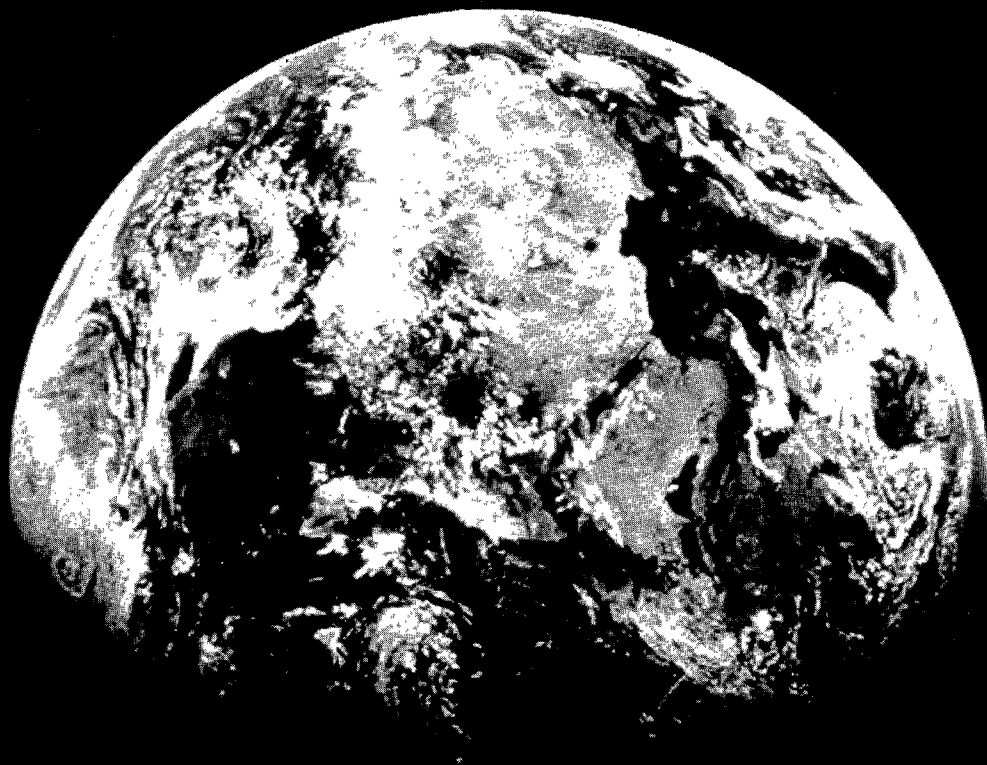


Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/May 1981



*The Doctrine of Beginnings
Strategies for Origins*

Several readers express appreciation for the John Osborn series on Preaching the Word, while others characterize the January editorial, "Legislated Morality," as advocating a noninvolved religious stance.

On target

John Osborn's article "Putting Your Sermon on Target" (January, 1981) was right on target! For more than a quarter of a century I have had the privilege of proclaiming the word that is able to save our souls. A few years ago I returned to my early practice of writing out every word of my sermon. This ensures careful preparation. At the end I always state my aim in a single, concise sentence. This is identical to Osborn's "proposition." Thank you for helping us feed God's people from what we Catholics today call "the table of the Word."—Catholic priest, Missouri.

The articles on ministry and the pastor in the January issue were excellent. I found "Putting Your Sermon on Target" and "The Saving Knowledge of the Truth" particularly helpful. I am finding many people coming to my church to find spiritual truth that means something in the wear and tear of life, rather than seeking

An outstretched hand

If you are receiving *MINISTRY* bimonthly without having paid for a subscription, it is not a mistake.

We believe the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. Since 1928 *MINISTRY* has been designed to meet the needs of Seventh-day Adventist ministers. However, we believe that we have much in common with the entire religious community and want to share with you our aspirations and faith in a way that we trust will provide inspiration and help for you too.

We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulders, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you cannot use.

Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. Each request should be on your church letterhead (if possible) and include name, address, denominational affiliation and position. Clergy outside the U.S. and Canada please remit \$2.00 postage.

formalism or shallow emotionalism. What a blessing to see them established in our wonderful Lord and finding that their relationship, based on the Word, can meet every situation. Your articles challenge me and give me insights that will make me a better servant of our Lord.—Nazarene minister, Michigan.

Almost by accident I came across the series by John Osborn, *Preaching the Word*. I have the second and fourth articles in the series and would like to receive the others. Please put me on the mailing list to receive subsequent issues of *MINISTRY*.—Christian and Missionary Alliance minister, Ontario.

I recently received a copy of *MINISTRY* that was addressed to the former pastor of this church. I would like to continue receiving it. I am particularly interested in earlier articles of the series *Preaching the Word*. I am teaching a class of ministerial students in a course of methodical Bible study. Mr. Osborn's article is a helpful summary of how the minister bridges the gap from personal study to application in presenting a message.—Wesleyan minister, Michigan.

John Osborn's series began in the May, 1980, issue and ran in each bimonthly copy until its conclusion with this issue. Readers who missed certain articles in the series can obtain them for the cost of making photocopies.—Editors.

Afraid of being left out?

Re: your January, 1981, editorial, "Legislated Morality," I am sick of you trying to tell others not to be political when your church is full of it. The thing that is worrying you is that you are afraid of being left out. We all pay taxes, so we have a right to speak out and try to turn this nation around. Did not Elijah bring a nation to her knees when he appeared before King Ahab and pronounced that there would be no rain until the Lord gave the word? (1 Kings 17). You have far too much of man in your work and far too little of God. Please do not send *MINISTRY* to me anymore.—Foursquare Gospel minister, Maryland.

If we could be sure that the positions taken by the "religious Right" on such matters as

ERA, defense spending, the Panama Canal treaty, et cetera, were spoken to them by God as directly as He instructed Elijah what to say to Ahab, we would have no misgivings. Lacking such assurance, we can't help being a bit uneasy. Actually, it seems to us that in this case we depend less upon man and more upon God, since we feel that the most effective way to accomplish spiritual and moral reforms is not to coerce through legislation passed by man, but to coerce through the power of the Holy Spirit as we present the claims of God to individual hearts.—Editors.

No right to speak

Your understanding of separation of church and state ("Legislated Morality," January, 1981) is completely novel and would be repudiated by the Founding Fathers. You advocate an irrelevant, monastic religion, which by its noninvolvement in community issues and decisions (which is all that politics is) ends up aiding and abetting the crimes of our day. Indeed, you have no right whatsoever to speak out on the issues if you refuse to participate in them. Perhaps you'll change your mind when someone tries to put a peep show next to your church! Like the Essenes of old, you've chosen the easy way out in the desert. Jesus, like the prophets before Him, chose the marketplace.—Nazarene minister, Massachusetts.

If the January editorial gave the impression that MINISTRY believes the church should isolate itself from society and refuse to speak out on moral issues, we somehow failed to make the total picture clear. We believe the church has a definite responsibility to take stands on moral issues. Our concerns with the "Christian Right" stem from the overtones that seem to be present that in achieving certain political goals the "kingdom of God" can be established. If one feels that we can legislate the spiritual objectives of the church by political processes, then we believe there is ample cause for alarm. This is a very different matter from saying that the church should keep silent or uncommitted in moral issues. The point of the editorial was that the state is concerned with the well-being of society and thus passes laws to control actions detrimental to it. The church, on the other hand, is primarily concerned with matters of the heart, and these cannot be legislated. We believe that a sound case can be made against such evils as homosexuality,
(Continued on page 29.)

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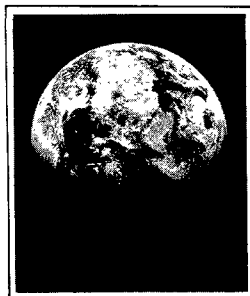
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Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/May 1981/Volume 54/Number 5



COVER: NASA

The Essence of Dispensationalism/4. A system of understanding Scripture begun in nineteenth-century England has become widely held. Hans K. LaRondelle examines the hermeneutics of dispensationalism and compares this relatively recent phenomenon with the church's historical understanding.

Pain Precedes Healing/7. John Savage. Do you have an inactive church member whom you avoid visiting because of the painful encounters such a visit usually causes?

Michelangelo: Poetic Theologian/8. The name Michelangelo is well known among artists, but theologians have rarely considered his contributions to their field. In this perceptive essay Robert Allen Patterson examines some of Michelangelo's literary works, and finds rich theological treasures.

Bringing the Sermon to a Close/10. John Osborn. In this concluding article in the series on Preaching the Word, the author gives specific points to remember when planning the hardest part of the sermon—the conclusion.

Treasure in Earthen Vessels/13. It is possible that unsuccessful communication with your congregation is caused not by being a poor preacher but by having a poor pastoral image. Kenneth R. Prather, a practicing pastor, shares four elements that will enhance your congregation's perception of you.

"Monkey Trial" Ruling Pleases Creationists/14. Leo R. Van Dolson.

What's in It for Me?/16. John Todorovich. Peter's question in Matthew 19:27 could be stated simply, "What will we get out of our ministry?" This question is echoed by pastors today—and sometimes the answers take us a long way from the high ethical principles set forth in Scripture.

The Doctrine of Beginnings/18. What the Bible teaches about Creation proves to be more fundamental and pivotal to all of Christian thought than most of us have realized. Warren H. Johns continues the series, This We Believe, with an examination of this crucial doctrine and its implications for contemporary Christians.

Ministerial Tuneup/21. Dunbar W. Smith. In their dedication to their calling, ministers sometimes neglect the precious gift of health—until it is almost too late. Here are some hints that may prevent you from wearing out long before you should.

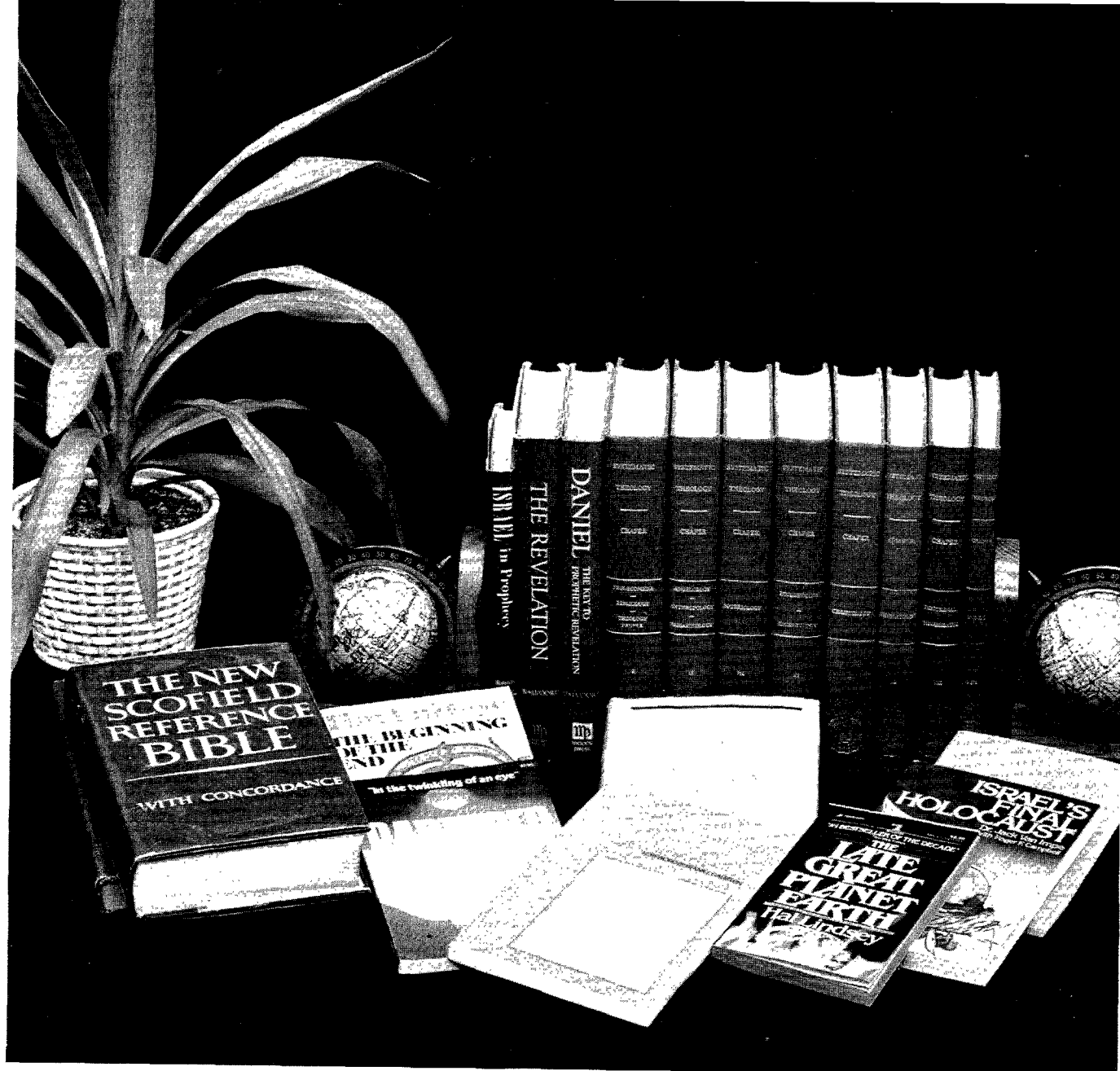
Why Johnny Can't Listen to the Sermon/22. B. Russell Holt.

A New Love Affair/24. Sally S. Streib.

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The essence of dispensationalism

A system of Biblical interpretation begun in the nineteenth century is embraced by many Christians today. What are the key concepts of this relatively recent hermeneutical method, and how do they differ from what the church has generally held?

by Hans K. LaRondelle

Dispensationalism as a system of Scripture interpretation can best be understood against the background of its historical rise in the nineteenth century. John N. Darby (1800-1882), one of the chief founders of the Plymouth Brethren Movement in England, is credited with the

Hans K. LaRondelle, Th.D., is professor of theology, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

development of a new system of theological interpretation not known before in the history of Christian thought. Clarence B. Bass, at first a dispensationalist himself, detected during his doctoral research into Darby's doctrine of the church "a basic hermeneutical pattern of interpretation that is broadly divergent from that of the historic faith."¹

Bass states in his historical study: "Darby introduced not only new concepts into theology, but a wholly new *principle of interpretation*. He himself admitted that this principle had been hidden from the church for nineteen centuries, and then revealed only to him."²

This new principle was a strictly applied literalism in the interpretation of the Bible resulting in a sharp separation between "Israel" and the "church," and between "dispensations" of law and of grace.

Bass concludes: "Whatever evaluation history may make of this movement, it will attest that dispensationalism is rooted in Darby's concept of the church—a concept that sharply distinguishes the church from Israel."³ Darby conceived the idea that the church was *not* prophesied in the Old Testament. Therefore he began to teach a future hope for Israel outside the church, based on his assumption that God's covenant promises to Abram and Israel were unconditional. Consequently, a whole new chronology of final events had to be constructed in order to safeguard the premise of a separate hope for Israel after the church had been raptured away from earth to heaven. Darby's concept that it is a fundamental error of historic Christianity to believe that the church of Christ Jesus is the true Israel, and therefore has inherited Israel's covenant promises and responsibilities, is still the basic assumption of modern dispensationalism.

One needs to recognize the spiritual climate of the early nineteenth century with its theological liberalism, its loss of hope in the second advent of Christ, and its widespread ignorance of Biblical teachings, to understand the ready acceptance of Darbyism. William E. Cox explains: "The Brethren teachings with their emphasis on prophecy and the second coming of Christ, met a need in the lives of the spiritually-starved people of that generation. It is not difficult to replace a vacuum! . . . Darby not only returned to the faith once delivered to the saints—which admittedly had been discarded and needed to be recovered—but he went far beyond that faith, bringing in many teachings of his own, which were never heard of until he brought them forth."⁴

However, in the 1920s many leaders of the fundamentalist movement came to feel that in order to be a fundamentalist—to believe in the fundamental teachings of Holy Scriptures—one also automatically had to be a dispensationalist. Thus modern dispensationalism, as a system, arose as a reaction against the spiritualizations of the

liberal theology of the nineteenth century. It originated in the teachings of John N. Darby and is popularized in the footnotes of the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1917) and *The New Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967). Dispensational theology is worked out systematically by Lewis Sperry Chafer (successor of C. I. Scofield) in his apologetic work *Systematic Theology* (8 vols.) and in the writings of John F. Walvoord, currently president of Dallas Theological Seminary. Dispensationalism is taught in principle at the Moody Bible Institute (Chicago) and in an estimated two hundred Bible Institutes in the U.S.A. The dispensationalist magazine is *Bibliotheca Sacra*, inherited by Dallas Theological Seminary in 1934.

Popular authors such as Hal Lindsey, Salem Kirban, and others have influenced millions through their writings and motion pictures to accept dispensationalist futurism—a Middle East "Armageddon" war and a Jewish millennium kingdom centered in Jerusalem—as the true prophetic picture of God's plan for the Jewish people and the world.

The fact that Darby was the originator of the system of dispensationalism does not in itself, of course, indicate whether the system is *therefore* false or true. The truthfulness or falsehood of dispensationalism depends exclusively on its harmony or disharmony with the Holy Scriptures. The claim of the dispensationalist Harry A. Ironside that Darby's teachings were "scarcely to be found in a single book or sermon through a period of sixteen hundred years!"⁵ invites critical investigation into the essence of dispensationalism—its distinctive hermeneutic of literalism.

The hermeneutic of literalism

Dispensationalism represents that system of Bible interpretation which maintains that in Scripture the terms "Israel" and "church" always stand for two essentially different covenant peoples of God: an earthly, national-theocratic kingdom for Israel, but for the church only an eternal place in heaven. As Lewis S. Chafer puts it: "The dispensationalist believes that throughout the ages God is pursuing two distinct purposes: one related to the earth with earthly people and earthly objectives involved, while the other is related to heaven with heavenly

people and heavenly objectives involved."⁶ Daniel P. Fuller correctly concludes: "The basic premise of Dispensationalism is two purposes of God expressed in the formation of two peoples who maintain their distinction throughout eternity."⁷

In other words, dispensationalism maintains different eschatologies for "Israel" and the "church," each having its own, contrasting covenant promises. The essence of dispensationalism therefore consists in "*rightly dividing*" the Scriptures, not merely into compartments of time or dispensations, but also into sections of scripture that apply either to Israel or to the church or to the Gentiles, a division derived from 1 Corinthians 10:32. L. S. Chafer taught that the only Scriptures addressed specifically to Christians are the Gospel of John, the book of Acts, and the New Testament epistles.⁸

The final conflict or tribulation in Revelation 6-20 is claimed to be between the antichrist and godly Jews, not between antichrist and the church of Christ, because, as J. F. Walvoord says, "the book as a whole is not occupied primarily with God's program for the church."⁹

The fundamental principle from which this compartmentalizing of the Scriptures stems is called a "consistent literalism." One of its modern spokesmen, Charles C. Ryrie, categorically states: "Since consistent literalism is the logical and obvious principle of interpretation, dispensationalism is more than justified."¹⁰

"Dispensationalism is a result of consistent application of the basic hermeneutical principle of literal, normal, or plain interpretation. No other system of theology can claim this."¹¹

"Consistent literalism is at the heart of dispensational eschatology."¹²

The implications of this principle of literalism are far-reaching in theology, especially in eschatology. It demands the literal fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, which therefore must take place during some future period in Palestine, "for the church is not now fulfilling them in any literal sense."¹³ Thus literalism leads necessarily to dispensational *futurism concerning national Israel* in prophetic interpretation.

