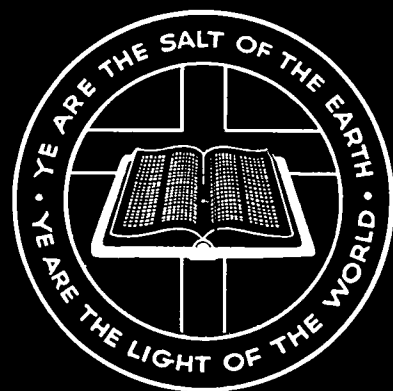


1972 Christian  
Life Commission  
Seminar  
PROCEEDINGS

# SALT 72



\$2.50

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## Foreword

The 1972 annual seminar sponsored by the Christian Life Commission was unique. Previous seminars during the past decade have been designed to acquaint Southern Baptist leaders with the main social issues of the day and with the personalities directly involved in those issues. The primary goal has been basically educational while the secondary goal has been involving Southern Baptists in the world, which world "God so loved that he gave his only begotten son . . ." (John 3:16).

This year a special effort was made to help Southern Baptists apply Christian principles and Christian insights through the local church so that God's people who truly are the salt of the earth would actually find better ways to be salt in 1972. This is why the seminar came to be called SALT 72. In enlisting program personalities, the first qualification was evidence that the speaker was actually doing in his own church and in his own community the things that he would be talking about to the registrants.

It should be emphasized that the printing of these messages in this form is a reportorial service provided by the Christian Life Commission. Several of the spoken messages were transcribed from tapes and have been reproduced here without any effort to edit them so as to put them into the literary form that would be required if this were a more formal publication.

The response to SALT 72 from the more than 300 busy people who attended the meeting was strongly positive. We fervently hope and earnestly pray that these printed addresses will serve further to convey the calling, the need, and the way for God's people to be God's salt in God's world today.

FOY VALENTINE, Executive Secretary  
The Christian Life Commission of the  
Southern Baptist Convention



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of the 1972  
Christian Life Commission Seminar  
SALT 72  
held in the Sheraton-Jefferson Hotel,  
St. Louis, Missouri,  
March 13-15, 1972

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**THE CELEBRATION OF SALT**  
**(The Opening Service)**

The Ministry of Silence

"Be Still and know I am God"

The Call to Worship:

A Media Introit

A LITANY OF PRAYER:

To Be Prayed With Eyes Wide Open

*Leader:* Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

*Voice I:*  
(*Disenchanted*)

"—Overwhelming pressures are being visited upon cities already in distress. —Many of our central cities are in need of major surgery to overcome decay. —The old, the poor, the discriminated against are increasingly concentrated in central-city ghettos while others move to the suburbs leaving the central city to battle against immense odds." (Former President Johnson)

*Voice II:*  
(*Status Quo*)

"There's just so much anybody can do."

*Voice III:*  
(*Prophetic*)

"The new breed's man is involved, active. He is at police court on Monday morning not at pastors' conference. He is at a housing commission hearing, or on a protest platform, or in some jail for a Christian reason, not at the denominational offices. —If a denominational servant, he is of some avant-garde division on the fringes. —Often and increasingly a pastor, the new breed's man, is always in the world." (Carlyle Marney)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done.

*Voice I:* "Segregation and poverty converge on the young to destroy opportunities and enforce failure. Crime, drug addiction, dependency on welfare, and bitterness and resentment against society in general and white society in particular are the results." (The Kerner Commission)

*Voice II:* "Those welfare folks are just trifling, that's all."

*Voice III:* "This deepening racial division is not inevitable. The movement apart can be reversed. Choice is still possible. Our principal task is to define the choice and to press ahead for a national resolution." (The Kerner Commission)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* Give us this day our daily bread.

*Voice I:* "During this litany, 33 people will have died of starvation somewhere in the world."

*Voice II:* "Isn't that terrible?"

*Voice III:* "Feed my sheep." John 21:16b

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us.

*Voice I:* "I found that the typical American city was split into a variety of different worlds that were often wholly out of touch with the ablest and most influential people in the city. —These fragmented worlds were ignorant of one another—ignorance bred fear, and the fear bred hostility. These cities were not communities. They were encampments of strangers." (John Gardner)

*Voice II:* "We don't have any problems around our town. Everybody pretty much knows his place."

*Voice III:* "Today, urban experts are rather like the original builders of Babel: confused, each clinging to a discipline. Churchmen can at least bring these builders together and

sit silently while they discover and work through their animosities.” (Stephen C. Rose)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*Voice I:* “I say to you Christian gentlemen, it was you who put into our (Japanese) constitution the words, ‘and we abolish war forever as an instrument for settling disagreements with other nations.’ Someday we may have to remind you of this. And on that day, we shall have to say to you—‘lead us not into temptation!’” (A Japanese official, a Buddhist, Tokyo, 1948)

*Voice II:* “The Bible says there will always be wars and rumors of wars.”

*Voice III:* “Today, when I picture Christ in this warring world I can see Him in one place only, not arrayed in the panoply of battle on either side, but on His judgment seat, sitting in condemnation on all of us—aggressor, defender, neutral—who by our joint guilt have involved ourselves in a way of life that denies everything He stood for.” (Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1941)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* For Thine is the kingdom.

*Voice I:* “Violence is as American as cherry pie.” (H. Rap Brown)

*Voice II:* “We’ve got to have civil order at any cost.”

*Voice III:* “Violence today is white-collar violence, the systematically organized bureaucratic and technological destruction of man.” (Thomas Merton)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* And the power and the glory.

*Voice I:* “A Chicago example shows that in 1965, blacks held 7 out of 50 aldermanic positions, but they only held 2 out of the 156 top appointive policy-making posts in the city administration.”

*Voice II:* “Religion and politics don’t mix.”

*Voice III:* “Some urban churches have recognized that the basic decisions about the life of people in the city are made in the pyramids of power, especially those of business and politics. —By laying claim to politics as a sphere of Christian ministry—they demonstrate that the work of God can be done through politics as through all the other spheres of city life.” (George D. Younger)

*All:* FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOR EVER AND EVER.

*Leader:* For ever and ever.

*Voice I:* “Today, in the major cities, the black unemployment rate is two and a half to four times that of the white.”

*Voice II:* “No nation in history has made the great strides the United States has made.”

*Voice III:* “The Christian establishment can misuse its power by a fearful retreat into inaction. —We need not fear power. We rejoice that Christ has given us a theory of using it. We hope we can be responsive to His wish.” (Alfred McBride)

*All:* FOR THINE  
                  IS THE KINGDOM,  
                  IS THE KINGDOM,  
                          AND THE POWER,  
                          AND THE POWER,  
                                  AND THE GLORY,  
                                  AND THE GLORY,  
  FOR EVER  
  AND EVER.  
  AMEN.

*The Covenant of the Salt*

*Leader:* Our Lord calls us into the world to show us who we are.  
*Celebrants:* WE ARE SONS OF GOD.  
*Leader:* Our Lord calls us into the world to show us what we are to do in the world.  
*Celebrants:* WE ARE TO DENY SELF, BEAR THE CROSS AND FOLLOW AFTER.  
*Leader:* Our Lord calls us into the world to show us how we can make a redemptive difference.  
*Celebrants:* WE ARE SALT FOR THE WORLD.  
*Leader:* Our Lord calls us into the world offering a covenant, giving us the courage to be the salt that adds compassionate flavor to an insipid world.  
*All:* THEN, PASS THE SALT PLEASE!  
(As the salt is passed, take a pinch and hold it until we can partake together with the cue of the leader.)  
*Leader:* Do this in remembrance of the gift of grace and the cost of discipleship.  
*All:* AND FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD.

*The Benediction*

*Leader:* Go now, into the precincts of this conference with the taste of salt in your mouths. Go, with your guard down and your entire mind-soul-set exposed. Go, willing to be wounded by a prophetic word in order to be healed. Go, willing to be humbled in order to be renewed with the challenge of servanthood. Go, with the promise of God's grace that you are worth your salt. Go, and may God be with you, my brothers and sisters.  
*Celebrants:* AND WITH YOU, OUR BROTHER.  
*All:* AMEN!

## Dunamis Power

Gordon Cosby

I've been deeply moved by the worship we had together and by the very perceptive address of John Claypool and the discussion following. I have the feeling that almost all we need to do is to spend the rest of these days to simply internalize and to learn what it means to incarnate what John has shared with us. I am immensely grateful for what John has said.

I would like to suggest that we try to introduce some dimensions of retreat in the seminar. I think it would be tremendously valuable if we could work with a portion of Scripture during the time that we are here. What I would like to do for just a few minutes is to open up a theme and call your attention to certain passages of Scripture and suggest that we actually try to live with these Scriptures, notably the book of Acts, and learn what it means to meditate at profounder levels on the Scriptures. I would also suggest, though it is very difficult in the sort of setting in which we find ourselves, the importance of trying to build into our time together some concept of personal prolonged silence. I think God has a way of being able to speak to us in ways which really last if we will take time to be in silence, to search for silence. It is very difficult, for when we are together we are so eager to be with those that we love and whom we have not seen for a long period of time that we almost never build in this dimension with any seriousness. So, I would suggest at least this possibility for some of us, feeling that this can be tremendously helpful.

Now, as we move into the theme of the *Covenant of Salt* more deeply, I would say that I am very much concerned about the church getting into the world, the church being concerned with social action. But I feel that often times the fastest way to get there is what seems like the longest way around. I feel that one of the temptations is to get our people involved in the world; then, when they are there some of them have not the slightest idea concerning why they are there. In fact, the description of a false prophet is that he goes without being sent and speaks without having been spoken to. So, I want to talk about a theme and point to some Scriptures having to do with it, for I think it is tremendously basic.

The theme is power. The word for that in the Greek is *dunamis*, along with other words. The nineteenth verse of the first chapter of Ephesians goes this way: "I pray that your inward eyes may be illumined so that you may know." Then there are three dimensions to the prayer: (1) That you may know what is the hope to which he calls you. And I think the recovery of the meaning of Christian hope is tremendously significant. There is a deep cynicism about the future and what is really possible. This is one of the problems, this cynicism, that nothing new is really going to take place. The Scriptures are not really going to change. I think we need to work with the meaning of this hope. Moltmann suggests that we ought not to be thinking in terms of revolution or religion or revival or renewal. All of these words with "re" as the prefix are thinking in terms of "going back." Moltmann thinks in terms of "provolution," or "proligion." It's a moving into that which has never been before. It is moving into the

future and sensing that the future is rushing in towards us. The future is God's new mode of being with us in Christ and a way to recapture "Christ in us, the hope of glory." The writer of Ephesians is saying that he hopes our inward eyes may be illumined so that we may know the hope to which he calls us. (2) And what is the wealth and glory of the share he offers you among his people in their heritage. (3) That we shall know the vast resources of this power open to us who trust in Him. These resources are measured by His strength and the might which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead.

The general, more comprehensive word encasing the content of the other three words which are used in this passage having to do with power is the word *dunamis*. This word suggests the ability to accomplish what one has taken in hand. The cognate verb is *dynamai*, which is "I am able." The suggestion here is that anything which we have taken on—if we have taken it on under obedience because it has been given to us by the Holy Spirit—we shall have the power to accomplish it. The English derivatives of this are "dynamite" and "dynamic." There are other words—*energeia*, the thought of activity here is primary. Paul in Colossians 1:29 says that he struggles with all of the energy of Christ, with the power of Christ. *Energeia* was the word that was used. There's another word for power called *kratos* and here is the thought of power that subdues, or rules—of victory, of dominion, of power over others. Another word, *ischys*, means inherent strength or might which is always the property of the possessor whether he is exercising it in a moment or not. But the whole thing is suggesting a power which, I think, is different from human power and from psychological power, as we normally understand it. In Luke 24:47-49, after teaching the disciples about their commission, Jesus says, "Now, begin with Jerusalem. It is you who are to be the witness of it all. I am sending upon you my Father's promised gifts. So stay here in the city until you are armed with the power from above" (with the *dunamis* from above).

In Acts 1:8 we have the theme of the whole book of Acts where the disciples are asking whether this is the time that God is to restore the kingdom of Israel. He says, "It is not for you to know about dates or times which the Father has set within His own control. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will bear witness for me in Jerusalem and all over Judaea and Samaria, and away to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:7 NEB).

In the sixth chapter of Ephesians, the writer says, "Finally then, find your strength in the Lord, and in his mighty power. Put on all the armour which God provides, so that you may be able to stand firm against the devices of the devil. For our fight is not against human foes, but against cosmic powers, against the authorities and potentates of this dark world, against the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens. Therefore, take up God's armour, then you will be able to stand your grounds when things are at their worst, to complete every task and still to stand" (Eph. 6:10-13 NEB). It seems to me the orders are very clear—when the Holy Spirit shall come upon you, you will receive power. And you will receive power in order to bear witness—the Holy Spirit and power and witness. This is what the book of Acts is all about. It is this strange

power. It is this power which was so surprising and caused the world to wonder when it was set loose in the initial stages of the Christian movement.

## I

There are two characteristics that keep coming back again and again from the book of Acts. The one thing that takes place again and again is that this power, this *dunamis*, enabled the early Christians to be aware of the nudgings of the Holy Spirit, of just where they were to be at just that *kairos* moment. Then they were in on an event which immensely furthered the progress of the kingdom of God. We have illustration after illustration of this.

In Acts 8:5 you read that Philip was in Samaria but the angel of the Lord said to him, "Start out and go south" (Acts 8:26). That's all he heard in the initial stages of his guidance. Start out and go south to the road that leads to Gaza. So, with these instructions he left Samaria. He started out and got down to the road and when he was there he sited a chariot in which there was a high ranking official, the treasurer of Ethiopia. When he got to the chariot, he discovered that the Ethiopian official was reading the Scriptures. Out of all the Scriptures that he might have been reading, he was reading from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah: "He was led as a sheep to be slaughtered and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him and with his stripes we are healed" (v. 5). Now, if you are looking for a prepared moment, if you are really interested in evangelism, and if you want to do something at the centers of political power, you can't get a situation which is more prepared than a person who is working with the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. So Philip said to him, "Do you understand what you are reading?" The Ethiopian official answered, "No, how can I unless there's someone to give me a clue?" And Philip said, "Well, that's why I'm here." The official said, "Well, will you climb up in the chariot and travel with me?" Philip did it and beginning with that passage he opened up to him the gospel. He talked to him of Jesus. And then we read that the Ethiopian official went on his way well pleased after having a baptismal service (see Acts 8:19-39).

In the ninth chapter of Acts there was a disciple in Damascus whose name was Ananias. In a vision, Ananias heard the voice of the Lord say, "Ananias!" And he said, "Here I am." The Lord said, "Go at once to the street called Straight to the house of Judas and ask for a man from Tarsus whose name is Saul." Ananias resisted the voice of the Lord a little bit and said, "But he's here with instructions to imprison those of us who are of the Way. Are you sure that you've got your instructions clear?" The Lord said, "Yes, Ananias, I've got it straight. You go!" So Ananias went. In that moment of being there, he got in on an event which was prepared. There was a healing of Saul and there was the preparation of Saul for the tremendous mission that he was called to—to the Gentiles.

We get the same sort of thing happening in the tenth chapter of Acts. You can hardly miss a chapter anywhere. But here is Cornelius and he was having

prayers one afternoon at three o'clock and an angel appeared to him. He is frightened because of the angel, but then instructions come: "Send to Joppa for a man whose name is Simon, who is also called Peter and he's lodging with another Simon, a tanner whose house is by the sea." So Cornelius sends a military orderly and two of his servants. While they are approaching, Peter is on the housetop waiting for lunch to be prepared. He's famished. He falls into a trance and has a vision. The vision is of the great sheet being let down with all sorts of things in it and a voice comes to him saying, "Peter, rise, kill, and eat." And Peter said, "No, Lord. I have never eaten anything profane or unclean." And the voice comes back, "It is not for you to call profane what God counts clean." This happened three times and just as he's pondering, wondering what the vision means, there's a knocking on the door and the Spirit said to Peter, "Don't worry. These people are downstairs because I have sent them. And whatever they ask you to do, you do!" So, Peter is all prepared. He's gotten the message. They tell Peter that they have come from Cornelius and that Cornelius wants Peter to come to his home. Peter resisted just a little bit because he has an intimation of what is going to take place—this Gentile. He knows there's going to be trouble and he's going to have to be accountable to the home church. He's fearful about what's going to take place. But he goes with them the next day and all of the relatives and close friends are gathered together. Peter says, "What do you want?" And they say, "We're here for anything you have to tell us." He begins to talk to them about Jesus and while he's talking, the Holy Spirit descends on them just as he had descended on the Jews earlier. This great beginning of the gospel reaching out now to the Gentiles comes because of this sort of guidance. This strange sort of power is at work.

In the sixteenth chapter of Acts, Paul tries to go into Bithynia but is hindered by the Spirit of Jesus. The Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to go into Bithynia; he finally reached the coast of Troas and during the night he had a vision and the vision was of the man, a Macedonian, who stood there appealing to him, saying, "Come across to Macedonia and help us." And as a result of this sort of guidance—this strange sort of leading—he goes across into Macedonia and the gospel begins to spread to the west. This is the way they operate. It is a matter of somehow being able to sense the nudgings of the Holy Spirit so that one is in that moment that he needs to be in—that *kairos* moment and the event furthers the progress of the kingdom of God immensely. Now, I say one second of this sort of power is worth months of the usual sort of labor that we engage in. This is the *dunamis*.

