentrate. Do not leave her and do not try to go through a study with her. Stay awhile and have a friendly chat and make friends with the children. They can be won to you by simple means and before too long you may find yourself "adopted" as auntie. Bring your visit to a close with a short reading and prayer. Always kneel and always pray for any member of the family who may be showing antagonism to you, then when he or she is speaking against you your student can say: "Miss _____ never says a word against you, but she always includes you in her prayers."

If there are any of our own members who have contact with your student pay them a visit and tactfully let it be known that you wish them to leave the development of all doctrine to you. Warn them against making disparaging remarks against the Roman Catholic Church. An unfortunate remark at the wrong time may lose a precious soul to the kingdom. A family I knew foolishly introduced to my student, who was a friend of theirs, the subject of misconduct by certain priests. This was almost more than she could take, and if I had not made her my friend during early studies she would have turned from us altogether.

Have on hand a good summary of the points you have covered in your studies. Once, unknown to my student, her husband invited the priest to the house to settle the "nonsense" she was dabbling in. He stayed for three hours, reducing her to tears and a state of confusion.

When the priest left, her husband put all her papers in the fire and she had nothing to refer to. Next day she called me on the telephone and said that the priest had "tied her in knots" and had "almost convinced" her again that his church was right. The "almost" gave me lots of hope. I pointed out to her that since she did not know her Bible very well others could also have "tied her in knots." The fact that the priest had done so really proved nothing. As quickly as possible I had a summary of our studies placed in her hands. Reading this brought all the points back to her mind and acted as a fine stabilizer.

In your initial visit it will be well to remember that Roman Catholics are told all kinds of things about Protestants, and your student will be wondering just what your approach will be and what you will be like. She may have been told that Protestants protest against everything that is good, that they worship the devil. Some have been told the most fantastic things. In one place in South America a priest declared that Protestants kept a crucifix at their window. The crucifix was pointed in the direction of the nearest body of water. At this crucifix prayers of confessions were made and then the Protestant blew on the crucifix, hoping that the winds would carry the sins away to the water, where they would be washed away.

Be careful what you say about the priesthood. Many of these men are deeply sincere and are rightly held in high regard by their people. Many have given wonderful help to their people, and even though your student has begun to see things that are not right in her church, she may still look upon her priest as a man of God and certainly one who has been a friend in time of need.

Because her mind is used to thinking Roman Catholic theology you may have to repeat some truths a number of times to help her to grasp them. Lay a strong foundation for the Bible as the only rule of faith and Jesus as the only Mediator and Saviour. No one else can share His position. No priest is "another Christ," as has been claimed.

In the first studies it is most important that you set the direction of her thinking along clear lines. This is best done by taking as short a route as possible first, in the explanation of a subject and then later backing it up with a full-scale study. For example, when you are first asked about purgatory do not go into a long detailed study on the condition of men in death. Simply point out that since "The blood of Jesus Christ . . . cleanseth us from all sin" any other establishment for cleansing is entirely

superfluous. Pointing out that purgatory thus casts contempt on the ability of Jesus, the One she loves, has a telling effect.

When questions arise about the priesthood it is rather shattering to take a copy of the Douay Bible and show that there are no priests listed among the New Testament church officers. Where, then, did they come from? Have they any real authority to be in office? This will probably introduce the subject of the mass, for a priest's special function is to offer up a sacrifice. In the front of the mass book it describes the mass as the offering of Jesus as an "unbloody sacrifice." Knowing this, you simply point out that "without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin. Thus the mass is without effect. Never refer to it as "a farce." To the Catholics it is their most sacred service and unless we handle this subject tactfully we ourselves and not the service of the mass will become abominable. Point out, too, that since our Lord (it is best to always use this term when referring to Jesus) is in heaven and right at His Father's throne it is strange that He should have to come to earth again in the form of the wafer, to offer Himself to the Father in a bloodless sacrifice. Before long you will be able to show that if the wafer is the body of Jesus, to eat it is cannibalism. If it is not the body of Jesus, to bow to it is idolatry. Give your student every opportunity to state this herself. Don't sweep in ahead of her.