According to dispensationalism the church of Christ, which was born on the day of Pentecost, as recorded in Acts 2, is definitely *not* a part of God's covenants

Dispensationalism represents that system of Bible interpretation which maintains that in Scripture the terms "Israel" and "church" always stand for two essentially different covenant peoples of God.

with Abraham and David. The Christian church with its gospel of grace is only an "interruption" of God's original plan with Israel, a "parenthesis" (H. Ironside) or "intercalation" (L. S. Chafer), unforeseen by the Old Testament prophets and having no connection with God's promises of an earthly kingdom to Abraham, Moses, and David.

Basic to the dispensationalist system is the assumption that Christ offered Himself to the nation of Israel as the messianic king to establish the glorious, *earthly* kingdom that was promised to David. On this supposition rests the inference that Christ "postponed" His kingdom offer when Israel rejected Him as her rightful king. Instead, Christ began to offer His kingdom of grace (from Matthew 13 onward) as a temporary covenant of grace that would terminate as soon as He would again establish the Jewish nation as His theocracy. The church of reborn believers must therefore first be taken out of this world through a sudden, invisible "rapture" to heaven before God can fulfill His "unconditional" Old Testament promises to Israel. The restored Jewish nation will then be plunged into the tribulations of "the time of Jacob's trouble." Thus the dispensationalist system requires a "pre-tribulational rapture" of the church of Christ.

Dispensationalism asserts that the Old Testament covenant promises to Israel can be fulfilled only to the Jewish nation (in all details as written) during the future Jewish millennium of Revelation 20. Only then will God's distinctive and unconditional purposes with Israel be gloriously consummated. This implies of necessity the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem and the reinstitution of animal sacrifices in "commemoration" of the death of Christ. All the nations will then acknowledge national Israel as the favored people of God. Ryrie says, "This millennial culmination is the climax of history and the great goal of God's program for the ages."¹⁴

Thus it is quite clear that dispensationalism separates the church of Christ from the total redemptive plan of God for Israel and mankind and restricts the future kingdom of God to the restoration of a strictly Jewish kingdom—the so-called millennial kingdom.

This dichotomy between Israel and the church, between the kingdom of God on earth and the church, between Jesus' gospel of the kingdom and Paul's gospel of grace, is the logical outgrowth of the adopted principle of literalistic interpretation of the prophetic Word of God.

Key to the Old Testament

According to Christ and the New Testament, is the dispensational hermeneutic of "consistent literalism" the genuine key to interpret the future fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies? Is the hermeneutic of dispensational literalism

organically (i.e., genuinely and intrinsically) related to the Holy Scriptures themselves, or is it a presupposition that is forced upon God's Word from the outside as an "objective standard"¹⁵ in order to safeguard the Bible against unwarranted spiritualizations and allegorizations? Should not the "objective" principle for understanding the Word of God be derived inductively from the inspired record itself?

The cardinal point is this: Is the Christian believer permitted to take the writings of the Old Testament as a closed unit by themselves, in isolation from the New Testament witness of its fulfillment, or must he accept the Old Testament and the New Testament *together* as one organic revelation of God in Christ Jesus? Is the Christian expositor allowed to interpret the Old Testament as the complete and final revelation of God to the Jewish people, a closed canon, without letting Jesus Christ be the true interpreter of Moses and the prophets, and without letting the New Testament, as the final revelation of God, have the supreme authority to interpret the Old Testament prophecies according to Christ?

In the first place, the Old Testament by itself lacks the guiding norm of Jesus Christ and His apostles for a Christian understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. The principle of "literalism" is then introduced into this vacuum of an unfinished canon of Scripture to supply the guiding norm of interpretation that Christ and the New Testament were appointed by God to fulfill. The term *literalism* itself becomes dubious in meaning if one defines it as the literal or normal grammatico-historical exegesis of the Old Testament but then immediately exalts this Old Testament exegesis as the final truth within the total canon of the Bible, so that Christ and the apostolic gospel have no authority to unfold, modify, or (re-)interpret the Old Testament covenant promises.

Charles C. Ryrie states that the dispensational view of progressive revelation can accept additional light but not that the term "Israel" can mean the "church." This would be an unacceptable "contradiction" of terms and concepts.¹⁶ Dispensationalism denies an organic relationship between Old Testament prophecy and the church of Christ Jesus. It rejects the traditional application of the Davidic kingdom promises to Christ's spiritual rulership over His church, because to do so would be inter-

preting prophecy allegorically, not literally, and therefore illegitimately.

A crucial question then becomes, Do dispensationalists really accept the organic character of the Bible as a *whole*, that is, the spiritual and theological unity of the Old and New Testament revelation?

Should our idea of "literalism" be set as the highest norm for the understanding of the ultimate fulfillment of Israel's prophecies, or should Christ Jesus Himself be our norm for the full understanding of the entire Old Testament? F. F. Bruce gives the answer: "Our Lord's use of the Old Testament may well serve as our standard and pattern in biblical interpretation; and Christians may further remind themselves that part of the Holy Spirit's present work is to open the Scriptures for them as the risen Christ did for the disciples on the Emmaus road."¹⁷

The next article in this series will take up such questions as: When did the church actually begin according to Christ? How do Christ and the New Testament writers apply God's ancient covenants with Abraham, Israel, and David? Does the New Testament present the church as the "Israel of God," heir of all God's promised covenant blessings for the present and future?

¹ Clarence B. Bass, *Backgrounds to Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 9.

² *Ibid.*, p. 98.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁴ William E. Cox, *An Examination of Dispensationalism* (Philadelphia, Penna.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.; 1963), pp. 4, 5.

⁵ Harry A. Ironside, *The Mysteries of God* (New York: Loizeaux Bros., 1908), pp. 50, 51, as quoted by D. P. Fuller, *Gospel and Law* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 13.

⁶ Lewis S. Chafer, "Dispensationalism," in *Bibliotheca Sacra* 93 (1936), p. 448.

⁷ Daniel P. Fuller, *The Hermeneutics of Dispensationalism* (unpub. diss., Northern Baptist Theol. Sem., Chicago, Ill., 1957), p. 25.

⁸ Chafer, *op. cit.*, pp. 406, 407.

⁹ J. F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967, 2d printing), p. 103.

¹⁰ C. C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism Today* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), p. 97.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 158.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 88. Ryrie: "What check would there be on the variety of interpretations which man's imagination could produce if there were not an objective standard which the literal principle provides?"

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

¹⁷ In *Baker's Dictionary of Theology* (Baker Book House, 1973), p. 293.

Is the Christian believer permitted to take the writings of the Old Testament as a closed unit, or must he accept the Old and New Testaments together as one organic revelation of God in Christ Jesus?

The heart of every inactive church member contains deep reservoirs of hurt. Calling on such a member is an anxiety-provoking event, but one essential for healing to begin. And the healing process itself causes pain both for the healer and the healed.

by John Savage

Pain precedes healing

The reason most churches do not have a program of visiting their inactive members is not lack of concern for their inactive. It is due to the substantial pain that is evoked in the visitation process.

The pain of the inactive member has been carefully studied in recent years. It has been found that very often an anxiety-provoking event in the individual's life or the life of the congregation is at the center of the problem. This event makes the person very upset, anxious, and usually very angry, and may be stimulated by a large number of situations.

I remember one of the first such visits I made, to a middle-aged couple who had dropped out of the church one year after I had become pastor. They had remained inactive for approximately four years. Although they tithed on a sporadic basis, they did not attend any meetings, church functions, or worship during this four-year period. When I called and made an appointment they were more than willing to see me. It was a snowy, wintry day in Rochester, New York, when I pulled up to their home. We chatted about surface issues. Then the wife said to me, "You have not been here for four years. Why not?" The tone of her voice was hostile and the question was not one of inquiry but of hidden resentment. My response was, "I didn't know that people who were once active in the church, like you were, went through such severe pain in the process of becoming inactive. I certainly was not sensitive to your cries for help, and I am sincerely sorry for my insensitivity. I hope you will forgive me." The woman began to cry. Her husband came and sat beside her on the couch and put his arm around her. For the next two hours I sat and let them share the deep pain that was inside them because of leaving the church.

I happened to be the anxiety-provoking event in their leaving. In listening to them, they were able to share their hostility toward me around the issue that occurred nearly four years earlier. They

related how they had lost the community in which they had found great comfort and love, and how they felt bad about the alienation with me personally but did not know how to go about bringing about reconciliation. They related how their children had been out of the church school and youth fellowship for that same period of time and that they felt inadequate as parents; and finally, how, once they had left the church community, they did not know how to gracefully return, and therefore stayed on the outside. They had, in fact, cried for help to me through the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, but at that time in my life I was not sensitive to the cries for help that people give prior to leaving. If I had been sensitive to that earlier, I would have saved a lot of pain for them and myself.

A second example will clarify some insights into the pain of leaving a church. During my original research in visiting inactive members (from which the book *The Apathetic and Bored Church Member* evolved) I visited a couple in their thirties. Six months earlier their 3-year-old baby boy had died. In the parish to which they had moved, the pastor made only one call on the family after the death of the child, and no one from the congregation came to visit them in their time of deep pain. Both the husband and wife cried openly during my time with them. They were in extreme grief, not only from the loss of the child, but also from the lack of the community support from the church that was so necessary at that time. They were in the process of rapidly leaving the church, disillusioned by the people and disappointed in their pastor. This existential pain was traumatic to their very existence, and it took all they had to hold onto life itself.

These two visits are not atypical of the inactive church member. Almost without exception, in every inactive family visited I discovered enormous inward pain concerning the church, its people, its pastor, and even God Himself.

There is an intuitive awareness on the part of the congregation that when you visit an inactive church member, you are going to have to deal with hostility, anger,

and guilt. And most persons do not know how to relate meaningfully to someone who is in deep pain. We avoid those people and therefore add even more pain to what they are already experiencing. This leads to the second part of the dilemma of the pain of the visitor.

When I, as a visitor, hear the story of another's pain, it triggers my own feelings. I hear the words, the tone; I see the body language; I hear the truth coming through the story that is told. Another person's hostility usually evokes anger in me. Their self-condemnation provokes guilt; their noncaring attitude may elicit personal feelings of rejection and thoughts of disgust. The dynamics that occur produce an awareness in myself that I really don't care to confront. My temptation, as a visitor, therefore, is to avoid any situation that will evoke such reactions in me, because I do not want to have to deal with my own inner struggles.

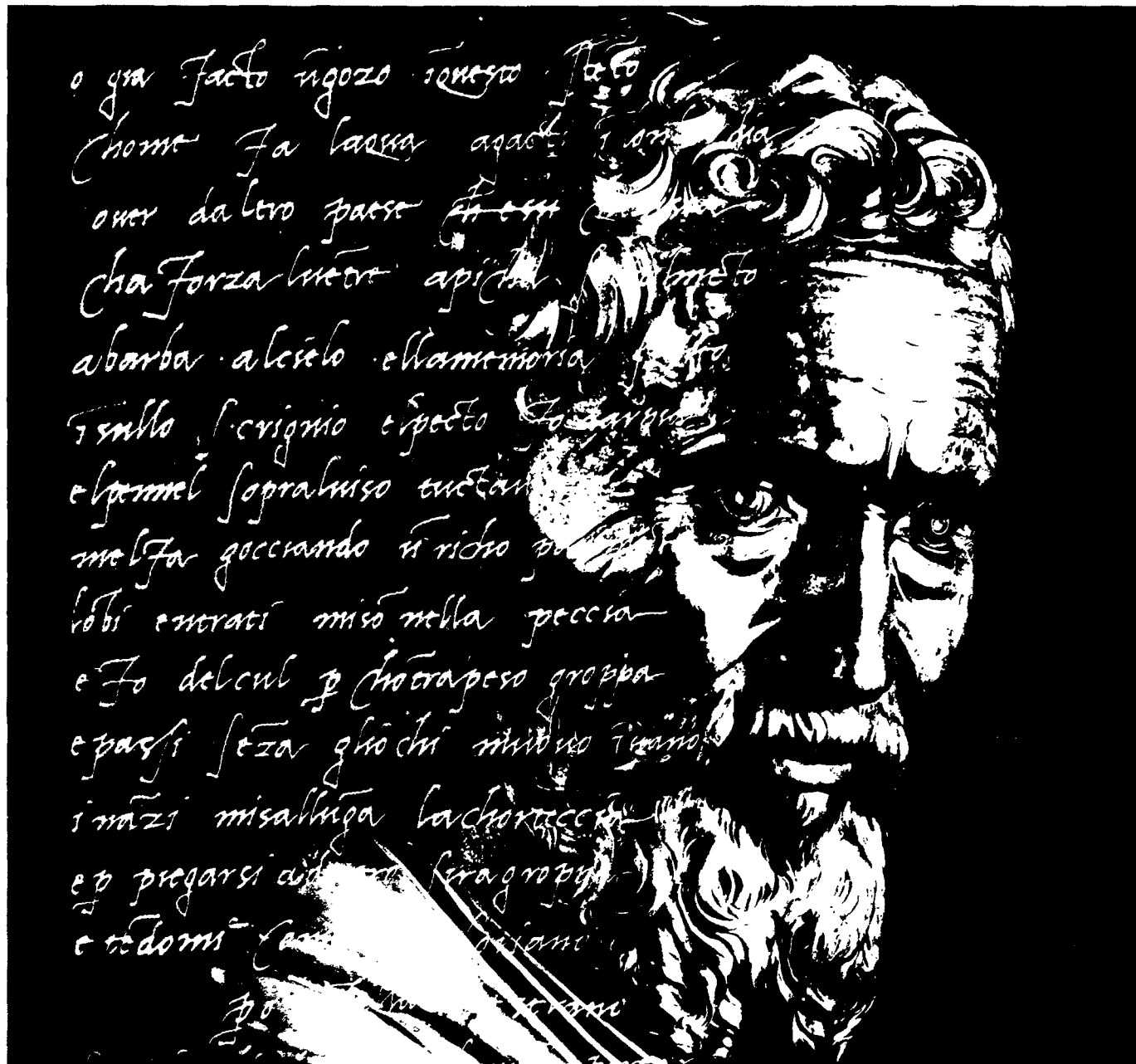
One of the great values of a ministry to inactive members is that it provides a type of cleansing process for both the caller and the callee. In order to be an effective visitor, people must learn the skills of real listening and must also be aware of their own inner feelings. By calling on another person we get in touch with our own struggle, and the call allows us to work on it rather than perpetually avoid it. However, my call can be used by God to bring about reconciliation with the person I am visiting, to let him know that other persons do care, and that I can honestly feel his pain.

I know of nothing more theologically sound than that kind of relationship, God's pain is deeper than any pain I can suffer when one of His lost sheep wanders from the flock. But His joy is exceedingly greater when that sheep returns, when the lost son comes home.

Calling on the inactive member is a deeply theological activity that is at the heart of the gospel. For the gospel, after all, is the message of reconciliation.

John Savage, Ph.D., is president of LEAD Consultants, Pittsford, New York. He is a popular and respected authority on reincorporating the inactive church member.

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Having achieved perpetual fame for his magnificent artistry, Michelangelo is often overlooked as a poet. But it is here that he expresses his personal defeat, his frustration with sin, and his intense desire for the assurance of salvation.

by Robert Allen Patterson

Michelangelo: poetic theologian

The name Michelangelo (1475-1564) is well known in the fields of painting and sculpture, less known in the discipline of architecture, but seldom referred to in the area of literature. Although he expressed theological statements about God and man

Robert Allen Patterson writes from Albuquerque, New Mexico.

through his paintings and sculptures, it is his poetry that most clearly reveals his inner struggles with himself and God. Poetry has long been utilized as a vehicle for subjective expression; its words can reveal the inner turmoil, conflicts, and convictions a person is experiencing. A sensitive person confronted and struggling with disturbing questions about life may turn to writing poetry as a means of personal catharsis. Such was the case with Michelangelo.

If a theologian is a person who wrestles for a meaningful understanding of God and man and the interaction between them, then Michelangelo certainly qualifies. However, he was not an abstract scholar pondering divine mysteries; rather, he found himself in the cauldron of subjective struggles, writing from personal experiences and observations. He was a man of two worlds and knew well the conflicts between them. Popes as well as princes vied for his time and talents in an age in which social status was enhanced by having well-known artists decorate everything from rooms to tombs.

The entire collection of his poems (including letters written to friends in verse form, a not uncommon practice in his day) portrays a man seriously involved with all the questions, distresses, and passions of life. The poetry, consisting primarily of sonnets and madrigals, is not polished in the usual sense of the word. He was not a commercial poet grinding out rhyming words simply to make money. He wrote for the purpose of expressing individual emotions and concerns.

The poetry of Michelangelo is rich with poetic statements that can be used as illustrations in sermons, church-school lessons, or as a focal point in personal spiritual devotions. Let's look specifically at two theological themes that are found throughout Michelangelo's poetry.

The reality of personal sin and evil

In a sonnet he makes an interesting statement about the process of evil. I say "process" because there is a dynamic about evil. Unless it is stopped, it will continue to grow. Michelangelo expressed a psychological and spiritual truth when he wrote: ". . . evil, less unpleasant the more it grows."¹

In a later madrigal he includes a line about evil that every person would do well to remember: "For evil harms much more than joy sustains."² In this important observation and insight Michelangelo recognizes that there may be a certain amount of "joy" in the doing of evil. That is precisely its lure—something will be enjoyable or will be better; we will gain or do something that we believe will bring us a larger measure of joy than we presently know. However, the end result of evil is a great diminishing of joy because the quiet hurt and heartache that it brings continues long after the initial joy has subsided. Evil

has indeed harmed us. We have been misled and deceived.

Michelangelo felt the reality of sin in his life so keenly that he wrote in a moment of despair, "My life's indeed not of me, but of sin."³ In an unfinished sestina we find a pleading prayer for God's help in combating the reality of personal sin and evil:

I feel myself now being turned to nothing,
And sinful nature is in every place.
O strip me of myself and with your shield,
With your sweet piteous and trusty arms,
Defend me from myself.⁴

This brings us to another theological theme in Michelangelo's poetry.

