

Ministry

A Magazine for Clergy/September 1984



Coping With Depression

Creation/evolution controversy

Being interested in the Creation/evolution controversy, I enjoyed your origins issue (May, 1984). It is about as objective as any creationist literature I've seen. However, considering the nature of creationism, I was not surprised to find a lot of problems in it.

Creationists should not be so willing to accuse God of making the earth look old. It is true that organisms would need to show apparent age if a competent creation were performed. Three-day-old plants would not provide much sustenance, and six-hour-old animals cannot take care of themselves. But to make minerals show deceptively old radioactive ages and to make the various radioactive datings concordant are not a necessity for competent creation, but they are for deceptive creation. If Adam and Eve had the necessary skills and equipment and if God was not deceptive, it is *not* true that "no scientific evidence could independently lead Adam and Eve to the conclusion that their world was only six days old."—Page 19.

Radioactive dating is not only internally consistent but externally consistent. It agrees well with ancient coral growth bands, with relative dating, with the cooling of igneous rocks, and with the amount of cratering seen on the moon. There is some evidence for a younger earth, but the evidence is hardly consistent.—Pastor, Minnesota.

In forty years in the Christian ministry I have never preached a sermon on Creation/evolution. I believe there are more important subjects for sermons. Often in discussion groups or personal encounters I have not sidestepped the issue. And when I have taken a stand, it has been on the side of Creation. But I have a "quarrel" with the creationist. He bases his argument on the first chapter of Genesis. All that is—or ever will be—was created in six days. Period!

Neither you nor I were present during those six days. Nor was anyone else. Why, then, can we not give God the glory that He created all things—visible and invisible—without asking how He

did it or how long it took? If He is the Creator, what difference does it make whether He took six days or a thousand years? With Him, "one day is . . . as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Does it really matter?—Retired pastor, Walla Walla, Washington.

Yes, it does matter. *God's position as Creator impinges upon His authority as Lawgiver. If the days of Genesis 1 are not factual and twenty-four hours in duration, then the days of Exodus 20:11 need not be considered as factual. Then what need is there for created mankind to honor a Sabbath of rest and worship during a specific time?—Eds.*

I have read the May, 1984, issue of your magazine from cover to cover and with considerable interest. It is a more complete presentation of the creationist view than I have seen elsewhere. In his lead article, "Darwin's Revolution," Richard Tkachuck gives a masterful summary of the achievements of Charles Darwin and a good outline of his theory of the evolution of life by natural selection.

But his second article, "In Search of the Silver Bullet," seems to me to demolish much of the creationists' argument, pointing up their tendency to seize upon false or mistakenly interpreted evidence in such instances as the Texas dinosaur tracks or the finding of angiosperm pollen in Precambrian shales. In fact, after a careful reading I can find only one question in his two articles that might serve to maintain his standing as a strict creationist: "Darwin was correct in assuming that species could change. But if species could change a little, is it fair to say that given enough time, one can extrapolate the evolutionary scheme from single-celled animals to man himself?"—Page 6. To this I can only answer, "Why not?" especially since every individual—you, me, Dr. Tkachuck, and every other person on earth, plus every complex animal in all creation—starts out as a single cell and develops (or evolves) into the full-fledged, multicelled adult of its kind or

species! If God does it that way for the individual, why not for the species, the genus, and the family in our *human* classification of life on earth?—Pastor, Port Byron, Illinois.

It was the question of Creation/evolution that first led me to the seminary. However, I have come to see that the issue is not creationism versus evolution, but Biblical interpretation. Biblical creationists have a responsibility to come to terms with the Bible before they challenge evolution. Is the Bible factually accurate and historically true? Consider these inconsistencies: Was man created after the animals (Gen. 1:25-27) or before (chap. 2:7, 18-20)? Was man created after the plants (chap. 1:12, 28) or before (chap. 2:4-7)? If we see Genesis 1 and 2 as separate accounts and then add the other Creation stories such as Job 38-41 and Psalm 104, more such difficulties arise.

I have answered these questions to my own satisfaction—in a way that allows me to say the Bible is inspired and true without being always factually accurate. I agree that "how one views the origin of life has an impact on how he views life itself." God as Creator is basic to my theology as to yours. I believe that our differences lie in our understanding of the nature of the Scriptures.—Lutheran pastor, Ontario, Canada.

I've read the Creation/Evolution issue from cover to cover with much interest. I have one question. On page 19 the author says that on "the first full day of their existence no scientific evidence could independently lead Adam and Eve to the conclusion that their world was only six days old. They were surrounded by mature plants, animals, and landscape. Truth concerning the age of their world could be apprehended only through the testimony of reliable observers." Who were the "reliable observers" who existed before Adam and Eve? Who observed the creation of days one through five?—Pastor, Sparks, Nevada.

The answer is implicit in Job 38:4-7.—Eds.

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COVER: DAVE SHERWIN

Coping With Depression/4. A pastor's lifestyle can often set him up for depression. Marilyn Thomsen's interview with Dr. Archibald D. Hart suggests some ways of accepting and dealing with the consequences of ministry.

The Parson Who Talked Sense/7. Do your sermons ever miss their mark because of semasiological dissimilarities? Fred E. Luchs shares a practical prescription to preclude the problem.

The Nonproductive Pastor/8. There's more to the problem than initially meets the eye, and common "cures" may only make matters worse. Kevin Howse's incisive analysis suggests ways of dealing with causes instead of symptoms.

The Dark-horse Candidate/12. Should we trust a man in leadership who has admitted to serious sins in his background? Elizabeth E. Platt reminds us of how God answered the question many years ago.

Effective Pastoral Counseling/15. B. Preston Bogia reveals an important factor that multiplies a pastor's effectiveness as a counselor.

Illustrations in Preaching/17. Master Illustrator Floyd Bresee's article is so full of illustrations you won't be able to put it down once you start reading!

The Status of Religion in the U.S.S.R./21. What's really happening to Christians in Russia? Editor J. Robert Spangler shares a firsthand viewpoint.

Shepherdess International—What Is It?/24. Enoch Oliveira interviews two ladies who have been working very hard to develop an organization to minister to ministers' wives.

The Money of the Jewish Temple/27. How did Baal get into the Temple, and who kept Caesar out? Stan Hudson reveals the fascinating history of taking up an offering.

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Coping with depression



astors are perhaps more susceptible to depression than almost any other professionals. Pastoral work can be very emotionally draining. How can a pastor learn to profit from rather than succumb to the depression that knocks at his door?

□ *Dr. Archibald D. Hart interviewed by Marilyn Thomsen*

Q. *Dr. Hart, you have said that surviving ministry is, for many, surviving depression. What do you mean by that?*

A. It is my contention that ministers are more prone to depression than people in most other jobs. One of the major causes of depression in ministry is the idea that because it is "sacred work," certain obstacles should not occur. "If God is with me in this, then how is it things don't go smoothly?" This sets up an incredible level of expectations and frustration.

There are other factors also. Ministers tend to "spiritualize" the relative importance of their work as a way of psychologically compensating for the low wages. Depression can also be a problem because of the singleness of purpose many ministers have. Then there's the matter of time pressure. Ministers have no clearly defined time boundaries to their work. And ministry is depression-prone because it is primarily people-related. People cause stress. People cause conflict. People cause depression.

Dr. Archibald D. Hart, dean of the Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, is interviewed by Marilyn Thomsen, director of public relations and media, Southern California Conference of SDA's.



Q. *What exactly is depression?*

A. Depression is one of three things. Occasionally it may be a symptom of another illness. Some cancers and other diseases give rise to significant depressions. Then, for about one person in ten, depression can be a disease entity of itself. We call these biological or endogenous depressions, which seem to be caused by biochemical disturbances within our bodies. Most commonly depression is a reaction to loss or deprivation. We are designed such that we enter the strange emotional state of depression whenever we experience loss, and this we call the grieving process.

Endogenous depression responds very well to antidepressant medication, whereas purely psychological depression doesn't respond to such medication at all.

Q. *What kinds of losses can trigger depression?*

A. I divide losses into four categories: *real losses*, such as loss of a loved one, a job, or possessions; *abstract losses*, such as the loss of self-respect when someone criticizes a sermon, or the loss of love when someone rejects us; *imagined losses*, by which I mean the imagined hurts that others are causing us; and *threatened losses*, which are the most difficult to resolve because there is nothing to grieve over yet.

Q. *Does depression have a purpose?*

A. Yes! I call it the healing emotion. It's designed to facilitate healing by removing us from our environment. If we can help the depressed person recognize that there is a reason for his depression, we've made a step in the right direction. Then we must help him deal with the cause of depression instead of just telling him to resist the depression itself.

Q. *How can a person recognize depression?*

A. I divide symptoms into three main clusters. First is loss of interest or

You should seek help for depression when it is not getting better. A depression that lasts more than a month needs professional help, because most reactive depressions will clear up sooner than that.

ambition—loss of interest in one's environment, loss of interest in hobbies, loss of interest in sex, loss of interest in friends, not wanting to answer the telephone. The second cluster I call psychomotor retardation. It results in fatigue, lethargy, and a loss of energy, so everything slows down. The third cluster has to do with the feeling of sadness that goes with depression. Of the three, the low mood, which most people identify as depression, is the least important. So many people, when you tell them you think they are depressed, reply, "But I'm not feeling sad." They fail to see the psychomotor retardation—the loss of interest in their environment—as evidence that they are depressed.

Q. *Is it possible for a person to diagnose depression accurately in himself or herself?*

A. Not usually, because it clouds a person's awareness of what's happening; it requires some feedback from an alert individual. We all experience depression, but we do not all label it accurately because it is masked by other emotions. Anger or loneliness can mask depression. We also mask depression by becoming compulsive. I have learned to recognize my own depression because there is a vague feeling of discomfort in my stomach that goes along with depression. Whenever I feel that, I ask myself, "Am I depressed?"

Q. *Depression is a continuum, obviously, between mild depression and psychotic depression. How can people gauge the seriousness of depression in themselves or others?*

A. Again, you really need an objective outsider to help you understand that. You can't trust your own feelings, because the more depressed you become, the less interest you have in whether or not you're depressed. In an extreme form of depression you're not interested in the existential state of being depressed. You're preoccupied with the conse-

quences of the depression.

Q. *Meaning what?*

A. Meaning that you're so unhappy, you're so miserable, you don't care about whether you're depressed or not. Your attention is on how miserable life is, how this matter is bothering you, and how worried you are about that event occurring. You are so caught up in the experience of the depression that you can't stand back and view it objectively.

Q. *Can you categorize different levels of depression by their symptoms?*

A. In mild depression we continue to function normally; we can tolerate the feeling. Medium depression begins to affect us. We start canceling out on obligations. In severe depression, people are totally incapacitated and unable to take care of themselves, and that can be dangerous. They won't eat. Their wish to die is so strong that suicide is a real threat.

Q. *What do you do to help people in that kind of severe depression?*

A. Very often you have to force them against their will to go for treatment. You must make sure that they are placed in a safe environment, that they are given fundamental care, that they are given nutritional care. Sometimes that can be provided in a home where people are available, but often it means hospitalization.

Q. *At what point should a person seek professional help for depression?*

A. That's a very difficult question. I think you should seek help for your depression when it is not getting better. I think a depression that lasts for more than a month needs professional help, because most reactive depressions will

clear up sooner than that. If it's not being resolved, either you're not coming to terms with your loss or else there is a complicating physiological variable. Also, if your depression incapacitates you, if you're canceling out on any significant appointments, it's out of control. You need help. Third, you need professional help if any close acquaintance says to you, "You need help!" because he wouldn't say it unless he could detect a significant problem.

Q. *When a person recognizes that he or she is depressed, what action should he take to deal with it?*

A. The first step is to recognize your depression. I encourage people to engage their spouse or friend to help them here. Since the depression is a signal that we've lost something, and since so many of the losses we can experience in our culture are abstract or imagined or threatened, the sooner we get in touch with the signal, the sooner we can resolve the matter of the loss.

The second step is to identify the trigger. What have I experienced as loss? If it's an imagined or threatened loss, check it out. You are far better off knowing reality than not knowing reality.

The third step is to face and accept the reality of the loss. For example, how do you counsel people who go through bereavement? You take them to see the body of the deceased, don't you? I saw a woman once who had been depressed for more than two years after her husband had died of a heart attack in his late thirties. One day someone persuaded her to come and see me. She told me that their bedroom was still just as it was when her husband died. His shoes and slippers were under the bed, his clothes hanging in the closet. She hadn't faced the reality of the loss. In her imagination somehow he was still going to come back. I called up a friend of hers and with the friend's help forced her to go home that day and clear out every single thing of his. She came back the next week and

The minister who uses a lot of adrenaline will experience a drop when demand diminishes, resulting in a postadrenaline depression. The day after preaching can become a day of very deep depression.

her depression was gone! She had done with her grieving the moment she faced the reality of the loss. We prolong depression unnecessarily because we play denial games instead of being in touch with reality.

Fourth, develop a perspective on the loss. If the gospel does nothing else, it puts perspective on this life and forces us to separate the essentials from the nonessentials and to stop "catastrophizing" things. I helped a young man once who'd borrowed money from everyone in the church to go into business, only to go bankrupt a year later. He called me up one day and said, "I'm about to take my life. But somehow I think God is saying to me, 'Just go once and talk about this.'" For the next two or three weeks I talked with him, forced him to face the reality of the loss, and forced him to face his friends. Then we tried to put it in perspective. Slowly he turned around, and six months later he was in mission school preparing himself for missionary service. He had turned apparent catastrophe into a glorious spiritual-growth experience.

Last, we must learn from our depression. Some of us experience the same loss over and over again. Every week, depressed. We have to work at changing our value system to avoid repeating our loss. We may need to improve our communication or the way we think, or learn to take control and be more assertive. I try to make it a principle of my life that every time I am depressed I learn from that experience.

Q. Can a minister keep on doing adequate pastoring during a depression?

A. It depends on the severity of the depression. In mild depression you can go about your work and probably no one will notice. But I have worked with pastors who are in very severe depression, and unfortunately, the depression has led them to be quite dishonest. Often they have found themselves saying they were out on a series of calls all morning, when they were lying

in bed at home. With depression that severe it is vital to get into treatment as early as possible.

Q. Should the minister ask for time off?

A. I think that in the case of a severe depression, he should get advice from whoever is treating the depression and take a leave of absence if necessary.

Q. Can a minister who has to put out a lot of adrenaline on church day expect to experience depression as a result?

A. Yes, the minister who uses a lot of adrenaline will experience a significant drop of that adrenaline when the demand diminishes, resulting in what we call a postadrenaline depression. The day after preaching or peak demand in a typical minister's life can become a day of very deep depression.

Q. How should he or she plan to handle that?

A. First of all, try to reduce the use of adrenaline ahead of time by good relaxation during the week. The day before a heavy engagement he should be more rested up than at any other time. Then he should plan for a low level of routine activity on the day following the peak demand: paper shuffle, just doing mechanical things in order to maximize recovery. I do not advocate that the day after necessarily be the day off. That should come later in the week, preferably, when the person's adrenaline system has recovered, so he can enjoy family activities when he's not in this low-grade, depressed, fatigued state.