## II

The second characteristic of this power in the book of Acts has to do with what the Scriptures call boldness when one is in that moment. Because sometimes you can be in that moment and miss it! You will recall after the man had been healed at the Beautiful Gate that Peter and John were called before the authorities and were instructed never again to speak in the Name of Jesus. It was amazing how frightened they were of the Name. You will recall their reply. "You will have to decide whether it is right for us to obey God or

you, but as for us we cannot help but speak the things which we have seen and heard.” And the court was felled helpless because the people were so excited about this miracle that all they knew to do was just to caution them again never to speak of the Name. So Peter and John rushed back as quickly as they could to the community. Always going back to be with the brethren, the sisters, the people in the community, and they told them what had happened. Then you will recall that the church gathered spontaneously in prayer and the prayer was, “Mark their threats, these rulers and these sovereigns who have risen up against the Messiah . . . mark their threats but grant thy servants the capacity to speak thy word with boldness” (Acts 4:29).

Now, I don't think they would have prayed that prayer unless there was temptation not to speak the word with boldness. The order is that if one is in that moment which is the moment prepared for us by the Holy Spirit, by this *dunamis*, then one has the capacity to proclaim the word with boldness. Then this is the preparation for God's stretching out His hand to perform signs and wonders. Now, that is the order. I submit that this is different from the way we normally go about it, which is a matter of getting together and deciding where the need is and then bringing in to being a committee to respond to the need. But to me this is the order. It is a very difficult way to proceed but I think that it is much easier than the way we go about it. Jesus said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Somehow we need to get hold of this power so that we really operate in this *dunamis* power.

I have the feeling that this power is as available now as it was in the early days of the Christian church. This is really what we need to recover if the principalities, the powers, the dominions, the systems and the structures are going to fall before us. John Claypool made it very clear that he had a new appreciation of the complexity of institutions and the problems of change. I have a new appreciation of the complexities of the institutions and the structures of the world and how demonic they are and how you can struggle with them year after year and nothing fundamental really happens. The only thing that really does it is this power which is very difficult for us to really trust.

I think somehow we have to have for us the prayer answered that was answered for Elisha. You remember when Elisha and his young apprentice were surrounded at Dothan and the enemy was all around, they went out early in the morning and the young man saw the chariots and all of the forces of the enemy and he turned to Elisha and said, “What in the world are we going to do?” Elisha's prayer was, “Lord, open the young man's eyes that he may see, that he may be aware that they who are with us are more than they who are with them.” This is the spiritual way which is absolutely crucial—that we shall be on an inward journey so we shall be able to hear these nudgings and sense these nudgings and be in that moment, be just where we need to be. And we will have the boldness; we will be given the boldness to name the Name, to make the proclamation, to speak the word which we are given to speak and to be aware of this infinite power, the vast resources of the power that is available to us, to those of us who trust in Him. I believe that

that power is at work. I believe that nothing ultimate will happen until we learn to trust Him. I think this is the long arduous journey, learning to really trust that power. Yet when it works and we begin to see it work in the community, it's the most fascinating thing in the world. There have been some weeks in the life of our congregation when I have felt that what has happened has been more like the book of Acts than the book of Acts. At times when this power is operating in a special way in the lives of certain of our people, you really have to call them up two or three times a day to get the latest news release as to what is taking place.

One example is fresh in my mind and we don't know fully how it will turn out, but we are moving out into new dimensions of missions in certain areas and need some facilities. We want to have a learning center for the people in the inner city. We want to have offices for people who are moving out into the work with the Spanish-speaking community, the large work with the elderly, and we want to have a place for four or five people who are committed to a sort of economic mission. They are going to get together and they're going to reduce their living as simply as they know how. They're going to make all of their resources available for mission in that area and they're looking for a place. So, this last week a man came into our Potter's House in response to a call that we made because we wanted to buy some nuts. We call him now “the nut man.” He got so excited about the spirit of the thing that he said to one of our people, “What can I do for you?” And this person said, “Well, you can buy a building that we have just looked at which will house these facilities.” And he told “the nut man” a little bit about what we had in mind. He said, “That's exactly what I want to do. I've been trying to find a way to get into a venture where I can lose some money. This is absolutely essential for me and I would love to do it through the real estate people. He left and he went to the real estate office and he signed a contract with them and, unless some contract preceded ours, he will give us that building which will cost him a total of \$75,000. This is not magic. It's truly not! But it's the sort of thing that's dramatic and easy to describe. It's a quality of life, it's a spirit, a power that we can really believe in. And nothing that we talk about as far as techniques and procedures and all the rest can make any sense unless we recover the real power which is available to us as the people of God.

Now, the tough thing which really keeps it from being mighty has to do with how we enter into the capacity for this *dunamis* to flow through us. I think the way that the *dunamis* begins to flow into us and through us is by total surrender to Christ, who is the one who said he would give the gift of the Holy Spirit. I want to read to you a description of how this came to one man, Rees Howells, who is a Welch miner. Now, it's written in an antiquated language and I'm using it intentionally because it is offensive. I have a feeling that what we do mostly these days is to psychologize almost everything we work with. I want to suggest there is a “Holy Other,” that there is One with whom we have to do, with whom we have to deal. [The following excerpt is from *Rees Howells, Intercessor* by Norman Grubb, 1952, pp. 37-43.]

The next morning Mr. Hopkins spoke about the

Holy Spirit. He made it plain that He is a Person, with all the faculties of a Person, exactly like the Saviour. He has intelligence, love and a will of His own; and as a Person, before He comes to live in a man, He must be given full possession of his body. "As he spoke," Rees said, "the Holy Ghost appeared to me and I knew Him to be the One who had spoken to me the day before and shown me that place of splendour and glory into which natural eyes can never look. It never dawned on me before that the Holy Ghost was a Person exactly like the Saviour, and that He must come and dwell in flesh and blood. In fact, the Church knows more about the Saviour, who was only on the earth thirty-three years, than about the Holy Ghost who has been here two thousand years. I had only thought of Him as an influence coming on meetings, and that was what most of us in the Revival thought. I had never seen that He must live in bodies, as the Saviour lived in His on earth."

The meeting with the Holy Ghost was just as real to Rees Howells as his meeting with the Saviour those years before. "I saw Him as a Person apart from flesh and blood, and He said to me, 'As the Saviour had a body, so I dwell in the cleansed temple of the believer. I am a Person. I am God, and I am come to ask you to give your body to Me that I may work through it. I need a body for My temple (I Cor. 6:19), but it must belong to Me without reserve, for two persons with different wills can never live in the same body. Will you give Me yours? (Rom. 12:1). But if I come in, I come as God, and you must go out (Col. 3:2,3). I shall not mix Myself with your self.'

"He made it very plain that He would never share my life. I saw the honour He gave me in offering to indwell me, but there were many things very dear to me, and I knew He wouldn't keep one of them. The change He would make was very clear. It meant every bit of my fallen nature was to go to the Cross, and He would bring in His own life and His own nature."

It was unconditional surrender. From the meeting Rees went out into a field, where he cried his heart out, because, as he said, "I had received a sentence of death, as really as a prisoner in the dock. I had lived in my body for twenty-six years, and could I easily give it up? Who could give his life up to another person in an hour? Why does a man struggle when death comes, if it is easy to die? I knew that the only place fit for the old nature was on the cross. Paul makes that very plain in Romans 6. But once this is done in reality, it is done for ever. I could not run into this. I intended to do it, but oh, the cost! I wept for days. I lost seven pounds in weight, just because I saw what He was offering me. How I wished I had never seen it! One thing He reminded me of was that He had only come to take what I had already promised the Saviour, not in part, but the whole. Since He died for me, I had died in Him, and I knew that the life was His and not mine. That had been clear in my mind for three years; so He had only come to take what was his own: and I saw that only the Holy Ghost in me could live like the Saviour. Everything He told me appealed to me; it was only

a question of the loss there would be in doing it. I didn't give my answer in a moment, and He didn't want me to."

It took five days to make the decision, days which were spent alone with God. "Like Isaiah, I saw the holiness of God," he said, "and seeing Him, I saw my own corrupt nature. It wasn't sins that I saw, but nature touched by the Fall. I was corrupt to the core. I knew I had to be cleansed; I saw there was as much difference between the Holy Ghost and myself as between light and darkness."

"Nothing is more real to me than the process I went through for that whole week," he continued. "The Holy Spirit went on dealing with me, exposing the root of my nature which was self, and you can only get out of a thing what is in its root. Sin was cancelled, and it wasn't sin He was dealing with; it was self—that thing which came from the Fall. He was not going to take any superficial surrender. He put His finger on each part of my self-life, and I had to decide in cold blood. He could never take a thing away until I gave my consent. Then the moment I gave it, some purging took place (Isaiah 6:5-7), and I could never touch that thing again. It was not *saying* I was purged and the thing still having a hold on me: no, it was a breaking, and the Holy Ghost taking control. Day by day the dealing went on. He was coming in as God, and I had lived as man, and 'what is permissible to an ordinary man,' He told me, 'will not be permissible to you.'"

This . . . experience was the crisis, which was followed by the process of sanctification during which the Holy Spirit, on the basis of his initial surrender, step by step replaced the self-nature with His own divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). First there was the love of money, that "root of evil" which had formerly taken Rees to America. The Lord told him that He would take out of his nature the ownership of money. "I had to consider what that meant," Rees said. "Money would be no more to me than it was to John the Baptist or to the Saviour. To an extent this was dealt with in my new birth, but now the Holy Ghost was getting at the root." The dealings on that lasted a whole day, and by the evening his "attitude towards money had entirely changed."

Then there was the fact that he would never have the right to a choice in making a home. "I saw I could never give my life to another person to live to that one alone. Could the Saviour have given His life and attention to one person, instead of to a lost world? Neither could the Holy Ghost. He took plenty of time to show me exactly what it would mean: the life He would live would be for the world. Was I willing for that?"

Other things that were dealt with included ambition. How could he have any if the Holy Ghost came in? The way the Lord showed it to him was like this: Supposing he had a mission in a town, and another mission opened in the same place; if there was jealousy between the two, and it was better for the town only to have one, then it would be his which would have to go. Or suppose that he and another man should apply for the same job, he would have to let the other have it. Or if he were

earning 12s. a day, and another man with a family was earning much less, the Spirit could tell him to give his job to that man. He saw the Holy Ghost in ways like that taking the place of the other, and suffering instead of him. Yes, he was willing for that.

On the fifth day his reputation was touched. As he was thinging of men of the Bible who were full of the Holy Ghost, and particularly John the Baptist, the Lord said to him, "Then I may live through you the kind of life I lived through him." A Nazarite clothed in camel's hair, living in a desert! Even in this, or what might be its modern equivalent, a real decision had to be made, "If I live My life in you, and that is the kind of life I choose, you can't stop Me," was the Lord's word on it. As the Saviour was despised, he must be willing to be the same.

By Friday night each point had been faced. He knew exactly what he was offered, the choice between temporal and eternal gain. The Spirit summed the issue up for Him: "On no account will I allow you to cherish a single thought of self, and the life I will live in you will be one hundred per cent for others. You will never be able to save yourself, any more than the Saviour could when He was on earth. Now, are you willing?" He was to give a final answer.

That night a friend said to him, "If some of us come over after the meeting, will you tell us of your position in Christ?" At once the Spirit challenged him: "How can you do that? You have seen the position of the overcomers, but you have not yet entered it. I have been dealing with you for five days; you must give Me your decision by six o'clock to-night, and remember, your will must go. On no account will I allow you to bring in a cross-current. Where I send you, you will go; what I say to you, you will do." It was the final battle on the will.

"I asked Him for more time," Rees continued, "but He said, 'You will not have a minute after six o'clock.' When I heard that it was exactly as if a wild beast was roused in me. 'You gave me a free will,' I answered, 'and now You force me to give it up.' 'I do not force you,' He replied, 'but for three years have you not been saying that you are not your own, and that you wanted to give your life back to the Saviour as completely as He gave His for you?' I climbed down in a second. The way I had said it was an insult to the Trinity. 'I am sorry,' I told Him, 'I didn't mean what I said.' 'You are not forced to give up your will,' He said again, 'but at six o'clock I will take your decision. After that you will never get another chance.' It was my last offer, my last chance! I saw that Throne (Rev. 3:21), and all my future for eternity going. I said, 'Please forgive me, I want to do it.'

"Once more the question came, 'Are you willing?' It was ten minutes to six. I wanted to do it, but I could not. Your mind is keen when you are tested, and in a flash it came to me, 'How can self be willing to give up self?' Five to six came. I was afraid of those last five minutes. I could count the ticks of the clock. Then the Spirit spoke again. 'If you can't be willing, would you like Me to help you? Are you willing to be made willing?' 'Take care,' the enemy whispered. 'When a stronger person than

yourself is on the other side to be willing to be made willing, is just the same as to be willing.' As I was thinking upon that point I looked at the clock. It was one minute to six. I bowed my head and said, 'Lord, I am willing.'

Within an hour the Third Person of the Godhead had come in. He gave him that word in Heb. 10:19, "Having therefore boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus," and "Immediately," said Rees, "I was transported into another realm, within that sacred veil, where the Father, the Saviour and the Holy Ghost live. There I heard God speaking to me, and I have lived there ever since. When the Holy Ghost enters, He comes in to 'abide for ever.'"

There are all sorts of psychological problems with the way this is put. But to work with those problems is to refuse to see the crucialness of this sort of surrender. I think the problem of being the community of salt starts with us. The only way that I know to get into this dimension of power, really the key to it, is for us to work with this sort of surrender to Him who releases that power, even Jesus Christ.

I would like for us to take this three or four minutes in silence and work with our own surrender.

## The Salt Community

Gordon Cosby

This afternoon I tried to say a word about a power which I believe to be a superhuman power which is really available, which is absolutely essential if we are to be effective at the point of the mission to which God calls us. Then we talked about the necessary cost of surrender, real surrender to Christ, which is the gateway to the release of the Holy Spirit in our lives, and about the release of this *dynamis* power.

I want gradually now to move into what I believe to be involved in the implementation and the structuring and how to free the Holy Spirit to operate some of the principles which are involved if we are to be the instruments of this power breaking out in new ways in the life of our congregations. This is much tougher than talking about just the spiritual realities that we were trying to describe this afternoon.

As persons who are called to be members of the salt community, I think our first compelling urgency is to be that which essentially we are. We have a very special thing to do. Our thing is to be a people, a peculiar people. In a very special way our thing is to do the thing of Another, to be responsive to the will of this One who is the Other. Our task is to be the people through whom the Word of God comes to our age. Being the church means being in mystical union with a highly diverse people chosen by Yahweh through His Son. We fuse into one another in Christ and together we seek the will of God for our lives. This *being* is the thing. This is more fundamental than the doing. It is a quality of life that we are talking about. It is a depth of loving that takes place amongst the members of this salt community. There

comes to be an excitement about the possibilities for the future, which I hinted at this afternoon. It is an openness to the new. It is a "life together," as Bonhoeffer describes it. To be the church, to be the salt community, to build up the church is to enhance and to enrich this quality of being. It is as a people to touch a quiet center, a corporate quiet center and an individual quiet center, and to live life out of that center. It is as a people to live out of wells of living water and out of this being will flow an unbelievable creativity. People begin to marvel at the mission, for this is what they will see. But it flows out of this inner being and what happens is that the parched deserts of the city's life begin to blossom like the rose. That which is seen, that which is visible, comes as a result of this inwardness which is very costly and which has to be tended.

I would like to describe four dimensions of the salt community, and to me they are absolutely essential. You will decide whether or not they are biblical, whether any one of these dimensions can be somehow eliminated or reduced. But I think we need to understand the nature of this community so that we are very clear; so that as people are deciding whether they want to come into the salt community, they can have very clear options because we are clear enough in our corporate identity to give the people the option of deciding whether they want to be a part of it or not.

### *Witnessing*

As we were saying this afternoon, it seems to me that the first thing we need to say about the salt community is that it is a witnessing people. It is a witnessing community to the life, to the death, to the resurrection, to the ascension, to the return of Jesus Christ. All of these ought to be seen, in one sense, as one event—the life, the death, the resurrection, and the return of Jesus Christ. We are to witness to that which God has done and is doing and will be doing in Christ. And when we witness authentically, God stretches out His hand to heal and to work signs and wonders. But our task is to witness.

We are living in a time when there is some reluctance to name the Name. There is a great debate going on as to whether it is wise to name the Name. I think I am aware of some of the reasons; I am told there should be a moratorium on God-talk. I think one of the reasons is that we are aware of our inauthenticity as Christians and aware of our inauthenticity as communities of faith; so, they tell us that we need to stop awhile and work incognito. It seems to me that it would be preferable rather than calling a moratorium on God-talk to work really seriously at the point of becoming a godly people, of becoming a Christ-like people, of becoming a holy people. To be holy means to be different and we are called to be holy, to be different, to close the gap between that which we profess to be and that which we actually are, thereby maintaining an integrity of consistency between what we are and what we say we are. If Christ is who He claims to be and has done for us what we say He has done, if He has given us an identity, if He has freed us from the bonds of our slavery, if He has evoked our gifts, if He has given to us the earnest of the Spirit, if we really await His

fuller coming, if it is Christ in us the hope of glory, then what is there which is comparable to talk about? It seems to me it is important to talk about it and that it is tremendously important to name the Name. In fact, I think that one is most alive when he is witnessing.