The need for personal change

Like the psalmist, who cried, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps. 51:10), Michelangelo felt the need for personal change and spiritual renewal. Yet at the same time he felt powerless to bring about the needed changes by himself.

Oh make me so I'll see you everywhere!
No one but you I call on and implore,
Dear Lord, against my blind and useless torment,
You only can renew, within, without
My will, my mind, my slow and little power.⁵

Michelangelo lived to be 89 years old, and a reflective sonnet written nine years before his death reveals his lifelong struggle with himself. It is a rather haunting sonnet in the sense that it reveals so much desire on the one hand to become a "better self" and so much personal frustration on the other over his inability to do so. Like many of us, Michelangelo's greatest problem was himself. This sonnet is really a prayer poem of a man who desired a greater communion with God before his death.

The world with its fables has removed
The time I had for contemplating God;
His mercies I not only put aside,
But with, more than without them, turn
depraved.

Foolish and blind, where others can perceive,
My own mistake tardily understood.
Hope growing less, desire is magnified
That you will loosen me from my self-love.

Cut down by half the road, O my dear Lord,
That climbs to Heaven! You will have to aid me
If I am going to climb that half.

Cause me to hate the value of the world
And what I admired and honored in its beauty,
So before death to taste eternal life.⁶

From another sonnet written the same year (1555), we know, however, that Michelangelo knew at least moments of spiritual comfort and reassurance.

If sometimes by your grace that burning zeal,
O my dear Lord, comes to attack my heart,
Which gives my soul comfort and reassurance,

Since my own strength's no use to me at all,
To turn to Heaven at once would then be right,
For with more time good will has less endurance.⁷

The last two lines indicate that Michelangelo knew the importance of human response to God's grace. He also knew the tendency of human nature to postpone turning to God and what this can tragically do to a person's "good will."

The next year, 1556, he wrote a letter poem in the form of a sonnet to Bishop Beccadelli in which he states his assurance of salvation:

Through grace, the cross, and all we have endured,
We'll meet in heaven, Monsignor, I'm convinced.⁸

His poetry shows Michelangelo to be a man who knew the personal defeat and frustration that are the result of sin, but who also experienced the work of God through grace and the cross, which gives new visions of one's self and what one can become. The insights he penned testify to his spiritual sensitivity and his willingness to take a hard look at himself—something we may not be prone to do. The poetry of Michelangelo speaks with a starkness and honesty that reveals yet another dimension of a multitiered man. I suggest that his poetic theological insights are just as important as the artistic masterpieces he left the world. Like many of his artistic works, they cause us to focus on our life and relationship to God, something a good theologian always strives to help us consider.

¹ Creighton Gilbert, trans., and Robert N. Linscott, ed., *Complete Poems and Selected Letters of Michelangelo* (New York: Random House), No. 76, p. 54. All poetry quotations are from this edition and are used by permission of Creighton Gilbert. A new edition is available from Princeton University Press in both hardback and paperback.

² *Ibid.*, No. 122, p. 86.

³ *Ibid.*, No. 30, p. 19.

⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 31, p. 20.

⁵ *Ibid.*, No. 272, p. 154.

⁶ *Ibid.*, No. 286, pp. 160, 161.

⁷ *Ibid.*, No. 294, p. 165.

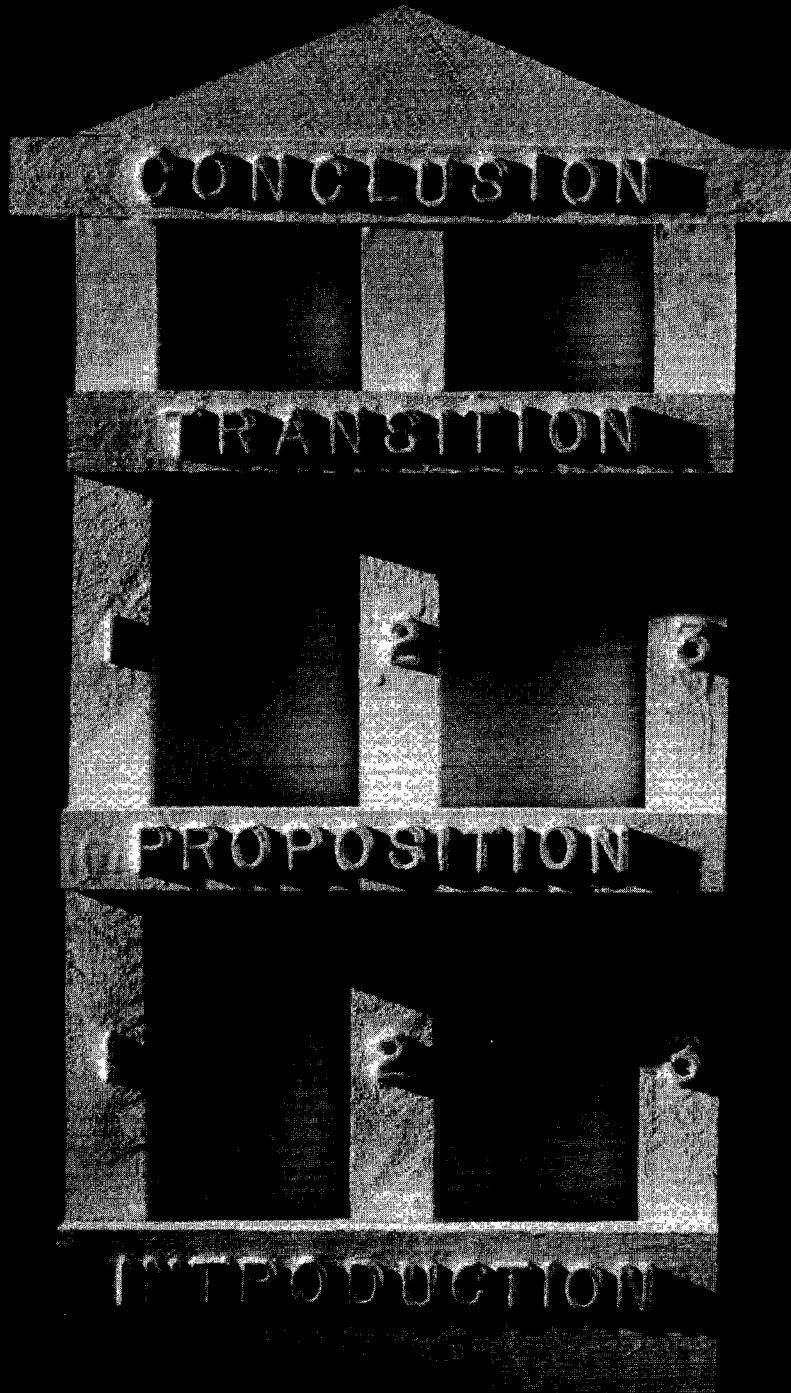
⁸ *Ibid.*, No. 298, p. 167.

His poetry shows Michelangelo to be a man who knew the personal defeat and frustration that are the result of sin, but who also experienced the work of God through grace and the cross, which gives new visions of oneself.

Bringing the sermon to a close

If a salesman delivers an impressive sales talk, but fails to get your name on the contract, he hasn't accomplished very much. And unless the conclusion of your sermon moves your congregation to embrace the action it calls for, you haven't accomplished a great deal either. Here is where you ask your people to sign on the dotted line.

by John Osborn



Preaching the Word—7

All the discussion of sermon preparation and preaching in previous articles of this series has been converging on the really important part of the whole process—the conclusion.

If a salesman delivers an impressive sales talk, but fails to get your name on the contract, he hasn't accomplished very much. And unless the conclusion of your sermon focuses it so that your congregation is moved to embrace the action it calls for, you haven't accomplished a great deal either. Here is where you ask your people to sign on the dotted line.

Yet, what happens to many preachers at this point in their sermon preparation? Time is running out; they have to preach. And so, for the conclusion they scribble something down as quickly as they can. I can think of nothing more foolish than not to take time for the real purpose of the sermon—the application of it to the hearer. Yet I've done just that dozens of times! If you won't admit that you have done so too, it's only because I'm more honest than you are!

The conclusion, ideally, should incorporate four parts: (1) an objective sentence, (2) a brief outline or summary, (3) an appeal, and (4) a closing sentence or sentences. That is the way the conclusion should look. Now, let's discuss each part and find out its significance.

The first part—the objective sentence—has two important elements: *therefore* and *should*. The word “therefore” refers back to the basic arguments of the sermon body. The word “should” places an obligation upon the hearer to do something about what he has heard. The objective sentence says (though not in these words), “In the light of all that I have said in the sermon, here is what you should do about it.”

Let's see how these elements fit our sermon on John 17, the illustration we have been using in this series of articles. The proposition of this sermon, you remember, is “The church can have an effective relationship with the world.” The preacher has given answers to that question. He has shown the people how the church can have an effective relationship with the world. Now, as he moves into the conclusion, he is coming to the target. He has launched his missile; it has flown

through the main divisions and subdivisions of his sermon. Now it is going to hit the bull's-eye and bring the application home to the people. It is at this point that you must come up with the answer to the question, What do I want these people to do? What response do I want them to make? Having determined the answer to that question, the preacher uses the elements of the conclusion's objective sentence—*therefore* and *should*—to present the claims of the sermon: “Therefore, as Christian ministers, we should in our own experience develop this effective relationship with the world. Therefore, as members of this congregation, we should in our own lives develop this effective relationship with the world. Are you out of the world? Are you nonetheless in it? Are you not of it, yet going back into it? You should.”

You see, all the points of your sermon become obligations that you press home to your hearers as you move into the conclusion of your sermon. The objective sentence tells this specific congregation what they should do in light of the sermon's proposition. And that is the reason this sentence should always have the basic concept of the proposition (the part of the sermon that is aiming at the target) combined with the ideas of *therefore* and *should* (the actual point of impact). “Therefore, you as young people . . .” “Therefore, you as preachers . . .” “Therefore, you as members of the church should do thus and so.” This is the objective sentence.

A young preacher who had heard me giving these ideas on sermon preparation came to me some months later and said, “My wife is getting awfully tired of hearing me close every sermon with the words *therefore* and *should*.”

“I don't blame her,” I replied. “I would too.”

“But you told me to do that!”

“No, I didn't,” I protested. “I told you that you should always have these words in your outline and use the idea. But there are all kinds of synonyms for these words. You don't have to say the same thing every time like a formula!”

The objective sentence should be followed by a brief outline or summary of the main sermon points. It must be brief because the conclusion itself is to be brief. Introduce no new material in the conclusion. How many times have you been

preaching when some bright new thought came to you as you were bringing your sermon to an end? You didn't think of it in time, so you tucked it in the conclusion! This is not the purpose of the conclusion; to do this is anticlimactic and defeats your purpose. When you come to a stop, you want to do so intelligently, and so this part of the sermon should be well thought out.

The conclusion is basically a gathering together of the threads of the sermon. Perhaps I should say it is focusing all the main beams of the sermon on a point, much the way that as small children we would take a magnifying glass and hold it so that the sun would shine through it and then focus it on a piece of paper until the concentrated heat would burn a little brown hole in the paper. This is what you want to do with the conclusion. You are now taking all your main heads and you are bringing them into a sharp focus. You're holding up a magnifying glass to the sun of information given, and you're bringing it down in a close application to the hearts of the people. This can be done by summary or by recapitulation. You won't want to follow this practice every time, but it is good to refresh the memories of your hearers regarding what you have said.

It's interesting that homiletics disagree on this. One says, “A good conclusion does not include a summary. A summary looks back, and you don't look back in the conclusion. If you want to spoil a good sermon, summarize it.” Another states in opposition, “A preacher may rightly consider that if the statements and the main points are worth using, they are also worth repeating. Many conclusions are highly effective when the listener's mind is refreshed by hearing a recounting of the main points.”

You can take your choice, then, and still be in good homiletical company. I believe a middle position is best. To always summarize would become very monotonous. It's uncanny how your members, although they are not trained in sermon preparation, can almost predict what you are going to say next and how you will say it. After you have been with them for a length of time, they catch on to your speaking style and technique. They may not know all the principles behind what you do, but they can say to themselves, “Watch! This is the way he's going to close. He always says it this way.” So I suggest you shouldn't always use the

As the preacher moves into the conclusion he is coming to the target. He has launched his missile; it has flown through the main divisions of his sermon. Now it is going to hit the bull's-eye and bring the application home to the people.

The late John Osborn was Ministerial secretary of the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and active in conducting seminars on expository preaching. This article is based on a taped transcript of his last such seminar.

summary method. But to summarize once in a while is good.

Another method of focusing the sermon points for your hearers is by application. Although you have made an application after each main point, there can be an application at the close and oftentimes should be. Of course, some homiletics believe the conclusion may be weakened by too much application in the body of the sermon. They argue that by petty distribution of impression all impression is lost, and that if you do too much applying in the main part of the sermon there's no point to applying in the last part.

I think such views are partly right and partly wrong. As we move along with our application and plan our sermon, we ought to see the whole thing in perspective and thoughtfully look at the conclusion, asking, "How does this application in the conclusion relate to those that I have made in the body of the sermon?" You can't see this unless you spend time developing your conclusion. If you have four main points in the sermon, have four subpoints in the conclusion, and apply each one to the individual hearer.

The main thing is to pull the threads together. Bring into sharp focus and bear down upon that one big truth. Make clear what it is so the hearers will understand what they are supposed to do.

As you focus the main points of the sermon and make clear what the response should be, you will naturally move into the third element of the conclusion—an appeal to action. It can be either direct or indirect. At this point the wooing note is always prominent, and if you use any illustrative matter it should always be of a nature that will speak to the heart. The ultimate purpose of the appeal is to persuade the people to do something about what they have heard. Bring to bear upon them a very strong sense that they must respond individually.

When Peter finished his sermon on the day of Pentecost, the people said, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" His words made an impact; he moved the people to action. "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 2:37, 38).

The preacher's attitude, as well as what he says, is important at this point. Far better for the Holy Spirit to make the hearer feel uncomfortable than for the preacher to attempt to do so through

psychological gimmicks or emotional stories.

There is power in emotional appeals, and some preachers have a tendency to use that power. When I was pastor of a certain church a visiting speaker who was raising money for a certain purpose came to preach. Before he came, the president of the conference said to me, "This is a private venture and no official offering is to be taken in the churches for it." So I mentioned this fact to the speaker. His reply was, "That's all right. I don't need to ask for an offering. I've got a real tear-jerker today!"

We had about five hundred people there that day. We took the regular offering and got eighty or ninety dollars. Then the visiting preacher spoke, and when he finished with his "tear-jerker," he didn't ask for a cent. But people came forward spontaneously and laid \$700 on the table for his project!

A lot of people will respond to emotional appeals. I'm not saying you shouldn't use emotion. It is a legitimate means of appeal. But a preacher should be extremely careful how he uses it. What is the motivation? What is the basis? The appeal must be given in the context of deep earnestness and integrity. Honesty and sincerity should permeate the spirit of the preacher. This is no time for sham.

There are other motivations to which a preacher can appeal. Charles Koller, in his book *Basic Appeals to Preaching*, mentions six: altruism, or benevolent regard for others; aspiration, the universal hunger for spiritual happiness and a sense of completeness; curiosity, the human susceptibility to that which appears novel, unfamiliar, or mysterious; duty, the divine urge to do a thing because it's right; love, the affection we feel for others, for God, sometimes even for ourselves (there is a kind of self-love that is healthy); and fear. Fear is by no means the most lofty incentive, but it is a legitimate one. Did our Lord appeal to it? He certainly did. "If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away; it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell" (Matt. 5:29, R.S.V.).

When you get into the appeal, pronouns become very important. Use *you* and *we*. Bring yourself into it. The appeal is not for your congregation alone, but for *you* along with them. It must be highly subjective.

And this, of course, requires careful and prayerful study.

An appeal can be made in many ways. It does not always have to take the form of calling for visible response. I know some pastors *always* close with an appeal for folks to respond by coming forward. Some do this beautifully. Others do it very awkwardly. In some places it's very effective; in some places it's not. When it's well done, I think it's good. But I don't think it's a stereotype that every preacher everywhere should feel he must follow. An appeal can be powerful and effective in producing change even if it does not call for an overt response from the hearer.

I know that some preachers don't think an appeal should be planned carefully ahead of time. "I just leave it to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit at the moment," they say. I think there are times when we can do that. I think there are times when we stand in the pulpit that the Holy Spirit actually helps us to know what direction to go. I think there are times when we can plan so tightly what we are going to say and stay by our stereotype so closely that the Holy Spirit can't move in and guide us. But it works both ways. I also think that sometimes we lean on the Holy Spirit as an excuse for our unwillingness to put forth the effort that adequate preparation requires.

It's like a young preacher who said to a famous German evangelist, "I never prepare before going into the pulpit. The Holy Spirit always tells me what to say. I go into the pulpit, open my Bible, and the Holy Spirit gives me the sermon." The great evangelist said, "That's wonderful. I never really had the Holy Spirit speak to me just like that. But sometimes when I'm in the pulpit He does speak to me, usually at the close. And what He says is, 'Today, Klaus, you were lazy. You didn't make proper preparation.'"

The Holy Spirit can pour it all into our brain without any effort on our part, but usually He doesn't.

The concluding sentence or sentences form the final portion of the conclusion. They should be carefully prepared. Charles Brown, former dean of Yale Divinity School, suggests that the last three sentences of the sermon should be carefully prepared, written out, and memorized. This will avoid uncertainty or hesitation when coming to a stop. The wheels of the sermon should touch down with ease and grace, bringing the sermon flight to a smooth landing.

When you have spoken your closing sentence or sentences and the conclusion is finished, stop talking! Some pastors are afflicted with not knowing when to quit. Never say, "In closing . . ." and then ramble on for another five minutes. Your congregation will forgive many homiletical sins, but they will not forgive this. Show no hesitancy and uncertainty. Bring to a conclusion and then sit down!

The preacher's attitude, as well as what he says, is important. Far better for the Holy Spirit to make the hearer feel uncomfortable than for the preacher to attempt to do so through psychological gimmicks.

What your congregation believes about you will determine, to some degree, how successful you will be in communicating to them. Here are four ways you can enhance your congregation's perception of you.

by Kenneth R. Prather

Treasure in earthen vessels

Phillips Brooks defined preaching as the "bringing of truth through personality." Brooks realized, as do other authorities of homiletics and communication, that for a sermon to persuade, not only is the message important but so is the congregation's perception of the messenger.

Aristotle, who was one of the most important students of persuasion, observed that a speaker's personal character is the most effective means of persuasion he possesses. Roger Nebergall, former chairman of the department of communication at the University of Illinois, contends that in a rhetorical situation the speech is of minor importance; the person giving the speech and the audience's attitude toward him are more significant factors in persuasion.¹ More than one hundred scientific studies support the theory that a speaker's

image has an enormous effect on communication.