Q. How does exercise fit into an adrenaline management program for a minister?

A. It can help in a number of ways. If your body is producing excess adrenaline, exercise will absorb it like a sponge

and get rid of it quicker for you. Exercise also builds the system's tolerance for adrenaline. The demand for adrenaline diminishes. Exercise helps to tranquilize the system. Research shows that exercise increases endorphins, which are the brain's chemistry to both tranquilize and suppress pain.

Q. Is depression a sign of failure?

A. No, depression is a natural consequence of certain psychological or physiological events. In the case of an endogenous depression, the physiological event is a disturbed body chemistry, and the depression is a natural consequence of that. In the case of psychological depression, the depression is usually a response to loss, and it is a natural response to loss.

Q. Is it sinful to be depressed?

A. That depends on the cause. A person, for example, who has a disturbed body chemistry and refuses to get treatment for that may very well be sinning in remaining depressed. Similarly with psychological depressions. If I am depressed because the IRS has caught me cheating on my income taxes, the depression is normal and natural. What is sinful is the cause of the depression. If I put the cause right, my depression will often go away. So we need to make the distinction between the cause, which can be sinful, and the consequence, which is always a natural response.

Q. How can a spouse help a minister cope with depression?

A. By helping the pastor do some good reality testing. She can respond to imagined or threatened losses by kindly saying, "How do you know that's true? Why don't you check the figures again?" By helping the pastor to be more in touch with reality, she has a part in facilitating the healing process.

The parson who talked sense

When you are preaching well, your listeners understand and remember the ideas you are attempting to convey. By using words familiar to your congregation and portraying word pictures, you communicate most successfully. □ by Fred E. Luchs



Recently my son was in a traffic accident. I received the following letter: "We are subrogated to the rights of our insured to the extent of the payment which is made by us as a result of this claim. You are, hereby, notified that we claim a lien in the amount of such payment upon any amount that may be paid by

you or your insurance carrier in settlement with our insured or upon any monies paid by you in satisfaction of any judgment which he may procure against you."

This question came to me: In my effort to show profound thought, do I preach sermons that sound like that? Do I get lost in a plethora of big words that give only a vague and confused idea of what I mean? I believe that one rule is essential for sermon clarity: Use picture words.

Some years ago an English clergyman, much against his wishes, was sent to minister to a country church. But he set himself to win his people. He learned the vernacular of his flock. He noted every word they used in conversation, and in time collected about three hundred words. He translated his sermons into the local dialect, avoiding words unfamiliar to his people. His congregation grew larger. People came in numbers to listen to "the parson who talks sense."

My old neighbor Harold Bosley tells of a question his young son asked him upon his return from a teaching and speaking tour in the Far East. The boy asked, "But

Father, you speak no Japanese. How could they understand you?" Dr. Bosley answered that he had preached two or three sentences, then stopped and allowed his Japanese interpreter to convey his message to the people, after which he again spoke in English. The boy said, "Dad, why don't you do that in your own pulpit?"

Of course, it would be better to ask, "Why don't we do that in our studies before reaching the pulpit?" We may write our sermons in the philosophical jargon of Tillich and Niebuhr, but on completion we must transpose them to a key that stirs our people.

When Abe Lincoln was a boy, he would listen to conversations about politics or religion. Then he would pace the loft of his Pigeon Creek home, trying to put the ideas he had heard into language that a boy could understand. When searching for an idea, he would not stop until he had caught and phrased it in the right words. By this method he developed his power of clear expression.

It is easy to preach in abstract terms. It is simple to beseech our people to be Christians. It is not as simple to picture for them the straight and narrow path. It is easy to say, "Tom is a Christian," but if we are to convey the full meaning of that statement, we must show Tom paying his

bills on time, giving to the United Fund, helping a blind man across the street, or doing other acts of kindness.

The Bible exhorts us to become as little children. Would that we could paint word pictures as they do. Dr. Arnold Gesell in *The Word Became Flesh* observes, "The child of five is a pragmatist and defines things in terms of use."

Once we too could express ourselves like that. Now we pride ourselves in our capacity for handling abstract ideas in smooth generalizations, and our parishioners go away with words, not pictures, to remember. How many of our sermons have started out with great promise, yet never arrived because they were made up of concepts rather than pictures. Great preachers never spoke that way. They projected Bible incidents on the screen of the mind. The human mind is often sluggish. We cannot induce a congregation to listen to us unless our case is stated with warmth and vigor. A listener recognizes truth at once when it is presented in concrete form.

Great truths rest not upon abstract reasoning, but facts. When we preachers use our imagination and compel our hearers to use theirs, facts become vivid and real. Let's do our thinking in the abstract and our speaking in the concrete.

Fred E. Luchs, pastor and editor, writes from Athens, Ohio.

The nonproductive pastor

Upon beginning our ministry we feel that we can conquer the world, and we set out in a whirlwind of activity to prove it. Later in our ministry we feel that the world has conquered us, and our level of productivity begins to prove it. How can we avoid becoming just another mortality statistic among clergy failures? If we are an administrator, how can we infuse new life into a pastor who has become paralyzed with inactivity? The counsel offered here is invaluable. □ by Kevin Howse



uring the early years of his ministry the young pastor tends to be an indefatigable worker. His productivity puts inactive pastors to shame. His churches love and deeply appreciate the young dynamo as he conducts his lively and creative program almost single-handedly. For several years he maintains this vigorous

program, encouraged by his superiors, rewarded by his congregation(s), and lamented by his wife and family.

But then mid-life crisis strikes. Perhaps his health breaks down, his body being unable to keep pace with his hectic and compulsive lifestyle. Perhaps his neglected wife threatens to leave him, or his children rebel, tired of being third-class citizens of his world. Or perhaps the stress and strain of his workaholic gets the better of him, and his emotional control system breaks down. Then he

begins to evaluate his life by the things he has not yet done and perhaps will never do. By whatever means the crisis comes, it dawns on him that ambition and hyperactivity have been a poor measure of success. He asks himself some painful questions: "What is it all worth if I lose what is really important in life—my health, my family, my eternal security? What does all this success really prove? Am I about to become just another mortality statistic among clergy failures?"

In dealing with the problem of the nonproductive pastor, we start with the assumption that for the most part the nonproductive pastor is made, not born.

Admittedly, there may be some who are not suited to the ministry because perhaps they perceived the ministerial profession as a comfortable retreat from responsibility and strenuous work. They are basically lazy. Or perhaps they saw the church as an institutional umbrella promising maximum security for a minimum of personal investment. However, most of those entering and remaining in the ministry have followed higher motivations than these.

There is more to the nonproductive pastor than meets the eye of the anxious congregation. Erratic visitation, poorly prepared sermons, inadequate administration, and general apathy often belie a

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As a reaction to his previous compulsive activity, it is not uncommon for a pastor in mid-life to take up hobbies, television, sports, or other "escape" activities almost as devotedly as he previously worked.

more profound problem. His lack of motivation is often *not* the direct result of dwindling spirituality, self-interest, theological deviance, disloyalty to the church, or faulty vocational calling. Consequently, the common remedies that have been recommended and applied in the past treat only the symptoms of the problem, leaving the fundamental cause untouched. Indeed, administrative pressure, misunderstanding, or neglect serve only to aggravate an already delicate situation.

The process whereby the pastor becomes inactive and ineffective is, in many respects, like that of the burnout process. The job burnout process moves through four distinct stages. Stage 1: Enthusiasm. Initially the individual commences work with high hopes and expectations. Stage 2: Stagnation. Gradually the individual becomes ineffective (not doing the right things) and inefficient (not doing things right). Stage 3: Frustration. He experiences confusion and intense disappointment as enthusiasm has been wasted, expectations have been thwarted, and hopes dashed. Either the anger felt at this time can provide the energy for creative change, resulting in a new and more realistic enthusiasm, or else its energy can be wasted, leaving the pastor apathetic. Stage 4: Apathy. Finally, in an attitude of defiant acceptance, the individual gives up hope and becomes nonproductive, cynical, and inactive.

Nonproductivity and the pastoral life cycle

To understand better the problem of nonproductivity, we must be aware of the unique anxieties that a pastor experiences during an average pastoral life cycle.

The early life. The stages of burnout can be active throughout the pastoral life cycle but perhaps are felt most keenly during the early years. The period between completion of ministerial preparation until a few years after ordination are the most stressful years, being a time of major adjustment.

The young intern often commences

ministry with great anticipation and an enthusiastic willingness to sacrifice and serve. However, during the very early months of ministry he makes the transition from student to teacher/pastor, and from young person to adult. The anticipation of a life career clashes with fear of the unknown as he begins to reevaluate his unrealistic expectations. The joy of recent academic success and achievement is dampened by the awful realization that he doesn't know everything and indeed has serious skill deficits. The relief of having finally arrived in the place of his calling is tempered by feelings of loss, loneliness, and seclusion, having left the comfort and safety of friends, home, and a familiar environment. The young intern wrestles with feelings of self-doubt, insecurity, and loneliness and even questions his calling to the ministry.

Internship experiences will either serve to breed disillusionment, anxiety, fear, and skepticism or nurture fulfillment, hope, and success. Leiffer's study¹ demonstrated that younger pastors tend to be more radical and action-oriented than older ministers. This phenomenon often results in frustration and conflict as to the role of the minister and the church, because it appears that neither are the agents of change, but rather stand fixed as bulwarks against it. The young pastor's enthusiasm becomes tempered by the apparent rigidity and coldness of others.

Upon becoming frustrated, angry, and disillusioned, the young pastor is reduced to a condition of static inefficiency. He either searches for ways to drop out respectably or, instead of dropping out, searches for an alternative spiritual gift and calling. Constant moves, higher education in paraministry specialization, and diverting energy into special challenging projects may provide respectable alternatives.

The mid-life preacher. Mid-life can be characterized as a period of disillusionment and soul-searching, as the pastor comes to detest his compulsiveness as well as all those who have manipulated this trait and rewarded him for it. Real

enjoyment and satisfaction in ministry is depleted as the pastor tends to spend more time in the activities he likes least and considers least important, while spending relatively little time in the activities he likes most and considers most important.² He begins to realize that busyness and success can be two different, although often confused, criteria by which to gauge effectiveness in ministry.

If he and his family survive the mid-life crisis, three alternatives are possible. He may discover new and more realistic criteria than busyness by which to measure pastoral effectiveness, and consequently implement a more balanced style of life and work. However, as a reaction to his previous compulsive activity, it is not uncommon for such a pastor to reverse his behavior patterns completely. He may take up hobbies, television, sports, or other "escape" activities almost as devotedly as he previously worked, while maintaining a minimal involvement in all but the essential pastoral responsibilities. He appears unmotivated and disinterested in his profession, demonstrating meanwhile considerable enthusiasm for his substitute activities. Or, finally, he may escape by abandoning his profession and perhaps even his faith. In so doing, he may think that he has treated the problem at the cause, but more often than not he has merely changed hats.

The aging pastor. As the years go by, a cloud of frustration and desperation frequently settles over the minister, who, being sensitive to the changing needs of the church and world around him, realizes that these needs demand new abilities and skills. He realizes he is no longer as effective as he once was. He feels trapped. On the one hand, he fears to get involved lest he expose his inadequacy, but on the other hand, he feels that updating his skills would be impractical.

Many a minister who mastered the skills necessary for effective ministry during previous generations finds himself growing inadequate to the unique demands of the 1980s. He lacks the skills

The pastor's caring, nurturing, empathizing qualities provide a basis for personal ministry. Without sensitivity there can be no compassion, and without compassion there can be no effective Christian ministry.

of family counseling and youth ministry. Such a pastor feels powerless as he helplessly watches families split apart and youth march out the back door of the church. The task of reaching a post-Christian, secular, technological society demands a new vocabulary and a vastly different set of evangelistic skills. And so he looks on in dismay as churches that he once labored hard to build dwindle in membership.

Added to this, health problems and energy depletion may also limit his ability to work at the same pace as he once did. It is not that he is lazy or poorly intentioned, but rather that he is ineffective because of not being able to update his skills to meet the needs of a rapidly changing society. Consequently, instead of his many years of spiritual leadership climaxing as he comes to retirement age, he may find that he is merely biding his time while his ministry fizzles to an end.

Personality traits and nonproductivity

Personality factors are both learned and inherited, and these traits generally tend to predispose individuals to certain professions. The following personality types are often associated with those who choose religious professions, but they sometimes bring the negative effects of stress.

The sensitive. Those called to the ministry often possess qualities that are both their greatest strength and their greatest weakness. Sensitivity is one example of such a quality. In the daily course of ministry the pastor is called upon to be sensitive to the personal needs and conflicts of individuals in his congregation. His caring, nurturing, empathizing qualities provide a basis for personal ministry. Without sensitivity there can be no compassion, and without compassion there can be no effective Christian ministry.

However, this very quality can also make the pastor vulnerable to offense. Misunderstandings with church leadership, inequities and injustices in the administration of policy, personal criti-

cism, and petty church fights provide the bulk of offenses that often turn into resentment.

Over the years the sensitive individual can allow these painful emotional experiences to drain him of his compassion. He becomes cold, critical, cynical, and aloof, and his interpersonal effectiveness is all but destroyed. He permits his bruised sensitivity to sabotage effectively his ability to be sensitive to others.

The angry/hurt idealist. In a study of Lutheran pastors this characterization was the most frequent of any for pastors (22 percent) and their wives (15 percent). "They tend to be friendly, outgoing, anxious to please, and they are usually interested in new ideas. Their response to stress and frustration, however, contains a mixture of immaturity, poorly controlled expression of hostility, and self-centered demands. They experience temper outbursts and make threats resulting from the poorly controlled anger, even though they usually make considerable effort to repress untoward feelings."³

The very nature of Christian doctrine and pastoral ministry demands a high level of idealism. Properly balanced, it is a quality that inspires hope and optimism, and, as a leadership quality, brings out the best in people. However, the pastor learns quickly that not all is as he expected it should be. The church is not as enthusiastic about its goals as it should be, and Christians don't always behave as they should. Sermons, no matter how well conceived and delivered, do not always result in changes in the life of individuals or the congregation. Problems do not simply evaporate with prayer, Bible study, and witnessing. Grand illusions and unrealistic expectations, when confronted by reality, result in disappointment, hurt, anger, and disillusionment. The resulting underlying hostility is most often communicated nonverbally in his tone of voice as he preaches his sermon or complains about church members and leadership. Emotionally, his anger drains him of his life-giving qualities. Spiritually, he grows cold and lifeless. Such realities

cause a crisis in the early ministry of young pastors, and many never fully recover.