I had an interesting experience sometime ago when I was driving home one morning from our coffee house. It was one o'clock in the morning. I was amazed at how good I felt and I started thinking about it. I said, "You shouldn't feel this good at one o'clock in the morning. You've had a long day; it has been a long night." Yet there was a feeling of exhilaration, a feeling of great joy; so, I began to think back through the hours of the evening. I recalled that I had spent almost the entire evening talking about Jesus, witnessing. I think there is a sense of aliveness when we are describing that, when we are talking about that which is our life. I am aware, of course, of the possibility of ravaging another person. We must wait until Christ tells us to speak and usually this is a matter of waiting until a person is asking the reason for the hope that is within us. First Peter reminds us that we are to be ready to give to anyone who asks us the reason for the hope which is within us.

The first dimension of church as I understand it is that it is a witnessing people, and it is witnessing to the love of God in Christ our Lord; and it is witnessing to His redemption and to salvation from sin. This is the first dimension of the salt community, the witnessing people.

### *A laboratory of change*

The second dimension of the salt community, if it is to remain salt, is that for the people who are in it it must be a laboratory of change. We are commanded to grow up into the fullness of the stature of Christ. This, I believe involves discernible change, that there ought to be a discernible difference in a person who is in Christ over a period of time. For a person to be essentially the same person two years later, if he has been in Christ for that two years, is in a sense a denial of faith. So, to be in church is to be in a laboratory of change. As we heard very clearly from John Claypool this afternoon, change is painful and anything which is painful is resisted. Perhaps change is most always resisted. Church involves change. To be in church is to be changing. It is to grow up into the fullness of the stature of Jesus Christ.

There are three journeys which I think we must take when we are thinking about this laboratory of change. All of them involve inner change.

*The journey into self.*—The psalmist engages time and time again in a conversation with his own inner spirit. "My soul, why are you disquieted within me? Why are you cast down? Why are you depressed?" He is in this conversation, this dialogue with himself. I think it is crucial that a person learn to be in touch with the various dimensions of his own life. I think there is nothing much more tragic than a person trying to witness but witnessing out of a life which is rigid and a life which is not in touch with itself. When we are talking about a journey into self, we are talking about the very costly, painful task of bringing into consciousness that which formerly has remained unconscious. It is a matter of being in touch with our

many selves. In a sense the name of each of us is Legion. And how will I learn to identify the various selves which are within me so that I am not controlled by those selves which remain unconscious? And one does not get in touch with these dimensions of one's life unless one is engaged in disciplines which will make it possible, without the journey into self so that increasingly one is coming to understand himself, his coming to be a freer sort of person. He is in touch with these deep fundamental dimensions of his life so that the patterns of self-defeat are not destroying him unconsciously.

*The journey into God.*—As we make this journey into self, we are simultaneously making this journey into the life of God. We are deepening the life of prayer. We are coming to understand what it means to be a meditative person, letting our lives meditate upon the Scriptures so that new power is flowing through and new insight is taking place, and we are being people who are nurtured meditatively on the Scriptures. We are learning what it means to be contemplative people. Many people are saying that what we need most in our time are contemplative critics so that we are not acting convulsively, that we can look at the total picture, and we can see those things which are really the issues that we need to be working with. Normally we are working with the same issues that the world is working with a year after the world has brought it to a head. If you look at our church publications, they are dealing with the issues that the world has already been struggling with but considerably later.

Now, the person who is a contemplative critic will be a person who will be able to detect those issues as they are arising, while there is still time to do something about it; so, they will be picking up these issues three years, four years, five years ahead of time. But this will only take place as a person learns what it means to be a contemplative critic. And the tragedy is that most of us move so rapidly and are engaged in so many things and we are so busy that there is no opportunity to be that which is most needed in our time—a contemplative critic. We will learn what it means to engage in the art of contemplation, what it means really to touch the quiet center, what it means to engage in the ministry or the work of intercession. And these things I want to talk about in greater detail tomorrow morning when we are talking about the dimensions of inwardness.

*The journey into community.*—What does it mean really to be members of one another? What does it mean really to be a people of God, a family of faith? What does it mean really to love one another? To be in a community of faith, opening our whole lives to one another, accountable to one another—what does this mean? What does it mean to be a person in community? What does it mean to deepen our love for one another? They said of those early Christians, "Look how they love one another!" This is one of the marks of the authenticity of the salt community.

Now, change, I suggest, presupposes discipline. We have to come to grips with the whole issue of discipline if there is to be change. Disciplines have to be understood, I think, as consistent exposures to God's grace, consistent responses to God's grace. As we learn to open ourselves to this grace, to these con-

sistent responses, then God's grace will produce the change. We are not talking about changing ourselves. We are talking about doing the inner work that we must do in order that God may produce the newness and Paul says the only thing that matters is new creation. That new creation, I think, must begin with us. I believe that the disciplines should only be embraced when they can be freely embraced, when there is a connection between the goal which we hold for our own lives and the discipline which will help us to get to that which is our *own* goal. Otherwise, the person embraces a discipline which becomes law and this comes to be another burden which he carries. It comes to be destructive, it comes to be a weight. If the person sees the goal of freedom, of union with God in Christ, of growing up into the fullness of the stature of Christ, if he sees the discipline as the means of reaching that which he himself wants; then, it comes to be a freeing thing rather than a new legalism.

In connection with discipline I would like to suggest an idea which I think is very important to grapple with. It is the concept of a critical minimum. I think one of the problems with discipline in so many groups is that the group has not grappled with the concept of a critical minimal discipline. And this idea is that unless the discipline is sufficiently challenging, unless it is tough enough, unless it is a real discipline, then the people will work with the discipline but nothing will take place and the group and individuals within the group will simply be frustrated because the discipline does not meet the critical minimum which is necessary for growth. This critical minimum will be constantly changing. That which is my critical minimum today will not be adequate for me two years from now. That which was adequate for me five years ago is not adequate today. I think the group, the salt community itself, will have to decide what is the critical minimum for the whole group, but then the individuals within the group will have to grapple with what its critical minimum is so that growth will continue to take place. So, I say the second dimension of the salt community is that it is a laboratory of change. To be in church is to be in the laboratory of change, it is to be changing, it is to be resisting, it is to be in some pain and suffering—and this is just par for the course. There is no way to avoid it.

### *Shepherding*

The third dimension is what we call the shepherding dimension. I think the salt community must be committed to being a nurturing group for people outside its life, giving guidance and spiritual direction a consistent long-range basis to those who are ready and eager for such a relationship. There are a number of essential reasons for this. If a group is really witnessing to Christ, if Christ is using mighty power and is really witnessing to His own life and power through us, then what's going to happen is that some people will get converted. The power is going to break through. A hunger is going to be created in their lives. They are going to enter into the faith. This is going to take place inevitably simply because Christ witnesses to Himself through us, and these changes occur. What are we going to do with all of these people?

It ought to be evident by now that the pastor is un-

able to provide this sort of shepherding relationship for more than a handful of people. I don't know how many "the" pastor—the professional pastor—can shepherd in this sense, but I doubt that he can shepherd more than ten or twelve people this way. I don't think he can shepherd that many and look after his administrative responsibilities and participate with people in the crisis moments of their lives and the special events of their lives. I doubt that he can look after that many people. So, we have to have other people do it. Also I think we need to remember that it is necessary for the continuing growth of a Christian to be nurturing someone else who is newer in the faith. We internalize at ever new levels facet after facet of our faith as we articulate the journey we are making, and as we make ourselves available as spiritual guides to others.

I think the only way to get out of the bind of the leadership problem in our churches is to make a serious effort of training spiritual guides for other people so that we don't have one person who is the bottleneck, the person that everyone feels he must get if he really has a serious spiritual problem—the pastor. I think this is a fallacy. So, the salt community will be a shepherding community. It will be a community that can take people at whatever point of the journey in which they find themselves—new in the kingdom of God, having just been converted, not even at the point of being confronted by Christ, just open, just hungry but at whatever point we find them—and have people who can take them where they are and help them move from where they are to where they want to go, guiding them in their journey. This is a basic function of the salt community.

#### Mission

The fourth dimension is the dimension of mission. To belong to Christ is to be a part of the salt community, to be a part of His body. It is to participate with Him in His costly continuing work of reconciliation. In Ephesians, Paul says that you know now the hidden secret of God and the secret is that everything in the universe is being brought into unity in Jesus Christ; Christ is engaged in this ministry of reconciling the totality of things, the universe. The difference between the world and the church is that some of us have seen this hidden secret, we have been let into it and we have been called to participate with Christ in that which He is doing. This is really what church is. Jesus says, "As the Father has sent me, so I send you." He says, "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves." This is what the world is like with its demonic structures, with its systems that you are to be working with. "I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves."

Now, if we have no stomach for this sort of thing, we don't yet belong to Him in the relationship of obedience. We are not yet truly church. We are to get out there where the people are, groaning in their alienation—the elderly, the children, the prisoners, the pill hounds, the hungry—we are to take on the suffering of those who are in travail. We are to take on the suffering of people wherever and whoever they are in our deteriorating inner cities, in Vietnam, in Bangladesh—wherever and whoever they are. To be the people of God is to somehow take on all the suffering, the travail of humanity and to participate in

it. I think there is a very wrong sense in which we do take it on, in which we should not take it on. But we are to feel the totality of humanity to which we belong and we are to participate in this reconciling ministry of Jesus.

It seems to me that not only are we to take it on in the sense of a personal ministry but we are also to tackle the systems, to grapple with the structures in which people live. We are to tangle with the demonic structures, the demonic powers which use these structures to dehumanize people. We are to bring this *dunamis* power into these systems. This dimension of mission is absolutely crucial.

The most telling parable I have ever heard took place when my wife and I some years ago were traveling in Scotland. We were traveling with a friend in the highlands, the sheep country. We were waiting for a flock of sheep to get across the road. Sometimes you wait ten or fifteen minutes for them to amble across the road. The person that we were with turned to me and asked, "What do you know about sheep?" "I don't know one thing about sheep. What," I said, "do you know?" He replied, "Well, I discovered something very interesting. Sometimes in the wintertime when the snow comes, the sheep get hemmed in against these walls. It is a very interesting thing that a sheep can live for seven to ten days in such a blizzard by eating his own wool. But," he said, "the problem is that after that it dies from exposure." That is the most powerful parable of the church that I know. The church cannot live indefinitely by eating its own wool.

The only way that the church can really develop a strong spiritual life is to be developing it as it is yonder in the midst of the pain and the travail of mankind. It can only discover the *dunamis* of God as it is up against these demonic structures where only the *dunamis* of God will prevail. That is when you call on it—when you have to have it.

I think it is important that we make these dimensions of church explicit for those who are exploring church. If the person is not ready, then I feel we should be willing to wait as Christ waited for the rich young ruler. There is a person who presents himself to be a part of the salt community. I think it is crucial that we ask him whether or not he understands that he is entering into a community which has the function of witnessing. Sometimes he will say, "Witnessing to what? Witnessing to whom? I never heard of such a thing." I think we need to ask the person whether he really wants to be in a laboratory of change. "Laboratory of change? What's that? You mean to tell me that pain is a part of this journey?" "Yes," we reply, "that is what we mean to say. Are you willing? Are you ready? Do you want to be in a laboratory of change which leads to these journeys which are very costly journeys?"

You remember Jesus said, "Narrow is the gate and hard is the way that leads to life, real life, and few there be that find it." Do you want to be a shepherd? I am not thinking about the professional pastor. Ready to be on mission? I am talking about making it explicit. If this is what the church is, doesn't a person have a right to understand what it is when he is exploring this salt community? I feel that many of the problems that we have are problems which arise because we are unwilling to make explicit the terms of the covenant.

The problems which arise in most of the small groups with which I am most familiar have already arisen and the seeds of the defeat of the group are already sown before the group comes into existence. The reason is that we are unwilling to make explicit the terms of the covenant. Let me add a note of realism. I feel that few people desire to be in any kind of serious community. I just think that is the reality of the situation. Those who are ready to be in a serious community almost always want to be in what I would call a one-dimensional group. By that I mean this. There are people who want to be in a Bible study group. There are people who want to be in an action group. There are people who want really to be in a therapy group. There are people who want to be in an inventory group. I think all of these are legitimate groups. But the average person who wants to be in any serious group, wants to be in a one-dimensional group. The church by its nature is multi-dimensional; thereby, most people don't want to be in it. There are those who are very much interested in the inner journey, life of prayer, but they don't want to get their hands dirty. There are other people who want to get on with the action and they are terribly impatient so far as prayer is concerned, any sort of inner development and growth in their own lives. You put that person in a group which has an inward dimension and that person is miserable and is always fighting it. So, I think it is fair to let people know that the church is a multi-dimensional group. To bring a person who wants a one-dimensional group into a multi-dimensional group is to cause unspeakable problems for him and to cause very difficult problems for the group.

I think it is possible to do what Jesus said: To compass land and sea to make a single proselyte and when we have won him, make him twofold more a child of hell than before. To translate that into modern terms it would be that we work ourselves to death to get a church member and when we have gotten him he is worse off, he is more bound, he is carrying more weights than he was before. Really what the church is all about is freeing people, helping them discover their gifts, helping them to have the time of their lives, helping them to enter into good news—and one of the reasons for our failure is that we are not clear concerning the real nature of church. We put on people responsibilities which they never intend to carry and which they have to resist. This, as I understand it, is the nature of the salt community. I think it is biblical.

## Dimensions of Inwardness

Gordon Cosby

I have tried to indicate that there is a new dimension of power which is available to us. I have also tried to make it very clear that I think to tap into this power in any real sense is tremendously costly. It is so costly that I think most of us do not take it seriously. I have also indicated that it is tremendously important that we be explicit concerning the dimen-

sions of church and that if the salt is not to lose its savor, we have to be in a group in which there is this multi-dimensional life occurring. Not only will the group be witnessing but it will be a group of people who are seriously on an inward journey in a laboratory of change. The group will be struggling with all of the pain and the hurt and the wounds which all of us have in our lives. It will be deepening lives with prayer in a costly, disciplined way, and serving as shepherds of other people who are not as far along the way as we; then, it will be grappling with the meaning of mission.

I want to talk tonight about the dimensions of mission which I think are way beyond that which normally we are working with, having to do primarily with various forms of service. I want to talk a bit about grappling with the structures of society and how very costly this is.

In these moments, I want to say a word about the dimensions of inwardness because I feel that unless we work seriously with these dimensions and learn what it means to develop a quiet center and to live out of that quiet center, that the rivers of living water simply will not flow. I find that this is very difficult for people like ourselves.

It is an interesting thing about this generation, the generation of youth. I think that more than any generation which has existed in the last several hundred years that the generation of youth that we know now is more an inward generation than any other. This may sound strange to some of us but it is an inward generation. They are learning yoga practices, they are working at the point of meditation. They will go to the Eastern mystics if they cannot find it in their own congregation. Anyone who is going to give leadership in the seventies, who is going to be the salt of the earth, will have to be an inward person. We cannot work with the generation which is an inward generation unless we have been there and can say to them, "I have travelled this way. I can be with you in your bewilderment. I can be with you in your confusion."

I was speaking to a group of about thirty congressional wives several weeks ago and I said to them, "Your husbands are in serious trouble because, more than at any other time in history, your husbands need to be contemplative critics. They are living at a killing pace. A day in the life of a senator," I said, "is an unspeakable thing to come to be aware of. So, that which is most needed seems to be impossible." I wonder if it is not true of people like ourselves—pace killing.

Somebody said this morning that when he got home he probably would have to get off the plane running in order to catch up with all of the administrative details which had gotten ahead of him during the time he was away at this Christian Life Commission seminar. We are too busy? We have more to do than we can do? We are not really aware of the limits of our finitude. People who come to know us simply do not feel that there are wells of living water, that there are depths within our spirits from which they can draw. I would plead with you to come to be a contemplative person, to be an inward person. When we are talking about this quiet center, it is extremely difficult, I think, even to describe the quiet place, the heart of one's

inner being where one meets God. It is difficult to describe what one means. One has to find it himself and experience something of God's "holy otherness." Almost any description of it is unsatisfactory. Romano Guardini in the book, *The Lord*, says that when a human being in the grip of divine power attempts to convey something of God's "holy otherness," he tries one earthly simile after another. In the end he discards them all as inadequate and says apparently wild and senseless things meant to startle the heart into feeling what lies beyond the reaches of the brain. I think that in the end all we can do is to witness to one another, saying, "There is a quiet place. It is a great thing being there."