Therefore, if we, as preachers, want to persuade people to accept Christ and Christian doctrine it is most important that we have a good image. Of course, we do not have complete control over what our congregation believes about us; nevertheless, four elements will enhance their perception of us and therefore increase our ability to persuade. They are: trustworthiness, expertise, good will, and power.

If one does not trust another, there can be no genuine communion. Many political figures are having a difficult time being believed because the attitude of the public toward politicians causes everything they say to be suspect. A person who is not trusted cannot be a credible witness. The importance of trustworthiness can be seen in Paul's advice to Timothy to handle the Word of God "rightly," and in his declaration that the heart of his own preaching was "Jesus Christ, and him crucified," unlike orators and sophists whose primary concern was the production of words (see 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 2:1-5).

Trustworthiness for the preacher also includes believing and living what he proclaims. Paul's advice to the young pastor, Timothy, is again appropriate: "Command and teach these things. . . . Set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:11, 12, R.S.V.). W. M. MacGregor reminds us that a man is not a preacher because of any external form, recalling the Latin saying, "The cow does not make a monk."²

The second element in securing a good image is expertise. A congregation soon loses respect and interest if it thinks the preacher does not know what he is speaking about because he has failed to probe deeply into his subject, lacks experience, or does not show intellectual integrity and sound judgment.

In the area of expertise, two reasons may be given for a lack of interest in sermons today. First, instead of explaining and applying the Word of God, many preachers spend much time in politics, sociology, and psychology, areas in which their audiences do not think them experts (nor expect them to be). Second, a preacher may not give enough time and scholarship to his sermon.

Good will is the third element enhancing one's image. Good will occurs when

the speaker identifies with his congregation and shares with it common interests, feelings, beliefs, genuine love, and respect. Discourtesy, strutting, or bullying an audience greatly damages a speaker's ability to persuade.

The local minister, although he may be no pulpit genius or great orator, can through his pastoral concern develop good will between himself and his congregation so that his people hear him gladly. Heart speaks to heart.

While attending seminary in Illinois and preaching in a small town there, I witnessed an incident that showed me the necessity of good will for persuasion. A local minister, whose turn it was to preach the sermon for the high school baccalaureate sermon, would not allow any other ministers from the community on the platform with him. Had that preacher afterward wanted to persuade me about his church doctrine, he would have gotten nowhere. Why? Because he had set himself apart from me.

The fourth element that enhances a speaker's image is power. James A. Winans, who for forty-five years taught college speech at such schools as Cornell, Dartmouth, and the University of Missouri, said, "However much the orator lacks of goodness, he will rarely be found weak. The orator is a leader, and weaklings do not lead."³

The apostle Paul was a powerful preacher. He knew that God had called him to preach (see Gal. 1:15, 16), and this sense of call clothed his ministry with dignity. Dignity of person and office has a powerful influence upon an audience. He also knew what he believed and why. Power is rooted in commitment and conviction. The need for power in preaching may have been the reason why Paul encouraged Timothy not to be timid and wrote Titus not to allow anyone to put him down (see 2 Tim. 1:7; Titus 2:15).

The next time you stand before your congregation, remember Phillips Brooks's definition of preaching as "truth through personality." What you are will be speaking as well as what you say.

¹ James L. Golden, Goodwin F. Berquist, and William E. Coleman, *The Rhetoric of Western Thought*, 2d edition (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co. 1978), p. 219.

² W. M. MacGregor, *The Making of a Preacher* (London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1954), pp. 33-46.

³ James Albert Winans, *Public Speaking*, rev. ed. (New York: the Century Co., 1921), p. 124.

If one does not trust another there can be no genuine communion. A person who is not trusted cannot be a credible witness. The importance of trustworthiness can be seen in Paul's advice to Timothy to handle the Word of God rightly.

"Evolutionists have been given notice that their monopoly in the classroom is running out," says Kelly Segraves, plaintiff in the recently concluded challenge to the California school system.

by Leo R. Van Dolson

'Monkey trial' ruling pleases creationists

Press reports that California Superior Court Judge Irving Perluss ruled against the creationists in the recent case challenging the teaching of evolution as dogma in the State's public schools are misleading. Actually Kelly Segraves, director of the Creation Science Research Center in San Diego, who instituted the suit in behalf of his three children, indicated after the trial that he gained what he wanted to out of the suit.

"I think you'll find a very effective change taking place that will stop the dogmatic teaching of evolution and will protect the rights of the Christian child," he added. Mr. Segraves cited Judge Perluss' concession that the State's policy forbidding dogmatism in the treatment of the origins of life had not been communicated effectively to all who should know of it. The judge ordered the State Board of Education to distribute its 1973 policy statement prohibiting dogmatism in teaching evolution to all the schools and districts in the State.

Richard Turner, Mr. Segraves' attorney, who presented the case against the State, made this point clear in a recent letter he wrote me, stating: "Despite some misleading reports in the press, the Court did rule in our favor and has required the State to eliminate dogmatism from the teaching of evolution."

Nancy L. Stake, director of California-based Citizens for Scientific Creation, declares: "No matter what you may have heard—WE WON! The judge, whom we have renamed Solomon, made a genius decision, patting the back of both sides, while giving us what we wanted with far-reaching implications."

It is these far-reaching implications that the press at large seems to have missed. Kelly Segraves told me during a personal interview that, as a consequence of the trial, "evolutionists have been given notice that their monopoly in the classroom is running out."

On top of this the Segraveses seemed pleased over the national and interna-

tional newspaper and television coverage being given to the case. For 20 years they had attempted to call public attention to the monopoly evolution has had in public classrooms in the United States without receiving much public notice. During the trial, which ran from March 2 through 6, their case received worldwide attention and publicity.

Confusion about the verdict resulted from the fact that before ordering the California public educational system to circulate its policy statement to all who needed to be aware of it, Judge Perluss ruled that the policy, adopted in 1973, did not violate the religious freedoms of Christians who believe the Biblical account of Creation. It just was not being circulated.

Billed in advance by much of the press as a repeat "monkey trial" because of its similarity to the Scopes trial in Tennessee in 1925, in which a public school teacher was fined for violating a State law against teaching evolution in his science classroom, the trial was narrowed by Attorney Turner on the morning of March 3 to the question of whether the three Segraves children had had their First Amendment rights violated by the dogmatic way evolution had been presented to them in their public school classes.

Judge Perluss ruled that the case would not deal with the question of whether Creation is a valid scientific approach to the origins of life but would center on a sentence on page 84 of the scientific framework adopted by the State Board of Education. The sentence reads: "The process (evolution) has been going on so long that it has produced all the groups and kinds of plants and animals now living as well as others that have become extinct."

In our interview with Mr. Segraves, we learned that he objects to this statement because it presents evolution as a fact. When he was in the sixth grade, Kasey Segraves, who was then 11, was given the choice of either helping to produce a chart to be placed on the wall of the school that would trace evolutionary development or of role-playing how apes evolve into men. The sixth-grade child did not want to be embarrassed in front of his classmates, nor

did he wish for his grade to be affected, so he decided to cooperate. Picking the lesser of what he considered to be two evils, he helped draw the chart. The Segraveses considered this assignment to be a violation of his First Amendment rights. Along with this they took exception to elementary school textbooks portraying evolution as a fact.

Mr. Segraves told me that in 1970 a scientific framework had been drawn up by the State Board of Education which included statements that teachers in the State should be neutral in their classrooms in regard to the questions of origins. This framework was applied to some extent in textbooks produced in 1973, 1975, and 1977. But in 1978 a new framework was drawn up that dropped the emphasis on being neutral toward origins. Because there will be major science textbook adoptions in California in 1982 and 1984, the Segraveses were concerned that if the present guidelines stand, the former position of neutrality would not be reflected in any way in the new textbooks.

Believing that the case involved a demand that the Biblical account of Creation be taught in public schools, the attorney general's office defending the case planned to bring in an array of scientists and educators such as Carl Sagan and Nobel laureate biochemist Arthur Kornberg, who were prepared to testify that religious considerations pertaining to the origin, meaning, and value of life are not within the realm of science because they cannot be analyzed or measured by present methods of science. However, on Tuesday morning Segraves' attorney, recognizing that the judge could not interfere with the content of the State's textbooks, made it clear that the plaintiffs did not want to put science and religion on trial. To the disappointment of those who had built up the case as a new Scopes "monkey trial," the case was narrowed to the consideration of the question of whether the language of the Board of Education's guidelines is offensive to Christian children and thus a violation of their right to the free exercise of religion.

The only defense left for the State was to maintain that the Board of Education's

Leo Van Dolson is an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and a contributing editor of *MINISTRY*.



Kelly Segraves, right, director of the San Diego-based Creation Science Research Center, stands in Sacramento Superior Court with his wife, Polly, center, and 13-year-old son, Kasey, left.

regulations and policies already make it mandatory on the teachers not to present evolution as a dogmatic fact in the classroom. Testifying for the defense, Marian Drinker, a member of the State education board, held that the board had already adopted a policy of teaching evolution as a theory rather than as dogma.

The eight-year-old policy, not to be confused with the "scientific framework" the plaintiffs were attacking, was developed under Max Rafferty, a conservative who was State superintendent of public instruction. The policy states:

"1. That dogmatism be changed to conditional standards where speculation is offered for origins.

"2. That science emphasize the 'how' and not the ultimate cause for origins."

Segraves' lawyer, Richard Turner, in his closing argument on Friday, derided the 1973 dogmatism as a "phantom policy." He contended that there is no evidence that it had ever been used in selecting textbooks.

The Segraveses have been prominent in the creationist movement since the early 1960s, when Kelly Segraves' mother, Nell, first challenged the teachings of evolution in the public schools. In 1970 the Segraveses founded a nonprofit, non-denominational organization in San Diego, the Creation Science Research Center.

Nell, Kelly, his wife, Polly, and their son Kasey were in the courtroom throughout the trial. Kasey, who is now 13 and in

the eighth grade, took the stand Tuesday, testifying that although he believed that God created people and put them on earth, his sixth-grade teacher insisted that humans evolved through the evolutionary process for millions of years and that evolution was scientifically true. His father testified that he had found evolution taught dogmatically in the textbooks Kasey had used from the fifth or sixth grade onward. Their testimony conflicted sharply with that of defense witnesses, who tried to establish the point that evolution per se is not taught in the State's elementary schools.

Attorney Claude Morgan, an observer at the trial, explained to us that he had a question in his mind as to whether the scientists testifying in behalf of the defense define evolution in a way that excludes the evolutionary materials that the Segraveses pointed to in the science textbooks from the category of evolution. "In other words," he added, "they might say that this is not teaching evolution—just biology or something else."

Throughout the trial Judge Perluss took the position that even if the State could prove that the theory of evolution is true, doing so was not the point of the trial. "We still have a First Amendment that guarantees free exercise of religion," he said. "There are people, no matter how many scientists say otherwise, that go home, open the Bible to Genesis, and say, 'This is the truth.'"

Educators who testified for the defense Thursday admitted that students sometimes became upset after being introduced to evolutionary theory. They took the position that they were aware of and sympathetic to the rights of the Creation-oriented children and were already taking steps to meet their point of view by insisting that evolution not be taught in a dogmatic way. In talking with Nell Segraves after the Thursday morning session, we found her euphoric, telling us, "We really got them this morning. They made our point for us."

Later that afternoon Kelly Segraves told us that the more the State's witnesses were saying, the more they seemed to be conceding that scientific Creation could be taught in the schools as an alternate point of view.

At the exclusive breakfast interview he gave us on Friday morning, Kelly Segraves told us more about the Creation Science Research Center. The center is in touch with at least 750 Creation-oriented scientists who support its viewpoint. He explained that one of the reasons their attorney, Richard Turner, had narrowed the scope of the trial was that their funds were limited and they could not afford a long and extensive trial. Mr. Turner also felt that by taking the narrower position there was more likelihood that they would get what they wanted out of the case, a prediction that in the end proved to be true.

What's in it for me



Peter's question still speaks for ministers today. How we answer it for ourselves determines what kind of ministry we shall have.

by John Todorovich

Following the sorrowful retreat of the rich young ruler, Peter spoke up: "Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (Matt. 19:27). Simply stated, he was asking "What will we get out of our ministry?" This, certainly, was a practical question for ministers then, as well as now.

I can't hear Jesus answering, "Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me shall have \$100 per month donkey depreciation; \$160 per month hay-and-oats budget; and you will get \$360 per month to help you buy a home. If you have to make a special trip from Jerusalem to Bethlehem you will get an extra hay-and-oats allowance. If one of the other disciples rides with you, you may report that to Judas, and you will receive an additional hay allowance. If you stay on my team long enough, and do a reasonably good job, I'm sure that the Executive Committee will soon give you a larger synagogue to pastor. And we really do have a very generous retirement plan!"

Indeed, the ministry is the highest and noblest calling. Despite the secularization of the society in which we live today, clergy are still respected and treated with deference even by most worldly people. A survey some time ago asked people to rank, in order of confidence, the professionals they trusted most. Doctors ranked first; clergy placed third (automobile salesmen

came in eighteenth)! But even as honored and honorable as we are, we don't have to look at our own lives very long to be painfully reminded that we are indeed made of clay.

As ministers, we are often called upon by the laity to help them interpret the moral law of God as it relates to present-day life. We all have had people come to us for counsel regarding a questionable situation that could be to their advantage financially or socially. These people have argued all the reasons why this particular thing would be acceptable. But usually a moral or ethical question is involved. And, in most cases, as we have continued to uphold the moral code that should govern Christians, the individual has responded: "I knew that was the answer all the time. I just wanted to check with you."

People look to us to interpret the moral law of God for them. But just as judges and lawyers sometimes bend or violate the civil laws they have sworn to uphold, we ministers are at times tempted to bend the moral law of God for our own selfish ends. Usually, when a minister is found in violation of proper ethics, the problem has centered around the question "What's in it for me?"—financially, professionally, or personally. Rarely do we make these mistakes inadvertently, although, if challenged, we routinely plead ignorance as our excuse.

A member of the board of directors of a local credit union came to me one day and said, "Pastor, what can we do to make our ministers honest?" He went on to tell of

one pastor who applied for a loan but whose credit rating was so poor that he couldn't qualify. A minister friend took out a loan for him, and now, together, they could not make repayment! The credit union director continued, telling of the wife of another minister who obtained a loan, not declaring another that she already had, which made her application statement fraudulent. Now, with her business failing, she had declared bankruptcy. "What can we do to make our ministers honest?" His question kept ringing in my ears.

It is tragic when those who have been called to interpret God's standards for others succumb to the temptation to bend or manipulate that same standard for their own selfish ends.

"We have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" Like Peter, we are tempted to feel that because of our great talents, because of what we could have done financially in some career other than the ministry, or because we have accomplished so much good for the church, we deserve just a bit more than we are getting. And so we bend the rules—only slightly, of course—for our own ends. What a tragedy! One who attempts to point others to proper living, himself fails to exemplify the same high standards! We need to subject our lives and ministries to the close scrutiny of the following questions:

1. *Do I spend sufficient time in personal study of the Scriptures and in personal prayer and meditation to maintain a continually*

John Todorovich is Ministerial secretary of the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

growing relationship with my God?

Only you can determine how much time is sufficient for this in your own experience. But is your relationship with God as rich as it was a year ago? Five years ago? Your response to that question can provide the answer. Studies show that most people, even professionals, level off, cease to grow, or even regress after they reach midlife. Have you reached midlife spiritually?

2. *Do I avoid anything that will weaken me mentally, physically, or spiritually?* Whether we wish to acknowledge them or not, we each know, subconsciously, our own areas of weakness, "those darling sins," as one writer has called them. Have we truly surrendered these to Jesus?

3. *Do I abuse the authority given me by the Word of God? Am I always an example and a shepherd to those whom God has entrusted to my care?*

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:2, 3). Are we lords or shepherds? Your people will follow a leader; few of them want to be driven.

4. *Do I cheapen my calling by seeking special privileges, gratuities, or ministerial discounts?*

One minister, who was trying to get a better price on an item from a merchant, pleaded, "You know I'm just a poor preacher!" The merchant replied, "Yes, I know that you're a poor preacher. I heard you preach a couple of weeks ago."

It is truly sad when a minister will squeeze all of the profit out of a merchant for a "good deal," pleading the financial embarrassment of the ministry, and then go about boasting of what a bargain he got on the item.

5. *Do I keep with strict integrity all confidences that come to me as a minister?*

It isn't always easy to keep a confidence. But what does it mean to you when a person who is agonizing with a sin problem comes to you to share his burden and ease his guilt? He bares his soul to you. Do you tell your wife about it? a colleague? or your closest friend? What is a confidence but a person's trust in you that when he bares his soul to you, you will not repeat that confidence to any other soul?

6. *Do I refuse to use information about or from members for personal advantage?*

The laity trust that the clergy are a cut above the average person in honesty and integrity. They have a right to expect exemplary behavior of us. They would like to believe that we would be above using our position for personal gain. Don't give in to the temptation to abuse this trust.

7. *Do I go into the pulpit unprepared or use it as a platform to expound my personal views on society, politics, or matters unrelated to the gospel?*

Probably the cry that most often comes to church administrators is the cry for better preaching and better preachers. The man of God must never be satisfied with his preaching accomplishments. He must always be striving to grow in preaching ability as well as content. People will still come to hear good preaching.

8. *Do I play favorites or ally myself with factions within the church?*

The true shepherd is a shepherd to all the flock, the lovely and the unlovely. We cannot be a pastor to all if we take sides in any church problem. Let us never allow ourselves to be dragged into any church problem that is not a moral problem. And let us be careful that we do not create a moral problem where no moral principle is involved.

9. *Do I give prompt aid to members in time of distress or need?*

One problem with the clergy is that we feel that we always have to have all the answers. We need to recognize that we do not always know just what needs to be done or said, nor do our members expect us to. Then, let us not go about spilling empty words on people, saying, "I know what you're going through," when we really haven't been through it ourselves. Just let people know that you care and that you're available for support and help in time of need.

10. *Do I consider seriously the counsel of colleagues?*

There are two parts to this question that we must apply to ourselves. First, we should pray for the good sense to ask for counsel from colleagues from time to time. None of us has a corner on all wisdom for the parish. Second, we should pray for grace to accept the counsel we have asked for, if it is wiser than ours and if it is correct.

11. *Do I speak disparagingly of my predecessor or advise members of former congregations regarding their relationship with their present minister?*

When a minister leaves a church he should leave it. Cut the ties clean! Don't make yourself the exception to the rule. Don't go back into that parish unless you're invited to do so by the present pastor. Don't give advice unless that pastor asks for it. And if he doesn't ask for it, don't think that he has committed the unpardonable sin and that that church will come to ruin. Possibly he just might stumble through and succeed in spite of himself and

your worst fears and predictions!