As an alternative to becoming more flexible in their high expectations of the church, some simply drop out. Wilson concludes from his study of men leaving the ministry that these tend to have a "fairly rigid view of what the church ought to be."⁴ Meanwhile, others go on clinging to their original ideas and hide their frustrations and anger behind a tenacious adherence to rules and authorities that give them support, thus justifying their idealistic crusade against all those who do not agree and cooperate.

The undisciplined. In daily ministry considerable self-discipline is necessary. The pastor is often pulled in many conflicting directions. The demands placed on him to administer, study, preach, counsel, teach, and evangelize leave him fragmented. His work is never done to the satisfaction of himself, let alone others. Thus he reduces his goals to doing only what he has been asked to do. Success deteriorates to keeping people happy. Planning gives way to rushing around putting out fires. His ministry is a constant round of indiscriminate action. The vast array of expectations, duties, and demands leaves him confused and with a feeling of always being behind.

Others may describe such a person as lazy, but he would quickly argue in his defense that he had done a mountain of tasks, traveled many miles, and skimped on his sleep. They perceive him to be inactive because he is doing nothing of importance that has overall purpose or direction.

How to help the nonproductive pastor

While the pastor must ultimately accept responsibility for his feelings, goals, and behavior, he must also find understanding and acceptance from those whose responsibility it is to "pastor" the pastor. The following are suggested guidelines for helping the inactive pastor.

1. Make your leadership person-cen-

The pastor's work is never done to the satisfaction of himself, let alone others. Thus he reduces his goals to doing only what he has been asked to do. Success deteriorates to keeping people happy.

tered rather than product-centered. The most valuable investment in any organization is people. If those who are responsible for the well-being of employees wish to avoid contributing to burnout, they must undertake long-range planning in order to offer person-centered leadership, and replace material priorities with human and spiritual values. Productivity is achieved when there is a realistic balance between the needs for organizational prosperity and individual well-being. It is an accepted fact that productivity loss can be caused by work overload, boredom, unrealistic deadlines, improper training and supervision, fear motivation, inadequate rest periods, and no opportunity for growth, to mention just a few factors.⁵ Before inactive pastors are condemned, leaders must first ask themselves the question "What are we doing or not doing to contribute to the problem?" When an individual within the system malfunctions, the system itself must assume some responsibility.

The majority of inactive pastors are burned out, unsupervised, overwhelmed, and discouraged. The stresses of ministry have left them feeling tired, guilty, lonely, and confused. Consequently, either they escape into an isolated and "safe" world where failure is avoided by not trying or they invest themselves in relentless busyness and active nonproductivity. Inactive pastors do not need criticism; they need understanding and assistance in developing self-awareness, self-esteem, and realistic goals for self-directed behavior.

2. *Create a positive work environment for the pastor working under your leadership.* Burnout is present in environments with strong evidence of fear and a lack of trust. Jack Gibbs, psychologist and management consultant, has suggested that job burnout is significantly related to the degree of personal and trusting relationships on the job. Fear, he suggests, is the major stifler of creativity and imagination.⁶ Potential burnout environments are those in which the lack of trust is demonstrated through such means as limited growth opportunity, overcon-

trol, obvious management manipulative strategies, insensitivity, and nonexistent delegation. Organizations that demand unquestioning loyalty to hierarchical systems and stress high productivity as opposed to personal effectiveness and fulfillment may be creating the crippling stagnation, infighting, and low productivity that they are seeking to correct or avoid.

On the other hand, trust eliminates fear and minimizes distress. A century ago Count Camillo Benso di Cavour, father of Italian unification, constructed a new and more creative environment by advocating the idea that the person who trusts others will make fewer mistakes than the person who distrusts them.

3. *Use support systems to manage role conflicts.* If the pastor is to adjust to the role conflicts confronting him, struggle successfully to find the purpose and meaning of the church and his ministry, and achieve personal growth, he will need lifelong supervision and support in three major areas of adjustment:

a. *Personal support.* In adulthood men generally find great difficulty in making close friends. Added to this, ministry can be a lonely profession. Companionship needs cannot be expected to be entirely met by the spouse and immediate family. Consequently, the pastor must make intentional efforts to find meaningful friendships that meet his social needs.

b. *Spiritual support.* The effect of personal spirituality on pastoral effectiveness is well understood, but there is little appreciation of the effect of ministry on spirituality. Tiredness, anxiety, loneliness, fear, and frustration all take their toll on spiritual vitality and freshness. In order to bring accountability and insight to this vital aspect of pastoral growth, each pastor must have a spiritual supervisor/support person with whom stresses and anxieties can be shared and plans for personal spiritual growth discussed.

c. *Professional support.* Growth in effective pastoral skills is an ongoing process. However, seminars, workshops, and workers' meetings offer information but little assessment of a person's effec-

tiveness on the job. Pastors require assistance in clarifying issues that tend to confuse that which is personal with that which is professional. Consequently, professional support systems are needed in order to provide an opportunity for systematic self-appraisal and goal-setting in structuring for professional growth, clarifying issues in church and personal conflicts, analyzing difficult cases in counseling, establishing goals and evaluating plans, assessing worship, sermon, and preaching styles, et cetera.

Supervision/support systems are essential during crucial transitional stages in the life cycle of the pastor. During the early, mid-life, and later years pastors have special needs and tasks that when ignored lead to crisis rather than growth and maturity. Consequently, pastors are lost to the ministry simply because developmental tasks were ignored or help came too late. Each group requires special attention and support in order for the pastors to move through the issues unique to their stage of life and work.

In conclusion, while this article makes no pretense at being a comprehensive review of the problem, it is hoped that pastors and church administrators will take another look at the unique stress and developmental crises of ministry and attempt to formulate a positive response. By so doing, they will enrich intrachurch relationships, and both pastoral and organizational goals will more likely be achieved.

¹ Murray H. Leiffer, *Changing Expectations and Ethics in the Professional Ministry* (Evanston, Ill.: Garrett Theological Seminary, Bureau of Social and Religious Research, 1969), 189 pages.

² Samuel W. Blizzard, "The Minister's Dilemma," *The Christian Century* 73 (1956): 508, 509.

³ Jean J. Rossi and William J. Filstead, *Pastors in Crisis: An Evaluation of the American Lutheran Church* (Lutheran General Program, Behavioral Consultants, 1977), pp. 40, 41.

⁴ Robert L. Wilson, "Dropouts and Potential Dropouts From Parish Ministry," *Review of Religious Research* 12(3) (1971): 188.

⁵ Alec L. A. Calamidas, "Distress and Burnout Will Kill Productivity," *Pennsylvania State Continuing Education News*, 2d quarter, 1980.

⁶ See Jack Gibbs, *A New View of Personal and Organizational Development* (Los Angeles: The Guild of Tutors Press, 1978).

The dark-horse candidate

Figures larger than life. Royal chronicles from an Oriental court. Illicit sex. Murder. Attempted cover-up in high places. Intrigue concerning succession to the throne. A fearless defender of morality. All these elements suggest a highly interesting story. And, as you might expect, this one ultimately points to a sovereign God. □ by Elizabeth E. Platt



Recent journalism has acquainted us with little-known episodes in the lives of famous people. We are given detailed portrayals of a variety of political, military, athletic, and entertainment celebrities and their unpleasant and tragic failings. We seem to be a generation that suffers from a poverty of heroes. Our

culture holds up very few individuals as exemplary, people whose lives inspire us to lift our eyes in the direction of a meaningful existence amid the conflicts of our times. We seek those whom the best-selling author Gail Sheehy designates "pathleaders." And then when possible candidates do appear, rare though they may be, suspicion constantly lurks that journalists, credit-rating researchers, computer biographers, or electronic recorders will eventually expose a repulsive side of the character, causing the hoped-for one to lose face and his or her supporters to slink off in embarrassment and disillusionment. Our supposed heroes have feet of clay.

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Then, too, when we ourselves reluctantly consider that duty calls us to stand up for a needy cause in the face of the dearth of more talented leadership, we wonder, "Will something in my past be brought forward to the detriment of any accomplishment?"

In light of this, what view does the Bible give on heroes and their aberrations, on societal leaders and their backgrounds of personal indiscretions and misused opportunities? In our time, needing direction as we do, we are fortunate to have the gift of the Biblical record to guide our perspectives. Thinking first of the greatest heroes celebrated in song and story, and searching the Scriptures, we let our eyes fall on the story of David, the anointed one of Israel.

Contemporary Biblical scholarship

places the narrative of the Bathsheba incident from the second book of Samuel in a larger literary unit of 2 Samuel 9-20 and 1 Kings 1, 2. These chapters have been designated "The Court History"; they belong to the "succession narrative" genre in the royal literatures of the ancient Near East. (See Bernhard W. Anderson, *Understanding the Old Testament* [Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1975], p. 176.) Succession narrative served to give account in the chronicles of a dynasty as to who would be the next king. In other words, the point of the literary collection is found in the final chapters, which tell who ascended the throne. The preceding material was collected and included to introduce that person. According to this particular theory of Biblical scholarship, then, the purpose of any particular

The initial issue in this massive collection of hypocrisy and misuse of power is adultery. Why is the sexual aspect of human experience so central in our concern for our leaders' and heroes' lives?

section of this narrative is to be seen in light of the purpose of the larger unit.

Chronicles of the royal court

In ancient Near Eastern annals the chronicles of the royal court characteristically present the succession in terms blatantly favorable to the entire dynastic line. The mighty and glorious king, victorious in battle and accomplished in statesmanship, passes the crown to the most deserving of the heirs, proven in skills and dazzling in unquestionable royal pedigree.

But in Israel we find something else. Here we have the account of the key figure in the royal line shamed beyond belief by his own foolish choices, heedless recklessness, determined lawlessness, and ridiculous cover-up. And, startlingly, Israel's annals introduce a pivotal figure not of the royal house who

this right to govern came a constitution consisting of a complex set of legal instructions and binding guidelines. Historically this legal corpus began with the founding work of Moses and can be summarized basically in the ten commandments of Exodus 20. The prophet's office, in which Nathan served, functioned to call the anointed king to the constitutional terms of his position by reminding him of the system of justice at the foundation of the political order. His message brought David to return to his allegiance to the real sovereign power, the divine Emperor.

Reading the narrative that relates the incident with Uriah's wife, we are astounded at the number of serious legal aberrations involved, the number of constitutional commandments broken. The episode centers in adultery, but David also is guilty of perpetrating

beyond our ken experience, each of us does know the sensitive area of deep personal relationship encompassed by and expressed through sexuality? Is it not here in this exquisitely sensitive area of our humanity that we are most poignantly aware of the foundation for respect? And that foundation, that first essential, is trust. If we cannot trust our leader in one area that we universally can understand, that we know in the depths of our being demands honesty and loyalty, then we cannot trust this person elsewhere. Hence we question every other dominion under his control, every other aspect of our dealings with him. David's life illustrates this dramatically. Once his sexuality became a snare to him, other elements in his dominion fell consecutively, like a house of cards.

Maybe this explains why Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount teaches that we reach the point at which we can first cry out to God, "I have sinned," when we look at the attractive and desire what has not been given to us. Here we acknowledge the primary sovereignty of God and plead for His aid in preventing ignominious disaster and unimaginable suffering. We are assured that our cry for help will be answered and that the Holy One, who is always more ready to forgive than we are to ask, will indeed forgive us. Even here in 2 Samuel, at the extremity of this horrible chain of human sin, barely are the words out of David's mouth admitting his guilt than Nathan proclaims, "The Lord has put away your sin." David, you are forgiven, forgiven of all these things! This is divine, gracious, bountiful forgiveness! And we are not surprised at all that the child born out of the adulterous union will die—a small penalty on the scales of justice; perhaps a severe mercy, but a healing penitential price.

What a lovely story with its just and merciful resolution, abounding in steadfast love!

The real hero

But the Bible does not stop here. We must turn the subsequent pages for the finale. The conclusion goes so far beyond

We seem to be a generation that suffers from a poverty of heroes. Our culture holds up very few individuals as exemplars.

calls the king to account and has the audacity to appear before the throne and cry with unabashed authority, "Thou art the man!" Then, wonder of wonders, the incredible happens. The king, the anointed one, the royal David of Israel, repents. He repents before the pages of history and the thousands of years to come: "I have sinned, I have sinned."

The political theory behind the constitutional monarchy of the Davidic government contributes to our understanding of this incident. The Bible gives evidence that although the king in Israel was anointed to the governing office of the land, the monarchy, so to speak, was in reality an empire. The primary ruler, the emperor, was God. Scripture refers to God as the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the ultimate political authority in the cosmos. David received his kingship as a bequest from Yahweh. Along with

murder, deceiving a loyal subordinate, offering him a bribe, causing him to become drunk, conspiring with his commander, disregarding blatant incompetence in military strategy for personal advantage, endangering the troops, entering into treachery against them, and finally, desperately trying every conceivable method in attempting a cover-up.

Leaders' sexuality a concern

Interestingly, the initial issue in this massive collection of hypocrisy and misuse of power is adultery. Why is the sexual aspect of human experience so central in our concern for our leaders' and heroes' lives?

Is it not because, even though most of us may not be familiar with the complex responsibilities of political authority or the pressures those vested with power

All of the candidates are paraded before us in these wild chapters of the court history. We see all the majesty and intrigue of an Oriental court; but the end reveals a surprise.

what we could ever anticipate that even though it is in the text, we may overlook it as too fantastic to believe. The majestic conclusion to this succession narrative is matchless in all of literature. We may overlook it because the central character in the story is not seen as readily as the very real and human king David. The central character in this account, as in all the books of the Bible, proves to be none other than the true Monarch, the King of kings, the divine Emperor Himself. Thundering across the pages of this royal chronicle is God, brilliantly marching and leading His people as the heavenly hero.

Notice what happens. After Nathan's pronouncement of forgiveness, the story unfolds in page after page of breathtaking accounts of David's royal progeny. We hear of all the contenders to the throne of Israel as the succession narrative continues. Who will be the next ruler? Will it be David's son Amnon; or the handsome Absalom; or Mephibosheth, from the house of Saul; Jonadab, David's nephew; the revolutionary Sheba ben Bichri; or Commander Joab; or Amasa; Ahithophel, the traitor counselor; or surely Adonijah? Will it be the child of a royal line, the heir of the house of Saul, the legitimate first king? Will it be the one best schooled in diplomacy and political science? The one most acclaimed democratically by the people? The smartest in defense and military strategy? The most powerful in justice? The nearest royal heir of David from a marriage of state?

All of the candidates are paraded before us in these wild chapters of the court history. We see all the majesty and intrigue of an Oriental court; but the end reveals a surprise. One after another the candidates are disqualified for all kinds of reasons until, breathless, we see only one left. Here the court history climaxes. Other characters in the drama have their parts to play, but we are led by the overarching Biblical framework to the one who by strong implication must be king for one reason only—he is the candidate of God's choice. And who is it? Solomon, the second son of David and

Bathsheba—an almost invisible contender. His designation as king over Israel must have been an utter shock to the people living at that time. Yet the astonishing fact is that Israel reached its greatest period of nationhood and prosperity and peace during Solomon's reign. God's Promised Land became a historical, political reality under this the most dazzling of Israel's rulers.