In that quiet place one is most alive. In the stillness there is unbelievable movement—life and power. It is only in this quiet place that one is finally at home, that his restlessness is gone. It is when one touches this quiet place that creativity and productivity flow in unprecedented fashion. The psalmist says that the man who touches this quiet place is like "a tree, planted by streams of living water that bring forth its fruit in season: and his leaf shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper" (Psalm 1:3). Jesus said that out of the inner life of such a person shall flow streams of living water. It is in living out of this quiet center that one is aware of being lived through by infinite cosmic forces, that one comes to be aware of the resurrection itself, flowing through one when one touches this place within one's life. In this quiet place one is shielded from harm. One knows one's self to be invulnerable. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil for thou art with me." In the quiet place one is spoken to. One begins to know his place in salvation history which is quite different from service projects. One knows when to move from Samaria to the Gaza road. One knows when to move to the street called Straight. One knows where to lay down his life and let it come to be like a grain of wheat fallen into the life of the city or into the life of the nation. One knows when to cry aloud about Vietnam and its immorality, and one knows when simply to weep quietly and to pray.

I think one reason the Bible seems so foreign to us when we work with the book of Acts is that the actors in the biblical drama were, for the most part, men and women who touched center. The Bible is not at all foreign to people who touch center, who touch that quiet place. It is from this quiet center that one reaches out to embrace others when they are lovable or when they are rejecting, and one begins often to experience a heartwarming intimacy with people. It is from this center that we experience a kinship and oneness with the whole creative order and a sense of companionship with all living things. It is in this quiet center that hope is nourished for one has touched an order of reality that one knows can never die. One awaits eagerly the completion of that which one has already touched. Constantly living at this level of one's being produces radiance. This is the spirit which the halo is trying to depict. Being a member of church begins to mean being a contemplative person, being a person who is inward, being a person who has touched center. All I can do is to list some of the areas in which I think we need to move if we are to be able to live out of that quiet center.

I think the life of meditation as we work with the Scriptures is fundamental, so that not a day goes by that we have not worked with a passage of Scripture—not just to read it but to live with it and to meditate upon it and to mull over it and let its truths begin to move through us at the very deepest levels of our being. Take a passage such as the eighteenth chapter of Luke:

A man of the ruling class put this question to him (Jesus): 'Good Master, what must I do to win eternal life?' Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. You know the commandments: "Do not commit adultery; do not murder; do not steal; do not give false evidence; honour your father and mother."' The man answered, 'I have kept all these since I was a boy.' On hearing this Jesus said, 'There is still one thing lacking: sell everything you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; and come, follow me.' At these words his heart sank; for he was a very rich man. When Jesus saw it he said, 'How hard it is for the wealthy to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God' (Luke 18:18-25 NEB).

Did you ever work with that passage for an hour? Did you ever work with it for an hour a day for a week? Use your imagination. Put yourself there in the scene—really live with it. Have you ever moved from working with it at the level of using imagination and thinking about it and asking every question you can possibly think about and then have you ever made the transition so that you were the rich young person and were in actual dialogue with Christ Himself? Have you said to Him, "Christ (and you are in His presence now), all of these things I have kept from my youth up." He looks into your eyes and He looks into mine, and He says, "But one thing you lack. Sell everything that you have and give it to the poor and come follow me." See what I am talking about? You actually dialogue with Christ in Scripture and you let that Scripture work with you and speak to you. You take thirty minutes a day to meditate on the Scriptures in this sense and something begins to happen to human life. You plow up the ground; you come to be a different person. It is remarkable what God begins to do with the life which will live with Scripture. As someone put it, "The Scriptures, you see, are not models for morality. The Scriptures constitute mirrors for identity." Really meditate on the Scriptures, let the living God speak to you through the Scriptures. This is not a spasmodic thing but this is a daily thing.

The second thing which is crucial if we are going to develop this quiet center is that we are going to have to recover again the meaning of confession. The trouble with this is that it has been spoiled for us by some groups, but it is a very scriptural sort of thing. What is confession? There are two kinds of confession, though they are integrally related. First of all, there is the confession of sin. He who commits sin is a bond slave of sin. "If we claim to be sinless, we are self-deceived and strangers to the truth. If we confess our sins, he is just and may be trusted to forgive our

sins and cleanse us from every kind of wrong" (I John 1:9 NEB).

I think there are three steps in confession. The first is the step of self-observation. This is a prelude to confession. Where am I missing the mark? What are the dimensions in my life which are wrong? What are the attitudes which are blocking me from the full oblation of my life to God? We can talk glibly about these things but we know that we have area after area after area where we are blocked out from God. We want God and we don't want Him. If a person does not know that he is fleeing God like Jonah fled God, he doesn't know himself. We want Him, and we fear Him. What are those areas which are blocking me from the full oblation of my life to God? In the final analysis sin is against God. "Against Thee only have I sinned." Confession is one of the areas which is so lacking. This is the reason it was so beautiful what John Claypool did for us yesterday afternoon. Confession is absent among the students of our time and confession is absent among the old in our time. I don't find either blacks or whites doing much confessing and I don't find the party in power doing a lot of confessing. Reformers are seldom heard to make confession. Most of us here are not making confession. One has to develop this inwardness so that he can be aware of the areas in which he needs change, because one can't confess that which is not conscious. So we have to get those hints. Sometimes we can get those hints from a close friend who will tell us really what we need to know—how shallow we are, how superficial, how unable we are to hear. What is the area that I need to be aware of so that I can make confession?

So out of this self-observation comes new awareness; then, one can take that which one is aware of and he can confess it to God. You confess it to God not in order to inform Him. "Even before a word is on my tongue, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether" (Psalm 139:4). It is to bring to the source of healing that which can be healed by Christ. To confess is to bring it, to offer it, to wait in faith for healing. Often times we need to confess it to a brother. This is the reason we need a confessing community so that week after week we are with people to whom we can confess. We don't confess to the brother for the purpose of changing him. We don't confess in order that he may be open to change. There are times when it may be helpful to pin a person against the wall and not let him off the hook until he gets on to his monkey and understands his monkey. Sometimes we need to let him know that he is a phoney but that's another matter. That is not confession; that is confrontation. It may go like this: I have feelings that you are a fraud. I want you to change. It would be easier for me to relate to you if you got in touch with your deep feelings. I don't like your shallowness. I don't like the fact that you're not in touch with your deep feelings. It worries me when people are not free in this way. I'm the sort of person who feels that until you change, you have nothing to offer me. Confession has another theme and sound. It goes like this: I want you to know that I'm this sort of a person. My attitude has blocked me from you. I have missed your outstretched hand. May God forgive me! Will you forgive me?

Unless we can recover this measure of confession, we will never touch that quiet center. This is something that needs to go on week after week and month after month and year after year. One of the qualities of the saints is that the closer they get to God, the more they come to be aware of their own sinfulness.

Another level of confession: We need not only to confess the dark side but we need to have the strength and the capacity to confess the light side. Sometimes I think it is more difficult to confess the light side, the gift, the uniqueness, the preciousness, that which Christ is bringing into being because the minute we confess the light side, then we are responsible. We have to be accountable for it. We need to confess the gift that Christ is bringing into fulfillment and completion within us.

Then there is the prayer of adoration. We don't adore enough. "Whatever the depths, a man becomes a man in the inner vastness of his own personal 'I am.' Unless the dialogue takes place, beginning identity slowly congeals and freezes to death. Man cannot dispense with the dialogue. He needs it so that he may grow and fulfill himself. The dialogue with the Absolute is of paramount importance, something far beyond a mere idea or ideal. The God of life is a personal God, and only when man enters into the dialogue with Him does he begin to realize his dreams. In this conversation he learns the fundamental principles of his own being—adoration, veneration, love, trust. Anything undertaken on a plane lower than this dialogue, no matter how much zeal and sincerity and devotion go into it, is in the end incomplete. Adoration is a road that leads man to himself." We just need to be with God. At times tell Him how much you love Him and how worthy He is to be adored and just give yourself in this sort of adoration and take time to do it and not feel that it is a waste of time. Remember the account of the person who was seen day after day in the little wayside chapel in France. One day the priest came to him and said, "What in the world do you do all that time?" In a very simple way he said, "I just look up at Him and He just looks back down at me." Adoration! It is so very nonutilitarian. How much time have you taken recently just to adore God, just to let Him know that you love Him?

What can I say about the prayer of silence? This is very difficult but we must work with it. It is not meditation. Meditation is where you use your mind and your imagination, your will; you enter into this dialogue with Christ, you let Him speak the living word in the deeps of your own spirit. But there comes a time when you just get silent and begin to reach out and send that dart of longing love to Him non-verbally. It is beyond images; it is beyond words. You are just with Him in silence. I suppose the "cloud of unknowing" is one of the most helpful guides to this kind of prayer. The time comes when God in His wisdom and His love calls us to this kind of prayer. This is beautiful! And perhaps if we are ever going to learn it, we are going to have to take time to retreat when we take a day or two days for it. Somebody said to me this morning, "What I would like to do when I leave here is not go home but to take a week just to sort through what I have listened to." Why don't you do it sometime? Just take a week! The

church wouldn't really fall to pieces, would it? And if it did, it should! It is so easy to withdraw into a simplistic, sort of pietistic approach. What I want to say to you is this: The real call of people to get involved with their total lives in costly mission in the world, I believe, comes out of this sort of inwardness and that's the reason I'm talking about it. I don't believe that this is just a lovely little tête-a-tête with God.

I want to talk about the discovery of the gifts—a uniqueness and what it means to be in a community which is gift-evoking. I just want to say that it is out of this inwardness that people really get their call, and it comes.

A girl in our congregation a few weeks ago began to struggle because she knew that the job that she was in was not right for her. She was a research assistant for Senator Hatfield. Out of this sort of inwardness she began to get the feeling she should resign. She resigned, not knowing what she would do. Then her money ran out and she tended to wonder whether or not it was just out of her confusion that she was waiting. She said, "But I must wait until I hear." There were people who said, "You know, she's just bewildered. She ought to take something." She was offered many jobs and each job was better than the previous job. She was offered more money and somehow she knew it wasn't right. And then one day it came. It came in such a strange way to this young girl, just twenty-two or twenty-three. She said it came to me that God wants me to get a real estate license. On the surface it didn't make much sense. She said, "I know that's right." It was about three weeks ago that this came to a head. Her father is one of the largest real estate dealers on the West Coast; so, she had it in her background. She has a real estate license now in three weeks—this is not always the easiest thing to do in Washington, to pass the tests and get it. And she is in the process now of buying three apartment buildings, large buildings with some hundreds of units. The person has been provided to buy these buildings. She is going to make a living by selling real estate and she is going to give her life to the mission of the city.

Now, this is not an isolated thing. It happens again and again and again. I am saying this thing is the most practical thing I know of. Instead of trying to get people out there and get them involved, take them where they are; help them get in touch with the deepest streams of their own being and let them know that this inwardness is crucial. Then, out of this comes the guidance, comes the leading for the sort of mission and ministry which I think will have some really ultimate, redeeming effect upon the demonic structures and upon the deterioration which is on it. Unless we hit this thing at a level beyond that which we are now touching it, we're doomed! I say this is the quickest way to what we are really after, but it seems like the long way around.

For I call you in the name of Christ to become a contemplative person—a person who touches his quiet center and lives out of that quiet center the life which is holy, the life which is different, the life which is filled with an unspeakable power.

## Evoking the Gift

Gordon Cosby

What we are going to talk about this afternoon, is, concepts that we have been working with and actually get them embodied, this is always the rub. It is easy I think, absolutely essential. If we take the general to talk about the principles but it is rather difficult actually to get the principles incarnated. So, what we will be working with is as important as anything we will be dealing with, I think, in the course of our time together. Let me read to you from the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians:

About gifts of the Spirit, there are some things of which I do not wish you to remain ignorant.

You know how, in the days when you were still pagan, you were swept off to those dumb heathen gods, however you happened to be led. For this reason I must impress upon you that no one who says 'A curse on Jesus!' can be speaking under the influence of the Spirit of God. And no one can say 'Jesus is Lord!' except under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are varieties of service, but the same Lord. There are many forms of work, but all of them, in all men, are the work of the same God. In each of us the Spirit is manifested in one particular way, for some useful purpose. One man, through the Spirit, has the gift of wise speech, while another, by the power of the same Spirit, can put the deepest knowledge into words. Another, by the same Spirit, is granted faith; another, by the one Spirit, gifts of healing, and another miraculous powers; another has the gift of prophecy, and another ability to distinguish true spirits from false; yet another has the gift of ecstatic utterance of different kinds, and another the ability to interpret it. But all these gifts are the work of one and the same Spirit, distributing them separately to each individual at will. . . .

Now you are Christ's body, and each of you a limb or organ of it. Within our community God has appointed, in the first place apostles, in the second place prophets, thirdly teachers; then miracle-workers, then those who have gifts of healing, or ability to help others or power to guide them, or the gift of ecstatic utterance of various kinds. Are all apostles? all prophets? all teachers? Do all work miracles? Have all gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues of ecstasy? Can all interpret them? The higher gifts are those you should aim at.

And now I will show you the best way of all. (I Cor. 12:1-11, 27-31 NEB).

And then Paul moves into that beautiful thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians:

Elizabeth O'Connor's book, *Eighth Day of Creation*, begins this way. She says:

Somewhere I heard a story about Michelangelo's pushing a huge piece of rock down a street. A curious neighbor sitting lazily on the porch of his house called to him and inquired why he labored so over the old piece of stone. And Michelangelo is

reported to have answered, "Because there is an angel in that rock that wants to come out."

This story comes to mind when I think about the gifts or the talents given to each of us. Every person has the task of releasing angels by shaping and transfiguring the raw materials that lie about him so that they become houses and machinery and pictures and bridges.

And how do we do this. How we "build the earth" is really determined by the discovery of our gifts; because through our gifts we are carried out into the world, as Mr. Youngblood made so very clear to us in such a tremendously helpful way. Our gifts make us participants in life. Therefore, the uncovering of these gifts is one of the most important tasks confronting any one of us.

When we talk about being true to ourselves, being the person we were intended to be, we are talking about gifts. We cannot be ourselves unless we are true to our gifts. When we talk about vocation, whether we are artists or engineers, we are talking about gifts. And if it is a question about commitment, we are on the same subject for the place of our concrete involvement is determined by our gifts. Serious reflection on almost any aspect of our lives leads us into a consideration of gifts. God is the creator. He is a creating God. He creates out of nothing the infinite variety of that which is. He created each of us in order that we might participate with Him in His work of continuing creation. We are called to the work of co-creation. The particular work of co-creation depends upon the challenge, the inner being, that we are peculiarly fitted for by our creation. As long as these gifts remain hidden, buried within us, we shall be dead or in anguish or torment or we shall be sour. As these gifts are detected and named and exercised and developed, we shall become alive. Energy will flow. We will enter into the joy of our Master. This is the opposite of the buried talent, the buried gift.

These truths hold to one's life whether one is a genius, has ten talents, or whether one is a less gifted person who has only one talent. Not to discover and use that one talent is to be a worthless servant and to be cast into outer darkness where men will weep and gnash their teeth because they are dead, because the challenge has not been discovered, because the gift has not been evoked. We are created for creativity. We are to till the world's garden, we are to build the earth and all of this in glad obedience to the Father's joy in His continuing work. This creativity, this work with the Father in accordance with our own inner being is fun. It brings deep satisfaction and it brings peace. It brings joy. It is exciting. Our work in our families, keeping the household strong and the children developing in their gifts, keeping the house itself clean and ordered and beautiful is an expression of a gift. It is a work of co-creation. Our job should be in keeping with our gifts and the work that we do daily should be filled with delight. The work which constitutes the mission of our church should also be an expression of our gifts and should bring joy, for in this work we as church are building the city and we are building the earth.

Now, so much concerning just the general understanding of this business of gifts.

I would say that the central task of church is to call forth the gifts of people. The salt community must be a gift-evoking community. Every person is what someone has called an unrepeatable miracle of God's creation. He is not yet a completed creation. He is in the process of coming into the fulness of his being but it is the church's task to help to bring that person into fullness of being. In Second Corinthians Paul writes, "And we all, with unveiled face beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (2 Cor. 3:18 RSV). We are not yet realized. We are the image of God in potential. When God calls a person, He calls him into the fulness of being. He can no longer remain the limited, emaciated, circumscribed person he was when the call first came.

The evoked person is himself the gift of the church and of the world. And then everywhere the person goes he is witness. He is the aroma of God. He is the fragrance of lavender. Remember Paul says, "You yourselves are our letter of recommendation, written on your hearts to be known and read by all men; and you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2 Cor. 3:2-3 RSV). Every evoked person will be exhibiting the fruits of the Spirit. He will be the aroma of Christ to God on those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. So, in the general sense, what we are talking about is evoking the totality of the person, evoking his potential, evoking his gifts.

I think this is necessary to understand in order to keep from misinterpreting what I was trying to talk about on yesterday afternoon when I was talking about this business of surrender. What is surrendered is the false self, the artificial self, the sham self, the self which is seeking security in the wrong places in order that the real self may come into its fulfillment and its potential. One dies in order that the new full form of his life may come into being. The wheat falls into the ground so that the stalk of wheat with new grain may be formed. So, this surrender has to be understood.