12. *Do I encourage or perform professional services in a former parish only upon invitation of the present pastor?*

This is simply a variation on the golden rule. It's just good taste, professional courtesy. If a layperson from a former parish asks you to perform a service for him or his family, simply say, "I would be very happy to do so. Now if you'll just channel this matter through your present pastor we will both feel more comfortable about it." That's all that it takes.

13. *Am I alert to the physical and/or spiritual needs of a retired colleague who may be a member of my church or who may live in my community?*

Let us not neglect the retirees. These people have given their lives to the church. These are people for whom the church has been their life and whose lives have been expended for the church. Let us continue to love them and make them feel a part of the church, even though they may not be able to take an active role any longer.

14. *Am I responsive to the needs of my family, recognizing that they are my first responsibility as a servant of God?*

Don't forget your wife and your children. They are people too. Give yourself to them and their needs. They are your flock as verily as the larger flock that you have been called to serve. Make them your first work, without neglecting your parish flock.

Ministerial ethics! What a challenge is ours as we attempt to lead our people into a closer, richer experience with God!

"Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?" (Matt. 19:27). In reply to Peter, Jesus promises that we "shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (verse 29). I receive a "hundredfold" here and now, each time I have the privilege of bringing a soul to Christ. My salary and my benefits are necessary to meet the physical needs of life, but my real bonus comes every time I see a person give his heart to Jesus.

How fortunate I am to have a part in His ministry! I am the richest of the rich, "as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (2 Cor. 6:10).

As ministers, let us live carefully and frugally when necessary, but let us not be cheap, nor cheapen our ministry with unbecoming conduct.

Like Peter, we are tempted to feel that, because of our great talents, because of what we could have done financially in some career other than the ministry, we deserve just a bit more than we are getting. And so we bend the rules.

It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, . . . endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change.—The Westminster Confession, Chap. IV.

This We Believe/2

by Warren H. Johns

The doctrine of beginnings

The way we perceive God, the way we look at the world around us, and the way we understand our own selves all have their roots in the opening verse of Scripture: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). Theology, like a many-faceted jewel, can gain its full radiance and resplendency only from the opening pages of the Sacred Word. Just as the Creator's words "Let there be light" (verse 3) provided the first dawning upon the natural world, so the opening chapters of Genesis provide the first rays of light upon God, the Creator, and His plan for all created beings. Here the many facets of Christian theology all gain their greatest significance and deepest meaning.

Every major doctrine of the church finds its bedrock foundation in Creation. To establish a correct doctrine of God as well as of man we must begin with Genesis 1. There we see, in contrast to all the ancient Creation myths, a God who is distinct from nature, a Creator who is above and beyond His created works. There is no confusion here between Deity and matter, as in the case of paganism or pantheism. If a pantheistic interpretation were forced upon Genesis 1, then we would have to say that God is His own Creator and that the account of the first seven days is a record of how God created Himself. Moving on from Genesis, we find a composite profile

in Scripture of a Creator who has infinite wisdom (see Ps. 104:24; Isa. 40:28) and great power (see Jer. 27:5), whose entire creative activity is a sign of His love (see Ps. 33:4-6) and who desires the companionship of beings who can love and be loved (see Isa. 45:18; Deut. 6:4, 5; Jer. 31:3). Creation also unveils other aspects of God's character such as His glory and deity (see Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:19, 20).

Man is more than a machine

Likewise, Genesis 1 portrays a doctrine of man in which man is distinct from his Creator, as well as from nature. If man were not distinct from God then it would have to be said that man created his own God, in his image and after his likeness. This would be humanism, which elevates man as the supreme being in the universe. When the record states that "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7), it informs us of the paradox that man is separate from nature as well as a part of nature; he is more than a collection of molecules, more than a skillfully designed machine with a computer for a brain. He is distinct from the animal world, because he is given a kingly dominion over the rest of the creatures (see chap. 1:28). Yet, like the animals, man was not created *ex nihilo*; God did make use of preexisting materials in the creation of both (see chap. 2:7, cf. 1:24). Therefore, we might expect to find

physical, biochemical, or physiological similarities between man and certain members of the animal world, past or present. According to this significant clue in Genesis we should not be shocked to find extinct hominids exhumed in Africa that have a greater likeness to man than do the living apes. This does not prove common ancestry, according to Genesis, but a common Creator, using common materials and a similar blueprint.

Genesis also teaches us that man is endowed with a moral nature, for he is fashioned in the image and after the likeness of God, who is a moral Being (see chap. 1:26). To man is given something given to no other creature—the power to make moral choices (see chap. 2:16, 17). This would suggest that man's intelligence is on a higher plane than that of any of the other creatures. Contemporary scientific studies, however, try to demonstrate that man's reasoning and thinking processes are basically no different from those of the animal world; evolutionary studies try to close the gap between man and the animals. This stands in sharp contrast to the tenor of the Genesis record, which shows the uniqueness and distinctiveness of mankind, at least on the mental and spiritual level.

Salvation itself has its roots in Creation. According to the synonymous parallelism of the following poetic passage, the designations "Maker" and "Redeemer" are equivalent: "For thy Maker is thine hus-

Warren H. Johns is an associate editor of MINISTRY.

band; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called" (Isa. 54:5). Other Old Testament passages show that salvation is predicated upon Creation (see Ps. 124:7, 8; Isa. 42:5, 6; Jer. 33:2, 3). A comparison of the two versions of the Ten Commandments shows that one gives Creation as the central pillar undergirding the fourth commandment, while the other cites redemption (see Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). Likewise, God's redemption of Israel from Babylonian captivity, using Cyrus, a second Moses, as His instrument, is based upon His power as Creator (see Isa. 44:24-45:4, 12, 13).

Christ, the center of Creation

The New Testament adds a new dimension in the inseparable relationship between Creation and redemption. Significantly, the Gospel of John, the only one of the four Gospels to discuss the preincarnate state of Christ, begins with the same words as Genesis 1:1. * Christ is presented as the Creator not only here but also in Colossians 1:16-18 and Hebrews 1:1-3. The New Testament adds the dimension that the work of Creation centers around Christ. Because Christ is our Creator and a special tie exists between Creator and creature, how could He ever abandon us to the onslaughts of sin? Just as it is unnatural for a mother to abandon her suckling child (see Isa. 49:15), so it is unthinkable for Christ to abandon to eternal doom those whom He brought into existence.

Christ's ability to save is predicated upon His power to create. If Christ did not have a part in our creation, then He cannot be considered our Saviour, for only the Creator has the power to save. It takes as much divine power to produce life in one whose heart and mind has been deadened by sin as it does to call to life an inanimate form made of clay and lying upon the ground, or to produce an entire being from a man's rib.

Some feel that the Creation account is a legend in keeping with the style of other ancient Near Eastern myths. Let's follow the implications of such reasoning: If Adam and Eve were mere legendary figures having no existence, then there was no historical garden named Eden, nor a tree named the tree of knowledge of good and evil, nor the eating of its fruit and the subsequent fall into sin. If there was no fall into sin, there is no need of a divine Saviour—man must become his own savior. Sin, then, would be a myth and an incarnate Christ unnecessary. This runs directly antithetical to the plain teaching of God's Word, depicting our need of a creative power working from within. David's prayer was, "Create in me a clean heart, O God" (Ps. 51:10), and Paul describes the one who has already experienced the answer to that prayer as being a "new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17, R.S.V.). The work of Creation and the work of

redemption have essentially the same goal—the production of the image and likeness of the Divine within the human (see Gen. 1:26, 27; cf. Rom. 6:5; 2 Cor. 3:18; Col. 3:10).

Creation is inseparably tied to eschatology. If we minimize the importance of the one we invariably detract from the importance of the other. The strength of the one lies in the strength of the other. The foundation of modern geology as a science is often dated from 1785, when the Scottish thinker James Hutton appeared before the Royal Society and ended his treatise on earth history with the words "The result, therefore, of our inquiry is that we see no vestige of a beginning, no prospect of an end." Hutton was not denying the possibility of a beginning and an end to earth history; rather, he was saying that the geologist is not confined to the Biblical concept of a definite beginning in space and time for earth's history, nor a catastrophic end. Hutton stood in diametric opposition to the Biblical concept of a God who sits above the circle of earth and who sees the end from the beginning (see Isa. 40:22; 46:10). The same power that was exercised in calling the world into existence must also be administered in the eventual destruction of the world and the creation of the new heavens and new earth (see Isa. 65:17; 2 Peter 3:7-13). God indeed is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning of the first Creation and the beginning of the second (see Rev. 1:8, 3:14; 21:6).

The methodology one applies to the book of Revelation and the general nature of the conclusions he draws from it will differ very little from one's study of Genesis, and vice versa. If we say that the Apocalypse is viewed merely as a book of symbolisms without actual historical fulfillments, then we will likewise say that the first few chapters of Genesis are mere symbolisms unrooted in historical facts. If we say that the last book of the Bible no longer holds relevance and value for twentieth-century thought, then we will do the same for the first book. If we apply the Apocalypse in a strictly literal fashion without consideration for the symbolism involved (i.e., the "mark of the beast" is a literal mark or brand on the forehead), then we will most likely treat Genesis 1 and 2 as literally as possible ("There could have been no rain in the Edenic world"). Also, if we treat the Creation record in a

deistic fashion ("God does not intervene directly in the affairs of the world, but uses secondary or tertiary mechanisms") then we will use the same approach for the Apocalypse. On the other hand, if we say that the Creator indeed intervened directly in history and brought the Edenic world into existence in six sudden steps, then we will most likely view the present world's demise as being also rapid and catastrophic, brought about by the Creator's direct intervention in human affairs. The beginning and the end cannot be separated either theologically or methodologically.

Christ is the one who gives the greatest significance and the deepest meaning to the beginning and the end. He adopts the title "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end" from His Father (see Rev. 1:8, 17; 21:6, cf. 16:17; John 19:30). The cross spans all of human history from beginning to end; its arms point both backward to the time when man had face-to-face conversation with his Creator, and forward to the time when His followers "shall see his face" (Rev. 22:4). Thus, the cross is the focal point for both Creation and the last acts in the drama of redemption.

Creation, the basis for doctrine

Many other teachings of Christianity have their roots in Genesis. The foundation of the Sabbath and its weekly rest (to be discussed in a later installment) goes back to Eden, and not merely to Sinai. When Christ rested in the tomb, He was honoring the Creation-Sabbath and indicating that the work of redemption upon the cross was complete, just as His rest on the seventh day of Creation week indicated that his creative work was complete and perfect (see Gen. 1:31; Heb. 4:3, 4). His cry upon the cross, "It is finished," parallels the finishing of His labors at the end of Creation week (Gen. 1:31; 2:2). Just as "God . . . commanded the light to shine out of darkness" (2 Cor. 4:6) on that first day marking the beginning of human history, so Christ, the Light of the world, arose from a darkened tomb on that Sunday morning, marking the beginning of a new era for mankind. The time sequence of Creation has been preserved at the cross, and the Sabbath is a weekly reminder to us of Christ's creative work during the premier week of history, as well as of His creative work in our hearts now.

The cross spans all of human history from beginning to end; its arms point both backward to the time when man had face-to-face conversation with his Creator and forward to the time he will again see His face.

All true worship has its source in Creation. As far as the Biblical record goes, the very first choir and worship service are mentioned in connection with this earth's creation—"when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7). True worship can take place only when man humbles himself before his Maker, when the creature acknowledges his creatureliness and the greatness of the Creator. Such a spirit is captured for us in many of the psalms: "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our maker"; "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" (Ps. 95:6; 8:3, 4). When we contemplate the magnitude and complexity of the universe, as well as the mysteries locked within our own planet, it causes our spirit to thrill with amazement that the Creator should lavish so much time and attention, love and concern, upon us in His work of redemption! Are we not like an atom in comparison with His vast domain?

The foundation of the family is also found in the setting of Creation. No better rationale can be derived for the fact that marriage itself has the seal of God's approval than the knowledge that the Creator performed the first wedding ceremony on the same day that Adam and Eve came into existence, and that the Creator incarnate recognized its divine origin by performing His first recorded miracle at a Jewish wedding service (see John 2:1-11). The future of society hinges upon the integrity of the home, and the integrity of the home depends upon our recognition of the divine origin of marriage and our willingness to pursue it according to the divine blueprint.

The survival of society in the face of a perilous future will also depend upon the recognition of the brotherhood of man, which likewise stems from the fact of Creation. The apostle Paul, who was perhaps the greatest champion of human brotherhood in the first century outside of Christ Himself, declared to the Athenians that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts 17:26). An acknowledgment of the fact that we are all brothers both literally and spiritually makes it imperative that we treat one another with love, respect, and a caring concern. A failure to do so brings us under the rebuke found in Malachi 2:10: "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" The ethics for proper human relationships have their roots in Creation. Thus it can be shown that the great doctrines of Christianity, as well as the practices of Christian living, all have their foundation in Creation. Destroy Creation, and the heart of Christi-

anity itself is destroyed.

Why did the Creator create?

In addition to viewing its importance in a doctrinal sense, we can discover the importance of Creation by analyzing the reasons why the Creator created. According to Scripture, man was created expressly for the glory of God (see Isa. 43:7), for the habitation of an empty earth (see Isa. 45:18), and for the purpose of performing good works in the service of Christ (see Eph. 2:10).

Genesis 1 and 2 suggest two additional, but complementary, reasons for the existence of man. First, man was created for service. Just as light and soil were fashioned as the prerequisites for the existence of plants, and plants were made for the existence of animals, and animals for the service of man, so man was made for the service of the highest form of being, God Himself. The stair-step structure of the Creation account suggests that each level is a servant to the next higher level. God did not end His work on the sixth day, but on the seventh, as stated in Genesis 2:2, which suggests that man was *not* the climax of Creation but that he was made for the service of God. The parallel structure of Genesis 1—the first three days corresponding to the next three, and the last day being the capstone of the whole week—leads us to conclude that the law of service is written across the face of Creation then as well as on the face of nature today. This is the exemplification of true ministry!

Second, man was created for companionship. Genesis 1:26 implies companionship among many other things: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Full companionship can come only when two beings have a common bond, when there are many more likenesses than differences. Adam, when first created, could not become overly enthusiastic about fellowship with mere animals, so God created a being who, like Adam, was in His image. When Adam began to enlarge his family after the tragic death of his secondborn and the flight into exile of his firstborn, the record states that he bore "a son in his own likeness, after his image" (Gen. 5:3). This again was to enlarge the circle of fellowship, which had been previously ruptured. Just as Eve was created for the fellowship of her beloved, and Seth was brought into the world for

fellowship with his sorrowing parents, so Adam was first created in the image of his Maker so that he could enjoy exquisite and unparalleled fellowship with Deity. This is the ultimate goal of redemption, as well as Creation.

Without a divine revelation we would be totally unable to interpret correctly the book of nature or arrive at a correct knowledge of the Creator and His work of Creation (see the March, 1981, *MINISTRY*, "Scripture Is by Inspiration of God"). The works of creation do provide us a window for viewing the Creator; we can look through nature to catch glimpses of nature's God. But it is through His inspired Word that the ultimate questions about Creation can be answered. Only in Scripture can we discover who the Creator is (see Ps. 100:3; Isa. 40:28; 43:15; John 1:1-3, 14; 1 Cor. 8:6; Rev. 4:11), the mode or manner by which He has created (see Ps. 33:6, 9; 104:24; 136:5), the scope of His creative activities (see Ex. 20:11; 31:17; Neh. 9:6), and the reasons for Creation. Without the written Word we would not be able to detect God's providential hand in sustaining His work of creation, a fact that has ample support in Scripture (see Neh. 9:6; Ps. 147:8, 9, 16-19; Isa. 40:26; Acts 14:17; Col. 1:17). This rules out the deistic concept of an "absentee landlord" Creator.

Creation cannot be tested by the scientific method, because the scientific method can deal only with repeatable events. No scientific experiment can be constructed to test the probability or even the possibility of Creation. This leads us to the scriptural declaration that the ultimate test is the test of faith: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear" (Heb. 11:3). Faith does not negate reason—"through faith we *understand*." Creation is a catalyst to stimulate us to think God's thoughts after Him, to trace the footprints of the Creator throughout His marvelous, never-ending domain of science. Only as we heed the injunctions to ponder and study will we begin to realize our creatureliness and the greatness of our Maker (see Job 12:7-10; Ps. 104:24; 111:2, 4; Isa. 40:26).

*The Septuagint (Greek) translation of Genesis 1:1 begins with the words *En archē epoiesen 'o Theos*, while John 1:1 begins *En archē ēn 'o logos*. *Logos* is equated with *Theos* in the same verse.

Christ's ability to save is predicated upon His power to create. If Christ did not have a part in our creation, then He cannot be considered our Saviour, for only the Creator has the power to save.

Ministerial tuneup

Do we give more attention to maintaining our automobiles than to safeguarding our health? Such a practice could result in ministerial breakdown. Here are fifteen tips for maximum daily performance.



We recognize that no single program can fit the different needs of every individual. Perhaps more than most, ministers have a daily schedule that varies from day to day. Yet, the suggestions given here are important principles for good health and effective ministry. We urge you to seriously consider putting them into practice, adapting where necessary to fit your particular situation.—Editors.

The great religious movement initiated at Oxford by the Wesleys and their associates was dubbed Methodism because the members' program of living, studying, worshiping, and serving was carefully systematized. This enabled them to make the best use of their time.

We would be more successful in our Christian experience and work, and would enjoy better health, if individually we were better organized and our daily program were more methodically scheduled. The following is suggested:

1. Rise early. To make this easier, go to bed earlier the night before. An adult needs only six to eight hours' sleep. Indeed, statistics reveal that, all things being equal, more sleep than this may increase the chance of premature death from heart disease.

2. Upon rising drink two glasses of

water. This flushes out the stomach, kidneys, and bladder, and prepares the gastrointestinal tract for breakfast. It also hydrates the system, thus decreasing thirst at mealtime. Repeat well before dinner and supper.

3. Personal devotions. A person should feed the soul before feeding the body. Commune with your Maker when the mind is fresh and there are few distractions. Systematically pursue some Bible topic and a programmed reading of Scripture and quality Christian literature. Don't neglect meditation.

4. Exercise. For those in a predominantly sedentary occupation such as the ministry exercise is an absolute necessity. Most calisthenics are of limited value; exercising the big leg muscles is of more benefit in protecting the heart. Jogging, cycling, or swimming is excellent, but walking is good enough for most people. Walking requires no expensive clothing or equipment, and almost everyone, unless crippled, can walk. Walk at least three miles a day, six days a week. Walk fast and breathe deeply.

5. Bathe. A bath or shower, especially after perspiratory exercise, is important. Bathe daily to cleanse the pores. The steward of the body temple should keep it immaculate.