These Biblical records tell us that out of David's most notorious sin came a miracle of God's most beneficent grace. David repented before the prophet, the nation, and all humanity, and God in His glory, accepting that repentance, made the locus of the sin the place of an inconceivable transformation. Out of the adulterous relationship with Bathsheba came, in time, a true marriage that brought forth the greatest political figure the nation ever knew. And from that

begins in the style of an ancient Near Eastern royal chronicle. Matthew desires to demonstrate by legal declaration the divine right of Jesus Christ's messiahship. He has no time to recount a long succession narrative or court history, so he gives the legally accepted abbreviated form. First he makes an identifying summary: "The genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David" (R.S.V.). Then the writer begins to trace the direct line of descent of the royal house of God's chosen people.

In his list, Matthew carefully does not refer to Bathsheba by name; her epithet is "the wife of Uriah" (R.S.V.). This rivets the attention of his readers on the incident of David's sin. They are to recall that out of that tragic situation in the life of the people of God came David's repentance and Solomon in all his glory. For Matthew is writing a Gospel—the

But the Bible presents here a far more magnificent view. God takes human sin, man's mistakes, and creates glory from them.

union came the Messianic line, with the promise of salvation for all.

Often when theologians and saints wish to expound on the marvelous qualities of Divinity, they emphasize that God is Creator, the one who creates the world and the cosmos, even out of nothing. But the Bible presents here a far more magnificent view. God takes human sin, man's mistakes, and creates glory from them. The Bible focuses on God's creating a people, a people endowed with divine love—*His making a kingdom, a nation even, out of sinners*. "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation," God thunders from Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:6, R.S.V.).* "I will make nations of you," God promises Abraham, "and kings shall come forth from you" (Gen. 17:6, R.S.V.).

The Gospel according to Matthew

good news of an imperial decree that has transformed sin into astounding righteousness. He too has a story to tell. It is a story about disloyalty, the breaking of faith, murder, and crucifixion.

Matthew, strong in the tradition of Nathan, the Biblical prophet, is going to call humanity to repentance for the worst sin in the world—killing God's Son. And Matthew, too, is going to give voice to our forgiveness and to tell us how the sovereign God used the locus of our sin, the crucifixion of Christ, as the primary vehicle for His grace in the transformation resulting in our eternal salvation. Hallelujah, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, our Hero of heroes, is with us! And that begins a new story . . .

* The Scripture quotations marked R.S.V. in this article are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

Effective pastoral counseling

Pastors have a unique opportunity and advantage when it comes to counseling. The shared worship community opens avenues for understanding that no other counselor can make use of. We should understand the specialness of our profession and how to capitalize on our unique advantage.

□ by B. Preston Bogia



he most common approach in pastoral counseling is to focus attention on the identity of the counselor (a pastor) and the counselee (a parishioner), and to evaluate the specifically religious tools and resources available for the counseling process, which is an interaction between counselor and counselee. But

what if the distinguishing characteristic of pastoral counseling is really to be found within the wider context of the worshipping community of which the counselee is a part? This thought-provoking question has arisen in the course of reading and discussions in the clinical pastoral education program at Topeka State Hospital. The premise that has emerged out of our discussions is this: A counseling process is *pastoral counseling* only when both the counselor and the counselee are members of a worshipping community; that which is done by a minister with a person who is unchurched may be considered as skilled *clinical counseling*, not *pastoral counseling*.

Importance of the counselee's community

This definition can be refined much further; if it is true—or only partly true—we can elaborate on several

implications for the importance of the community in pastoral counseling:

1. The counselor's identity as a minister becomes fully operative only when there is a common background of knowledge, experience, and history shared with the counselee. The two persons may be greatly unequal in the amount of religious background, but the important factor is that they share a spiritual community that enables and enhances the counseling process so that it becomes fully pastoral. Charles Wheeler Scott reminded us of this when he wrote in an editorial: "It should not be forgotten that one of the advantages the pastoral counselor has over his secular counterpart is that he works within the context of a worshipping community."—*Pastoral Psychology*, February, 1972.

2. The worship community becomes an integral part of the counseling process. Of course, this does not have to be understood in the narrow sense of a particular congregation, or even denomination; there may be many shared images and symbols taken from the whole context of religious belief that can become a part of the process. But the strong implication is that the counseling room must include a *community*, not just

two individuals. The sense of belonging that is communicated by the community provides a context for understanding problems and solutions in the counseling process. In theological terms the community helps to define both *sin* and *grace* for the counselee. Thus there can be less dependence on the wisdom (or lack thereof) of the counselor.

3. The community is a worshipping community, and thus it introduces another dimension—that of God's relationship to His people. Although the minister, as counselor, may represent this dimension, there is even more power in the sense of belonging to a group that defines itself in relation to God. Personal worth may sometimes be found in the act of giving wor(th)ship to God, in addition to depending on Him for guidance. That is, some counselees may find that their sense of self-worth returns when they consider themselves worthy enough to offer something to God.

4. The term *pastoral* denotes an environment, rather than suggesting dependence on a role or the use of specific tools. Prayer, for example, may be nearly meaningless when utilized in a counseling process with someone who is unrelated to the church. On the other hand,

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prayer acquires a richness when it is accepted by both members of the faith community—counselor and counselee—as important and effective. Similar things may be said about sacraments, the use of Scripture, and personal meditation or faith. It is only within the supportive, accepting atmosphere of the community of faith that these resources become fully effective and powerful. Their use by a minister outside of the context of the community may be perceived as an appropriate “religious” response, but they may be ineffective in the helping relationship.

Practical applications

Let's examine some of the practical ways the involvement of the community of faith may affect the course of a counseling relationship. In other words, how can a pastor effectively capitalize on the common religious beliefs present in the counseling room.

1. *Practice listening skills.* An effective pastoral counselor will master the art of being a good listener. Special skills need to be developed through intensive training that will allow the counselor to listen with a “third ear” to the counselee. It is amazing how often listening is enough. Often a counselee will leave a session with effusive thanks even when the majority of the counselor's time has been spent in listening and merely reflecting the content of the spoken words. Frequently beginning counselors believe that they must have advice to offer or answers to give to nearly every utterance. More often than not, this approach interferes with the process more severely than almost anything else. The counselor *must* have skills in listening above everything else.

Once this competence is proven, then the importance of the faith community becomes clear. When there is a shared belief system, the counselee comes to feel that listening is done with an ear to shared values. Even when the topic under discussion is controversial, the trust level may move rapidly to a high point, because there is an assurance of understanding.

2. *Utilize references to Scripture.* References is an important word here, for it is meant literally. When counselor and counselee hold in common some knowledge of stories and passages from Holy Scripture, it is seldom necessary to do extensive reading or quoting.

For example, a counselor may say something like “I am reminded how Joseph's brothers reacted negatively to his status as favorite son. I wonder if there is any similarity between that experience and your feelings of rejection.” The counselor need not go into detail, but only suggests a direction. The counselee is left free to develop the theme further, if desired, or to move in an entirely different direction. The important point is that the counselee's faith stance allows the counselor to utilize references to Scripture effectively as a pastoral and counseling tool without resorting to proof texts or preaching.

3. *Draw on repeated themes.* Just as the worship community is present in spirit in the counseling room, so the counseling situation can be a part of corporate worship experiences if it is handled very carefully. A sensitive pastoral counselor will be able to identify readily themes that emerge over and over and are indicators of the human condition. For instance, counseling may highlight communications problems as a major factor in broken relationships. This issue is not confined to the lives of those who seek counseling, but it has an impact on all people. Thus conflicts and problems that are revealed in counseling situations can be indicators of needs in the congregation.

While extreme care must be exercised to avoid any hint of breaking the confidence of any counselee, a pastor in preparing sermons can be guided by the recurrence of such problems. If themes that emerge during pastoral counseling are really repetitive, they will certainly reflect issues within a congregation at large, thus providing sermon material.

4. *Pray with the counselee.* Prayer with a counselee who does not share religious beliefs may be strained and awkward; prayer with a member of the worship

community acquires a richness and provides a sense of community.

Both opening and closing a counseling session with prayer may be beneficial to the process. At the beginning of an hour the counselor's prayer establishes a mutually held context and reminds the counselee of the presence of God and of the worship community. The time together can then proceed with the assurance that all that is said and done is offered to God.

At the end it seems natural to give thanks, to submit painful, unresolved problems to God, to request guidance. If the entire session has been conducted with an awareness of commonly shared beliefs, prayer is often welcomed by the counselee—not as a magic solution, but as a recognition of a source of strength both acknowledge or recognize.

Counselor must still be a pastor

Clearly, the counselor's pastoral identity is important. In effective pastoral counseling it still seems that ordination or being identified as a religious professional is essential. There is something about pastoral authority and leadership within the religious community that provides an indispensable element in such a relationship. A trained clinician who also is a member of the worshiping community cannot provide counseling that would be recognized as pastoral in the fullest sense of the word.

In the past the uniqueness of the role of the minister in pastoral counseling has often been explored. The ideas presented here are intended to supplement this concept and to expand horizons and definitions. I believe that we have been overlooking an important dimension when we have focused on the counselor and excluded the counselee's commitment to the worshiping community. At least the question deserves consideration.

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Illustrations in preaching

In many ways the success of preaching depends upon the success of the illustration. An idea without an accompanying illustration is like an airplane without wings; the idea is not going to fly. The most successful preachers soon discover that illustrations have a way of personalizing the message, of attaching an address to it. As preachers, when we fail to use illustrations, it's the same as writing a lengthy letter but failing to address the envelope before mailing it.

Toward Better Preaching □ 9 W. Floyd Bresee



li Baba, in an old Arabian Nights tale, was fleeing for his life. Suddenly he was face to face with a dead end. Mammoth rock walls rose before him and on either side. His enemies were closing in from behind. It seemed there was no way to escape. But Ali Baba shouted two secret words, "Open Sesame." As if

by magic, giant rock doors swung open before him. He rode through to safety and riches.

Preacher, have you ever had that dead-end feeling in the pulpit? Have you found yourself facing people whose minds seemed as impervious as rock to the truth you were trying to present? Have you been hotly pursued by feelings of failure? Have you desperately wished you had two magic words like Ali Baba's that would open doors and let the truth get through?

You do have two magic words: for instance. As you lay an illustration before your congregation, eyes focus on the pulpit. Minds focus on the sermon. Doors swing open. The truth gets through!¹

Importance of illustration

Let's first examine the reasons why illustration is an important way of conveying truth.

1. *The Bible is largely a book of illustrations.* Remembering this makes the Bible both more interesting and understandable. Underlying virtually the entire Old Testament is illustration of how God leads His people. Notice how Paul emphasizes this fact: "Now these things which happened to our ancestors are illustrations of the way in which God works, and they were written down to be a warning to us who are living in the final days of the present order" (1 Cor. 10:11, Phillips).²

We wouldn't become nearly so confused over such subjects as the Old Testament sanctuary if we remembered always to look at it as God's way of illustrating how Christ saves. The Gospels perfectly illustrate truth by telling the life story of the only One who ever lived truth perfectly. If you're going to

teach truth the way God teaches it you must use illustrations, for His Book is a book of illustrations.

2. *Jesus always illustrated.* Mark 4:33, 34 asserts, "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them." The Sermon on the Mount has some fifty-six metaphors. You can read the entire sermon aloud in fifteen minutes. If the sermon was delivered just as it is recorded Jesus was using more than three illustrations a minute.

With Jesus the kingdom was always like something. Look at just one chapter with me—Matthew 13. In verse 24 Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field." In verse 33, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." In verse 44, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a

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Unfortunately today some feel that sermon illustrations are unspiritual and shallow. But if God in Scripture so persistently used illustrations, is it right to call illustrations unspiritual?

field." In verse 45, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is *like* unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls." And in verse 47, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is *like* unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind." In our Lord's preaching, the kingdom was always *like* something.

3. *Paul used illustration.* Before the angry mob at Jerusalem and when on trial before Agrippa he used a narrative—the experience of his own conversion (Acts 22 and 26).

Unfortunately today some feel that sermon illustrations are unspiritual and shallow. But if God in Scripture so consistently and persistently used illustrations, is it right to call illustrations unspiritual? Certainly the Bible is not unspiritual. If great minds such as those of Jesus and of Paul used illustrations, should we call illustration shallow? Certainly we would not call Paul and our Lord shallow.

Definition of Illustration

Illustration comes from the Latin word *lux*, meaning "light." It might take the form of a narrative, an analogy, or whatever, but its purpose is not the same as storytelling. It is never used primarily to excite or entertain, but to throw light on truth.

Storytelling, on the other hand, is that which is used for its own sake and is out of place in the pulpit. It deserves the indignation heaped upon it. Brown differentiates illustration from storytelling in the following way: "The word *illustrate* means literally to throw light or luster upon anything. The illustration is never to be regarded as an end in itself; it shines for the sake of something beyond. When the lighted candle is held up to the painting, it is not intended that the beholders should look at the candle but at the painting upon which the candle throws its light."²

Too little light prevents you from seeing the picture, because of the darkness. But too much light also keeps you from seeing the picture, because of the glare. Too little sermon illustration prevents many in the congregation from

seeing the truth you are presenting. But too exciting and dramatic an illustration leads them to see the story instead of the truth. Sometimes the best story makes the poorest illustration.

When a listener has remembered your story but can't for the life of him recall what it taught, though it may have been a good story in itself, it was a bad illustration. A story can be like a living-room lamp. It's beautiful—something to look at. A sermon illustration should be like a streetlamp. It doesn't attract much attention to itself. Its business is lighting up the community.

Christ didn't tell hair-raising stories as a preface to long theological discussions. Instead He used simple analogies almost continuously and with a proper balance of emotion. He didn't focus on the extreme ends of the reason-emotion continuum, but stayed in the middle, using both as continuously as possible.

An illustration, then, is not for entertaining, nor is it a blank space between arguments. Rather, it is that which applies argument to life. Did you ever try to hang a picture for your wife when you had only a nail and no hammer? Ever try to drive the nail with your wife's high-heeled shoe? On the other hand, did you ever have a hammer and couldn't find a nail? The best of hammers would only make a mess of the wall. Which do you need to hang a picture—a nail, hammer, or both? The nail is your idea, the lesson you want to get across in your sermon. The hammer represents your illustration. Having an idea without an illustration is like having a nail without a hammer to help it penetrate—to drive it home. Having a story without a lesson to teach is like having a hammer without a nail for it to strike against. You need both.

What do you see on this page? Ideas? Words? Not really. What you see on this page is ink. But the ink is being used in such a way that, hopefully, we become oblivious to it and see only ideas. The perfect illustration is like that. It becomes almost oblivious. It leaves the listener thinking, not of it, but of the idea it illustrates.

Purposes of illustration

Let's look at six reasons for using sermon illustrations.