But Christ came in order to give us life and to give us fullness of life and to release all of our potential. In the deepest sense each person who is an evoked person is a gift. So, what is your gift to the church? What is your gift to the world? It is *you*. Some of us have a sense of mock humility and it would be hard for us to say, "You know, I'm really God's gift to mankind." But this is a mock humility. If we really have it, this is the way we conceive it. The only gift that I have to give is myself and the self which is coming into being because Christ is touching me and bringing me into being. In the deepest sense, then, what we are talking about is the evocation of the person in his totality.

You know there is nothing more exciting than evoking people and that is all that church is about. It is not to make them good. It is not to fit them into the slot. It is not to get them into the organization. It is not to get them to do anything. It is just to make them free, to make them what they were intended to be. It is just to bring them and their gift into fullness of being. That is a tremendously exciting thing. That

is what church is all about. It is evoking gifts.

Now, there is a narrower sense in which we need to understand this business of evoking gifts. The gift of the Spirit is given out of God's generosity to each member of Christ's body to provide the rich diversity needed for the body to be a body and to do its work within the total organism of humanity. Within the church, according to the New Testament understanding of it, each member is given a manifestation of the Spirit. There is a variety of gifts but all of these gifts are crucial to the proper functioning of the body. There are no unimportant minor gifts. All of the gifts are given for their building of the body for the common good in order that the organism will be enriched and enhanced. When these gifts are functioning, each person in the church is an initiating center of life. He becomes a leader at the point of his gift.

If you have fifty members in the congregation, you have fifty leaders. If you have 500 members in the congregation, you have 500 leaders. Somehow we have to get away from this leadership syndrome that we have to have a professional staff, we have "the" pastor. This is one of the most serious blockages in a real creative movement of the church into the world that I know. But every member is given a gift of the Spirit. Every person who is exercising his gift is exercising authority at the point of his life. So, you don't get just a few people exercising authority in the life of the congregation and, therefore, taking the hostility of the rest of the congregation. You get everybody exercising authority, everybody being obedient at the point of somebody else's gift; so, you get this hostility shared, which is a very wonderful thing.

If you have ten people in a group working on this business of gifts and trying to be the salt of the earth, if each is an evoked person, if each is exercising his gift, then you have a group which is creative. You have these initiating centers of life. You have a group which has power to attract, power to be the instrument of conversion, power to heal, power to tackle the demonic structures and systems of the city. But if you have five people who have been evoked and who are exercising their gifts and you have five people who have not been evoked and who are not exercising their gifts, you have five resentful people in the group. That is the way it is. So, it is crucial that there be the multiplicity of their charismata, that the charisma, the grace, the Holy Spirit will have so entered into the life of each person in the group that each understands his gift and can name it. It is amazing how general we remain at the point of our gifts. We don't get specific; then, we don't have to be accountable. Therefore, most people I know like to remain general. Do you know what your gift is? Can you name it? What is your gift of the Spirit within the body of Christ and that you are exercising with all the stops out and with great joy? Do the people for whom you are exercising that gift know what that gift is? But the minute you name it, you have to be accountable for it and you have to deepen that gift in the Spirit. Now, I think these are some of the reasons why we have great difficulty naming the gifts.

What I would like to do is just to suggest several of the gifts which we have found to be crucial in the life of our congregation. I would hope that you would not be turned off by our jargon, by our terminology. I

think every community needs to evolve its own jargon so that the group understands what it is talking about. Every group has to have its "in" language. Ours is very offensive to a lot of people. You can take the gifts which are listed in Corinthians and in other places in the New Testament and stay with that terminology, and I think there is value in it. But I think there is also value in using another sort of terminology.

Let me say this, that the context that I am thinking about is a small group because I think this inwardness that I was trying to describe this morning simply has to take place within a small group of people. I think you have to have face-to-face relationships. I think you have to develop this capacity to love one another with a small group of people. I think these gifts can only be evoked when we are in intimate, close relationships with a small group of people; so, that is the context in which I am thinking. Also, I think if we are going to be effective at the point of mission, it needs to be a small cadre of people that move out because with a large group of people you always get a few people who are carrying the responsibility and you get a lot of people who are not carrying the responsibility. So, I think the smallness is crucial. How large the group should be varies but I doubt there should be more than ten or twelve people in a group. These gifts now I am thinking about in terms of a small group which is really going to function on the basis of a New Testament pattern of taking seriously the gifts of the Spirit.

First of all, remember the general sense of a person's creativity and his gifts being evoked, his potential being released; but in the narrower sense of what is the gift of the Spirit that he is exercising on behalf of the body of Christ in order that this whole body may then give itself in a corporate way to the world. We are not just functioning as individuals in the world but we are functioning as a corporate community in the world.

I want to mention several of the gifts which we find to be important. Each of our groups has what we call a moderator, or a prior. This is a Catholic term and that is the reason I say it is so offensive to some, but we haven't been able to get another word which does the job. The prior is the shepherd of the sheep. He is the overseer of his little flock. He is the one who under the Chief Shepherd assumes responsibility for his people who have been given to him by Jesus Christ and he knows that one day he will present this flock to the Chief Shepherd. He loves the flock and intercedes for it in something of the spirit of Jesus, who interceded for His little flock saying, "Father, here they are and only one is lost, the son of perdition. I only lost Judas." You feel the agony. You feel the love of Jesus as he is taking this flock and presenting it to the Father. The prior prays that every single person within this little flock will come into the fullness of his own uniqueness and discover his gift of the Holy Spirit and will have the sort of power with which it is possible for a person's life to move into the future. The prior will exercise any gift needed in the life of the group at a given moment if there is no one else to do it. You have got to have somebody who will pick up the pieces and will do whatever needs to be done if there is no one else to do it. But the prior of a group is the evoker of gifts. He has this capacity. He is the one who sees that the discipline of the group is

maintained and he is the overall shepherd of the flock. Every group of eight or ten people has to have somebody who will be this to the flock.

Now, there is another gift which we found to be crucial. It is the gift of a person who will serve as the spiritual director of the group. This is another Catholic term. But it is hard to get the right terminology. This is the person who has really been given authority by the group to exercise the best insight that he has concerning what is the structure of growth, which is the best structure of growth for the people in that group. He will hold the group accountable for being faithful to whatever that structure is. If you have been in a number of small groups, you know that the group tends to reduce itself to the lowest common denominator. You can never get the group to really engage in any sort of serious study or program of growth. This is just the way it works. But if you will identify the gift of one person in the group who has the deepest spiritual sensitivity of anybody in the group and who has the capacity to hold the group responsible and will plan a program of growth which, if the people are faithful to it, it will mean that they will change. They will grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ. Then you have something tremendously valuable. I think you have to have this gift in every group.

You have to have some mechanism for accountability. I think the reason that most small groups lack real power is that there is no mechanism for accountability. The mechanism which we use in our groups, and I commend it to you just to think about, is this. Each of us in most of our groups—and we are varied in this—keep what we call a spiritual journal. After we have worked with the Scriptures and after we have lived the day with Christ and have struggled with our lives, we take a few minutes at the end of each day to jot down in our spiritual journal what has come to us as we have lived with the Scriptures that day. We list in our journals the peak events of our lives that day. What are the things that we are really struggling with? Where do we hurt? Where are the wounds? What were the dreams we had? It is remarkable what you can discover about what is going on in the deeps of your life through dreams. Study dreams in the Scriptures sometimes and see how often God uses dreams. Modern psychiatry is discovering anew the importance of dreams. Well, teach yourself to remember your dreams. Jot them down in your spiritual journal. Work with them. This is just a mechanism for not losing that which is going on because we tend to lose the real important things which are happening in our inner life. This is a way of not losing them.

Then, at the end of the week before we go to our group meetings, each of us writes down a one-page description of what has happened to us in our life in Christ that last week. How did we get along with our disciplines? Did we have trouble? Where did we have trouble? Be specific. Secondly, what did Christ say to us as we were in dialogue with Him through the Scriptures during the week? If He didn't say anything to you during the week, you're in trouble. It may be all right for Him to withhold Himself for a week, two weeks, but if it keeps on for a number of weeks and nothing is really coming to us through the Scriptures, we have to ask some questions, some basic questions. Then, what are the high points of our lives during the

week? What are the issues we are really working with? What are the struggles? And all of this goes on a one-page report which we turn in to our spiritual director. It is amazing what one person who takes one page from the people in the group can know about the flock from that report if it is really perceptively done. This is what I am talking about when I am talking about being accountable. Discipline will never work in a group over a long period of time unless there is a principle of accountability which is understood and unless there is a mechanism of accountability.

Another thing that we have people report on from time to time is how they witnessed and how they ministered in the world through their jobs, their families, and their neighborhoods. The totality of life is to be brought under the lordship of Christ. How do you do it? What are the problems that you have? So, it is the spiritual directors' responsibility to structure the group, to see that there is a mechanism of accountability, and then to be in touch with the group members if they fail or to give them encouragement and help.

There is just one other gift that I want to describe and then I will have to leave the others. Each of our groups has within it what we call a pastor-prophet. This is awkward terminology but we put it this way because we feel that both of these dimensions are tremendously important. Every little group of people needs somebody who will pastor the people in the group. "The" pastor simply cannot pastor very many people. He can speak to them. He can be a lubricating influence. He can love them. He can pray for them in general ways but he really cannot pastor very many people. So, we have a pastor-prophet in each of the groups and this person is to keep up with the individuals in his group, to encourage them, to know where they are in their life in Christ, and to remember special occasions in their lives. If someone goes away, he is to keep in touch with him, send him the assignments of the group, and keep him up with what is going on in the life of the group. But the person also is the one who is to serve in a prophetic function for the group. This is to say that we are to look deeply in a person's life, not only to love him and to encourage him and to let him know that somebody cares, but also we need to confront him when he needs confronting. These two functions need to be embodied in the same person. It is not fair to have one person who is always loving up a person and another one who is always confronting him. And real love involves both of these—speaking the truth in love. So, I have my pastor-prophet and my pastor-prophet deals with me from time to time, and I need this very much. And I have my spiritual director and my spiritual director deals with me from time to time, and I need this very much. You get this intimate sort of nurturing going on and you have a group of people who are really growing and developing.

Now, every group, of course, needs at least two or three activists because you have to have gifts which deepen the inner life of the group but you also have to have gifts which really lead the group outward into its mission into the world. These we call the activists or plowmen. Every group needs this.

Our time is up but let me just say one thing about this business of really working with gifts and about one

of the primary reasons, I believe, why these gifts do not emerge more dramatically in the lives of the people in the church. I think this principle of gifts and of discovering the gifts is pure dynamite. I think if you can get this thing working in groups, that you have got so much excitement, so much newness going on, and you get so much activity flowing that it is really hard to measure what is possible. It is strange to me that this is such a clear New Testament principle and I almost never go anywhere that anybody is working on it. What we are talking about takes hours. It takes hundreds of hours sometimes for one person to discover what his gift is. And there is no shortcut to it. It is not a matter of just finding something that makes that person feel comfortable because you say this is his gift. He has the gift of music or he has the gift of something else—that is not what we are talking about. We are talking about something much deeper than that. It may issue in music. It may issue in many different things but it is the matter of really discovering that special, unique gift of the Spirit which is given to every person who comes within the body of Christ.

There are many problems but I think the one that stands out for me is that the reason it does not happen more frequently is the problem of envy. I think we have all sorts of subtle and not so subtle ways of blocking other people's gifts in creativity because it is threatening to us. Envy exists in every group in the world. It is the hardest sin to confess of almost any other sin, and we keep it in our unconscious. We have all sorts of strange ways of keeping a person from taking off. If we cannot take off ourselves, if our own creativity is blocked, we don't want anybody else to take off. We are going to do everything in our power to keep them on the ground, keep them grounded. I think we have to take this seriously.

I remember very well a number of years ago when I first began to work with it in a serious way. A friend of mine, John Casteel, wrote to me many years ago and asked me if I would write an article which he would include as a chapter in a book he was writing. I thought this was a fine opportunity and I sat down and wrote the chapter and sent it to him. Several days later I got a response back from him and it consisted of four pages of single-space typing telling me what was wrong with what I had written. It was so confusing to me, so bewildering that I just didn't know how in the world to embody all of these suggestions in the thing; so, I asked a friend in our congregation if he would write the chapter for me. And he said he would be delighted. So, he wrote the chapter and I sent it off and by return mail a letter came back indicating what a wonderful article it was. I said that this was a strange thing. I had something to do with this church, helping to bring it into existence and can't even interpret the thing in a way that is suitable to these people; and here is a person who was a pagan until he was in his sixties and he has just been converted a few months, and he writes this thing and does it better than I can do it!

Well, I was dealing with that and was in the process of working with that when I asked him to preach one Sunday morning. He said he would be delighted. And he preached that Sunday morning and he really preached. The people came out of the chapel that

morning and said, "Gordon, why in the world haven't you ever told us these things that Bill Ham told us this morning? We've just been waiting all our lives to hear that!" And for years I thought I had been telling my people those things. Here was this guy who could write better than I could and he could preach better than I could; and I wondered what in the world I had gone to the seminary for. Then people began counseling better than I could. You really have to work with it. I find that there are a lot of ministers who really do talk about renewal and are really committed to it intellectually, but they are blocking it. They are blocking it right down in the congregation and are not letting it come off. It is envy.

When you get these gifts released and you get the Holy Spirit running around freeing people, and you get these groups and really let them go, and you've got something on your hands. You really do. You can't keep up with it to save your life. You can't keep it under control. You can't even be informed concerning what is going on in the life of the congregation. If you have any rigidity within you and if you are shaky at the point of other people exercising real authority, then you just can't sleep at night. But this principle of envy works in every group and you have to recognize it when it begins to go to work, when it is taking place in all of its subtle forms because we will never be the church as Christ has called us to be the church until these gifts are released and that angel is let loose and a person is on his way and is soaring. The gift-evoking community! This is what church is all about. This is why it is exciting and it is fun. It is great!

## In the World, Not of It

Gordon Cosby

In the Gospel of John, Jesus says, "You are my friends, if you do what I command you. I call you servants no longer; a servant does not know what his master is about. I have called you friends, because I have disclosed to you everything that I heard from my Father. You did not choose me: I chose you. I appointed you to go on and bear fruit that shall last; so that the Father may give you all that you ask in my name. This is my commandment to you: love one another" (John 15:14-17 NEB). And then He gives this very interesting warning, "If the world hates you, it hated me first, as you know well" (v. 18). This shouldn't surprise you! "If you belonged to the world, the world would love its own; but because you do not belong to the world, because I have chosen you out of the world, for that reason the world hates you" (v. 19). And then there is something that must be of tremendous importance, because Christ prayed for this in the last recorded prayer that we have in his life, except for the prayers which He prayed upon the cross: He says,

And now I am coming to thee; but while I am still in the world I speak these words, so that they may have my joy within them in full measure. I have

delivered thy word to them, and the world hates them because they are strangers in the world, as I am. I pray thee, not to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. They are strangers in the world, as I am. Consecrate them by the truth; thy word is truth. As thou has sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world, and for their sake I now consecrate myself, that they too may be consecrated by the truth.

But it is not for these alone that I pray, but for those also who through their words put their faith in me; may they all be one: as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, so also may they be in us, that the world may believe that thou didst send me. The glory which thou gavest me I have given to them, that they may be one, as we are one; I in them and thou in me, may they be perfectly one. Then the world will learn that thou didst send me, that thou didst love them as thou didst me" (John 17:13-23 NEB).

What I've been trying to say in these times together is really very simple and yet tremendously difficult to implement. It is that there is a power which is possible to those of us who believe, and that this power can be entered into if we are willing to make a costly journey which is an inward journey—where we come to know ourselves and we come to know God and we come to know what it means to be in community and to love one another. Out of this inwardness and out of this journey we begin to hear a call. This call takes us into the world where we are hated because we do not function in the world as those who are of the world.

I feel that the only way that power can be voluntarily relinquished is for one to take this inward journey; otherwise, the systems fight one another and we are not able to relinquish the power and it has to be wrenched from us. But wouldn't it be a tremendous thing if there could be a nucleus of us who could voluntarily relinquish the power, to begin to live out our lives under the leadership of those who have been oppressed? This comes to be possible as one takes this inner way and comes to discover his securities in other ways and in other places rather than in the normal securities of the world. But this call that comes is a call that always drives one, I believe, into the world. "As the Father sent me, so I send you . . . I pray not that you will take them out of the world but that you will keep them from the evil one." "In the world, and not of it" is the formula. And the form in which the call must come to any particular person is unknown until it comes: then, it breaks and it has its own peculiar uniqueness when it breaks.

But I suppose the thing that has been most impressive to me as I have watched these calls operate in the lives of people over many, many years is the magnitude, really the immensity of the calls. Almost always when the genuine call comes, it comes as something which is impossible. It is almost never that which is possible. This is to me one of the authentic marks of genuine call—it is impossible. Surely this is the reason we resist it. Jonah gets the call to go to Nineveh. Just live your way into how a call like that would come to a person. Jonah was to go to this large city and put on a preaching mission without all the technological means that we have at our control today.