6. Family worship. The home, like the body, is a temple, and the father is its officiating priest. It is a cliché, but true nonetheless, that the family that prays together stays together—right into the kingdom.

7. Breakfast. This should be the main meal of the day. The stomach has rested during the night and is in the best condition to handle food. A substantial breakfast provides energy for the morning's activities without the need for coffee at ten o'clock or the cigarettes craved by some people whose breakfast has consisted of a hot drink and a sweet roll.

Children, too, do much better at school if they consistently eat a substantial breakfast, and older persons are less nervous through the day after an ample breakfast. Of course, a big meal in the evening will make it difficult to eat a good breakfast the following day. One nutritionist advises: "Eat breakfast like a king,

dinner like a prince, and supper like a pauper."

8. The morning work. Having observed and practiced the previous suggestions, a person will be popping with energy and able to do more than merely earn his salary.

9. Dinner. The noon meal should also be substantial. A brief after-dinner walk will aid digestion.

10. The afternoon work. Complete the day's work assignments and upon arriving home . . .

11. Complete the day's exercise. The exercise suggested in number four is best taken in two stages—before breakfast and before supper.

12. Supper. Eat a light supper, including such items as fruit, possibly a little whole-wheat bread, and a low-calorie warm drink. Do not drink much, if any, liquid after supper.

If practical, older and sedentary workers could well manage on two meals a day—breakfast and a second meal around two or three o'clock in the afternoon. Such a regimen is admittedly difficult in today's culture. Many, however, eat but two meals a day in actuality, since they merely snack for breakfast. They eat the wrong two meals, with a big dinner and a large supper at night. The big evening meal is more likely to contribute to obesity and also to prevent refreshing sleep.

13. The evening. Make good use of the evening hours. This is the time for family togetherness. Home should be the most attractive place for the children. Make it so.

Be sure evening worship with the family is short and interesting, and adjust it to the needs of all. Encourage the participation of each one. This is the time to review God's providences for the day and to thank Him for the day's blessings.

14. Personal devotions. Just before going to bed, personally pray and commit yourself to God for the night.

15. Retire early. Make it a habit to retire early enough to get your six to eight hours of sleep so that you can be refreshed and up early for the next day's routine.

System and regularity are health-promoting and make life much more enjoyable.

Dunbar W. Smith, M.D., is teaching in the School of Health, Loma Linda University, Loma Linda, California.

Why Johnny can't listen to the sermon

If your congregation is composed of "average American families" you have a competitor that is absorbing their attention some forty-four hours a week compared with the three or four they give you in church.

Would you turn off your television set for a whole month if someone offered you \$500 to do so? Don't be so quick to say Yes. When the Detroit Free Press made that exact offer recently to 120 families in their reading area, 93 turned it down flat! Chances are that a similar percentage of your congregation would too. After all, the

average family in America keeps its TV running 44 hours each week, and a person just doesn't lightly "turn off" a habit that consumes that much of his or her life. If you have a church of "average American families," stack up the 44 hours each spends every week in front of the tube with the 3 or 4 hours spent in the pew, and you

may begin to get a good idea of the competition you're up against in your preaching. Of course, keeping track of the hours you spend watching TV each week might shed some light, as well, on why your sermons don't always have the impact you envision for them.

Now every so often editors of religious publications get the urge to unburden themselves of a diatribe against the evils of television. I've been known to succumb to the temptation myself. Indeed, for almost ten years I could do so quite smugly, knowing that my home was among the miniscule number that had not a single TV set—not even an old black-and-white portable in the bedroom. I wasn't above casually mentioning that fact at opportune moments just to feel the righteous glow of abstinence and to practice a little Christian one-upmanship over my less self-denying brethren. Unfortunately, a few months ago the hospital where my wife nurses put in all new color models and sold the old black-and-white sets to employees for \$15 apiece. Election night was coming up, and the cost of buying a hospital TV was less than renting one to watch the voting returns. We returned to the ranks of the TV-possessing (or possessed). So I can no longer pontificate on the evils of television with the freedom I once could, and I have no intention of doing so here. In fact, I promise not to use the words sex or violence anywhere in the rest of the editorial. (However, I would like to reserve the right to throw the set away, take my \$15 loss, and begin pontificating again!)

I am convinced that the reason Johnny (not to mention Johnny's father and mother) can't listen to the sermon has a great deal to do with that 44 hours spent in front of the TV. I am even more convinced of that fact since reading an interview with Neil Postman, professor of communication arts and sciences, New York University, in the January 19, 1981, *U.S. News & World Report*. Although the context of the interview is television's effect on children, most of Postman's points apply equally to adults, in my opinion. Let me give you a few highlights from that interview.

Television, says Postman, seems to be shortening the attention span of children.



D. A. Roth, associate secretary, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, talks to Dr. Eugene Nida, executive secretary for translations, American Bible Society, at the recent Advisory Council of the ABS. More than forty denominational leaders met with ABS officials to stress continuing support for the worldwide work of the ABS and its partners in the United Bible Societies.

TV presents pictures moving very rapidly and dramatically. The average length of a camera shot on a regular program is three seconds (2½ seconds on a commercial).

It's no wonder Johnny becomes bored unless he sees the preacher from a different camera angle every three seconds. He also misses the close-up shots of the pastor's face dissolving into a wide-angle view of the choir; the instant replay when the preacher makes a particularly telling point (repeated in slow motion from two or three different camera positions, of course), and the break every ten minutes for a word from the sponsor. In short, you're up against some stiff competition.

Postman also points out that although human speech is heard on TV, it is the visual that always contains the most meaning. As a result, TV really isn't suited to conveying ideas, since ideas are essentially words. Television communicates in a way that is accessible to everyone; no one has to learn to watch pictures. On the other hand, Postman says, schools (and I might add "churches") assume that there are certain things one needs to know before he can learn other things, that not everything is as readily accessible as it appears on television.

Pity the poor pastor who has to try to convey the Word of God in mere words and who has to wean the flock from milk before being able to present the "strong meat." On TV each night the world's "strong meat" is readily accessible in just about any strength one cares for! And it is all served up in a way that requires no hard work or diligent study to comprehend. Just sit and watch. It isn't surprising that the sermon comes off second best in comparison with what Johnny has just seen on TV.

A third point Postman makes is that

television commercials are the modern equivalent of the ancient morality play. By the time an American child is 20 years old he will have seen approximately 1 million commercials, easily making these the most numerous learning experiences he has. And, says Postman, TV commercials are about products "only in the sense that the story of Jonah is about the anatomy of whales." Commercials, according to this media expert, are really miniature parables in which the problem is stated in the first few seconds, resolved in the middle segment, and concluded with a moral in which the actor(s) fade ecstatically from the screen. Ostensibly a commercial may be selling mouthwash, but in reality it is selling acceptability to the opposite sex. Likewise, automobile and motorcycle commercials are actually selling freedom and independence. And these commercials teach children three interesting things, says Postman: (1) All problems can be solved; (2) all problems can be solved quickly; (3) all problems can be solved quickly by means of some technology.

Little wonder Johnny (or his parents) become disenchanted with the pastor who can't neatly wrap up a problem, prescribe the proper pill or machine or prayer that will solve it quickly, and exit smiling all in 28 seconds. The people on TV do it all the time; why can't the pastor? Why does he have to spend 30 boring minutes talking about long-term solutions to life's problems—solutions that require something more than technological answers?

Life according to television, Postman maintains, is a caricature of real life. This caricature is based on certain assumptions that come across unconsciously to TV viewers. For example, characters with education or discernment are portrayed

almost invariably as aloof, unfeeling, and out of touch with their fellow men. The hero, on the other hand, is usually a "man of the people," uneducated perhaps, but warm and responsive. "It is very difficult for a youngster to find on these programs any model of someone who is admirable and who is also educated," says Postman.

Thus the minister who attempts to present the gospel on any kind of a reasoning basis has three strikes against him before he starts. The people on television who are to be admired and identified with don't complicate things with too much thinking.

So if Johnny can't seem to listen to the sermon (or if Johnny's father and mother have the same symptoms) a prime cause could be no farther away than the beautiful color TV set in their living room.

What can you do?

One possibility might be to challenge your church to a "TV-Free Month." (Try a week if you think a month is too ambitious.) If 93 out of 120 families in Detroit turned down \$500 to go without television for a month, you could conceivably run into problems convincing your congregation to do so for free, but a few hardy souls might be intrigued by the novelty of the idea. Make it a big thing; have some special church programs to keep the family from disintegrating during this time of stress; interview those who successfully complete the experiment. Who knows what results you might have from something so bizarre? It ought at least to be worth a write-up in your local newspaper if nothing else!

If you try it I'd like to hear what happens. With a little more encouragement I might even join you and throw away my \$15 TV!—B. R. H.

A word about our new look

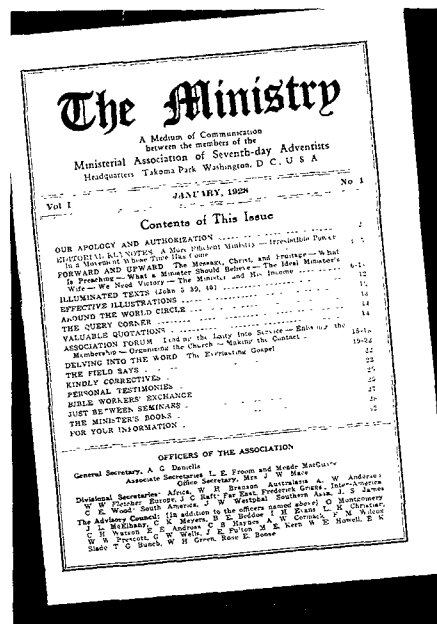
Auto makers haven't been content to keep producing the same body styles since Henry Ford abandoned the model-A for yearly design changes. Women's and men's fashions change regularly. And magazines too feel the urge to put on new clothes from time to time. We hope you like the fresh spring wardrobe our designer, Helcio Deslandes, has created for MINISTRY. Frankly, we think it is rather becoming.

Since its birth in 1928, MINISTRY has dressed in a variety of styles. As you can see from our first cover, visual appeal took a back seat to content in the early issues. Today we still believe that what the articles say is of major importance, but we like to believe that we also realize the value of an attractive setting. The changes we have made are not just for the sake of being new; each has been planned to make the magazine more readable and helpful.

We realize that most of our readers couldn't tell a pica stick from a galley

proof. (Some of us on the editorial staff can't do much better!) But you don't have to understand the intricacies of magazine layout and design to know what you like and whether a magazine looks "interesting." For those who want the technical specifications, the old type was Times Roman set nine on ten; the new type is Goudy set 9½ on ten. Translation: the new type face is slightly larger, appears much larger, takes only a few more lines per column, and is much easier to read. The other stylistic and design elements, we feel, work together to give a crisp, clean feel and to help the reader through an article without distractions.

After that explanation, we would actually prefer that you forget all the specific components of our new "clothes" and simply enjoy the total effect as you browse through the pages. We think underneath our new look you'll find the same familiar friend.—Editors.



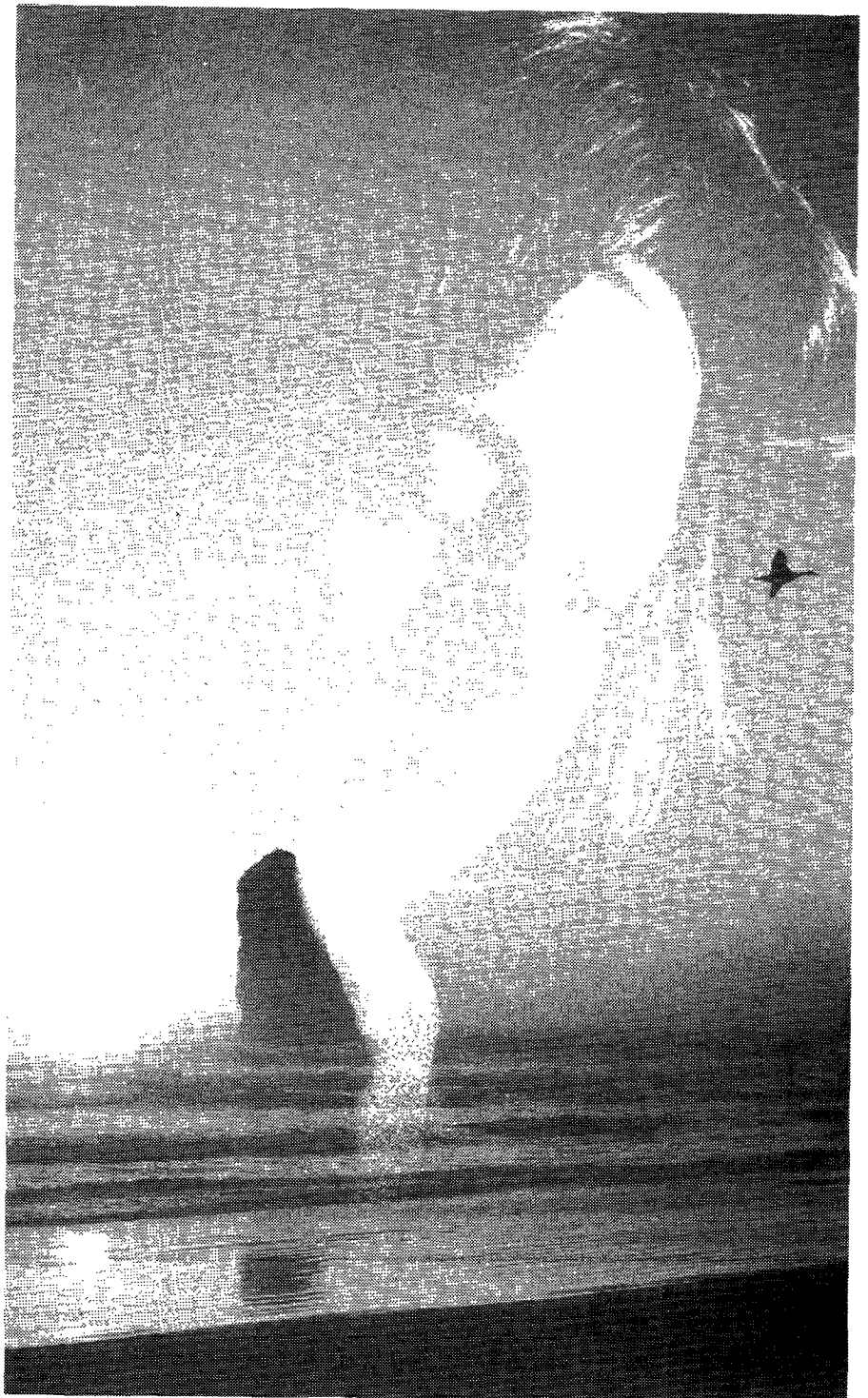
A new love affair

She had bathed in the familiar and the loved. Change seemed impossible to accept. But in time her new surroundings grew familiar, and changing affections provided a new place for her heart to reside.

*A peaceful calm
settled all around me.
The noises of the sea
sounded comforting
and friendly.
Could I ever be
happier? I didn't
think so. Could any
place be more
beautiful? Not this
side of heaven.*

I sat quietly on the sand watching the sun set behind the cliffs just offshore. Sea birds flew busily about snatching supper from the sea, then settling down for the night in hollows and nesting places chosen among the granite giants. Streaks of red and amber crossed the darkening sky; a peaceful calm settled all around me. The noises of the sea—endless, enduring sounds of waves meeting shore—sounded comforting and friendly. Could I ever be happier? I didn't think so. Could any place be more beautiful? Not this side of heaven.

I thought of many things in the closing moments of light. Could I ever love any place more or even as much? I doubted that. This was my home. It had befriended me, thrilled me with its beauty, excited me with its extravagant variety, and fed me from its bountiful larder. I belonged to this



Sally Streib spent the early years of her life in California, and now makes her home in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

place. Here I had grown up; here my ideas of life had formed—my attitudes, my curiosity for learning, my sense of adventure, and the need to love and be loved. Here my family and friends laughed, cried, played, and worked. Its mountains, deserts, hills, and shores had given generously and freely to my ever-deepening awareness of their Creator.

I had thought of all the special spots—the quiet cove reached only by a few climbers and mostly to be had in privacy, the first wildflowers of the springtime desert, mountain lakes scattered like pebbles tossed away by a child, and meadows full of music and wonder. I laughed remembering seagulls snatching fish from the nets of the fishermen as they worked by the ocean. I saw in my mind the acres of flowers grown for their seeds, and felt the almost overwhelming beauty that always took my breath away. And I thought of the miles and miles of orchards, farms, and growing things framed by great mountain ranges full of wonderful things the Lord designed. I thought of how much I loved the varied cultures, races, and languages of this familiar and beloved land.

During the years of my life I had loved, learned, and investigated my world. I had marveled at a heaven full of stars, a sea full of wonders, and mountains full of surprises. I had given and received in all types of human relationships.

Now I was leaving! My earthly things lay packed and sealed in boxes. My husband had just marched down the aisle with cap and gown to receive his coveted diploma. We were about to march down a new road. Half of my heart, it seemed, beat happily at the prospects of unknown adventure as a brand-new minister's wife. The other half, stricken, said, "How can you leave this

place and still be whole? How can you ever love any other place as you do this? You have to love; you can't just be. You are not put together that way."

Days passed, days of moving, learning new names, seeing new places, and making a home of a house. Those were days of trying new things and learning, days of working and praying with people. Days turned into months, and months turned into years. Three years. A new little church sprang up, watered by our tears, prayers, and work. There was the thrill of catching glimpses of what God wanted to do and how He could use imperfect people to win others to Himself. During these three years the challenges of "ministerial life" did not disappoint me. They were great! Life was filled with inspiring workers' meetings, camp meetings, retreats, evangelistic meetings, and day-to-day problem solving. I loved being part of a very wonderful family of workers. What a privilege!

Yet, deep inside, all the longings for the "old places and faces" remained alive and strong, sometimes crying out to be heard. I looked forward to visits home, when I could bathe in the ecstasy of the familiar and loved. These interludes became islands in the sea of days that surrounded me. I was always happy to return to my place of service, but that is what it continued to be—"a place of service for God," not a place for the heart to reside.

Then, somewhere along the way, God began to nudge my heart and mind with new thoughts. "Was not the reason I loved home so much because of all the things it had given me? Wasn't I loved there? Wasn't it a place where people had helped me grow and learn to meet life with joy? Was I not in love with the places that had

given me pleasure and made laughter a part of my day? It was a love affair, for sure.

Then God patiently suggested, "You will be surprised to realize how much of yourself you have invested in this 'new place.'" And I was! When we received our first call to move from one church to another in the conference, I began to understand that God had prepared a new kind of love affair for me. In fact, I had been experiencing it for some time without fully realizing it. I saw that during all the months I had been fellowshiping, laughing, and praying with God's people, I had been investing myself in this new life, and now the dividends were coming back in a wealth of happiness and contentment. There had been failures and good times; always there were the people to love. I realized what an unspeakable joy it had been to serve God's people.