1. *Illustrations make truth easier to understand.* We best learn a new thing by its being likened to something we already know, by the unfamiliar being compared with the familiar. This is the basic principle underlying the use of illustration in preaching. Beecher reminisced: "I have seen an audience, time and again, follow an argument, doubtfully, laboriously, almost suspiciously, and look at one another, as much as to say, 'Is he going right?'—until the place is arrived at, where the speaker says, 'It is like—' and then they listen eagerly for what 'it is like' and when some apt illustration is thrown out before them, there is a sense of relief, as though they said, 'Yes, he is right.'"³

Far from being shallow, well-illustrated preaching dares to present deeper thoughts. What if I have an argument that I would like to include in my sermon but it would demand the most careful attention of even the deepest thinkers in the congregation. Dare I include it? Only if I illustrate it. A deep thought well illustrated and practically applied will gain the interest of both the thinker and the child in your audience.

2. *Illustrations hold attention.* In the strictest sense many sermons that are preached never are delivered. The pharmacist sends his delivery boy out with a prescription for Mrs. Jones. But the day is hot, the bicycle is slow, and Mrs. Jones lives clear across town. So the boy throws the prescription in a trash can and goes swimming instead. Did he deliver it? Well, he got it off his hands. But you can be sure his employer will insist that delivery was made only when the prescription got into Mrs. Jones's hands.

Like the boy, we ministers tend to become lazy. We step into the pulpit with God-given truths, but we fail to provide the illustrations that will grip people's attention. When the sermon is over we pull our sanctimonious robes about us, insisting, "I said it. If the people didn't hear it, that's their prob-

Preachers must not overlook the principle behind Jesus' use of illustrations. If He were preaching in our cities today, He would illustrate with freeways and supermarkets, not with shepherds and sheep.

lem." Not so. A sermon is really delivered, not when the preacher has gotten it off his hands, but when his people have taken it into their hands and hearts.

Romans 10:17 gives a formula for building faith: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The formula is simple: WORD + HEARING = FAITH. A sermon is for the purpose of increasing faith. Our formula suggests that the Word of God must be combined with hearing before it produces faith. In other words, it's not how much of the Word of God we preach, but how much is heard, that will build faith. William James put it this way: "What gets your attention determines your action." And illustration is simply the most successful means available for focusing people's attention on truth.

Dad used to set two older brothers and me to work sacking grain. Being the youngest, I invariably held the sack, and my brothers did the shoveling. There's a bit of a trick to putting your forearm into the grain sack just right so its mouth hangs open wide enough for a whole scoopful of grain to go in. We shoveled a lot more grain than we sacked, but the problem was that Dad gave us credit only for the amount that went in, not the amount of grain that was shoveled. Is it not possible our heavenly Father measures sermons the same way? He's not so much impressed by the amount of truth we handle as by the amount that goes in. Good illustrations help hold people's attention. And that's how more truth goes in.

3. *Illustrations retain truth longer.* When a piece of film is developed and an image emerges, the process is not yet complete. The film must be put through a fixer before the image can last as long as the film lasts. In preaching, not only do we want to impress our listeners with truth, but we long for that impression to last. Illustrations are the fixers making permanent the image of truth.

But preachers must not overlook the principle behind Jesus' use of illustrations. If He were preaching in our cities

today, He would illustrate with freeways and supermarkets, not with shepherds and sheep. The principle behind Jesus' choice of illustrations is that they should tie truth to things people would be doing so they will be reminded of the truth every time they do them.

The truths of Jesus' sermons were remembered every time a listener saw a lamb or a lily. Every time the people lost something they remembered the lessons of the lost coin or the lost sheep. Every time they had company they thought of Jesus' teaching about the man who borrowed bread at midnight for his company. Ellen White suggests: "Christ's illustrations were taken from the things of daily life, and although they were simple, they had in them a wonderful depth of meaning. . . . Ever afterward, when His hearers chanced to see these objects, they recalled His

woman in your congregation has ever fought on a battlefield?

The day before he preached Beecher liked to spend some time at the docks. He claimed acquaintance with every gatekeeper at Fulton Ferry, every engineer or dockhand on the boats. Or he liked to ride on an omnibus and talk with the driver. His sermon was still forming in his mind when he went out to observe life, asking himself whether or not this idea would work there. From watching life on Saturday he brought illustrations that made his sermon relevant to life when he preached on Sunday. Proudly Beecher asserted, "If ever I saw one of those men in my church, I could preach to him, and hit him under the fifth rib with an illustration, much better than if I had not been acquainted with him. I have driven the truth under many a plain jacket."⁵

The word of God must be combined with hearing before it produces faith. And illustration is the most successful means available for focusing people's attention on truth.

words. Thus the truth became a living reality; the scenes of nature and the daily affairs of life were ever repeating to them the Saviour's teaching."⁴ If, like Jesus, you want your sermons to go on preaching themselves all week long, illustrate them with things your people will be doing that week.

4. *Illustrations prove religion relevant.* They are a means of showing that Christian theory works in everyday life. Listeners often wonder whether it will. Preachers tend to forget that it must. Good illustrations prove that it does.

Your audience will perceive your sermon as relevant to life if you illustrate it with experiences similar to theirs. An illustration about a child being spanked is usually more relevant than one about a soldier charging into battle. Most of your audience have been either on the giving or receiving end of a spanking, but what

5. *Illustrations present strong truth without offending the audience.* We might not look at this as a principal purpose of illustration, yet Matthew 13:10-13 shows Jesus used it this way: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. . . . Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand." Apparently Jesus used illustrations to make His teachings both easier and harder to understand—easier for those who wanted to understand, and harder and more obscure for those who didn't.

Abolishing slavery was not a popular idea in many congregations during pre-Civil War days, even in the North.

The minister who complains about having no illustrations is admitting either that his religion isn't relevant or that he doesn't yet possess what every successful preacher must develop—the "homiletic bias."

Many people didn't appreciate their ministers' preaching about it. Yet the consciences of some preachers wouldn't allow them to keep quiet. The solution? Some used examples out of slavery to illustrate sermons on other subjects. The illustrations gradually got to the people's hearts when no amount of argument would have. Illustration sometimes makes it possible to present strong truth without offending the audience.

6. *Illustrations motivate.* Merely to announce what ought to be done without helping motivate people to do it is of little value. Enveloped in a cloud of dust, the county agricultural agent drove into the farmyard and bounced onto the old farmer's porch. The farm looked pretty much run-down, and the farmer sitting in the creaking rocker did too. The agent, enthusiasm personified, began sharing what he thought were exciting ideas for improving the farm, but the old man stopped him in midsentence. "Simmer down, sonny; I know how to farm twice as good as I'm farmin' already."

Most people are not living even half the truth they already know. They don't so much need to know more as they need to be motivated more. While the principal purpose of illustration is not to excite the emotions, illustrations do help listeners feel the truth. And people mostly do what they feel like doing.

Sources of illustrations

Naturally it's much easier to defend the importance of illustrations than to find good ones when you need them. At times we're all tempted to throw up our hands and say we just can't.

The University of Northern Iowa once offered a general art course that included a most unusual exercise. The teacher brought to class a shopping bag filled with lemons and gave a lemon to each class member. The assignment was for the student to keep his lemon with him day and night—smelling, handling, examining it. Next class period, without warning, students were told to put their lemons back in the bag. Then each was asked to find his lemon. Surprisingly,

most did so without difficulty. They had fondled and scrutinized and lived with that lemon until it became intimately theirs.

The sermon illustrator must do with life what the student did with that lemon. The preacher must perpetually turn life over, examine it, study it, always asking the Holy Spirit to show him how it illustrates Christianity. This must be at least partially what is meant by "Pray without ceasing." We all live life. The preacher must truly observe it. A thousand illustrations pass before each of us every year, but we need to train ourselves to see them.

The minister who complains about having no illustrations is admitting either that his religion isn't relevant to life or that he doesn't yet possess what every successful preacher must develop—the "homiletic bias." The homiletic bias means more than training yourself to see the world; it means always seeing it in spiritual colors. What does it teach about Jesus? How does it illustrate His kingdom?

That's the way Jesus did it. He observed everything. He looked for illustrations everywhere. Notice how broad and all-inclusive was His observation of life as indicated by His illustrations on homelife (leavening bread, borrowing from a neighbor, patching clothes, lighting lamps, sweeping floors, the boy who didn't want to live at home, children playing games in the street); business (lending money, collecting money owed, paying taxes); trades (managing orchards and vineyards, building houses, fishermen sorting their catch, bosses and servants); nature (wheat, tares, harvesting, flowers, birds); politics (kings going to war); and social events (feasts, weddings). To illustrate as Jesus illustrated means two things: staying close to life, and staying close to God so that you see Him in every facet of life.

Keeping these principles in mind, let's look now at five sources of illustrations. *First*, the Bible. Biblical illustrations have both advantages and disadvantages. An advantage is that they carry

weight because they are taken from Scripture. A disadvantage is that most people have heard them so often they tend to be bored unless the illustrations are creatively done.

A few suggestions may help. Do enough research so you can make the narrative live. Use a "suppose" and translate the ancient experience into a modern setting. Utilize less familiar illustrations such as the life of Demas or Onesimus. Many Old Testament incidents are not well known in most congregations today. Unless you have a genius for narrative, use Bible illustrations more as proof, not as a substitute for examples from contemporary life.

Second, the congregation is a source. If the basic lessons for your next sermon have been gleaned from Scripture early in the week and are churning in your head seeking ways to be taught, then as you visit and minister to your congregation throughout the week, illustrations are almost certain to come. It is a simple fact that the sermons that come from the congregation tend to fit the congregation. They also tend to create a family atmosphere. Then your parishioners will respond, "This sermon is about *us*" or "One of *us* has a problem similar to that."

Caution! If the illustration is laudatory, people won't object to your telling something about them in public. But be extremely careful about intimate details. Someone is listening to how well you keep confidences before daring to trust you with the hurt in his or her own heart. I am shocked by the number of people who have come to me saying they don't share their problems with their pastor for fear he'll share them with the whole congregation as a sermon illustration.

Third, your personal life is a source. The preacher should not talk too much about himself in the pulpit, yet a careful observer should probably be able to compose a biography of his pastor from a year's sermons. Your own illustration is better even if it's not so good. That is, what you know for certain about Christianity is only what has worked for you.

(Continued on page 30)

The status of religion in the U.S.S.R.

Recently the editor and his wife made a nineteen-day official visit to the U.S.S.R. Here they report on their visits with various church leaders and highlight the Soviet Constitution's perspective on religion.

Our visit to the Soviet Union, June 28-July 16 of this year, impressed us with the fact that the goals of Marxism have numerous elements in common with Christianity. An English-language brochure that we found in the intourist section of one of the four Moscow airports informs readers of Soviet projects and forecasts for the twenty-first century. Many of the introductory concepts quoted from three Soviet academicians—Vladimir Obruchev, Nikolai Semyonov, and Igor Petryanov—parallel God's promises of a new earth (Revelation 21, 22). These gentlemen foresee the eradication of "contagious diseases," the conquering of "aging and fatigue," and the restoration to life of "victims of accidental death." They look forward to placing "all forces of nature at the service of man," hoping "to control weather, to steer the winds and the clouds, to regulate rains and sunshine, snow and heat." Obruchev concluded his remarks by stating, "It all sounds incredibly difficult, but it will have to be done." In a country comprising one sixth of the world's land area and spanning eleven time zones, this certainly presents an incredibly difficult challenge! Nevertheless we admire their vision.

The major difference, and it is a gargantuan one, between these forecasts and the scriptural predictions centers on the length of life they offer. These scientists aim "to prolong human life to 150-200 years," while the Bible's final forecasts declare that the time is coming when "there shall be no more death" (Rev. 21:4).

We noted parallels also in the area of morality, standards, and values. Repeatedly we scanned the three TV channels in the hotels in which we stayed. The total spectrum of programming in the Soviet Union resembles America's public broadcasting system. Viewers are fed a consistent diet of concerts, travelogues, news, documentaries, science, and sports. Both the children's programs and

drama seemed quite mild and innocuous compared with American productions.

The "tameness" of so-called "rock-and-roll music" also reflects the state's attempt to protect and augment "the moral and aesthetic education of the Soviet people, for raising their cultural level" (Article 27 of the U.S.S.R. Constitution). Pornographic literature and films may be available from underground sources to those who pay a price, but they certainly are not readily accessible to the U.S.S.R.'s 270 million citizens.

The U.S.S.R.'s standards relative to literature, music, art, and TV and radio programming resemble what most Christian churches in the West attempt to teach their adherents to select by choice. We who accept Paul's counsel to fill our minds with those things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovable, gracious, excellent, and admirable (Phil. 4:8, N.E.B.) in order to develop and maintain Christian character cannot help believing that the population of our nation would be better off without having their minds assaulted by plots reeking with lurid sex, violence, profanity, and horror.

Baptists, Adventists, Orthodox, and Catholics

Our visit to the U.S.S.R. had two purposes: to contact the ministers and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to evaluate as far as possible the religious freedom and activities of all Christian churches.

The two largest religious groups in the U.S.S.R. are the Russian Orthodox Church and Islam. Other sizable groups are the Buddhists, the Armenian Church, the Union of Evangelical Christian-Baptists (formed in 1944 through the merger of Baptists and Evangelicals and expanded by the addition in 1945 of some of the Pentecostal communities and later by Mennonite communities), the Roman Catholic

Church, Lutherans, Jews, Seventh-day Adventists, and a few other religious associations.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has approximately 32,000 members and 520 churches in the Soviet Union. About 10 percent of these churches are owned jointly by the Baptists and Adventists. (The churches in Moscow and Lvov exemplify both the advantages of this cooperation and the cordial relations that result from it. Recently the government granted Adventists permission to print 10,000 Bibles, some of which were shared with the Baptists.) According to some reports, there are approximately 500,000 Baptists in the U.S.S.R. Undoubtedly they form the largest Protestant group. Roman Bilas, a Pentecostal minister in Lvov, reported to us that there are about 100,000 Pentecostals in the U.S.S.R.

In the same city we spent some time with Kiernicki Ladislaw, the leading priest of the local Roman Catholic cathedral (he has only one priest to assist him). While we, unfortunately, were not able to attend his Sunday services, we were told that from 6,000 to 7,000 individuals regularly worship there, many of them young people. The Roman Catholics have two seminaries in the country for the training of their clergy.

Our longest visit was with Archbishop Nikodim, of the Russian Orthodox Church. He serves as archbishop of one of the 14 dioceses in the Ukraine (the U.S.S.R. has a total of 74). The Orthodox Church operates three seminaries and two academies for the training of their clergy. The Ukraine has 1,006 churches and cathedrals and a very large membership. Some estimate the membership of the Russian Orthodox Church in the U.S.S.R. to be around 50 million. Archbishop Nikodim served close to 20 years in Inter-America, Jerusalem, and Argentina before returning to his homeland at his own request. His final words to us were greetings to all Americans. He

asked for our prayers and love and expressed a desire for greater understanding between the people of our nations. We were touched by his sharing with us his special birthday cake on his "happy angels' day," which coincided with our visit.