Catholics are usually amazed to find out that a good number of their own priests have left the church because they doubted their ability to give absolution, and they doubted the worthiness of the mass. It is helpful to have on hand some good books that tell the stories of priests who have left the church, not out of bitterness, but because they found real truth. If you have books that show photos of the priests or monks you may find you can ward off the teaching they have that "anything can be written in books." Of course, you point out that since that is so, then much that is truth can be written "in books." I found most helpful the book *The Monk Who Lived Again*, by B. H. Pearson, Light and Life Press, Winona Lake, Indiana.

Spare no effort to make your study on the state of the dead clear and convincing. To do good work here is to sweep away eternal hell-fire, purgatory, prayers to saints and Mary, All Souls' Day, and masses for the dead without having to laboriously deal with each topic.

When you are told that Catholics do not worship the virgin Mary, show that they worship our Lord with prayers and hymns and offerings, and they pray and sing to Mary and bring her

offerings. How can such acts be worship in one case and not in the other?

Spend much time in prayer for these people. Help all you can and work along patiently and optimistically, rejoicing that you have the wonderful privilege of getting close to someone to give her a personal invitation to come out of Babylon.

A Bibliography for Ministers

(Continued from page 31)

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Note the inclusiveness of the above works. Preachers are directed to studies by Baldwin, Crawford, Dye, Garrison, Hite, Hult, McKee, Person, Seiders, Strang, Wells, Wilbur, et cetera. Student and camp counselors may find values in studies by Lanius, Maeda, and Watson. Chaplains—army and hospital—will probably be challenged by theses by Ingle, Kennedy, Lindsoe, Saeger, and Sutley. Surely there is a wealth of material accessible in these areas of interest.

Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 160.

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BOOKS

***At the Master's Feet*, H. H. Hargrove, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1963, 211 pages, \$2.95.**

Here are nine expository sermons from the Sermon on the Mount. They have been preached by the author in many Southern Baptist churches, revival meetings, and in summer encampments. The texts are taken entirely from Matthew's account of Christ's sermon, and expanded in Christ's later teaching and instruction of the apostles. Dr. Hargrove uses the teaching method, but that does not mean that his presentations are commonplace or dull. He follows closely an understandable outline, uses many texts of Scripture, and makes good use of subtitles. For example in the chapter entitled "The Christian and the Law" he uses the following subtitles: 1. "The Christian's Attitude Toward the Law Must Be in Harmony With the Master's Attitude Toward the Law." 2. "Christians Are to Observe the Law." 3. "Christians Are to Keep the Law in Their Hearts." 4. "The Christian Must Make Any Immediate Sacrifice to Keep His Heart Right." 5. "Christians Are to Have Honor Unashamed." 6. "The Christian Must Have Love Unbounded." He ends this chapter by saying, "So the Law is God's guide for Christians as it was for Israel. They are to observe it as God's will for their lives. Love is their passion and Christ is their dynamic for its observance."

ANDREW FEARING

***Luther*, Franz Lau, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1963, 166 pages plus 5 pages of bibliography and an index, \$3.75.**

This short study of the man whose history our ministers are told to study (*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 152) is a welcome addition to literature. Professor Lau holds the chair of Church History at the University of Leipzig. Since this is in the area commonly known as East Germany, one might expect the book to be quite subdued on certain subjects. It is commonly said that the Communists downgrade Luther and exalt the more radical men of the Reformation Era. Lau does not echo this bit of propaganda. His study gives evidence of being the fruit of his honest conclusions, based on a thorough study of all the available literature. (He has served

since 1957 as the editor of the *Luther Yearbook* and the *Luther Bibliography*.) For a minister who has already mastered the main outlines of Luther's life this volume will be a welcome refresher of the memory. Let me quote an interesting passage as a sample of the writer's excellent style:

"Many felt and said aloud that it was unheard of for a wretched mendicant monk to be cited to a German imperial diet and to be presented to a Roman cardinal, and an unprecedented audacity that the ridiculous monk, far from recanting without ado, dared to insist on an argument. That Frederick the Wise could risk all suggesting or demanding the appearance of his professor in the monk's cowl at Worms before emperor and empire, and that the imperial herald Caspar Sturm was assigned the ceremonial task of inducting a mendicant monk into the presence of the German estates and the emperor, was from the viewpoint of the medieval world an incomparably grotesque situation. That Luther dared to make a speech before extorting, as it were, the right to do so by means of the well-known and so often misinterpreted request for time to ponder—sounds like a fairy tale, and made just that impression on men's souls. It becomes comprehensible only if one realizes that actually the whole world was fascinated by this strange monk, and not only in a superficial way: his preaching and teaching had penetrated deep into men's hearts. The mendicant professor from the shabby, fledgling, and on the whole completely insignificant, small-town university in one of the most miserable mudholes in Germany had become the focus of German thinking, not, to be sure, because he embodied the spirit of the times in a particularly concentrated way but because he gave a new answer to medieval questions about faith, and in general had something to say only to those who wished to believe the gospel."

SYDNEY ALLEN

***When Children Worship*, Florence Lee, et al. The Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, 1963, 63 pages, \$1.00.**

This little book is a collection of articles by various writers. All of them have been published previously in *The Baptist Leader*, with the exception of one entitled "Wonder, Work, and Worship."

The writers of these articles have had much experience in the field of Christian education, and the articles are an endeavor to help parents and teachers to a deeper understanding of a child's mind with regard to worship and they suggest some ways of how to prepare him for this experience.

A modern trend of thought is that a child must wait until he reaches maturity before he can really worship and understand its meaning. The authors of this book suggest that God is already present in a child's world and that now—when he is a child—is the time to help him in his attitude toward worship. Now is when he needs adults who are

sensitive to his world to help him express his feeling of reverence toward God.

Several ways of helping the children in this phase of their experience are suggested in this book. Therefore, it could be very useful to parents and teachers of children who wish those in their care to learn the attitude and spirit of true worship and reverence while they are young.

J. INA WHITE

***While I'm on My Feet*, Gerald Kennedy, Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 204 pages, \$3.50.**

Bishop Gerald Kennedy, a Methodist, is known to many outside his church through his writing. *While I'm on My Feet* is autobiographical, but is far too brief to be a real autobiography. That is beside the point, for the book is intensely interesting to anyone who loves the ministry. Reading the book, I found myself reaching for my pen to underline passage after passage, for the practical good sense found in its pages.

Bishop Kennedy has been a teacher, preacher, and writer and now for years an administrator. His observations on preaching are almost worth the price of the book. "To organize our material does not take special gifts and it does not demand any great intelligence. But it does demand the assumption that an involved and obscure style is not so much a sign of profundity of thought as confusion of mind." "Abstract preaching is always poor preaching." "I have been preacher and teacher. Preaching is better. I have been preacher and writer. Preaching is better. I have been preacher and administrator. Preaching is better."

These are samples of the directness and practicality Kennedy uses throughout the book. You will find it stimulating.

R. E. FINNEY, JR.

***The Layman's Role Today*, Frederick K. Wentz, Doubleday and Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1963, 225 pages, \$4.95.**

We are surely aware that the work of God on earth will never be finished by the clergy alone. There must be a laity fully committed, well trained, and skillfully guided, cooperating with the ministry for total success. Dr. Wentz encourages the ministry to challenge the congregation to lose themselves in service to human need, and also to portray the Master's teaching in every respect of one's secular life—"Not as sheep existing solely to be shorn periodically by his shepherd, but as soldiers for Christ, aggressively committed to an all-out concern for a cause much bigger than himself."

This is an excellent book. Rich in ideas for laymen who wish to be more than ushers, serve on a church board, teach a Sabbath school class, sing in the choir, be a teacher, a Pathfinder leader, or even help on a visitation Sabbath day. This message is for men who want to apply what they learn on Sabbath to the job during the rest of the week. God's work will be done—through us if we are unable, through others if we are not. The author

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ANDREW FEARING

***Power of Paul*, W. McFerrin Stow, Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tennessee, 1963, 128 pages, \$2.50.**