This one man is to present the claims of God for repentance upon that city. It is totally impossible! The Ninevites are the enemy, and he runs. I think the instinctive response to the genuine call is to flee; so, Jonah heads for Tarshish. But the call comes and its tremendous magnitude is almost always perceived as impossible when it comes; so, the only way it can be fulfilled is for the *dunamis* to be granted. I think most of the projects which we think in terms of are not genuine calls because they are possible. Why does Moses resist the call and says that he stammers and cannot do it? It is because it is impossible—this business of leading the Israelites out of their bondage into the wilderness and into the Promised Land. So, God gives him Aaron as a concession. Jeremiah resists his call and he talks about what a terrible day it was when he was born. He wished that he had died in his mother's womb. Cursed be the one who brought the news of his birth, he cried. We resist the call because it seems to us impossible.

I want to describe several of the calls illustrative of this principle. One of the calls that came to us seemed to us to be totally impossible but the call came very clearly. The call was to eliminate and close the Institution for Dependent Children in the city of Washington. When the call came it was 1965 and there were 932 children in this institution. *The Washington Post* and other newspapers had editorialized against it. Everybody knew that it was a tragic place for a child to be, that a child in this institution missed all of the developmental phases of his life, and that this was tragic. Somehow we knew it and nothing was really being done about it, just as those who were the Church knew something about the concentration camps in Germany and somehow didn't deal with it. We said, "We have to deal with the Institution for Dependent Children. God has told us to work with it." And so, we sounded the call and the call was for anyone to join us who was ready to get into the fray to eliminate this institution in the city of Washington. One reason we chose this institution was that it was the symbol of that which was most tragic in our life because of all the people who were the recipients of the tragic conditions in Washington and of the welfare policy in Washington, the children were the ones suffering most. So the call was, "Come join us. We'll close this institution, not because we can do it but because God is calling us to do it." We made a mistake on the timing. We said that we would do it within a year. That was before we knew! We worked on it step by step until at the present time we have twenty-three group homes providing alternative forms of child care. We have foster children in our homes. We are working with so many children that I really don't know how many we are working with.

We discovered that we had to move from providing alternative forms of care to actually tackling the system. We found that this was a different matter. We got several congressmen interested and we had congressional hearings so that the thing got publicly aired. We got a writer who was willing to work with us from *The Washington Post* and *The Washington Post* committed itself to keeping the thing alive in the mind of the public. We finally got hearings held by the City Council. We brought some twenty other churches into the mission so that it comes to be ecumenically

based. This is where the black community has participated in this mission and Catholics have participated with us in the mission. It comes to be a very wonderfully dramatic, exciting sort of thing to tear down demonic structures so that we can provide liberating structures in the community. There are some twenty or twenty-five mission groups which are ecumenically based working with us at the present time. We have a commitment now on the part of the City Council to close the institution not later than September of 1973. Emergency shelters have been brought into being. Alternative forms of care have been organized. Welfare policy has been changed. The director of the Department of Public Welfare has been relieved of her responsibility and another person has been brought in. There comes to be a real changing of the whole spirit and of the attitude of the welfare structures in the whole Department of Public Welfare. This is one of the calls.

When the call comes, then whatever is needed somehow happens and is brought into being in order to do the job. One comes to be aware of the dimensions of the task and the implications of it as one gets into it. You can never know this until you are actually in it. I think we have here an illustration of the *dunamis* power at work. There are fewer than 200 children in the institution at the present time—a reduction from 932 to 200. The thing that has surprised me is that if you get a small group of committed, disciplined people working together and depending upon this *dunamis* power, my conviction is that anything can change.

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given unto me." It is also true that you can get into an issue which you know absolutely nothing about in the early stages and after you've been with it for a few years, you will know more about it than almost anybody in the community. You can become experts on almost any issue in a period of months. What you cannot yourself become an expert on, you can always bring in the experts. They are always available. So, what I am saying is that I think it is not important to wait until we go through a long-range educational process so that we know everything which is involved, because that comes by getting into the issue and tackling it.

Another thought came to one of our people. It was a call to bring into being a polycultural international college. We call it the Dag Hammarskjöld College. The concept here is to train leadership for our one-world community which lacks the sort of leadership it needs to move into the future of mankind. In this liberal arts college, sixty percent of the student body will be from other cultures, sixty percent of the faculty will be from other cultures, and every person will receive in-depth understanding and training in one culture other than his own. This will be located in the new town of Columbia, Maryland.

Now, if you want to know something that is impossible, it is to bring into being such a college in this particular time in history when those colleges which have been established and in existence over a period of time are having a difficult time. Within the period of the next eighteen months, several million dollars will have to be raised in addition to all of the other problems which are involved. Over the period of the next

several years we will need 20 to 25 millions of dollars. This started as a mission group in the life of our congregation. It has moved on out now to where it has its own Board of Overseers and has on the Board the Japanese Ambassador. Norman Cousins will be the chairman of the meeting on this coming weekend. People of this caliber, you see, are now getting into it to help make it a reality at this stage in its life. But when that call comes to bring into being an international polycultural college, feel the impossibility of it!

Another mission which has recently been one which we believe has been given to us is the mission which we call the *Dunamis* Mission. And this is rather impossible too. But the vision has come and the call is on us to establish pastor-prophet relationships with every congressman in the United States Congress—to pastor these men and women, to be prophetic in our relationship, to carry them every day and many hours in the day in disciplined and intercessory prayer. Mark Hatfield has written an article which he delivered at Princeton which is titled "Pastors, Prophets, and Politicians." What he says in this article is that the lobbying efforts of the church, he feels, are rather immature and ineffective as the church gets into the lobbying business and does a job which is not far different from the other lobbyists in Washington. What he pleads for is for the church to bring to bear this *dunamis* power at the point of the people who are in positions of political responsibility and to establish another sort of relationship with these men who carry this immense responsibility in order that there would be a reversal of our national priorities—these men and women would be carried in this way.

We start at the point of an issue, whatever issue it is that a person is concerned with—the problem with the criminal justice system, the problem of pollution, overpopulation, or whatever it happens to be. Then, we move from the issue to the committee in Congress which has most responsibility for that issue. Then, we move to the specific delegation of certain members of that committee and this is where we begin to form these relationships and to carry them in our prayers. Now, I think you can never really push it back to whether it's prayer, whether it's relationship, or what it is; but very dramatic things take place. One of the committees that we have been praying for in a disciplined way is the House District Committee. Now, I don't know whether you know anything about the way this committee functions, but it is the most undemocratic committee in the Congress. You can't believe it! The members of the committee are not notified when the committee is being held and the members can't get the information concerning the time meetings are to be held or of the agenda of the committee. This is the committee which is responsible for the legislation affecting the District of Columbia. A number of the people on this committee are very hostile toward the District; they don't want to see it work, and it is a tragic situation. The person who is the chairman of the committee is McMillan [John L.] from South Carolina. Down the line is a man whose name is Digs from Michigan. He is the first person we can get to who would give the sort of leadership of real love and caring for the District—the sort of thing we need—so that we can get at the problems of the District. The frustration of having a Lost

Colony is quite something. So we started working with this committee.

We started by praying. We started forming these relationships. The third man in succession for power is Dowdy of Texas, and he's been indicted. The second person is Abernathy of Mississippi, and just a few days ago he decided he wasn't going to run for re-election. The only thing that has to happen now is for McMillan to be defeated; then, Diggs will move up to be chairman of that committee. We have a chance to have some real hearings on the home rule and all of the other problems which concern the District. Nothing can happen at the point of the educational system because you can't even get the issues aired. If anything is going to happen to the quality of life in the District of Columbia, something has to happen at the point of this committee.

We want to cover all of the committees. We are in process now of bringing into being fifty to seventy-five groups that will really sound a call to prayer to the nation, to the metropolitan area of Washington, and start with these relationships. We already have six or seven of these groups in existence and have already formed this type of relationship with fifteen or twenty of the congressmen. We have been surprised at the response of these congressmen. We always do a lot of praying before going into talk with them to see if we can get guidance as to how best to do it because this is an unusual sort of relationship and some of the congressmen haven't been in the habit of having this sort of relationship.

We have a group which is concerned with military spending and it tried to "psych out" the different people who were on that committee. The group chose a particular congressman, whose name I won't give, and they prayed for guidance as to how to go about it. There are a number of people who are professional lobbyists within this *dunamis* group but what they said is, "We've got to find out what the spiritual approach is. We know how to lobby but that's not what it's about. We've got to find out how to get in and do another sort of job."

So, they set up an appointment with this congressman and his administrative assistant. They walked in—the three men—and this is the way the conversation went: "Congressman, we have come because we want to establish a spiritual relationship with you." (The group had argued whether to be direct about this thing or whether to be indirect, but that was about as direct as you could do it!) They said, "We're concerned with the issues of power and peace, and we know that you are concerned with these issues; so, we have a common ground to start with." They said, "You know, we've done our homework and we've read everything we can find about you in the Congressional Directory and all of the articles that you have written. But what we don't know about you is your spiritual pilgrimage. What we would like for you to do is just to share with us your spiritual pilgrimage, your spiritual autobiography." The congressman said, "You know, that's really wonderful. Nobody ever asked me for my spiritual autobiography before." And he started sharing his spiritual autobiography. This is the way our people come into membership in our church. They always prepare a spiritual autobiography and come to our council and share it; then, the council confirms

the call of the person. So, this is where they got onto this spiritual autobiography deal. And then, the congressman's administrative assistant shared his, and then our people started sharing theirs. The congressman had to interrupt the session because of a committee meeting, but he said, "You know, this is terrible. We just must continue this. Can you come back?" They said, "Sure, we can. We'd love to come back!" He asked, "Can you come back tomorrow?" "No," they replied, "we can't come back tomorrow but we'll come back as soon as we can." So, that was the beginning of a relationship. Everyday they carry that congressman in their prayers. They are forming relationships with the administrative assistant, with the legislative assistant, and with other people in the office. They are beginning to develop Christian presence right there in the office of that congressman.

Now, what we want to do is also to call into being these *dunamis* groups all over the country, because we want a group in the home district of each congressman so that when he leaves Washington, you've got him! You can voice the same sort of concerns and you can pray for him. We have a feeling that something can happen if we will pray in this disciplined way for those who carry the unspeakable responsibilities in these positions of political power. This is the call of one of our little mission groups. In time it will spread and it will be a mission in which many different groups will be involved. I am simply trying to describe something of the impossibility of the genuine call when it comes. And it can come to anybody!

I would like for you to keep in mind the necessity of moving from what may start off as a service dimension to dealing with the issues and structures which make that service necessary on a continuing basis. For instance, we have a little group which is called ROMAH. It is a construction crew. ROMAH stands for the Rehabilitation of Men and Houses. Most of the people in this little construction crew are ex-convicts. This is a great group. Some are black and some are Spanish-speaking—well, they are everything. We had them out at our home just the other night for a party and it was by far the most delightful party we've ever had in our home. You just get a group of ex-cons together and their friends and you've got something! It is just tremendous. I don't think you can stop at the point of a construction crew of ex-cons, you see. I think you have got to move into what is involved in the reform of the prison system. Then, you get into what is involved with the whole system of society which sends people for the sort of punishment and the sort of procedures that we use in connection with prisons. You have to tackle the system as well as grapple with the service dimension.

There are other things I wanted to share having to do with getting involved and the dangers of getting involved, but I think I will stop because you have had a long, long day.

## A Covenant of Salt

John Claypool

The old college debater in me cries out for some definition of terms at the outset of a discussion. This is

particularly true when your subject is not exactly self-evident. When I speak of "A Covenant of Salt," I am referring to that approach to the Christian life for which this Commission has always stood. Jesus spoke of discipleship in terms of one's being the salt of the earth, and I take this to mean that one is to become involved, to get mixed in with the whole substance of life for the purpose of adding taste and meaning to the process and being an agent of stabilization. J. H. Oldham coined the phrase "a salty Christian," and this symbolizes the willingness actively to engage with the world. This is the stance of taking seriously both history and society and humanity, and of desiring to become a part of the answer rather than a part of the problem. I mean by "a covenant of salt," therefore, that understanding of Christian commitment which involves active participation in the world and a desire to be a reconciler and a healer. It is the model of Christian discipleship that I am assuming most of us here in this room would embrace.

However, as soon as one defines this kind of covenant he must admit that this is not where most Southern Baptists, or for that matter, most American Christians, are at this moment. The covenant that characterizes their Christianity is a much more limited sort of thing. It usually has to do only with that part of life which is called spiritual and involves rather limited expectations. The contract most Christians strike with their churches calls for personal inspiration for one's self, education for the children in faith and morality, and concern for the older members of the family. On occasions of crisis like hospitalization or death, a church member wants the church to be present. He also needs a minister in celebrating such occasions as a wedding. Other than that, his understanding of this side of his life comes to an end. Therefore, I think it is fair to say that this covenant is one not of salt as much as of self-concern. Mr. Average Church-Member sees himself essentially as the recipient of certain ministries for which he pays when he contributes to the church. He does not think of his relationship here as a call into active ministry himself. Just as he puts a lawyer on a retainer fee to serve him in times of legal difficulty, so his relationship to the church is seen in the very limited way of pertaining solely to his individual and religious needs.

Therefore the problem becomes: How can we take people whose understanding of discipleship is a covenant of self-concern and move them to this other form of discipleship, a covenant of salt? This is the challenge I have faced ever since I left the seminary to devote my energies full time to the ministry. And I am assuming that this is the basic concern in our conference today. How do we facilitate a change of consciousness, to use Charles Reich's famous terminology? How do we move people into this new mode of Christian existence?

As I look back over the decade of the sixties, I must confess that I have been pretty much of a failure at this task. I have honestly tried; in fact, this has been a basic thrust of my intentions. And yet as I look back over this decade, I have to admit that there have been more defeats than victories. However, I do not look on these failures as a total loss. I believe I have learned something out of these experiences that can keep them from being wasted on me. Looking back

now, I can detect several mistakes that led to failure, and learning from them could make me a more productive minister in the seventies. As you all know, Wayne Oates has created quite a stir by confessing that he is a workaholic. I now intend to borrow a page from his effort and confess my failures as a change agent, in the hope that out of this litany we can all become better strategists of authentic discipleship. Let me specify three areas where I now sense mistakes were made.

First of all, let me confess that I did not understand adequately just how complex the process of change really is. There is far more involved in the attempt to change people than I dared realize. We preachers are used to calling for change—it is a staple of biblical religion from Abraham on; yet, I for one did not recognize the deep ambiguity such a call evokes. On the one hand, it activates positive feelings. Most men would like to be different and to grow beyond where they are. Paul Tournier has suggested that the instinct for adventure is as basic a human drive as the need for food or air. There is something in us all that wants to become more and other than we are. On the other hand, the call for change also activates many negative forces within us. After all, change represents venturing into the unknown and calls on us to let go of present securities and move into the not already experienced, and this evokes trauma. Howard Clinebell goes so far as to suggest that all change is initially regarded as loss; that is, when we first hear of change we tend to think more of what we will have to give up than of what we are going to receive. Then, too, there is the element of implicit negative judgment in every call for change. To suggest to someone that he should be different is a way of saying that what he is at the moment is not acceptable, and we have so much "I'm not O.K.ness" in us that our antennas of sensitivity are quick to pick up this sort of signal.

The call to change, then, is never simple. There are always conflicting forces set in motion. Thus the challenge of the change agent becomes deciding how to mobilize the positive for change and at the same time how to overcome the factors of resistance that inevitably are raised.

What I did not realize for a long time is that you do not accomplish this delicate feat out of a stance of condemnation. Whenever you set yourself over against a person and confront him with negative judgments about his condition, such an effort invariably takes on the appearance of attack and puts the other person on the defensive. In such a process the issues at stake get lost. All that the person who is being criticized can think of is that he is being threatened, and this drives him instinctively to throw up his defenses and become embattled and usually to strike back. When Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Judge not, that you be not judged, for with the judgment you judge, ye shall be judged," he was simply describing what always happens when change is called for out of condemnation. Attack calls forth attack. When we say to person: "You are inadequate. I do not like you, and I am not going to like you until you change," the effect of such an effort is to rigidify the other person and entrench him ever more deeply in the basic problem. Jesus depicts such a process in the ludicrous image of a man with "a two by four" sticking out of

his eye proposing to pluck a speck of sawdust out of another's eye. No one in his right mind is going to submit to that kind of operation. Instead, he will say to such a self-appointed reformer: "Who made you a judge over me? You are not so perfect yourself. Physician, heal yourself." The truth of the matter is that we never confess to our critics, nor do we allow those who are negative toward us to have access to our innermost parts.

In this same passage, Jesus suggests another approach to this matter of effecting change, and it is to assume a stance of solidarity rather than of condemnation. If you really want to get at the problem of evil, the best place to begin is with that part of it which is the closest at hand; namely, the part that involves you. If, instead of going after the other man's speck of sawdust, you are willing to start struggling with the "two by four" in your own eye, this can have a very different effect. Rather than placing yourself over against another or up above him, this is placing yourself alongside another. By confessing that you are having a problem with certain difficulties, you thereby neutralize the factor of shame and guilt and call forth the courage which enables the other to come out of hiding and begin to acknowledge his difficulty. As I said, men never confess to their critics, but they are willing to share with fellow strugglers, and a man who dares to say "we" in relation to the problems instead of the accusing "you" is one who can facilitate change healthily. If one says, "We have a problem, let's struggle together," this stance can liberate dynamics for change.