I remembered, too, how God had sent Jesus from loved and familiar surroundings to this inhospitable place so that He could become one with us, serve us, live and die for us. He put everything He had into His "home away from home." He became part of us. Jesus literally gave Himself to us. His joy was to be anywhere. He could bring happiness, healing, or spiritual growth to anyone who would respond.

Jesus has called us, His ministers' wives, to a similar experience. We move from "home" base and go from new adventure to new adventure. We actually share, in a small way, Jesus's own experience. He may separate us from our treasures so that, standing yielded and empty before Him, we may then be filled and prepared for this wonderful experience. He may lead us away from a life of receiving to a new one laden with giving. He leads us into a new kind of love affair.

Prayers from the parsonage

"Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray" (Matt. 19:13).

Lord, it's still an effort to bring the children to You. Dressing them in good clothes, seeing they've eaten a nourishing breakfast, and getting everyone into the car by 8:45 a.m. requires planning and organization. But we count out offerings and review memory verses to establish our children in the habit of attending church.

We sing "Who Has Come to Sabbath School?" at least fifteen times, keep the baby from chewing the felt angel, and teach a Bible lesson that 3- and 4-year-olds can understand. Then there's the bathroom and drinking fountain routine before

we can crowd into the place "reserved for parents with small children" at the back of the sanctuary.

"... and the disciples rebuked them" (verse 13).

Sometimes I wonder if church is really for children. Relegated to noisy, distracting sections, they miss the beauty of a worship service. In the rear pews there are no extra adults to lend a lap or keep a child's interest. Maybe, though, non-parents don't want to bother with bouncy, curious kids. I've seen members shoot icy glances at a frazzled mother who couldn't keep her brood sitting still. Once a deacon almost pushed a young woman and her baby into the vestibule when the infant cried out during a quiet moment. And displeased looks usually follow the embarrassed father who makes his hasty exit, hand muffling a child's outburst.

"But Jesus said, Suffer little children,

and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (verse 14).

I love You especially, dear Son of God, because You were not too preoccupied to notice the children! How many children did You listen to or play a game with before they trusted enough to flash You a bright smile, go closer, and finally climb onto Your lap? Were some of Your stories recorded in the Bible told especially for some squirming little ones?

We long to approach You, Jesus. In awe of Your majesty, we nevertheless are drawn by Your love. Oh, may our children know how important they are to You! Let them learn to lift their voices in prayer and song and testimony. Teach them, too, the satisfaction of listening and the peace of meditation. May the church always be a happy place where good friends gather to be blessed.

By Cherry B. Habenicht

Strategies for origins

Theologians, as well as scientists, have proposed a wide variety of strategies for uniting the geological record with the Bible. In this brief survey a Ministry editor takes a look at the various approaches.

The rise of modern geological studies at the beginning of the nineteenth century indelibly altered our approach to the opening chapters of Genesis. As the earth's crust was first probed in earnest, man discovered a much more complex and extensive history of life than he had ever dreamed possible. Vast thicknesses of sedimentary rock had entombed literally millions of creatures now extinct, and to follow the excavations of the geologist's pick was like entering the fairyland of another world or far-off planet. The challenge to theologians was immediately self-evident: How does one reconcile the findings of geology with the record of Creation as contained in Genesis?

Basically three approaches have been followed: one extreme gives as much credence as possible to the conclusions of the geologist, the other gives as much credence as possible to the Biblical record to the exclusion of the findings of science, and a third attempts to give equal validity to science and Scripture. Of course, many gradations exist between these three broad categories.

The various strategies proposed for

harmonizing Genesis and geology can be arranged upon a continuum defined in two ways: (1) the amount of involvement the Creator has in His work of creation and (2) how literally the Biblical scholar wishes to interpret the various facts of the Creation account.

Outline of strategies

Evolutionary theories of origins

1. Materialistic evolution: totally a chance process in which God has no part in the origin of material or biological worlds.

2. Deistic evolution: God's involvement is only at the creation of the first living cell; evolution, apart from God, takes over from that point.

3. Theistic evolution: God is an intrinsic part of the evolutionary process as a guiding force.

Creationist theories of origins (old earth)

1. Progressive creationism: numerous acts of creation throughout geological time, but not in the order of the six days of Genesis.

2. Concordism: numerous acts of creation throughout geological time exactly in the same order as the six days of Genesis.

3. Mosaic vision theory (revelatory

days): the six days refer to six visions, each on a successive day, and not to the actual length of Creation.

4. Multiple-gap theory: six literal days of Creation scattered throughout geological time.

5. Multiple catastrophism/multiple creationism: numerous catastrophes accompanied by many successive acts of creation, the last being that described in Genesis 1.

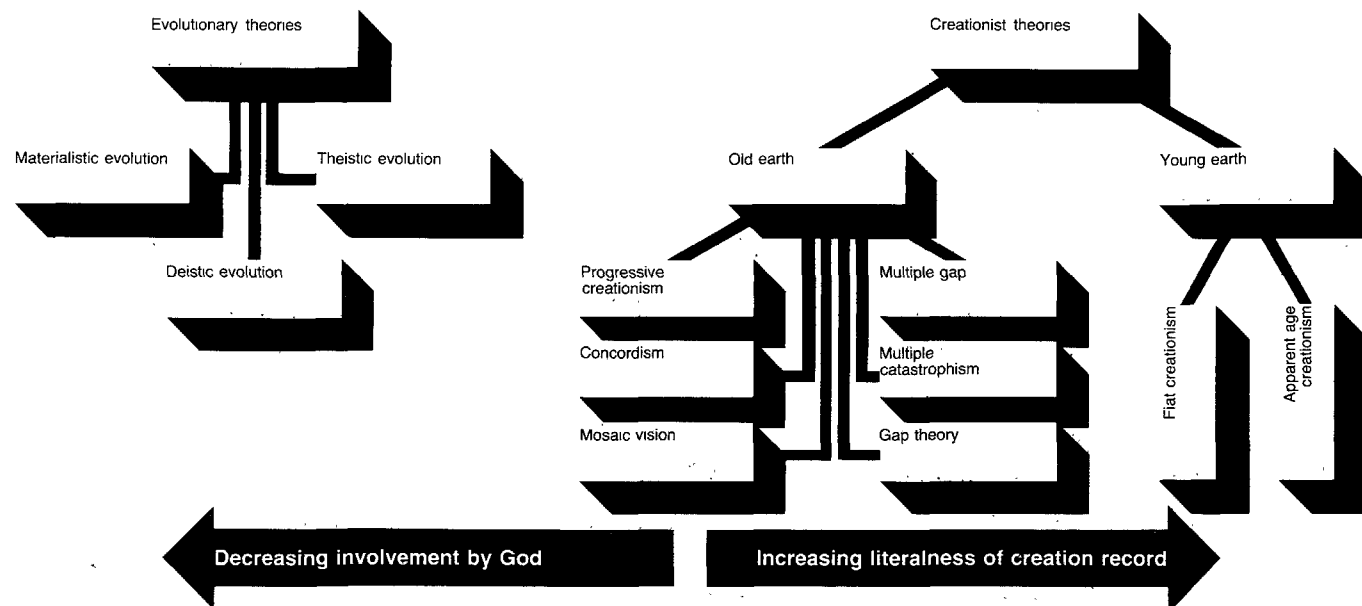
6. Gap theory (ruin-restitution): nearly all of geological history inserted between verses 1 and 3 of Genesis 1.

Creationist theories of origins (young earth)

1. Fiat creationism: the earth and all living things created in a span of six literal days about 6,000 to 15,000 years ago.

2. Apparent age creationism: a literal six-day Creation week that includes not only all living things but also most of the fossil record.

The progression of divine involvement can be seen easily. In materialistic evolution God's involvement in origins is nil, while in deistic and theistic evolution it is very slight, but increasing. All of the old-earth creationist strategies have periodic occurrences of divine supernatural intervention separated by lengthy periods of evolutionary development that may last



several million years. And of the young-earth creationist categories, God is most highly involved in the creative activity described by the apparent-age theory, to the point that He creates practically the whole fossil record sometime during the six days of Creation week!

The second continuum is the perceived literalness of the Genesis account. In materialistic evolution it is apparent that Genesis has no literal validity and no inspiration that would set it apart from any of the ancient Near Eastern Creation myths. In deistic and theistic evolution it is often asserted that the Bible tells us that God is Creator, while science tells us that He "created" by an evolutionary process involving chance. In the old-earth creationist strategies greater credence is given to the Genesis record as one moves down the list, so that by the time the gap theory (number 6) is reached it is asserted that the Bible explicitly describes two worlds and two episodes of Creation, the one being the pre-Adamite world of Genesis 1:1 and the other being our present world in Genesis 1:3-31. In progressive creationism and concordism, the six days of Creation are viewed as symbolic of lengthy periods of geological history, while in the Mosaic vision theory the days are viewed as partially literal and partially figurative. Strategies four, five, and six under old-earth creationism all hold to the six days as being literal 24-hour days. The creationist theories advocating a young earth add the additional element missing in all the old-earth creationism strategies; they assert that the Bible tells us *how old the earth is*, in contrast to the other strategies that allow science the privilege of setting the age of the earth and the subsequent appearance of life.

Evolutionary theories

A closer look at each of the strategies will help clarify where one stands and the reasons why one has taken such a stand. The first three strategies, all of which are evolutionary, suggest the existence of a gulf between science and the Bible. "The Bible is not a textbook of science, nor is the Bible given to answer scientific questions," they assert. Personally, I believe that the Bible *does* give scientific information and a philosophy of science, because the God who is the Author of Scripture is likewise the Author of science. For this reason the two must agree (see "The Doctrine of Beginnings," p. 18). However, the Bible was not written in the precise language of science, and therefore its records must be subject to interpretation and exegesis just as are the rock records.

Creationist theories (old earth)

The first of the creationist strategies, progressive creationism, was prominently held in the days before Darwin's *Origin* was published. It acknowledges a progression

or an order in the fossil record, but holds that this order was by design—by distinct creative acts. Its most able spokesman today is Bernard Ramm, who wrote *The Christian View of Science and Scripture* (1954). Sometimes it is called the framework hypothesis, because the six days are viewed as an artificial framework arranged by the author of Genesis and not correlated with the order of the fossil sequence.

While concordism overlaps with progressive creationism on most points, it differs by suggesting that the order in the rocks matches very nicely the order described in Genesis 1. The noted archeologist W. F. Albright notes that the "sequence of creative phases is so rational that modern science cannot improve on it" (cited by Carl F. H. Henry, "Science and Religion," in *Contemporary Evangelical Thought*, p. 275). One proponent of concordism today is Davis Young, a trained geologist who wrote *Creation and the Flood: An Alternative to Flood Geology and Theistic Evolution* (1977). The book has been dedicated to his father, the late conservative Old Testament scholar, Edward J. Young. Both progressive creationism and its sister theory, concordism, equate the days of Creation week with lengthy periods of geological time and are sometimes called day-age theories.

It is most difficult to stretch the six days of Genesis beyond their natural interpretation as twenty-four days. The major Hebrew lexica, such as Brown, Driver, and Briggs' *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* and Koehler and Baumgartner's *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, view the six days of Genesis 1 as each being twenty-four hours in length. True, the Hebrew word for day (*yôm*) is sometimes applied to an indefinite time in the Old Testament, but whenever it is accompanied by an ordinal number it invariably refers to a time period marked out by one revolution of the earth on its axis. John Skinner, in the *International Critical Commentary*, states: "The interpretation of *yôm* as *aeon*, a favourite resource of harmonists of science and revelation, is opposed to the plain sense of the passage, and has no warrant in Heb. usage" (*I.C.C., Genesis*, vol. 1, p. 21). As Christians, our pattern of six days of labor followed by the seventh day of rest takes on its greatest significance if the first six days of history were literal days. Christ, the Creator, acknowledged this literalness of

the Creation days in His life here on earth, as well as in His death (see Luke 4:16; cf. "The Doctrine of Beginnings," p. 18).

The Mosaic vision theory (revelatory days) is an interesting compromise between a literal six days and the day-age theory. It suggests that the days were literal twenty-four-hour days, but that they took place on top of either Mount Sinai or Mount Nebo, not at Creation week! According to this theory, Moses had a vision in which he saw all of God's creative activities compressed in videoscope fashion into six showings, each lasting a day. The main nineteenth-century proponent of this theory was the Scottish geologist-churchman Hugh Miller, whose books were widely read and went through many editions, and, in the twentieth century, P. J. Wiseman, author of *Creation Revealed in Six Days* (1948).

The multiple-gap theory, like the revelatory days, is also a compromise. It states that the days of Creation are literal but nonconsecutive. Vast periods of geological time are inserted between each. This view finds expression in Peter Stoner's *Science Speaks* (1953). The problem with both these views is that Scripture gives no hint either that Moses had a vision lasting six days or that the six days should be interrupted by huge gaps of time. They are founded on ingenious speculation.

Multiple catastrophism/multiple creationism was one of the earliest and most widely held views in the early part of the nineteenth century, being advocated by Georges Cuvier, the father of vertebrate paleontology, and Louis Agassiz, the father of the ice-age theory and son of a Swiss Reformed pastor. It suggests that earth history is a succession of global catastrophes leading to mass extinctions among the animals and plants, each of which was followed by a new act of creation. The last global catastrophe—Noah's flood—occurred about 5,000 or 6,000 years ago and has not been followed by further creative activity. However, because further research in geology is found to be out of step with the known facts, this theory has long vanished along with its many catastrophes, which at last count reached more than forty.

The gap theory holds much in common with the previous two strategies, but differs by suggesting just one major gap in the Creation record (inserted between verses 1 and 2 of Genesis 1), and only one major

We believe that the Bible does give scientific information and a philosophy of science, because the God who is the Author of Scripture is likewise the Author of science. For this reason the two must agree.

catastrophe (alluded to in Genesis 1:2). The opening verses of Genesis are interpreted as follows: "In the beginning of geological history God created the heavens and the earth. Millions of years later the earth became formless and empty. Then God said, "Let there be light." Thus the six days of Creation took place a few thousand years ago after a universal destruction of all preexisting life, perhaps due to the depredations of Satan upon this planet after being cast out of heaven. This is also called the ruin-restoration theory, because, according to it, a previous world was ruined, immediately followed by its restitution to a perfect condition. This theory was promulgated throughout the nineteenth century and was popularized in the twentieth among conservative Christians by the *Scofield Reference Bible*, published in 1917, and by Harry Rimmer, who wrote *Modern Science and the Genesis Record* (1937). The chief problem with this theory is its lack of sound Biblical exegesis. A critique appears in Bernard Ramm's *The Christian View of Science and Scripture*, pp. 134-144.

Creationist theories (young earth)

Among the two young-earth strategies, fiat creationism has the greatest amount of variation. It may hold to a strict six or seven thousand years for earth history, based on the existence of no gaps in the Genesis genealogies, or it may allow numerous gaps that would extend the earth's age up to fifteen thousand years. The most commonly suggested figure is ten thousand years. It may hold that the whole stellar universe was created a few thousand years ago, that only the solar system was created *ex nihilo* then, or that only life was created upon a preexisting planet at that time. It may include some aspects of the apparentage theory. For example, most fiat creationists believe that the organic world was created with an appearance of age. This is nicely described by Frank L. Marsh, *Life, Man, and Time* (1967, p. 69): "When Adam came from the hand of the Creator on Friday he had every appearance of being a mature man at least in his twenties, a man of marriageable age. Fruit-bearing trees appeared to be at least several years old. The great aquatic animals playing in the waters appeared to be sixty to one hundred years old. And the smoothed landscape with its rounded mountains and hills, and broad rivers, and with a vegetated layer of fertile soil over all land areas, from a uniformitarian viewpoint, appeared to be millions of years old."

Some fiat creationists believe that the inorganic minerals likewise were created with the appearance of age. Speaking of soil, which normally takes "centuries of rock weathering" to form, Whitcomb and Morris conclude: "It was created with an 'appearance' of age!" (John C. Whitcomb, Jr., and Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood*, 1961, p. 233). Marsh suggests that

at Creation a few thousand years ago the radiometric clocks were set to show much older apparent ages. He concludes his discussion by asking, "Would it be unreasonable to assume that the minerals of the earth as well as its organic forms may have been created with an appearance of age?" (*Life, Man, and Time*, p. 69).

Some fiat creationists disagree with Marsh's interpretation by suggesting that the inorganic minerals are indeed as old as the radiometric dating methods make them out to be. In other words, the earth may have been in a moonlike state of existence for a full 4.5 billion years before the Creator created all living things just a few thousand years ago. They accept the various radiometric dating methods as capable of yielding correct real-time age for nonliving matter but reject all interpretations that yield ages greater than about ten thousand years for anything that was once living. This small but growing segment of fiat creationists has one foot thrust into the door of old-earth creationism strategies, but they part company with gap theorists and others by suggesting that Genesis 1:1-31 describes a recent Creation in its entirety without any suggestion of pre-Adamite activities.

Those who follow the appearance-of-age strategy 100 percent are those who include the entire fossil record in Creation week, in contrast with fiat creationists, who place most of the fossil record in the events of Noah's flood. A prime example is Philip Gosse, who in 1857 published *Omphalos: An Attempt to Untie the Geological Knot*. Its title comes from the Greek word for "navel." Gosse asked, Did Adam have a navel? His answer was in the affirmative. And if Adam had a navel, he reasoned, why could not the Creator create fossil forms as if they had once existed, although they never did? Chateaubriand takes this reasoning one step further in his *Genius of Christianity*: "It was part of the perfection and harmony of the nature which was displayed before men's eyes that the deserted nests of last year's birds should be seen on the trees, and that the seashore should be covered with shells which had been the abode of fish, and yet the world was quite new, and nests and shells had never been inhabited" (cited in A. D. White, *A History of the Warfare of Science With Theology*, 1965, p. 185). In other words, Adam taking a walk on the

first Sabbath of his existence would have seen shells scattered along the sandy beach and empty birds' nests in the trees lining the shores when all these things were less than a week old!

The key problem with all appearance-of-age theories is: Where does one draw the line? Should only animals, plants, and man be included in the mature creation? What about soils and landscapes? or radioactive minerals? or shells and birds' nests? or even the fossils beneath one's feet? Wherever the line is drawn, it is always at an arbitrary point. There is no explicit scriptural support for the idea of appearance-of-age creationism; its only support lies in the mind of the Biblical exegete who wishes to harmonize the Bible record with findings of geology indicating a longer time period than six-thousand years. It often confuses the issue of what God *could* do with what God indeed *did* do. Anyone who believes that God is omnipotent will agree that God *could* have made all the fossils in a microsecond or wound up all radiometric clocks in the same second of time as though they had already been ticking for many billions of seconds. But the safest approach to all mature-Creation speculations is to hold them to oneself until the day when scriptural or scientific evidence is uncovered in their support.