Background of government attitude

In the 1984 printing of the English edition of their Constitution as adopted at the Seventh (Special) Session of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., Ninth Convocation, on October 7, 1977, we find the foundations for the government's attitude toward religion. Chapters 6 and 7, of Section II, which is titled "The State and the Individual," deal with citizenship—"the basic rights, freedoms, and duties of citizens." This portion of the Constitution gives insights to the careful reader as to the extent of religious freedom in the Soviet Union. One must understand that atheism is one of the major premises on which this Communistic state is built. Knowing this, we find that it is not difficult to comprehend the government's consistent attitudes toward all religions.

A statement from an official publication written by Vladimir Kuroyedov, head of the government's Council for Religious Affairs, describes earlier inequities and casts a new light on the current system's approach to religious liberty: "In Russia before 1917, the Russian Orthodox Church was the officially established faith. The code of laws of the Russian Empire included special statutes and regulations establishing the structure and restricting the activities of religious associations. Thus, government interference in the internal affairs of the church was official. Inequality of the different religions in the eyes of the law was also officially acknowledged. The Orthodox Church was proclaimed the pre-eminent and dominant state church with the Tsar himself as its 'sovereign guardian and protector.' Anyone who denied the verity of Orthodoxy was, in the light of imperial law, against the Tsar and his sovereignty. . . . The Russian Orthodox Church enjoyed more extensive privileges than other religions. It had the exclusive right to propagate its doctrine and alone had the right of autonomy, being governed by the Holy Governing Synod headed by the chief procurator appointed by the Tsar. The

religious affairs of other faiths were under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior, all other churches being only 'tolerated' in Russia.

"Only persons belonging to the Orthodox Church could hold government posts. . . . Followers of certain religions were persecuted for their beliefs. People who refused to convert to the Orthodox Church or who wished to abandon it were often dismissed from work."—*Church and Religion in the U.S.S.R.*, pp. 9, 10.

A brief study of history will confirm the above statements. We are acquainted with a number of individuals who came to the U.S.A. from Russia prior to the revolution because of religious persecution. Regardless of how we may evaluate the Soviet Constitution relative to religious freedom, we must admit that all religions, Christian and non-Christian, are on an equal footing before the law. Elderly members of our own communion with whom we spoke gave unanimous testimony that for Seventh-day Adventists, the religious freedom climate today far surpasses that which existed prior to the revolution.

U.S.S.R. Constitution and religious rights

Article 34 of the Constitution states that "citizens of the U.S.S.R. are equal before the law, without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile, or other status." Carefully consider the words "attitude to religion." The final sentence in this section is significant: "The equal rights of citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social, and cultural life."

Chapter 7 outlines the rights, freedoms, and duties of the citizen. These include the right to work, to rest and leisure, to have health protection, old age maintenance, housing, education, enjoyment of cultural benefits, et cetera. These rights are most laudable. Of major concern to us as Christian leaders is Article 52. We shall quote it in its entirety and we urge our readers to study it carefully.

"Citizens of the U.S.S.R. are guaranteed freedom of conscience, that is, the right to profess or not to profess any religion, and to conduct religious worship or atheistic propaganda. Incitement of hostility or hatred on religious grounds

is prohibited.

"In the U.S.S.R., the church is separated from the state, and the school from the church."

As far as we were able to discern in our visits to our churches in Moscow, Tula, Frunze in central Asia, Sochi on the Black Sea, and Lvov and Kiev in the Ukraine, our members could freely gather on the church property to worship and fellowship. The last statement of Article 52 dealing with the separation of the school from the church places all education in the hands of state-controlled schools. Adventists operate one of the largest parochial school systems in the world, but Article 52 forbids any type of religiously controlled educational systems within the U.S.S.R.

Although Article 52 declares that "the church is separated from the state," the Soviet Union has a National Council for Religious Affairs. This council functions as a special governmental body under the Council of Ministers. According to Article 130, this Council of Ministers is "responsible and accountable to the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R."—the highest authority of the nation. (The Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. is the legislative branch, while the Counsel of Ministers is the executive branch of the government.)

Fourteen of the fifteen republics have a representative of religious affairs who is responsible to the National Council for Religious Affairs in Moscow. The Ukraine, which has possibly the greatest concentration of Christians, has its own separate Council for Religious Affairs. That council wields the same power and authority as the National Council but on a regional level, and is, of course, accountable to the National Council for Religious Affairs.

Early development of Adventist work

The Seventh-day Adventist Church arose in Russia as a lay missionary movement. Many ethnically German citizens of Russia immigrated to America in the 1870s. Some of those who became Seventh-day Adventists after immigrating sent books, tracts, and magazines to their relatives and acquaintances back in the "homeland."

Interest in a study of the Scriptures was evident not only among the foreign settlers but also among the native Russians. Because disaffection from the Orthodox Church was treated as a state

crime and punished by banishment, early efforts at evangelism were confined to the German settlers—who were exempt from the leaden hand of the state church and had better opportunity to study the Word without fear of their security. The first converts were made about 1882 in several places in southern Russia. Early in 1886 the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists sent L. R. Conradi from the United States to Basel, Switzerland. Later that year he met Gerhard Perk at Odessa, and the two of them contacted people in the Crimea and elsewhere in Russia who had shown an interest in the gospel. On one occasion after they had conducted a baptism, both Perk and Conradi were arrested and jailed for forty days. We owe much to these early pioneers, who sacrificed everything in order to establish churches in various parts of the country.

During the first decade of Soviet government in Russia, Protestants enjoyed a degree of religious freedom unknown in czarist times, and the Adventist membership more than doubled. Our church had its internal problems, however, and prior to the second world war we practically lost our organization. In 1944 and 1945 our churches opened again. But with no trained ministers there was a very limited understanding of our doctrine—especially that related to righteousness by faith alone in Jesus Christ.

Gradually various leaders arose in different parts of the Soviet Union, and tragically they differed among themselves as to both theology and methodology. In the latter area, they disagreed as to whether they should attempt to get government recognition of our church or to work in an underground fashion.

In 1958 Mikhail Kulakov was elected to lead our churches in the central Asia region where he had served for a number of years. Then, in view of its divided condition, the Seventh-day Adventist Church was officially disbanded by the Soviet government.

In 1970 Mikhail Kulakov visited relatives in the United States and attended the Annual Council of our church in Washington, D.C. After returning to his homeland he went to various Adventist leaders in the U.S.S.R., urging the uniting of our churches and cooperation with the government authorities. His efforts had the support of the officers of our General Conference in Washington, who made it

clear that our church should work openly and not underground as long as we were able to maintain our church services and to worship God according to the dictates of conscience. His endeavors sparked the reorganization of our church in Russia, and the ensuing years have seen its gradual reunification.

In 1976 Pastor Alf Lohne visited the Soviet Union, the first official General Conference representative to do so in recent times. His return the next year saw the beginning of an official organization. All the pastors were invited to meet to elect leaders for our Russian work. As the disagreement over methodology still existed, a number did not attend.

In 1981 Pastor N. C. Wilson, our General Conference president, visited the Soviet Union and delivered a momentous speech to our members in Moscow. He stated that the world church body was taking a stand on the side of those who were working in harmony with government laws and seeking registration from the government in order to worship openly. Since that time there has been a gradual improvement in our work in Russia. We are looking forward to greater things as

the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, accompanied us on this tour. In most places both of us preached in services beginning at 8:00 P.M. Sometimes the meetings lasted until 10:30 P.M. or later. We wondered whether people would come back the next night, but the churches were always packed.

When we arrived in Kiev the aisles were jammed with standing people. Some of them took turns in standing and sitting, and for three hours these precious souls like sponges drank up every word of the Word. In this particular church the ventilation left something to be desired, and the temperature rose to well over 100 degrees, but this in no way dimmed the enthusiasm of the worshipers.

The music, instrumental and vocal, choirs and soloists, was outstanding. And we found, as is true all over the world, that the right tone of leadership attracts young as well as older worshipers.

In our thirty years of traveling the surface of our globe and visiting nearly every nation and country on earth, we honestly can say we have never had such

Elderly members of our own communion gave unanimous testimony that for Adventists, the religious freedom climate today far surpasses that which existed prior to the revolution.

more and more churches are recognized by the government.

We hope soon to see the day when we will be able to establish a division-level organization for the U.S.S.R. (A division is the largest geographical unit of organization in our church. Currently we have ten divisions.) When we met with the chief international communication officer of the Soviet government's Council of Religious Affairs, he substantiated this hope by assuring us that he saw no problem at all as far as his government was concerned in the setting up of a division for our church in that nation.

Greatest emotional experience

In our visit to the Soviet Union we found a deep interest in worship and the preaching of the Word. Lengthy services did not concern these dear people in the least. Pastor Walt Blehm, president of

an emotional experience as this one. At several airports delegations of young people dressed in the national costumes of their particular area met us with beautiful roses and gladioli. In Lvov, our first stop in the Ukraine, we were offered the traditional beautifully decorated round loaf of bread with a small dish of salt in its center as a symbol of the wealth and love of their area being extended to us. The warmth and tenderness exhibited to us by our fellow believers bordered on the overwhelming. All of us shed many a tear.

We solicit the prayers of our readers in behalf of all Christian organizations in the Soviet territory. As we look ahead to the twenty-first century we believe that progress will be made not only in the fields of science, economics, and sociology but also in the area of Christian church growth.—J.R.S. and M.C.S.

Shepherdess International—What is it?

The minister's wife has been one of the most neglected, yet most valuable resources of the church. To meet her unique needs, a new organization has been set up on an international scale.

The Bible has a surprising lack of information about the life and character of the wives of ministers. But in the New Testament we do find six distinct references to Priscilla, or Prisca, gracious wife of Aquila.

The first time Holy Scripture mentions Priscilla by name we find her in Corinth, having just come from Italy. Then she and her husband went to Ephesus. Soon they returned to Rome, and again were directed to Ephesus. We imagine her with good cheer always accompanying her husband in their exhausting itineraries.

In an age when the educated woman was a rarity, Priscilla proved to be a noble exception. Upon visiting the synagogue in Ephesus she heard the scholarly speech of Apollos, "an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures." Perceiving that he lacked a better understanding of the true work of Christ, she and her husband invited him to their home, where they conversed intelligently, and as a result of their teaching, Apollos became one of the ablest advocates of the Christian faith (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 270).

The loyalty of this extraordinary lady deserves special mention. In a moment of violence and persecution when the church's enemies conspired against Paul and threatened his life, Aquila and Priscilla fearlessly jeopardized their own lives in order to save Paul from the criminal plottings of adversaries.

The last glimpse we have of Priscilla appears in Paul's Epistle written while he was incarcerated in a dark and filthy prison in Rome. "Salute Prisca [Priscilla] and Aquila," Paul enjoins (2 Tim. 4:19). Almost ten years had passed, but during that time, in spite of the vacillating faith of many, we find Priscilla and her companion enduring in the rugged battles of evangelism.

The church today has thousands of faithful Priscillas, serving the Lord with undivided dedication. The role they are

playing is of such importance that steps have been taken by the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference Ministerial and Stewardship Association to provide a more effective support system to foster and strengthen their activities as women, wives, mothers, and leaders. As part of a one-year pilot program, a new organization was formed, called Shepherdess International, that aims to assist our modern Priscillas in their activities, performances, and achievements for the Lord.

To introduce you to this organization, Enoch Oliveira, a vice president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, interviews Marie Spangler and Ellen Bresee, who are coordinating the Shepherdess International pilot program.

Oliveira: *Why did you select this particular name?*

Marie: "Shepherdess" is very fitting for the name of the wife of the one who is the "shepherd of the flock." For many years MINISTRY has had a section with this name devoted to ministers' wives. Through North America and some other parts of the world field, organizations with the same name have come into existence. Although other names, such as By His Side, have been used, a recent poll of the world field gives Shepherdess an overwhelming majority vote. Since the services of this pilot program include all divisions of the world field, it is only natural and fitting to call it Shepherdess International. We welcome suggestions if there is a better name that will meet the minds of the majority.

Oliveira: *What are your goals and objectives?*

Marie: Our purpose is to help

strengthen the pastoral home and to bring back into focus the importance of team ministry. We have several main concerns that need addressing at this time, such as the following: 1. Training through continuing education courses for the pastor's wife as well as courses for her and her husband to study together. 2. Resource materials directed at the establishment and maintenance of good relationships within the pastoral marriage. 3. The development of materials dealing with the role of the pastor's wife. 4. Materials for the encouraging of team ministry where husband and wife can cooperate together in saving souls. 5. The fostering of Shepherdess organizations on the local level that will provide support for the wives of ministers in their fields. It is our plan to give suggestions and materials to these local groups for their use. 6. And above all, our most important objective is to encourage wives to take time for personal growth.

Oliveira: *Why do you feel that it is important to have an organization just for ministers' wives?*

Marie: In our interaction with ministers' wives at various seminars, retreats, and camp meetings, we have come to realize that they have real needs that for the most part have been overlooked. In a recent study of Seventh-day Adventist pastors' wives it was discovered that they have a sense of isolation from, and an absence of, meaningful human relationships (see MINISTRY, June, 1981). Owing to the mobility of the pastoral family, the wife seldom has close relationships with neighbors, and she feels that she must treat all members of their church family impartially, showing no favoritism. Her husband is the focus of attention by the church organization, but she feels at times alone and inadequate.

Ellen: A second study conducted by Andrews University (see MINISTRY, Feb-

ruary, 1982) pointed out that less than 8 percent of pastors' wives have done graduate work, and another 31 percent have completed four years of college—which means that the majority do not have a college degree. In contrast, the Master of Divinity degree is the standard preparation for pastors, and a large number are earning their Doctor of Ministry degree. This creates a gulf between the educational level of the husband and wife. Eighty-nine percent of pastors' wives affirm the need for continuing education. With the move by our denominational leaders for providing continuing education opportunities for pastors, I feel that these same opportunities should be afforded the wife if she so desires. This will help raise the level of their self-confidence and effectiveness.

Oliveira: *If I'm hearing you correctly, it seems there are major problems confronting ministers' wives. Is this true?*

Ellen: Even though many women are basically happy with their role of pastor's wife, there are some serious problems to be faced. For the most part pastors' wives are dedicated Christians. The study Marie mentioned reflected a sense of mission and commitment on their part. They rated their own relationship to Jesus Christ as very close and claimed a devotional life that is personally significant. They are active—the average wife spends four hours a week accompanying her husband in pastoral visitation.