I am convinced that right here is one of the strategic mistakes I made in the turbulent sixties. As long as I approached the problems of race and poverty and war from an accusative stance, the net result was heightening of tension and rigidifying of embattled positions. To hit these issues head on may have been a way of getting something off my chest, but it was not a way of getting my people off dead center. It was not until I was able to shift into a stance of solidarity and to speak confessionally rather than critically that things began to move. When I started to admit that I too had problems with the great complexities of race prejudice and that I had an uneasy conscience about my own affluence in the face of so much poverty and that I had mixed feelings about Viet Nam and the questions of war and peace, the people began to lower their defenses and started to meet me halfway so that we could ask together: "What can we do?" And what applies to the celebrated issues of the sixties also applies to changing men from the pietistic covenant of self-concern to the more comprehensive covenant of salt. Let's face it. Most of us who were interested in getting people to change had nothing but condemnation for the old way. We set ourselves over against the pietists and rejected with contempt the definition of Christianity that had been given to them by their heritage. We rarely acknowledged that to move into the stance of a Christian problem-solver does have frightening complexities about it. In short, we did not identify sufficiently with these people and say: "We feel what you feel and together we need to grow." As a result we often rigidified people into a defensive posture rather than

facilitated their growth toward maturity. What we need to do is to identify with their fear of complexity and offer to grow with them toward a more responsible stance. We will probably discover they have sympathetic impulses here that can grow if not trampled under attack.

My first mistake, then, was one of stance. I think I understand now more clearly just how change takes place healthily. It comes out of a stance of solidarity, not a stance of condemnation. John Gardner has observed that the great tragedy in our nation just now is that all of our major institutions are caught in the brutal crossfire between unloving critics and uncritical lovers, and that neither one of these two is adequate to bring about the modifications that are needed. I hereby confess that I have been part of the unloving criticism that has evoked the uncritical loving that is really defensiveness under attack. I am reminded that when Jesus began his public ministry, the first thing He did on leaving the carpenter shop was to go to the Jordan river to be baptized by John. What was this if not profound identification with the very sinful people He came to save? He took His stance alongside of us, not up above us, and this is the secret of how He could change so effectively. As I attempt to move people to a bigger concept of Christianity, the stance is going to be solidarity. The methodology is going to be confession. The identity is going to be "we" and not "you."

The second area where I made mistakes had to do with what I will call "timing," and it pertains to the structure of human nature and how different forms of needfulness relate to each other. This led to faulty strategizing. I am assuming that the name of Abraham Maslow is familiar to most of you. He is the psychologist who has done significant work in the field of human motivation. What he has done is to arrange the various human needs in the form of a hierarchy. At the lowest level is man's physiological needs—the need for food and air and water. In succession above this are man's needs for safety and then belongingness and then self-esteem and finally self-actualization. These form an ascending scale, and Maslow points out that as long as there is a deficiency at one of these levels, that need tends to predominate. For example, if a man is deprived of food, it is pointless to talk to him about actualizing his skill in Chinese art because all of his attention is riveted at this lower need level. Man *does* live by bread alone when there is no bread, according to Maslow. However, once a need has been satisfied adequately, it no longer motivates, and a restlessness sets in that pushes one toward a higher need level. This is yet another illustration of the old law that the higher rests on the lower, and when we are working with people, it is important to determine where they are in their needfulness and thus proportion our efforts so that we do not attempt to engage them in a task that is utterly out of touch with where they are at the moment. All of this has particular application in the religious realm, for the truth is that the covenant of self-concern about which I talked earlier is comparable to the physiological needs for food and air and water. And until these elemental spiritual needs are met, the higher covenant of salt is hardly a possibility.

And herein lies the problem, for it occurs to me that in my efforts in the sixties to get people to become socially aware and politically involved, I tended to neglect the more basic areas of pastoral care. And this, of course, led to a conflict of expectation. The individual church member felt that what he wanted from church was not being delivered, and I, in turn, was frustrated because I could not get the people to go beyond what I considered "the milk" of the Christian pilgrimage. And thus the breakdown. A better way, of course, lies in a more realistic acceptance of the hierarchical shape of religious needfulness and a willingness to meet the simple needs so that we may move on to higher reaches. James Glass calls the traditional pastoral functions aimed at individual needs "the rent" that the minister pays in order to earn the right to move on to more sophisticated involvement. I think this is true, although I do not like the condescending note that seems implied in such terminology. The truth is that pastoral ministries are as valid a form of social involvement as any other kind of ministry. We are in danger of becoming so entranced by dramatic and distant kinds of problems that we overlook the more immediate and traditional occasions to engage in helping ministry to people. I still remember with some pain a Sunday at Crescent Hill when I was trying to get our congregation to understand loving the neighbor as extending to a responsibility for the black people on the other side of town. That same day we got several angry telephone calls during the eleven o'clock service saying that some of our worshippers had parked in the driveways of people near the church and were blocking them in. The deacon who received these calls felt that this sort of thing was compromising our witness of neighborliness in the immediate community and should be dealt with. However, I was so caught up in the "larger issues" that I failed to utilize this opportunity for teaching and dismissed it as unimportant. This was a mistake.

Therefore, as I seek to strategize for the seventies, I intend to give more careful attention to the basic contract that the individual pietist brings to the church. In meeting him at that point and saying yes to his most elemental needs, I believe I will have a better chance to lead him to a more inclusive vision of discipleship. If we do not do this, then know full well that inter-denominational Bible churches which specialize in allowing people to regress back to infantile escapism will engulf this kind of person and never challenge him to become anything beyond a dispensationalist.

The third area where I sensed I made mistakes was in not realizing the need for more realistic scaling of involvement as people moved out into problem solving. There is a tremendous difference between the impulse to want to help others and the practical expertise of really knowing how to do this. As I look back, I think I was too sentimental in generalizing about involvement in these great problems and did not offer enough concrete opportunity where people could begin to experience involvement but not be overwhelmed by the complexities of the problem. We did not scale down our objectives so people could learn step by step. Had we done this, it would have avoided much of the frustration that comes when one rushes in unpre-

pared to challenge a complex problem and comes out disillusioned.

One of our more successful projects of involvement at Crescent Hill resulted when we did attempt such a scaling. We acknowledged the fact that we could not take on the whole race problem; so, we decided to establish a "yoke" relationship with one black congregation, the Mt. Lebanon Church in the west end of Louisville, Kentucky. We worked to get comparable groups in the churches to sit down and have dialogue with each other. This meant the two boards of deacons got together, and the men's and women's Sunday School classes. We also had a special project for interested individuals who wanted deeper dialogue for understanding. This afforded members of both churches a chance to get out of their usual traffic patterns and to engage in depth conversation with certain individuals whom they would never have had occasion to meet otherwise. It was a way of moving into the whole complex area of black-white relations in a form that did not overwhelm the participants. To be sure, this effort did not bring about any earth-shaking results, but it was the kind of beginning that gave some of our people the confidence to move more deeply into the problem.

Another example of realistic scaling is what the Broadway Church [Louisville, Kentucky] did years ago in beginning to serve the depressed community around the church building. They started to work with the children, for here the effects of poverty were highly visible; and there is no way that some right-winger can dismiss these little ones as being shiftless and lazy and unworthy of help. Children are also the least threatening segment of a depressed population. And we must never forget that fear is one of the great dynamics of resistance in middle class reluctance to get involved. By starting a program which enabled lay people to see firsthand the effects of poverty on children, a program was begun that now is much more extensive and has the enthusiastic support of many whom you might label as highly conservative. This process of scaling participation so that some success can be realized and expertise gradually developed needs to be the shape of the future. The church has a long way to go in learning the difficult discipline of how to help people; yet, unless their experience is scaled, what little desire they do have to get involved will be dissipated in failure.

I come back, then, to the place where I began—to my commitment to a covenant of salt-kind of Christianity and to a confession of how I have failed in trying to actualize this. Yet all is not lost. In terms of the stance to take, the strategy to employ, and the scaling to provide, I feel I have learned something from my wounds. Many of my efforts to move men from a primitive covenant of self-concern to a covenant of salt met with failure, but I think now I have better insight into why. Therefore, my covenant for the seventies is "right on." With more humility, I pray, but no less zeal, let us take our stance alongside, and not over against, our fellow Christians. Let us meet the Christian where he is so that he may move on, and let us scale more realistically how he can become the salt of the earth and, in truth, part of the answer instead of part of the problem.

## Christian Youth in Celebration and Service

### Introduction—Bob Oldenburg

In January of this year our church had the opportunity to have Milton Cunningham come and lead us in our emphasis on foreign missions. He told us a lot of things about what is happening in Africa. One of the things he pointed out to us in a staff meeting one Wednesday morning was a verse of Scripture from the first chapter of John that says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." Then he went on to say that we have made the Word program, cassette recordings, audiovisual aids, Sunday School, WMU, mission action. But the Word of God goes on to say that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. With that idea we offer to you this morning "Christian Youth in Celebration and Service."

[At this time a ten-minute multi-media presentation was given illustrating various needs in the San Antonio, Texas area.]

Tommy Wright, Richard Kleiman, and I are going to share with you. We have not come to give you any big rundown on the great things that have happened in San Antonio. Nor are we going to try to impress you with the things that God is doing down there. We just want to share in an open and honest way our successes, our failures, some of the things we dream about, some of the things we anticipate for this coming year. We are trying to be the Salt.

Richard will give us a little bit of resumé of an activity that happened last year and something about the background that got it all started.

### Richard Kleiman

Jesus is real. He's alive. It sure is easy to say that. It's easy to get tuned in and turned on to Him, to get up on the mountain, and to get all the kids to follow you up the mountain, and to tell them that Jesus is real; then, to watch them look over the mountain into the valley and watch them fall off the mountain; then to watch some of them put the mountain in their heart and walk down to the valley.

December 31, 1970 on New Year's Eve, Bob and Lanny Allen, our music director, were very concerned about what was happening in our youth group. It was like dry, bleached bones. We ministered to each other but everything was dry. There was no life, no realism about our Christian commitment. So, Bob and Lanny asked the kids if they would like to come down on New Year's Eve and pray about what was happening. About eighteen of us showed up down at the chapel of our church and started relating to each other the confusions, the doubts. We started really sharing that Jesus is real, that he is alive. We prayed that New Year in, 1971. We didn't know what 1971 had to offer but out of that prayer session came the musical called "Real," written by Bob and Lanny. "Real" reflects the experiences that I used to have—the doubts and frustrations, the failures, wanting to be real with Jesus but not quite able to get over the hump. The answer is presented in the musical. The only answer that could be presented is Jesus—only Jesus is all you need to know. But you need to know

him daily. That meant denying self and taking up that cross and getting out there.

As the spring started blossoming and lives started changing and coming alive, we presented this musical. We couldn't say we performed it—for that is what it would have been, an exhibition. The Holy Spirit presented it as we yielded ourselves to him. Lives started being changed; not all lives, I couldn't tell you that because that wouldn't be truthful. But some lives did. As spring turned into summer we had a camp. We were blessed with a fantastic camp and with a fantastic personality. Ron Willis was our main speaker. He wrote the book, *A View from the Street*. He is a street minister who goes about caring for people. We think that those of us who were at camp had a real awareness that we really needed to be caring about people. So, the kids decided that they wanted to reach out and care about people. This was possible only because Jesus, the first step of being real, was there. You can't reach out and care unless Jesus is real. So, we came back from camp finally wanting to do something, to care about other people.

We got together and we got in our meetings and we thought about what we could do. We had been given a number of suggestions and what finally happened was the decision to have a free clothing store, which we named "Warehouse, Ltd." We were going to have our free clothing store in the summer, in August, to help the poverty kids around our church find clothes and go back to school, and to help anybody else who would care to come down. We decided not to advertise it as a project of the First Baptist Church. We needed to have a little bit of organization to collect the clothes. In collecting all of these clothes we needed girls to sort according to size, to mend, and to sew. We needed guys to decorate and put racks in place, to put the clothes on the racks, and just get the "House" in order. The floors were about to fall in and the ceiling was about to come down on us, but the Lord held that house together as he did us. So, we finally got it all together and we were going to open up on Monday morning.

On Sunday we got in the bus and went out into the poverty area around our church and distributed a little flyer that said: "Warehouse, Ltd. Free clothes. Come and see." So, Monday morning at ten o'clock we were all there at the little house waiting for the mob to come. When a few people came, we opened the doors. They came in and said, "Do you mean we can have these clothes free? What is this? Is this some kind of game?" There were curiosity seekers who saw the flyers. They came and they couldn't believe it. One Mexican-American man came up to me with tears in his eyes. He just reached out and I grabbed his hand and he said, "Thank you. My kids will have clothes to go to school this year." A few more families came trickling in and then we closed for the lunch break. When we came back at one o'clock, man, there were people all over the place! They were waiting for us to open the doors. My heart was thrilled to see all of these people. When we opened the door we said we were doing this for Jesus as a response to try to do his will.

We opened the doors and something began to happen. People began just to take everything in sight. They would come in and go out and we would have

to close down and go back over to the church to get another load of clothes to restock it. We would open the doors and let them in again. This went on all day Monday. It went on all day Tuesday. Tuesday afternoon some of the kids started coming to me saying, "Man, we need to put a limit on this!" "Man, these people are getting so selfish. One lady just grabbed about six dresses and took out of here." But I didn't feel that we could put a limit on it. I didn't feel that we could put a limit on God's grace. I didn't feel we were there to evaluate or to judge those people. Our aim was just to give. Some of our kids, not all of them, but some of them were discouraged. I guess some of them saw some of their own selfish desires in those people. It would be like letting me loose in Neiman-Marcus in Dallas or something like that. I would go pretty wild! But our kids really got down. They couldn't understand it. We ran out of clothes. I mean we just flat ran out. We didn't have any more to give. So, we left a sign on the house that said we were glad we could be of service to Jesus and that we hoped we had reached them in some way and if they needed anything else they could come to 515 McCullough Street, which is the address of our church. We didn't put First Baptist Church on the sign. We just wanted to share. A lot of the kids cared and a lot of them didn't. We found out that while celebrating the love of Jesus, we could serve other people. And this is just one ministry that happened during 1971.

#### *Tommy Wright*

First, let me tell you about the layout of San Antonio. It's a real small metropolis which is made up of suburbs all around the city. On the north side of the city live the rich people, predominantly white. On the east side are primarily the black. On the west side and the south side are the Latin Americans. I don't know if you all have it here, but we have a system where they open the schools during the summer and set up recreation programs for those children who live in San Antonio. So, the church decided to put some young people in an un-church-oriented place just to give a Christian testimony and witness. We weren't out there with Bibles or anything like that. We were just in the park to leave a little impression or a thought. We decided to go to a very under-privileged section of town.

Two of us went to the east side, which was primarily black. A few other people went to the west side. On the west side it was a little bit more hostile because of the trouble occurring between blacks and Latin Americans. On the east side I kind of expected to find hostility. I thought, "Well, I can't blame them." It was just the prejudice I had. I hate to admit it because I had always said, "I'm not prejudiced." But we have these natural prejudices—everybody does! I thought I was perfect until I went there. I was there feeling these people were going to be mad at me because, you know, my grandfather had their grandfathers in chains. So, I couldn't blame them. But, man, it wasn't like that! I expected hostility and there was none. They treated me like I was being welcomed into the kindest church in the world. There was no hostility. They treated me just like their best friend. As a result I came out of it with many good friends. And I really loved them more because they

earned my respect. It was an enjoyable time because I played ball with the little kids and stuff like that.

I am sorry to say that next year we're not going to re-open this program. It's a sad thing. Our church is like a lot of other churches. They deal a lot in numbers and they like to see the numbers add up. When you're in a situation like this, you're not going to grab people and bring them to church. This section is a long way from the church, and that wasn't the reason we went in the first place. We had a real fine recreation program and we left a good impression. We meant to leave just a small thought here and there—kind of a care and love to our brothers. Some of the deacons and people like that thought that we weren't totaling up enough numbers or something. I'm sorry to say that but it is true. Anyway, we're not going to have this program next year.

I am happy to say we are going to have a mobile recreation unit. I don't know if you all are familiar with this, or have heard of it, but it's a big trailer. It has basketball goals and all the facilities you need to set up a recreation center in the street. We're going to use this as a ministry. I don't think it will be near as effective but it will probably produce more numbers. We can take it right near the ministry of an outreach mission. Then, we will bring in the kids to the mission from that recreational unit.

There was this little girl at the park. Everyday she followed me around and pulled on me. Mike Daniels and I were the ones working out there then. We were the only whites. Everyday this little girl would come up and say, "Are you and Mike brothers?" And I answered, "No." The only thing we had in common was that we were both white. So, everyday she would come back and ask, "Are you and Mike brothers?" So, one day I said, "Yes, we are brothers. We don't have the same mother and father, but we have the same Heavenly Father." This is not the kind of place you bring out a Bible—a little kid wouldn't understand that anyway. We just wanted to leave an impression. I said further, "You are my sister. We have the same Heavenly Father; so, we are sister and brother." She said, "Naw, naw, naw! My mother is different from yours." I said, "Well, that may be but nevertheless we have the same Heavenly Father." So finally, about the last week, I was sitting up in the baseball stands and she was sitting up there with me. Three other guys came up and said, "Are you Mike's brother?" And I said, "Yeh!" And the little girl said, "Just a second, I'll tell them." She said, "Not only that, but me and him is sister and brother." The guys said, "You crazy?" She said, "Just a second, let me finish. We all have the same Heavenly Father. You know—God." This is not much but it leaves a real impression.