We have looked at a wide spectrum of strategies advocated by a large number of serious Biblical scholars and scientists. The weaknesses in each position have been noted more than strengths in order that the contrast between them may be more vivid. By understanding the reasons why the different views have been adopted we can better understand our own position. Where we stand on the science-religion questions is usually predetermined by how much involvement we wish to allow the Creator in His work of Creation, by how much weight we give to the testimony of scientists, and by how literally we interpret the Genesis accounts.

One final test in determining our stance can be administered: Does a particular view lead us to have more faith and confidence in the accuracy of God's Word, the greatness of God's power, and the saving efficacy of the blood of Christ, our Creator, or does it provide less? A fitting prayer for every committed Christian pastor and scientist is, "Lord, increase our faith."

Does a particular view lead me to have more faith and confidence in the accuracy of God's Word, the greatness of God's power, and the saving efficacy of the blood of Christ, our Creator, or does it provide less?

pornography, abortion, the breakdown of the family, et cetera, on nonreligious grounds that would be appealing not only to Christians but to those of other religions or of no religion. We would have no quarrel with Christians who combine their efforts to affect legislation in such areas on this basis. But to do so on the basis that it is the "will of God" or that we must inculcate the principles of our religion in society by political means, seems to us to be a very dangerous attitude. The problem becomes, as the editorial tried to point out, Whose religious principles shall we legislate? The same organization that can successfully legislate a religious principle with which I totally agree can equally successfully do the same with a principle that I cannot accept and that impinges on the service I owe to God. Indeed, the history of efforts by the church to enlist political support for its aims indicates quite clearly that this has inevitably happened.—Editors.

More than bargained for

Needless to say, the Christian community at large would like to see an increased awareness of the moral issues that this nation and the world are facing in the 1980s. However, the influence of the so-called moralists who are currently taking credit for the election of congressional candidates supportive of their ideals, I believe, is overstated. This self-righteous radical Right, if given the chance, would like to return to the days of the Crusaders when people of that age were brought under "conviction," not by the cross, but by the sword. Is history to repeat itself? This movement smells of Pharisaism. No other group in Biblical times received more admonishment from Christ than the self-righteous who took upon themselves the task of standing in judgment of the rest of humanity. Christ's philosophy was to win souls by showing them love and understanding. Perhaps the "morality group" should be reminded that the freedom of choice that America enjoys is a precious commodity that few others share. Let us not abuse it. In the end, it may cost the Christian church much more than it bargains for if it attempts to jeopardize the rights of others who do not share its convictions.—Orthodox Church minister, Indiana.

A big lie

The entire January editorial ("Legislated Morality") flounders because it repeats the big lie that one cannot and ought not to legislate morality. That lie has been believed only because it has been so often repeated. The truth is that morality is all that anyone ever legislates anywhere. All law is someone's morality enacted into legislation with appropriate fine or punishment imposed when one is

convicted of breaking that law and is caught.

The problem is not Will morals be enacted into law? It is Which ones will be enacted, and what penalties will be prescribed? The prohibition law didn't work, because it was not uniformly enforced. The editorial doesn't take a realistic look at the fact that, in our country at least, what is legal is generally considered to be moral.

The editorial perpetuates the total nonsense that the "founding fathers . . . did well to separate the church from the state." They did no such thing. They prohibited the "establishment" of a state religion. Certain States had established churches precisely like Europe. The "wall" developed as courts and people changed their minds about established state churches. I really feel that writer should have done a better job of research.

The editorial never approached the problem of precisely whose morality should be the law of the land. I am neither a Right-wing nor liberal—just a free American citizen who wants a nation based on Christian principles and morality. Legislated morality has nothing to do with evangelism, and to confuse the two is to introduce a red herring. Personal Christianity is the objective of evangelism; Christian moral principles enacted as the undergirding of law is the objective of legislated morality.—Lutheran minister, Wisconsin.

Time for renewal

Thank you for the opportunity to attend the Professional Growth Seminar you sponsored in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I found it to be very helpful. It was a good time to set aside my busy schedule and take time for renewal. As a United Presbyterian pastor, I found it great also to meet some of my brothers in the Lord who serve Him in another field.—United Presbyterian minister, Pennsylvania.

A list of upcoming Professional Growth Seminars sponsored by MINISTRY appears on page 31 of this issue. We urge you to attend one in your area and join the more than 5,000 ministers who have found these one-day sessions to be a time of fellowship and personal growth.—Editors.

Power vs. authority

Over the years I have learned to anticipate and enjoy MINISTRY. I find it gutsy, germane, and basically evangelical. Needless to say, I also find it necessary to read past your particular stable of straw men and whipping boys, even as I'm sure you must when you read an orthodox Lutheran publication. Altogether MINISTRY rates high on my "must read" list.

The article "Pastor Power?" (January,

1981) cries out for response. Everything Mr. Bietz states may be perfectly correct in terms of management theory. I also favor the tone of his concluding paragraph. However, he fails to discriminate carefully between power (*dunamis*) and authority (*exousia*), as Scripture itself does. In fact, he mixes the terms as if they were synonymous. To apply this necessary distinction to the life of the church: As a pastor, I participate in a special way with the body of Christ in the office of the ministry, which I believe is one link in the chain of authority transmitted by the Father through the Son to the church. In some situations I am powerless, but my authority remains. In other cases, I submit to the temptation to apply power where I have no authority, and I lovelessly wrong brothers and sisters in Christ. Mr. Bietz is speaking of allowing authority to hold a careful reign over power. These must not be mixed or confused.

You do a good work in Christ even though you are not orthodox Lutherans.—Lutheran minister, Michigan.

Leaves richer

Every time I finish reading MINISTRY, I end up wanting more. It has increased my knowledge of a variety of issues—religious, archeological, scientific, and historical. Although I don't approve of all I read there, the magazine leaves me richer by its coming, and helps me see issues clearly.—United Methodist minister, Philippines.

Gambling mania

"The Bible and Bingo" (November, 1980) was excellent. The recent NBC news special also gave much food for thought about the gambling mania that seems to be growing. What you said in your article needed to be said. An AP news dispatch tells of the upsurge of individuals in Atlantic City going to the Salvation Army seeking hot meals, hotel rooms, or bus fare home after losing their money in the casinos.—Presbyterian minister, Texas.

Wants on list

I picked up a copy of MINISTRY and love it! May I please be placed on the list to receive a subscription as soon as possible? I will be glad to send the amount specified.—Christian Church minister, Pennsylvania.

Although bimonthly gift subscriptions are still available to clergy (as described on the inside front cover), perhaps we should begin charging! If you would like to receive MINISTRY every month, we would be happy to enter a subscription. See page 3 for prices.—Editors.

SEMINAR ON CHURCH GROWTH AND PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Sponsored by MINISTRY and
Andrews University
for church professionals of all faiths

August 30 to September 4, 1981



Douglas A. Walrath, church development consultant and research specialist; associate editor of the *Review of Religious Research* and author of *Leading Churches Through Change* (Abingdon, 1979). He is currently coordinating research to identify the needs the church must address in the 1980s and 1990s. **John S. Savage**, president of Leadership Education and Development (LEAD) Consultants, Inc. He is a United Methodist minister whose presentation on "The Inactive Member" will utilize his extensive research on the critical factors involved in the church dropout.

James F. Engel, director, Billy Graham Graduate Program in Communication at Wheaton College Graduate School and originator of the Engel Model of Receptivity. His background in consumer behavior and marketing research uniquely fits him to address the problems the church faces in communicating the gospel. **Charles E. Bradford**, author of *Preaching to the Times*.

The world church and its problems, the pastoral mission, and the current situation in Christian theology are concerns that he has shared with thousands of ministers. He will present the keynote address at the opening convocation, Sunday night, August 30.

Additional resource personnel will include:

Des Cummings, Jr., director, Institute of Church Ministry, Andrews University.

In a special feature, he and the institute staff will present:

- Indicators of church growth
 - The pastoral personality and church growth
 - The pastor and wife: morale in ministry
 - The new member: who are we reaching and how?
- Mark Finley**, director, Lake Union Conference Soul-winning Institute, Chicago. His theme: "Strategies for Community Outreach." **T. A. McNealy**, pastor, Maranatha church, Atlanta, Georgia. Pastor McNealy's church has grown by 967 new members in three years! How? **Plus other church growth and leadership specialists.**

Seminar Schedule:

Five stimulating days of dialogue, sharing, and study.

Monday, August 31

The Inactive Member

Tuesday, September 1

The Pastor's Role in Church Growth Leadership

Wednesday, September 2

Motivation and Training of the Laity

Thursday, September 3

Heralding the Gospel to the World

Friday, September 4

The Gospel and the Secular Mind

This seminar is designed to meet the church growth needs of every pastor who longs to see a resurgence of power-filled ministry in his church. It will be a tremendous opportunity for fellowship and learning in a beautiful campus setting. Take a few days' vacation; bring your spouse and share this unique enrichment!

Tuition:

One hour transferable credit: \$100

Two hours transferable credit: \$190

Noncredit participation: \$80

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attend the entire seminar: \$25

No tuition charge for spouses who do not desire academic credit

Meals and Lodging:

Meal charge per day (3 meals): \$10

Residence hall lodging, two people to a room, per person, per night, \$7.50

Residence hall lodging, one person to a room (when available), \$10.65

Nearby motels are also available.

Seminar on Church Growth and Pastoral Leadership
Institute of Church Ministry
Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI 49104.

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The New Media Bible, a stupendous undertaking to transfer to the audio-visual medium the written words of Scripture, and to do so without offense to any, continues to draw the praise of many church groups.

The New Media Bible

The New Media Bible, a stupendous undertaking to transfer to the audio-visual medium the written words of Scripture and to do so without offense to Protestants, Catholics, or Jews, continues to draw the praise of many church groups. Two of the Bible's 66 books have already been "translated" at a cost of some \$23 million. The 33 volumes, each containing a film, teacher's guide, two filmstrips with audio cassettes, one projectionist's script, and 10 copies of a *Bible Times* magazine dealing with the Scripture passage, cover the Biblical books of Genesis (18 films) and Luke (15 films). The entire project may take 15 years to complete.

Each 15-to-20-minute film portrays a specific passage of Scripture. Most visuals were obtained in Israel, as near as possible to the original sites.

The filmstrips that accompany each film provide comment on the archeological and sociological backgrounds of the text, and provide information about people, places, customs, and events. They include still photographs from the films, maps, and illustrations.

The scripts accompanying the filmstrips furnish teachers with material to use during class discussion. With each is a teacher's guide that contains lesson plans for five different age levels—elementary, junior high, senior high, college/adult, and family.

A variety of film soundtracks is possible, including K.J.V. (read by Alexander Scourbey), N.E.B., and other translations. They are also offered in a variety of languages.

In addition to being available in super 8 mm and 16 mm film, the New Media Bible audiovisuals are for sale in videotape

and will soon also be for sale in videodisc (probably at reduced cost).

The cost per complete volume is \$325, plus shipping. This includes the supplementary materials. Additional teaching materials may be purchased separately. Those ordering all 33 volumes at approximately \$9,900 will receive a free super 8 film projector or DuKane projector. The films alone, without the teaching materials, would cost approximately \$8,250.

For information write: The Genesis Project, 1271 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 730, New York, N.Y. 10020.

Ministers and money

Ministers have money problems just like everybody else (some would say *more* than most!), yet management of personal finances in the peculiar setting of the ministry is probably one of the most overlooked areas of clergy training. Ministers Life Resources, of Minneapolis, Minnesota, offers booklets, tapes, and newsletters—eighteen different items—to help the minister in his own financial planning. Included are clergy tax tips, retirement planning, payment plans, insurance, investments, professional expenses, car allowance, and many other subjects. For a list of materials and prices, write: Ministers Life Resources, 3100 West Lake Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55416. Ask for the brochure "Ministers' Needs for Money Managing."

Listen, not counsel

Pastors should do less, not more, counseling. According to the *Evangelical Newsletter*, that's the position taken by Richard L. Krebs, a Lutheran pastor with a Ph.D. in clinical psychology and fifteen years'

experience in counseling.

"I have become convinced," says Krebs in *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, "that when I try to do counseling as a pastor, I am certain to fail." He gives two major reasons: (1) The promise of cheap growth. "People who come to their pastor for counseling are in most cases expecting easy, quick personality change. . . . All too often, the pastor accepts this unspoken challenge and becomes frustrated when the client-parishioner becomes disgruntled after a few sessions." (2) Misplaced priorities. "Pastors have become so enamored with their ability to counsel that preaching, teaching, visiting, working with committees—these less glamorous tasks—have taken a back seat to exhilarating closed-door sessions. . . . Pastors should be pastors, not underpaid, undertrained psychotherapists."

What role, then, does Krebs see for the pastor in alleviating the problems of people? He should evaluate, provide support, and refer. "Informal therapy"—brief, supportive conversations—are of special value. Krebs calls for seminaries to place less emphasis on counseling and more on listening skills. Being able to really listen to a parishioner and to respond with caring is all that a pastor needs to do, he says.

Needs Information

You can help with a research project concerning privileged communications and the clergy. If you have had a personal experience of being called (or threatened with being called) as a witness under law, either in a civil or criminal case, regarding matters confidentially communicated to you in your pastoral work, Rev. John C. Bush, P.O. Box 11862, Lexington, Kentucky 40578, would like to hear from you.

Seminars for May

MINISTRY magazine's Professional Growth Seminars continue to meet with much excitement among clergy of all faiths. If you have not yet found one close enough to make attendance possible, try the following list. Clergy in the locale of the seminar should receive an invitation in the mail, but just in case you miss getting yours, we are listing upcoming seminars by city, together with a local phone contact for early registration or additional information. Remember, each seminar is absolutely without cost to you.

May 11	May 12	May 18
Milwaukee, WI Wesley Jaster (608) 241-5235	Rochester, NY Nikolaus Satelmajer (315) 469-6921	Glendale, CA John Todorovich (213) 240-6250
May 11	May 13	May 19
Albany, NY Nikolaus Satelmajer (315) 469-6921	Brunswick, ME Lee Kretz (617) 368-8333	Battle Creek, MI Myron Voegelé (517) 485-2226
May 12	May 14	May 20
Winnipeg, MB Don McIvor (306) 244-9700	Manchester, NH Lee Kretz (617) 368-8333	Grand Rapids, MI Myron Voegelé (517) 485-2226
May 12	May 18	
Vancouver, BC W. W. Rogers (604) 853-5451	Detroit, MI Myron Voegelé (517) 485-2226	

Recommended reading

Funerals could be made less stressful, confusing, and costly, maintains the author of It's Your Funeral, if people would only admit the possibility of death and make some simple choices in advance.

It's Your Funeral, William L. Coleman, Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Wheaton, Illinois 60187, 1979, 150 pages, paper, \$3.95.

Funerals could be made less stressful, confusing, and costly, the author maintains, if people would only admit the possibility of death and make some simple choices in advance. Instead, most avoid the subject and leave their families to reach difficult decisions under extremely emotional circumstances. Even ministers, although they have more contact with funerals and death than the average person, are only marginally better informed about what is involved in dying, and only slightly better equipped to prepare themselves and others to handle the practical considerations that must be dealt with when a death occurs. Myths and misinformation abound regarding funeral practices and requirements. This is what Coleman wants to remedy with his book.

Here the reader will likely learn more than he knew (and maybe more than he wants to know) about funerals, cremation, organ donation, caskets, headstones, autopsies, embalming, and the like. Coleman does a fine job of treating the subject with the necessary taste and compassion while at the same time utilizing a common-sense approach that tries to assure the reader it isn't ghoulish, but beneficial, to preplan certain details of one's own funeral. The alternative, he points out, is to place on your family, at a time when they are least able to handle it, the burden of trying to guess what you would want done.

The author includes chapters examining the Christian view of the body and Biblical examples of burial. These are helpful, although Seventh-day Adventists will find the author's view of the nature of man somewhat flawed. Coleman doesn't try to use these chapters, however, to convince readers of any particular position in regard to funeral practices. His purpose, throughout the book, is to dispel misconceptions and to encourage prior planning.

Morticians receive a mixed review. Coleman argues persuasively that, like any businessman, the mortician performs a valuable service and should not be begrudged a reasonable profit. He cites examples of altruism and compassion to destroy the stereotype of the hardhearted

funeral director who "traffics" in the misfortunes of others. (So do doctors, lawyers, and even ministers!) But neither is all just as it should be in the funeral business, according to the author. Professional associations are often protective and secretive; some morticians are less than candid when the bereaved ask questions; and a lack of competition tends to keep costs artificially high.

Although not written specifically for ministers, *It's Your Funeral* will help any pastor be of greater service and support when a family in his congregation is bereaved. It is also ideal for seminars on funeral planning.—Russell Holt

Guidebook for Pastors, W. A. Criswell, Broadman Press, Nashville, Tennessee 37203, 1980, 383 pages, \$9.95, hardcover.

It has been many years, to my knowledge, since the appearance of a book on the work of the pastor to match this volume by Criswell. Its 21 chapters cover every aspect imaginable, and some that few would have thought of. Also, it is based on the experience of a man who ranks today as one of the world's most successful pastors, having, since 1944, served what has become the largest church of the Southern Baptist Convention, the First Baptist church of Dallas.

The first few chapters dealing with the work of the pastor in the pulpit, in his study, and his sermon preparation are worth the price of the book, even if there were nothing more. But there is much, much more—church organization, financing, construction of new buildings, the varied ministries of the church, et cetera.

Criswell excels in his discussion of the pastor as an evangelist. It is apparent that he has his priorities in order.

An outstanding chapter discusses the pastor as counselor and shepherd. Additional chapters give practical suggestions on the wedding service, the funeral service, the communion, and baptismal services. The closing chapters confront problems the pastor must face, tips on his personal life, dos and don'ts for a successful ministry, and finally the reward of a work well done.

There is not a pastor but what will benefit immeasurably from his practical guide to his high calling. —Orley Berg

Philippians, Ralph P. Martin, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1980, 176 pages, paper, \$5.95.

Martin's book, part of the revised New Century Bible Commentary series, completes the plan of replacing the single volume covering four of Paul's Epistles (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) with individual volumes on each (Colossians and Philemon are still combined). Philippians is the first of the revised series to be issued in paperback form, thus making this standard commentary available at a more modest cost.

Martin, professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, has drawn on existing scholarship in this exposition of Paul's letter to Philippi, and makes use of recent studies. In the introductory section he gives special attention to two central concerns: the nature of the sectarian teaching Paul warns against in chapter 3, and the meaning of the great Christological passage in chapter 2. The commentary itself is based on the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, and attempts to provide a balanced, up-to-date appraisal of the text both in its scholarship and its application of the text to contemporary Christian life.—Russell Holt

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