Marie: One of the open-ended questions sent out by Andrews University's Institute of Church Ministry was "The problem of conflict which has been most real for me as a pastor's wife is . . ." Answers were classified into forty-one categories. The highest ranking one was "Expectations of me." The pastor's wife wears many faces, and many demands are made on her, some of which she feels totally incapable of handling. Wives of pastors view the husbands' priorities as (1) church work, (2) time with God, (3) health, (4) wife, and (5) children. Nearly two thirds of the wives reported that their husbands spend fewer than two hours per day with the family, including mealtimes, and even when he is home he is likely to be either studying or involved in other job-related tasks. One third of the wives reported their husbands rarely

or never take a day off. One wife wrote that she did not mind helping her husband with church work but felt a balance was needed between professional duties and time spent with the family.

As she thinks of her church family the pastor's wife is overwhelmed with the members' expectations of her. She is to be "all things to all people" and is expected to do whatever is asked of her. However, there are those who have begun to ignore this traditional expectation. Our wives want to be accepted as individuals—not merely as an extension of their husbands and their work. How reassuring it would be if wives could have the freedom to choose the areas where they could be themselves and exercise their particular gifts!

Ellen: A possible solution is to elevate the vocation of a pastor's wife to a true professional standing.

Oliveira: *This, no doubt, would call for a new emphasis on the preservice and in-service education of the wife for her vital role of ministry.*

Marie: This is what ministers' wives are indicating they need and want. The amount of formal education never should be used as a standard of measurement for predicting success or failure as a pastor's wife. Each of us is an individual, and none should be forced to take training to fill this role or be made to feel guilty if she chooses not to. Nevertheless, the opportunity should be provided.

Another possible solution is to create a team ministry option for pastoral couples. Some of our fields are now giving programs that encourage and train for team ministry. From the inception of Shepherdess International it has been our dream to see the pastoral couple involved in a team ministry.

Oliveira: *Do you have any plans for encouraging wives who have not finished their college education?*

Ellen: Hopefully in the near future Home Study International will provide courses for ministers' wives, helping them not only in their work as ministers' wives but also in their pursuit of an academic degree.

Oliveira: *What do you think local conferences could do to encourage team ministry?*

Marie: One of our objectives is to help administrators and departmental men on all levels of church organization become aware of the importance of the public and personal role of ministers' and workers' wives. It was noted from the research done that some wives felt left out of conference programming and plans. One wrote, "Pastors' wives need to be considered by the conference as part of the team." Another noted there were meetings, publications, and seminars to help her husband in his work, but often she was called upon to perform similar tasks without the benefit of any training. We feel workers' meetings can be geared not only for the men but for a team approach. A tremendous untapped reservoir of talent is available in the wives of our ministers.

Oliveira: *Do you feel it is possible to develop a team ministry in these changing times?*

Marie: Today some prominent voices call for ministers' wives to find their own identity and forget involvement in their husbands' work. Christian education of children today requires more than the husband's income. Many wives feel the urgency to follow the profession for which they have been educated. Because of these and other reasons, many wives are involved in other lines of activity and have little time for the church their husbands serve. Even though changes are taking place in society today, some things remain constant with the ministerial couple that make a team ministry possible. Number one is commitment to the Lord and a clear vision of priorities. I believe that Noah and his wife were a real team ministry in witnessing to a coming flood. What if Noah had been married to Mrs. Lot?

Another element that should never change is the supportive role wives play. Peter's wife didn't want to leave her seashore home perhaps, but she was willing to make the accommodation for his work as an evangelist. When wives team up with their husbands in the ministry, they find a tremendous blessing awaiting them, and several have expressed this to me. I think if we promote team ministry and give proper support to this concept, many wives will participate in this with their husbands.

Oliveira: *I am getting the impression that the help given by ministers' wives should be directed only to their husbands.*

Marie: This needs clarification. Team ministry does not mean that the wife has to participate in *all* the church activities that her husband gets involved in. There are opportunities for team ministry that we can do anytime, anywhere, but they are so simple that we don't think of them as team ministry. For instance, I can help evaluate my husband's sermons. Speaking with members in a warm, friendly way is important. Visiting and telephoning sick or discouraged members is another way. Participating in various evangelistic outreaches, and teaching in a children's division, are other ways. If a wife works full-time outside the home at a job unrelated to the church program, she can be somewhat involved but only in a limited way. One wife who recently resigned from a secular position and joined her husband in a team ministry confessed that she really was not in tune with what was going on in the church.

Many ministers of necessity do part of their work in the evenings. If the wife feels compelled to follow her chosen profession, evening time may be an excellent opportunity for team ministry; however, this is difficult. A team relationship is many-faceted and varied. No wife can do everything, but every wife can do something. As Ellen White has stated: "A responsibility rests upon the minister's wife which she should not and cannot lightly throw off. God will require the talent lent her, with usury. She should work earnestly, faithfully, and unitedly with her husband to save souls."—*Gospel Workers*, p. 202.

Oliveira: *Do you feel it is necessary to have Shepherdess organizations in every conference and/or mission?*

Ellen: Yes, these organizations are very important. Women all over the world need to feel a bond of friendship and support as they interact with one another at meetings in their respective fields, sharing ideas and materials through newsletters.

Oliveira: *How do you plan to help the local Shepherdess organizations?*

Ellen: Even though local organizations are doing a good work, we feel there are

additional benefits to be derived from having a central place to coordinate all efforts, share ideas, stimulate thinking, and develop materials to enhance the personal and public life of our workers' wives.

Oliveira: *In what ways can this pilot program serve the world field?*

Marie: As I held seminars for ladies in my recent trip with my husband to the Far Eastern Division, I was thrilled to learn that a number of active chapters of Shepherdess International have been organized for quite some time. I have since learned of chapters in the South American Division, as well. We feel that the needs, although shaped by different cultures, are basically the same for all workers' wives anywhere in the world. We wish to encourage the organization of new chapters and the selection of officers, including editors for newsletters that can be sent out periodically. We hope to receive these local newsletters and from them glean the very best

material and provide an exchange for all the chapters in the world.

Oliveira: *Are the services you offer just for ministers' wives?*

Ellen: Our main target is the minister's wife; however, many workers' wives whose husbands are administrators, literature evangelists, teachers, doctors, et cetera, are members of the local chapters, and our services reach out to them, as well.

Oliveira: *Why is this help for ministers' wives more urgently needed now than in the past?*

Ellen: We are living in a world of more educated and sophisticated people than ever before in the history of our church. Parishioners want not only spiritual leadership but educated spiritual leadership. As mentioned before, many wives feel inadequate. In today's world many
(Continued on page 30)

Prayers from the parsonage

There is a scar on my chin inflicted years ago by a country doctor. Every time that I see it I am amazed I let him hurt me without protest. He was the kind of person who dominated any conversation, freely proclaimed his opinions, and overwhelmed all but the most stalwart people. Although never described as bashful, I always felt very shy in his presence.

One day I had to have stitches removed from my finger. After the procedure, the doctor looked at my swollen chin and announced, "I'll lance that pimple." Within seconds his scalpel had cut the tender skin, and I was trying to stop the bleeding. Indeed, the infection had been stopped, and the skin eventually healed, but I had a permanent indentation. Could he not have tried antibiotics, hot and cold compresses, or even a puncture rather than a slash?

I think about this incident each time

the church must discipline a member. I wonder how many poor "sinners" have been ruthlessly cut away. How many well-meaning individuals have lanced the poison in another, their motives unquestioned but their methods too dangerous.

Lord, I realize that discipline is necessary. I pray for wisdom to know when error should be tolerated with hope that the wandering one will return, and when it should be confronted.

Give me a loving heart that cares more about the person, less about defending a position or maintaining a reputation.

Show me how to be honest but not blunt, tactful but not timid.

Lead me to the positive "Neither do I condemn thee" rather than the judgmental "This woman has sinned." May I point others to a better way—"Go, and sin no more"—rather than leave them wiping at their wounds.

Keep my motives selfless, my manner kind, my touch gentle. Let no one I "help" be scarred for life.

Cherry B. Habenicht

The money of the Jewish Temple

Coins played an important part in Temple worship from Nehemiah's time on. The faces and inscriptions found on Temple money reveal some interesting details of Jewish history and theology.

Money and the organized church—they've been going together for centuries. Occasionally some may feel they are becoming too intimate! Nevertheless, it has always cost money to keep any church's doors open. Today we may use dollars, marks, or yen. Three thousand years ago, when Solomon's beautiful Temple was just opening its doors, there wasn't a dollar in sight! What kind of money did the Jews use to keep the Temple operating?

Solomon to the Captivity: the first Temple period

God inaugurated for ancient Israel its first stewardship program for a church ministry. To provide the considerable and consistent funds needed for a tabernacle or a temple, from Moses onward, each 20-year-old or older male, rich or poor, had to pay half a shekel as "an offering unto the Lord" at the time of the census (Ex. 30:11-16). The shekel then was a weight—not a coin—equaling from ten to twelve grams, or less than half an ounce. It could be cast as either gold or silver in the form of bars, bracelets, and necklaces. In fact, *kikkar*, Hebrew for "talent" in the Old Testament, literally means "ringlike." People would wear their money!

When Solomon built his spectacular Temple around 960 B.C., this "Temple tax" became especially important for financing such a large undertaking. The man who wanted to pay his half-shekel tax would come with his silver rings or bars to the Temple courtyard. There the priest or Levite would weigh out half a shekel on a balance scale against a standardized and inscribed stone weight

(such weights have been found, although not in Palestine). The worshiper may have received "change" and even a receipt in the form of a piece of pottery or a clay tablet with the appropriate "Paid in full" duly recorded thereon.

Zerubbabel to the first revolt: the second Temple period

The Solomonic (or first) Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. After the Persians had conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., Darius I Hystaspes (522-486 B.C.) introduced a revolutionary system of economic exchange throughout the Persian Empire, Palestine included. This new system of coinage was copied from the recently conquered Lydians of Asia Minor, who had invented it. The standardized discs, or coins, were mass-produced from silver and gold, each disc having Darius' image stamped on it. This marked the birth of coinage.

When the Jewish governor Zerubbabel began to take offerings for rebuilding the Temple, Persian gold darics (named after Darius) and silver sigloi (Persian coins adopted from the Lydians) were received, according to Ezra 2:69. (See Figure 1 for a picture of a double daric.) These are the only coins mentioned by name in the Old Testament.

In the following century (fifth century B.C.), Nehemiah made an agreement with the people to reinstate the old Temple tax at the new rate of one-third shekel per year, instead of the former one-half shekel. This offering was "for the service for the house of our God" (Neh. 10:32). The likely reason the rate was lowered was that one-third shekel exactly equaled a Persian siglos, the smallest coin available at that time (there were no bronze coins yet).

Archeologists are not sure whether Persian coins were used in the actual Temple services once the Temple had been rebuilt. Possibly the image of a

living thing (the Persian king) would have been considered a violation of the second commandment. In fact, it is possible that no coins were used from Zerubbabel's time through the second century B.C., because archeology suggests a long time before scales and weights were completely displaced. The terms *talent* and *mina*, referring to particular weights, not coins, were still used in Christ's time.

At any rate, by the end of the second century B.C., coins were probably fully accepted in Temple services. From this time to the first century A.D., Jews were not able to make their own silver coins, for political reasons—their Syrian or Roman rulers wouldn't permit them. So they chose the silver coins of the nearby city of Tyre, which enjoyed a special political status. Specifically, the coins chosen were Tyrian didrachms (two-drachma pieces) and tetradrachms (four-drachma pieces), which approximated by weight the Jewish half-shekels and shekels, respectively. First minted in 126 B.C., they appeared in large enough numbers and with good enough quality to end the real need of scales and weights (if they were still used). These coins were dated according to the year of the Tyrian dynasty, 126 B.C. being "year one."

It is ironic that Tyrian coins bore the image of Melkart, the Phoenician equivalent of Baal, Israel's old enemy. This surely stirred a resentful thought or two from the pious Jew worshiping in the Temple. The reverse carried an Egyptian-styled eagle and the Greek inscription "Tyre the holy and inviolable." The date was to the eagle's left (Figures 2 and 3).

That Jews so soon after the religious revival of the Maccabees chose coins tainted with paganism for sacred service is based on two factors: (1) the liberal Hellenistic Sadducees had gained administrative control of the Temple, and (2) no one wanted to use Roman

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coins, such as the tetradrachms of Alexandria or Antioch. Apparently no one wanted "Caesar's image" around the Temple. Even Baal was better than Caesar!

Because Jews came from all over the civilized world to worship in Jerusalem, they obviously didn't carry Tyrian coins. This problem was solved by setting up tables in the Temple courtyard with clerks called "moneychangers" (literally, "tablers") who would exchange Temple currency for foreign moneys. By the time of Christ this "convenience" apparently grew into a racket for bilking, with large profits being reaped at the expense of visiting worshipers. It was this practice, along with the selling of sacrificial animals for profit, that enraged Jesus to the point of driving everybody out of the holy grounds, charging them with making the Temple "'a den of robbers'" (Matt. 21:13, R.S.V.).*

By the time of Christ the annual Temple tax was reinstated at the old rate of one-half shekel per year. The collectors of this tax tricked Peter into

committing Jesus to its payment, even though prophets were considered exempt by extension of Ezra 7:24. Jesus, not wishing to cause unnecessary trouble, provided for His and Peter's tax by the miracle of the coin in the fish's mouth (Matt. 17:24-27). That coin would have been a Tyrian shekel, or tetradrachm. For betraying Christ, Judas received thirty Tyrian shekels from the chief priests, who probably got the money from Temple coffers. No doubt they considered it in the best interests of their ministry.

Unlike the silver coins, the bronze coins that were used in the Temple from

the first century B.C. onward *were* Jewish. The widow mentioned in Luke 21:1-4 put into the offering box two tiny Maccabean coins, *lepta* (literally, "tiny things"), translated as "mites" in the King James Version (Figure 4). Though much smaller than an American penny, the widow's offering was a generous one in the eyes of God.

The first Jewish revolt

In A.D. 66 the Jews revolted against the yoke of Rome. During this revolt they melted down all the Tyrian shekels in the Temple coffers and made new all-Jewish coins. These were the *first*

The shekel was a weight—not a coin—equaling less than half an ounce. *Kikkar*, the Hebrew word for "talent" in the Old Testament, literally means "ringlike." People would wear their money!



Figure 1. Persian double daric (fourth century B.C.); courtesy British Museum.



Figure 2. Tyrian shekel (31 B.C.), 25 mm.—showing both obverse and reverse.



Figure 3. Tyrian half shekel (11 B.C.), 14 mm., and shekel (31 B.C.), 25 mm.



Jewish coins ever made in silver (Figure 5).

These coins carried Hebrew inscriptions dated according to the year of the revolt, "year one" being A.D. 66 and so on. Whereas previously Temple shekels read "Tyre the holy" in Greek, now they read "Jerusalem the holy," an intentional improvement. These were the last coins to be used in Temple services, for Roman soldiers burned the Temple down in A.D. 70.

The second Jewish revolt

But oddly enough, the story of Temple coins doesn't end here. It was in A.D. 132, some sixty years after the destruction of the Temple, that the Jews first minted shekels picturing the Temple. This happened when Jews again revolted against Rome, this time under the leadership of Simon bar Kochba.