It was a joy to read this book. My faith was strengthened, my heart was lifted. A study of the life of Paul enables us to realize the limitless capacity of God to change a person's life. Observe what God did to Saul of Tarsus when He entered into his life. The power of God is no less today than it was then. His purpose is no different. We too can be changed, transformed. God's power is as available to us today as it was in the time of Paul. "Take from his [Paul's] life his encounter with God on a dusty road, and you take from him his greatness. Add to the life of any of us such an experience and we will begin to take on some of the qualities that relate to greatness. Paul was transformed because of his dynamic encounter with Christ. Paul was transformed because he made a total surrender to Christ after he had the dynamic encounter with him. Paul was transformed because he was willingly obedient to Christ. Paul was transformed because of his continuing fellowship with Christ." The style of this book is simple, for the chapters were written as sermons and were delivered to Dr. Stow's congregation, in St. Luke's Methodist church in Oklahoma City. The short sermons consider the themes: This One Thing I Do; The Greatest of All Love; In Every Thing God Works for Good; Remember to Forget; Christ Lives in Me; Thinking Positively; How to Grow Spiritually; I Can Do All Things Through Christ; How Weakness Becomes Strength; and Victory.

ANDREW FEARING

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NEWS BRIEFS

[Unless otherwise credited, the following news items are taken from Religious News Service.]

Adventist Missionary Honored by Denmark

Denmark's Royal Gold Medal award was presented in San Francisco for the first time to a missionary who is not of the State Lutheran Church of Denmark. The Reverend Bent A. Larsen, for 34 years a Seventh-day Adventist missionary in Peru, was given the medal by the Danish consul general in appreciation of his services to the Lutheran colony in Lima. As Pastor of the Adventist church there, Mr. Larsen shared a building with the Lutheran congregation. Adventist services were conducted on Saturday, Lutheran services on Sunday. When no Scandinavian Lutheran minister was in Lima, Mr. Larsen participated in the Lutheran services.

Dr. Ramsey Asks Young Anglican Clergymen to Postpone Marriage

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Arthur Michael Ramsey, made a proposal at the spring session of the Anglican Church Assembly: "There is a great desire that we should have more unmarried clergy," he said. "I do not think the Church desires an all-celibate priesthood. . . . It is right that the majority should be married, but there is a great desire that more and more should remain unmarried for four years in order to serve sacrificially for mobility of the clergy."

Ministerial Group Told Law Bars Pastoral Hypnosis

Eleven Toronto clergymen of four denominations reported that they wish to use hypnosis in religious counseling but have been told it is against the law. The group—four Anglicans, three United Church ministers, three Baptists, and a Presbyterian—took part in a demonstration of group hypnosis under the leadership of Canon Joseph Wittkofski, Protestant Episcopal priest from Charleroi, Pennsylvania. The warning against using hypnosis in Ontario came from the Provincial Minister of Health, Dr. Matthew Dymond. His department is responsible for enforcement of the Ontario Hypnosis Act of 1961, which says hypnosis may be practiced only by qualified doctors, dentists, and psychologists and students in those professions supervised by quali-

fied personnel. Sentences provide fines ranging from \$100 to \$2,000 and jail terms up to nine months.

City Drops "Registration of Sabbatarian Stores"

A registration provision that had been compared by some complainants to "Gestapo state" tactics has been stricken from the Minneapolis Sunday-closing ordinance. The ordinance contains a "Saturday option" provision permitting stores closing on Saturdays to open on Sundays. But to qualify, such stores were required to register with the Minneapolis police. When representatives of Jewish and Seventh-day Adventist groups objected, the city council eliminated the registration requirement.

Baptist Music Expert Sees Some Old Hymns On Way Out

The old fundamentalist hymn got a blow at a Southern Baptist music conference that showed the growing sophistication of music and musicians in this hymn-singing denomination. Attended by Baptists from various parts of the country, the three-day sessions began with criticisms of some old hymns. General sessions featured work by choirs, bands, and soloists of top quality. Their music was of concert hall caliber. The sessions also included pertinent words from prominent music scholars. Among them was the man who probably knows the most about what Southern Baptists sing—W. J. Reynolds, director of editorial services for the church music department of the Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, who remarked that changes in word meanings and modern theology are making some famous hymns outdated. "For instance," he said, "there is a hymn called 'Before Jehovah's Awful Throne.' Today's meaning of 'awful' hurts the meaning of the hymn." Austin Lovelace, author, composer, and member of the Union Theological Seminary faculty, called on musicians to keep love songs like "O Promise Me," out of church weddings. They are simply not religious, he said.

Evangelistic Visiting

(Continued from page 26)

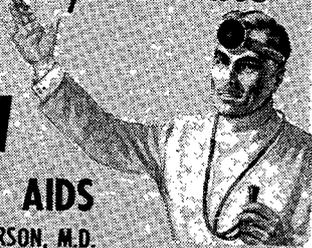
taper off on his stealing. Neither does He expect a delay with a cigarette smoker or a Sabbathbreaker. You will just have to stay close. Vigilance and prayer are more necessary now than at any time during the series.

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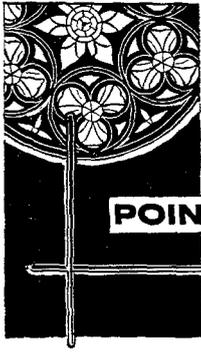
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POINTERS

FLYING TIME THERE is something wrong with every plan attempted by man. And often the perfect plan of salvation is little understood, owing to faulty transmission. Is this, then, a valid argument against any attempt? It requires no special intellectual endowment to point out the weaknesses in any man-sponsored proposal. Much of the unsanctified inertia that pervades is because of this. Great care should be exercised lest we make gods of our gripes. To have one's feet on the ground may be complimentary if it is not *flying time*. "Impulsive," "visionary," and "impractical," may describe a cause of victory or the seeds of defeat. The fact is, we should be careful not to overfavor our caution or our zeal, for it takes a little bit of both to make the earth turn. To illustrate: There are many unentered cities in this world filled with hearts that know only erosive despair punctuated with an occasional shaft of sunlight. To neglect these cities because of "lack of budget" can be as fatal now as similar reasoning would have been, had the pioneers exercised similar caution. Thank God they did not! They reached people with the saving message. The people have produced the budgets. This must be the key to present and future planning. We must not become dollar-bound in terms of gospel outreach. It is a sickness that can condemn us to this wilderness another hundred years. Pastors, we must interpret this personally. There are illustrations of the opposite among us. May God greatly enlarge this segment of our worker population.

E. E. C.

THE RIGHT TO BE ATTACKED AND CONTRADICTED

MANY Protestants are pleased at the attempts at the Vatican Council II to draw up an agreed statement on religious liberty. That statement will not be easily prepared, but there are nevertheless many points on which a façade of ostensible liberty may yet be erected. Many of these same seekers of Christian unity, however, have openly stated their views that proselytizing by Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other unnamed heretical sects, should be prohibited, if need be by civil power, from activities inimical to the interests of a world Christian church.

A courageous Danish preacher, K. E. Jensen, in

an address before the Danish Parliament recently, declared that the Christian church needs no bolstering by the state, and that the state should grant Christians and others the right to freedom of speech. Legislation designed to protect the church from attack is not right, he continued, "for to be attacked and contradicted is one of the foremost human rights and we shall not renounce it." The hostility of the world has enhanced the church's vitality all through the ages.

H. W. L.

MAKING TRACKS A SHORT time ago the President of the United States proposed for the nation a physical-fitness program. The very thought of a people going soft, at the peak of their nation's power, awakens tortured memories of ancient empires now extinct. To prevent this, Mr. Kennedy inaugurated a physical-fitness program in all schools. To publicize this he challenged the nation's armed services to a 50 mile hike—a proof of fitness. Soon civilians accepted the program, and the nation was treated with a rash of prominent 50-mile hikers.

The ministry has come a long way since the days of the old circuit rider, and not all the distance is praiseworthy. In fact, all the forces that can soften a nation can soften the preacher. And what are some of the signs that this erosive influence is at work among us? (1) Reluctance to run long campaigns or enough short ones to compensate, (2) our tolerance of an idle laity through spasmodic training classes or none at all, (3) fear of making pointed appeals for full surrender and *church membership*, (4) and the unjustifiable lack of appetite for anything worthy that entails suffering, sacrifice, and nameless risk. How long dare we linger while the ordinary, commonplace tasks consume our strength and the grand work of personal soulsaving goes unattended? What man among us can behold unmoved the teeming cities with their unreached millions? Does the impossibility of reaching all prevent our reaching any? Said the farmer to his son, "You may not plow the whole field today, but let the sunset find you making tracks." A prominent auto dealership advertises itself as the home of the "wide track" cars. Are you "making tracks"? Are they "wide"?