During this second revolt Roman tetradrachms from Antioch were overstruck with a new Jewish design of the facade of the long-destroyed Temple, complete with a prominent fence in the

foreground to keep out the Gentiles, or Romans (Figure 6). Inside the Temple can be seen the ark of the covenant, depicted lengthwise. Some of the original Roman design was often left purposely, of course, to show through—a painful insult to imperial Rome.

Historically, this remarkable coin perplexed coin experts, because it had the inscription "Simon" ("Sh'mon") on it. At first most experts thought that it referred to Simon Maccabaeus, who, according to 1 Maccabees 15:6, was given authority by the Syrian ruler of Judea to mint his own coins. That was in 140 B.C., long before the Temple was

destroyed by the Romans. Archeology, however, has come to the rescue and proved conclusively, with the discovery of more coins, that they belonged to Simon bar Kochba's time, not that of Simon the Maccabean. It would be most difficult to strike second century B.C. coins over second century A.D. coins!

Archeology has provided evidence that even after the Temple was gone, "money of the Temple" was still being used.

* From the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyrighted 1946, 1952 © 1971, 1973.

Liberal Hellenistic Sadducees had control of the Temple, and no one wanted to use Roman coins. Apparently no one wanted "Caesar's image" around the Temple. Even Baal was better than Caesar!

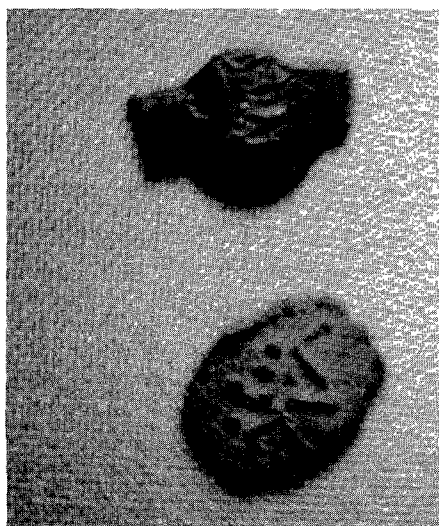


Figure 4. Maccabean bronze lepta ("mites") of Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 B.C.), 13 mm.



Figure 5. First revolt Jewish shekel ("year one," A.D. 66), 23 mm.

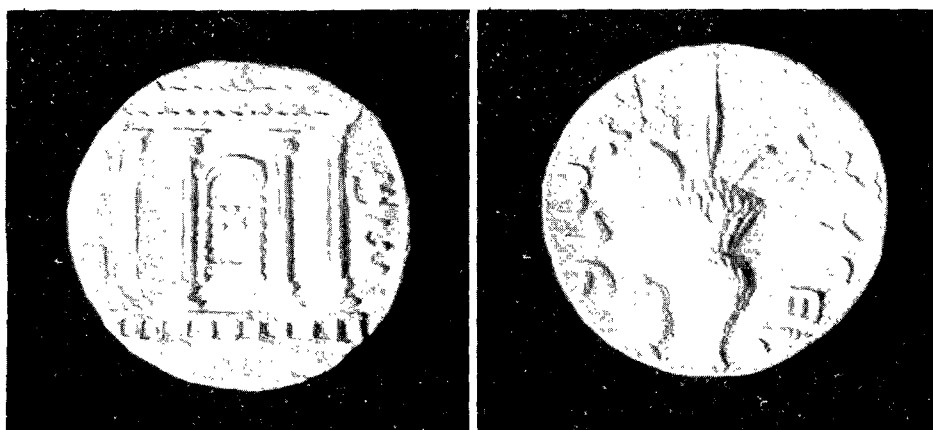


Figure 6. Second revolt Jewish shekel (A.D. 134/135), 26 mm., note profile of Roman emperor Vespasian still visible on reverse from previous coin; courtesy the Siegfried Horn Archeological Museum, where this rare coin is on display.

Illustrations in preaching

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However, don't be the hero of every personal illustration. It encourages people to hear of your humanity now and then and to know that you're aware of it. On the other hand, don't glorify your wayward youth or brag about mistakes of the past. Some preachers make it sound as though the only fun they've had was serving the devil.

When using illustrations from your own home, always talk lovingly about your wife. Ladies in the congregation are unbelievably sensitive in picking up little nuances about what kind of husband you make. Also, don't embarrass your children by either building them up or running them down. They already have enough of a goody-goody image surrounding them without Dad's sermons magnifying the problem.

Fourth, your file is a good source. Always write down an illustration as soon as you hear or think of one. Forget that you can remember, and remember that you are bound to forget. Have you heard about the preacher who had such a beautiful thought that he immediately dropped to his knees to thank the Lord for it, but when he got up he forgot what it was? Write it down. And have a well-organized topical file so it will be readily available when you need it.

Fifth, books of sermon illustrations are sources. These are left to last, because they should probably be used only as a last resort. Their greatest value may actually be in reminding you of some incident closer to your life or that of your congregation. Use them as "pump primers."

There's an old saying, a bit judgmental, yet true, that tells why we must use illustration: "Little minds dwell on people, mediocre minds dwell on things, large minds dwell on ideas." If only "large minds dwell on ideas," then how are we going to get *ideas* into little and mediocre minds? By associating them with people and things!

Reverently I ask, Did you ever stop to think that the use of illustration is like the Incarnation? "In Christ's parable teaching the same principle is seen as in His own mission to the world. . . . Men could learn of the unknown through the

known; heavenly things were revealed through the earthly; God was made manifest in the likeness of men. So it was in Christ's teaching: the unknown was illustrated by the known; divine truths by earthly things with which the people were most familiar."⁶

Let us, like Jesus, continuously link the divine with the human through illustration.

* From J. B. Phillips: *The New Testament in Modern English*, Revised Edition. © J. B. Phillips 1958, 1960, 1972. Used by permission of Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.

¹ Halford Luccock, *Communicating the Gospel* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 136.

² Charles Reynolds Brown, *The Art of Preaching* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1922), p. 124.

³ Henry Ward Beecher, *Yale Lectures on Preaching* (New York: J. B. Ford & Co., 1872), p. 158.

⁴ *Counsels to Parents and Teachers* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press, 1943), p. 261.

⁵ Beecher, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁶ Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1941), p. 17.

Shepherdess International

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find themselves being approached for family and nonfamily counseling. If they have not been exposed to at least a few good counseling concepts or do not know to whom to refer these troubled people, they could contribute more problems than answers.

For years we have been holding training workshops for pastors, teachers, church elders, Sabbath school teachers, deacons, et cetera, while we have expected the pastor's wife to stay in the background but at the same time be an expert in religious matters and perform several religious functions. One expressed her frustration by commenting, "Our husbands come into the ministry well trained, but we are given no training, and yet we are expected to function on the same level with them. Could we please have some help?"

Oliveira: *What were you doing before you became involved in this pilot project for ministers' wives?*

Marie: My husband and I entered the ministry forty-one years ago, right after we graduated from college, where I majored in English and secretarial sci-

ence. We enjoyed a team ministry in the pastorate and in evangelism until he was called to the Far Eastern Division as Ministerial Association secretary. During the eight years we were there I taught in the Far Eastern Academy and did secretarial work in the division office. When my husband was called to our world headquarters I was asked to teach elementary school. After helping with the development of our church's elementary school science textbooks and being employed as an executive secretary in the General Conference, I attended the University of Maryland, where I obtained a Master's degree in early childhood education. While teaching I also worked with the Shepherdess section of MINISTRY. Last year I left my teaching position in order to devote more time to helping the wives of workers.

Ellen: I am married to Floyd Bresee, associate secretary in the Ministerial/Stewardship Association, and for 35 years we have been actively involved in team ministry both in pastoring and in evangelism. I met Floyd at college, where I received elementary-teaching certification. Later I took work in family counseling at the University of Nebraska. Most recently I worked as family life coordinator with my husband for the Southwestern Union and served on our college church staff in Keene, Texas, as marriage counselor and promoter of family life activities. Since coming with my husband to our world headquarters I have been traveling with him, speaking to ministers' wives, and counseling them, as well.

Oliveira: *What have you been able to accomplish in these beginning stages of the pilot program?*

Marie: The committee has voted for work to begin on several continuing education courses, some of which have already begun. Plans are in progress for meetings to be held for delegates' wives at the 1984 Annual Council, as well as women's meetings at the forthcoming 1985 General Conference session in the New Orleans Superdome. We are also working on seminars for women during the World Conference for Ministers at the pre-session. We are currently working on a model constitution, as well as getting resource materials together for newsletters.



Microphone manners

Getting the gospel from mouth to microphone in such a way that the public-address system operator can get a blessing instead of a workout during the sermon can be a challenge. Bob Forman, of the Forman Company, Monmouth, Illinois, gives these tips based on years of service in the PA booth:

The working range of a good microphone is only about four inches. So if your normal distance from the microphone is twelve inches, try to stay in the range of ten to fourteen inches.

The angle of acceptance for even the best pulpit microphones is approximately 120 degrees. Don't expect to be able to stand off to the side and have your voice picked up clearly.

Being consistent is the key. Professional singers always hold the microphone at the same distance and angle, and preachers can learn much from their example.

Handling anger

Harding Hospital, Worthington, Ohio, will highlight the topic "Understanding and Dealing With Anger in Ministry" at the twenty-ninth annual Institute on Mental Health, from September 30 through October 3.

Registration is open to all interested persons, with priority given to Seventh-day Adventist clergy. Address: 445 East Granville Road, Worthington, Ohio 43085. Phone: (614) 885-5381.



A ministry for Jews

The New Israelite describes itself as "a journal of Jewish-Christian ethics and thought." The new editor, Clifford R. Goldstein, describes its mission as "to help others come close to our God, to help them know Him better and avail themselves of the wonderful opportunities He offers."

The magazine, which was published for many years as simply *The Israelite*, has taken on a new format with a four-color cover and with expanded use of art inside. Published quarterly, it is available for \$3.95 per year from: THE NEW ISRAELITE, 55 W. Oak Ridge Dr., Hagerstown, Maryland 21740.

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New Brunswick
Dec. 5, Moncton

Nova Scotia
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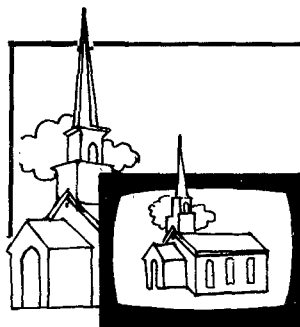
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Competing with TV?

A three-and-one-half-year study of religious-television viewers, called the Annenberg Report on Religion and Television, was released in April. Among items of interest to pastors are these:

Ninety-seven percent of viewers of religious programs

say they do not let their viewing interfere with participation in a local church.

Compared with non-viewers, viewers are more likely to be older, less educated, Southern, rural, non-white, and female.

About one third of viewers contribute to programs, and the median annual contribution is \$30.

Viewers consider the local church more effective in providing closeness to God, an experience of worship, sense of companionship or fellowship, and "a feeling that you are a better or stronger person."

Recommended reading

Tensions in Contemporary Theology

Eds. Stanley N. Gundry and Alan F. Johnson with foreword by Roger Nicole, Baker Book House, paperback edition, 1983, 478 pages, \$12.95. Reviewed by Gerhard F. Hasel, Dean, Theological Seminary, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

This volume with ten chapters on the contemporary theological scene is written by nine competent, balanced, evangelical/neoevangelical scholars. B. Ramm writes on the developments in theology from Schleiermacher to K. Barth and R. Bultmann. B. C. Grounds describes the developments leading to the radical theologians of the 1960s and 1970s. The matter of religious language is discussed by S. Obitts. The topic of the secular theology of the death-of-God theologians and such thinkers as D. Bonhoeffer, J.A.T. Robinson, and Harvey G. Cox is handled by H. B. Kuhn. The entire range of what is known as the "theology of hope" with special attention to J. Moltmann, W. Pannenberg, J. B. Metz, and R. Alvez and its philosopher Ernst Bloch is treated by S. P. Scaer. The new theological school known as "process theology," with such leading figures as A. N. Whitehead, Charles Hartshorne, John B. Cobb, N. Pike, Schubert Ogden, and N. Pittenger, is presented by N. L. Geisler. David F. Wells introduces the changes and developments in recent Roman Catholic theology. An overview of Latin and black theologies of liberation is put forth by Harvie M. Conn, who addresses in a second essay the liberation theologies' emerging consensus. "The Conservative Option" is the title of the last chapter, by Harold O. J. Brown, who surveys some basic issues from an evangelical perspective.

This is a very rich volume that brings together in this revised paperback edition (initially released in 1976) a wealth of information that keeps the reader informed on all major issues in contemporary theology. Each

contributor provides a critique or reaction followed by often extensive footnotes and a helpful list of selected readings. The literature cited does not usually go beyond the early 1970s, but the entire volume promises to be most fruitful reading and keeps the layperson, pastor, and seminarian abreast of contemporary issues in theology. What is unfortunately missing is an essay on the contemporary issues in evangelical theology. We would urge this to be added in a future edition and we would urge that the evangelical reactions to the nonevangelical theologies be enlarged.

Recently Published

Midnight and Morning. Clyde E. Hewitt, Venture Books, 1983, 326 pages, \$8.95. A fascinating look at the history of the Millerite movement, especially as it relates to the emergence of the Advent Christian Church.

The Christian Confronts His Culture. Richard A. Fowler and H. Wayne House, Moody Press, 1983, 228 pages, \$7.95. Seeks to guide Christians to a Biblical perspective that will help them relate effectively to abortion, feminism, and homosexuality.

Wholeness and Holiness: Readings in the Psychology/Theology of Mental Health. H. Newton Malony, editor, Baker Book House, 1983, 344 pages, \$12.95. Twenty-three articles grouped under five subheadings: (1) the human predicament, (2) the experience of living, (3) the meaning of health, (4) the process of healing, (5) methods of therapy.

When a Friend Is Dying. Edward F. Dobihal, Jr., and Charles William Stewart, Abingdon, 1984, 224 pages, \$10.95. A look at the church's ministry to the dying and their families, especially as it relates to lay involvement in ministering. Includes a selected bibliography and list of film resources.

Walking Through Your Bible With H.M.S. Richards. Kenneth W. Wilson, editor, Pacific Press, 1983, 382 pages, \$7.95. A combination "Bible Year" and morning devotional, the book divides the Bible into 365 consecutive reading assignments with a memory gem assigned from the day's reading and commentary selected from the sermons and writings of H.M.S. Richards. A special feature is definitions of difficult or obscure words from the day's passage.

The Youth Leader's Sourcebook. Gary Dausey, editor, Zondervan, 1983, 320 pages, \$14.95. Draws on the experience and expertise of twenty-five successful youth leaders to share ideas and a lot of practical how-to information. The chapters come under subheadings "Building the Foundation for a Successful Youth Ministry," "Providing Activities With a Purpose," and "Sharpening the Tools of Youth Work." Extensive lists of resource materials are also included.

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