E. E. C.

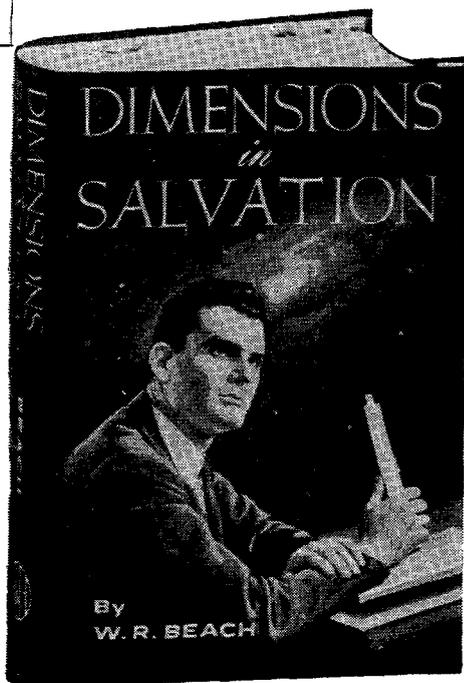
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It was told in England during World War II that a certain east coast town was shelled, but little damage was done. The shells, made to explode on impact with hard steel of warships, did not often explode when striking the soft walls of houses.

Drawing a lesson from this, Thomas H. Kcir, in

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The MINISTRY

a valuable little book *The Word in Worship*, says: "Some sermons fail to register because the modern mind is theologically so woolly that there is nothing for the gospel to bite on."—Page 15. He then quotes T. E. Jessop, who had much experience as a chaplain and who preached to large groups of troops during the same war. Jessop found men almost impervious to the abstract ideas involved in the Christian religion, and commented: "It is not that they won't; it is that they can't."—*Ibid.*

The fact is that the impetus of our pious fathers' religion is waning, and we are not reading the Bible, praying, searching, as did our forefathers. This spells spiritual apathy and atrophy of our spiritual perceptions.

All of which should send us to our knees in an agonizing prayer for power to break through. "Make bare Thine arm, O Lord of hosts!" H. W. L.

65—STILL ALIVE! AN *Australasian Record* reports that "Pastor W. M. R. Scragg, is holding a series of evangelistic meetings in the church at Young, where he retired." Strange retirement!

But this is true of most ministers of the gospel. Death alone can seal their lips. As I write this, J. H. Laurence, in his eighties, is pastoring a church. J. G. Thomas, over seventy, is in constant demand as a revivalist. B. W. Abney is active, giving Bible studies and as a church elder. Until his death, A. V. Olson was busy strengthening the saints. W. B. Ochs has retired, I understand, but he continues to lend his counsel at administrative gatherings of the church. G. E. Peters, though physically weakened, still counsels young pastors and inspires the saints. And many others could be mentioned, all of which raises an interesting question, Why is it hard to "retire" an Adventist preacher?

We glean our first answer from the obvious—they love the work, and they love to work. Nothing proves this more than the fact that they cannot quit at quitting time. And there is something intriguing about this—and altogether inspiring.

These men are gripped by something that will not let them go. It occurs to me that, with a minister, it is a question of "being released" and not a mere conscious relaxation. And, it seems, this never really happens. When does the minister cease to minister? The answer is Never!

A second reason suggests itself at this point. To the minister, the ministry is life. It is what he has done for years. To suddenly break that pattern is to send him to an early grave. For this reason if no other, it is unthinkable to insist on a cessation of service. And fortunate is the young man who has one of these brethren in his district. May "retired ministers" be shown the kindness and respect that they deserve. And may the latter years reflect their credit, like setting sun—casting its glory on that which is behind. E. E. C.

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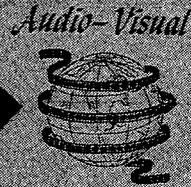
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