You can't always count on the big numbers. It takes little things. It takes tears in the eyes of a man who doesn't have a lot. It takes a little kid. I get the greatest feeling knowing Jesus.

#### *Bob Oldenburg*

As you can tell, it's a most exciting thing to work with young people like this. You never know exactly what they're going to say. We rehearsed this two or three times up in the room last night, and Tommy said exactly what he said this morning and I just grin and bear it, you know, because it's true. We're

not going back to the parks this summer because of the very problem he stated. It's not one that I'm happy with but I think that the alternate program that we're going with in the recreational unit will suffice in this particular area.

There are a lot of other things that have happened and that we are anticipating doing. Let me share one or two of them with you. We don't mean to be bragging in any way. We want just to share with you our successes and our failures.

One of the exciting things that happened last summer along with the others that you've heard about is, we had an invitation two years ago from the Guatemalan mission in Guatemala to assist the missionaries in taking care of the missionary children while the missionaries were planning the work of the mission for the coming year. Richard and two other young people and I went down there for that particular occasion. This was something that none of us had ever experienced before: to be in a foreign country, in a different culture completely, and to see the work that was being done, that was being planned, and to work with the children of these missionaries. We came back thinking that here we'd gone in the past on huge choir trips—maybe fifty, sixty, or seventy young people on the bus off someplace becoming sort of a burden to small mission churches in areas of the country, trying to present musical programs for one night only and then up and gone. We had no continuing program going. This was not what we would call real mission activity. But when we found that four of us could go to a place such as Guatemala and become a real ministry within that particular situation, why couldn't we do the same thing with the entire group of young people—not just the singers?

A lot of these programs were built on the choir and this is wrong because you have young people in all areas—athletics, those who don't have the time to spend in choir rehearsal, those who don't care to be in the choir. Yet, we had let the choir become the mission activity of the church. So, we came back to our staff retreat in September with the idea of maybe sending out several teams this next summer, going to various places, making contacts with home missions, local San Antonio missions, state of Texas missions, and even with some of our foreign missionaries. We presented it to the staff.

Dr. Jimmy Allen, being the kind of man that he is, jumped on the idea with everything he had. He got so excited that this summer he is taking one Venture Team himself to Colorado to one of the tourist areas for an entire week. He and a group of six adults will live in a tourist area ministering to the people there. I'm happy to say that we have twenty-eight teams going this summer but our church is not footing the bill; the young people are doing it themselves. We have what we call "Fiesta San Antonio." One of the projects is to sell seats at two parades. And these sales bring in quite a lot of money. We didn't go on a choir trip last year; so, the money we raised last year came over to this year's budget.

We will probably travel over 160,000 miles doing these twenty-eight mission projects involving almost 190 people. It will be an exciting thing going to Guatemala, to Costa Rica, to the states of California, to North and South Dakota, Utah, Nevada, Colorado,

Texas, and Wyoming. All of these areas are beginning new work—it's not going to be in established churches. It will be in backyards, in the middle of the desert in day camps, on the beach at Lake Tahoe, under tents in areas where there are no Southern Baptist churches. We are hoping that possibly coming out of this will be the establishing of more than six or seven new Southern Baptist works where there are no churches now. Besides all of that, for the young people and adults who cannot leave San Antonio, there will be a continuing program, such as you heard Tommy and Richard talk about, right in the city of San Antonio.

I think the thing that really kicked us all off into this particular thing, along with the experience of "real life" and the musical, was the encounter with the man Ron Willis. Now, he is a very controversial person. I know some do not particularly care for his approach, but I think the thing that really impressed us is that Ron is a real person. We saw in him a desire to communicate, not to teach masses. Ron's audience is not a big crowd—it is one person. When each one of us can relate to one other person in that same sort of encounter and can share Jesus Christ within the context of that person's need in life, I think this is realism. This is where Salt really becomes what it ought to be.

## The Church in Action

### Monte Clendinning

When I was a girl growing up in a small Mississippi town, I do not ever remember hearing terms such as "evangelism versus social action" or "ministering to the total person." On the other hand, I shall always have vivid memories of the joy my mother seemed to feel from experiences as she helped people in need through her Sunday School class, through Woman's Missionary Union, or on her own. It seemed she always was involved (and often she had me involved) in such activities as baking cakes for people; helping provide clothes and food for individuals; visiting prisoners in jail, sick people in their homes or the little clinic, or the elderly in the county old folks' home. A person's race or religious beliefs did not stop her from trying to help anyone. I noticed she often gave people gospel tracts. On occasion I heard her also share her faith in Christ with individuals. Later I came to realize that this kind of loving concern resulted from her deep commitment to Christ, which she kept warm and alive through reading her Bible and praying daily.

Making this natural expression of Christian service mine in today's world has led me on a spiritual pilgrimage. I share with you today some of the thinking and some of the experiences I have encountered concerning women as they apply the gospel through the local church.

In trying to make my own faith relevant, I have been confronted with many disturbing situations, particularly in recent years. This polarization of social action and evangelism among individuals and groups within the same church, for example, has been quite puzzling. I remember once I asked a Sunday School teacher, an excellent Bible scholar, if she would help

us with a ministry to women prisoners. Her reply was something like this, "I'm sorry, I can't help; I have nothing to offer women like these." I know this teacher loves the Lord; she rejoices when people are saved; but aren't women prisoners among the outcasts Jesus came to call (Luke 5:32 TEV) and aren't they included in the "Love thy neighbor" about whom Jesus taught (Luke 10:26)?

On another occasion a young woman confided that she had been criticized by several church members because of her involvement in trying to help a group of people in special need. Almost in tears she said, "I'm only trying to do what Jesus did!" And yet some seemed to feel she was not spiritual.

I have seen women in the same Woman's Missionary Union feel somewhat hostile toward each other. Where was the great love for one another which should characterize a fellowship of believers? On one hand, some felt unless a woman was in a Bible study group or a prayer group she was not being a serious follower of Christ. On the other hand, some in the same organization felt that they had time only for trying to meet some of the needs within the community. They overlooked the necessity of the plan to interrelate study, prayer, and action. Some called me a "do-gooder"; others, a "pious woman," when really I was trying to find in my own life Christ's balance between the two.

I agree with Dr. Elton Trueblood when he wrote in *The New Man for Our Time*: "Much of the sadness of the unhappy conflict in the church arises from the fact that it is unnecessary. . . . Though each part of the total gospel that is stressed is itself a valid one, it loses its validity when it is stressed in isolation, until it finally becomes almost as much an evil as a good. Isolation always brings distortion" (page 24).

This conflict led me to re-study the Gospels, and to reflect on the humanity and the deity of Jesus. [If we swing too far toward his deity, losing sight of the fact that Jesus was also a man, we are mistaken. Likewise, when we emphasize his humanity, de-emphasizing his deity, we are wrong.] We must accept them both and keep them in balance.

Is it not the same with social action and evangelism? Jesus taught that we are citizens of two worlds. As Christians—citizens of two kingdoms—we should have dual vision: vision of a man's basic need for Christ in the spiritual realm and vision of man's needs in the physical realm. A Christian's scope of concern should exceed that of a non-Christian. It is not *either* physical *or* spiritual, but both, making ourselves available to help with one or both—according to need and as we have opportunity. If we minister exclusively to physical needs and neglect the spiritual needs of the person or group, what more have we done than any concerned non-Christian in the community?

As I continued my study, I became very much interested in the recorded motive for Jesus' deeds. Why do we do the things we do? Is it because a Sunday School class or mission action group expects us to . . .

or because we need a project . . . ;

or it is the popular thing to do to become involved . . . ;

or do our deeds spring, like those of Jesus, from deep compassion for those in need?

In restudying the dual Commandment of loving God with all our being and our neighbor as ourselves,

I thought back on my feelings when I fell in love with my husband. It seemed that other people, too, became a little more important to me. I felt kinder toward everyone I met; I wanted to be more helpful to others, even people with whom I had disagreed. Something had happened to my emotions which carried over into my relationships with others. How much more is this true when we experience the *agape*-love of God through Jesus Christ that we relate to others in a different manner. It seems, then, we rise

from the level of mere obedience to a command that we love God and our fellowman

to the heights of joy in a full life, a wholeness in life, the abundant life about which Jesus spoke.

One day a member of a mission action group in First Baptist Church, Nashville, carried a hot dish of food to the sick wife of a Vanderbilt graduate student from India. As Lou approached the door, she prayed simply but earnestly, "O God, help me to show them that You really love them." When the mother became critically ill, Sherrard, the father, turned to Lou and asked her to take the tiny baby into her home. She did, in spite of the fact that she and her husband already had five children of their own. Individuals and groups helped with physical needs of the baby.

When doctors at Vanderbilt Hospital realized they could no longer help the stricken mother, alumni of Vanderbilt University chartered a plane, placing money in the husband's pocket, and they were flown to the Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. This was not the first time Vanderbilt personnel had been helpful. From the beginning, the Head of the Physics Department, an active First Baptist member, and his wife had ministered often to the Indian family.

Women of the church continued to pray individually and in groups. In spite of the best care, it became obvious the mother would not get well. Using tickets provided by First Baptist Church, Lou and the baby, Ulka, flew to Maryland, where the family was reunited on Mother's Day. Lou had opportunity to talk with the mother, Ammurate, who asked Lou to sing her "church songs." As Lou sang "What Time I'm Afraid I'll Trust in God," a calm and peace seemed to come over the frightened mother. The next day Ammurate died!

At the husband's request, the pastor of First Baptist Church, Nashville, along with others, led a memorial service where they told of God's love in Christ to the host of church members, Vanderbilt personnel, and scores of students from India who lived throughout the State of Tennessee.

The experience does not end here for Christian concern continued to be extended to Sherrard and to his sister who had arrived from India: a weekday Bible study was begun for Sherrard through the interest of a fellow student and his Sunday School teacher; orientation in baby care and life in the States was offered to the once hostile sister, now softened through friendship and Christian fellowship. Unprecedented doors for good will and Christian witness were now open in the Indian community, and Sherrard's profound appreciation to the church found expression in the dedication page of his physics doctoral dissertation for Vanderbilt University. It is literally impossible for me to know and to enumerate to you today the tremendously large number of individuals touched by

this incident—all put into motion by God's Spirit through one woman's earnest concern that God's love be shown to a family in need.

My study of the Gospels led me to notice that Jesus met the need at hand—whether it was physical or spiritual. According to the Gospel record, sometimes it was both; at other times, just one. As we attempt to let Christ live through us—imperfect instruments—we, too, must be sensitive to needs of individuals and try to be prepared to help. Why is it that often it is easier to use our hands, our feet, our minds, our money than it is to use our lips in sharing our faith in Christ? Most of us react against the idea of button-holing an individual in the spirit of "I'm going to evangelize you!" But if Christ *really* means something to us as we relate to people in our daily lives, we become sensitive to and pray for opportunities of sharing Him naturally in the power of the Holy Spirit. While we can never perfectly meet the needs of our fellowmen, we must try to be totally prepared if we are to minister to the total person.

I remember when our women first organized mission action groups. After making a survey of needs, we prayerfully set up the groups. Many women were overjoyed with the freedom at last to move out into the community on a more sustained basis. Some, in their eagerness to "get on with the job," did not stop long enough to study carefully mission action guides and other helpful materials. After the first three months, the group leaders (study, prayer, and mission action) devoted an entire morning to sharing their experiences. It was thrilling to hear their enthusiastic accounts. It was obvious that many were developing skills in ministry. I had taken for granted that as our women moved out among people of special need they would also share their faith in Christ as opportunity opened. To my astonishment, not a one of the several hundred women involved had attempted to share verbally her faith in Christ during those three months. Many indicated they were not aware that they should when opportunity presented itself; others said they simply did not know how. I am grateful now that we have WIN (Witness Involvement Now) materials to help with this preparation, but at that time we had to adapt materials from other sources to train our women in witnessing.

One of these mission action groups was formed at an established mission of our church. For years some of our faithful women had maintained a Mothers' Club there which offered once-a-week Bible study, lunch, ceramics, and child care to women living in this integrated, government housing area. These First Baptist women, along with women from another church, formed a group to sponsor the Mothers' Club. In spite of declining eyesight, Geneva accepted the role of leader of First Baptist's group when she felt God speaking to her through the study of the mission book, *Asphalt Jungle*. As needs were made known, other dedicated First Baptist women offered their talents: a story-teller, a pianist, a Bible teacher, one who loved children, one who liked to visit, a college sociology professor, a retired dietician, and so on. One Sunday School teacher even felt impressed to help as the result of her own teaching.

With the help of the mission action chairman, Geneva, in her quiet, efficient manner, lovingly led

the group and Mothers' Club members in significant changes. No longer was everything handed out to and done for members of the Mothers' Club. Gradually, the women began to assume responsibility for planning and carrying out plans. Once a month the club members enthusiastically prepared their own lunches from what they had brought from home—everything from fried chicken to delicious turnip greens.

Bible study and Christian training began to result in members' developing a deeper concern for family members, neighbors, and others. Attendance grew. Several women made their profession of faith in Jesus. One member opened her home for a weekly Bible story hour for children in the neighborhood. Some members began to bring a little money to help with expenses, otherwise cared for through Baptist Women's budget, a ladies' Sunday School class, and women from a neighboring church. At Thanksgiving and Christmas now instead of club members just receiving, they also prepared gifts for others, such as making and taking remembrances to elderly residents of a nearby nursing home. Some of the women participated in their first home mission study with Baptist women at the mother church, sharing lunch together.

As First Baptist members came to be involved with families represented in the Mothers' Club, they began to help often in cooperation with government agencies operating in that area: a place was found for a black boy in the home for mentally retarded; Social Security records were straightened out, and funds returned to an elderly woman whose nephews had stolen her checks and forged her signature; and often individuals were helped to discover what help was available and how to get it. As the women moved in and out of the community, they also became increasingly aware of spiritual needs and began to share Christ in a natural manner. This week-by-week love and helpful concern during crises times caused one black club member to say, "When you white ladies first started coming over here, I said to myself, 'Yes sir, here are some ladies with an office to fill.' But now we know you really care about us." Racial differences seem to fade in the background as these women share concerns of their hearts with each other in the spirit of Christ.

Other First Baptist Church members, both men and women, also became involved when they learned of needs in this community. Volunteer workers organized a youth club; later, two all-black boys' basketball teams were organized, using First Baptist's coaches and facilities. As these two teams played the church teams, friendships began to form. One of the black teen-agers joined the choir and later presented himself for church membership. We already had other black members. But in any case, how could anyone not have accepted the boy when he came down the aisle with two of his white friends—both sons of deacons—on either side? In addition, closer cooperation came between the mission and the nearby school through the efforts of a dedicated First Baptist school teacher who visited throughout the community and led the mission Vacation Bible School. A group of Vanderbilt students were enlisted to direct a program for the boys and girls one afternoon a week.

While numerous activities were developing at this mission, many of the real problems were coming to the

attention of the mother church: (1) The day worker had resigned months before. (2) The mission pastor had a terminal illness and having offered mainly a church-oriented ministry, he no longer was able to cope with mounting problems and opportunities in the surrounding community—now about 90 percent black. (3) There was racial prejudice among some of the white adult members of the chapel.

Many of our fellow church members shared our unrest with the slow action of our leadership. Why was something more significant not being done in that highly-needy, interracial opportunity? We talked for hours about the dilemma. We listed the many possible ministries available to First Baptist's gifted 4,000 members. We talked with church leaders; we prayed; we agonized. At one time some Finance Committee members discussed dropping the mission from the budget because of limited funds. Just then we decided to put added emphasis on more personal involvement of our church members in the mission.

Well, my husband suggested that perhaps our family should help at the mission on Sundays. Since I was already involved there on Fridays, I could see real advantage in our being there on Sundays. But was I really ready to take our two sons, 8- and 10-year-olds then, into a different Sunday School and worship where they would have to make new friends? Since the boys had already become Christians, we discussed the proposal together; together we prayed about it; and at the first of the church year, *together* we began to attend the mission. On invitation from the mission pastor, my husband and I taught adults in Sunday School. How much good we accomplished in our endeavor is unknown, but the benefits *our* family received from that experience are invaluable.

Our children learned appreciation for children of different color, background, and standard of living and through them, First Baptist's Sunday School departments from their age groups became interested in children in this economically disadvantaged area. My husband and I became more and more involved in the lives of those adults. From this, we learned that often we need to leave our neighborhood and go across town in order to find people with special needs. Even though there are all kinds of needs at the mother church, they have so many more trained leaders and the mission had so few. This year's experience in the mission community made me wonder if churches shouldn't require a year's internship from every church member in the church's mission.

More and more attention to the crisis in this particular mission was being brought into focus at the mother church. While prayer had been offered up by individuals actively involved at the mission, now specific requests from this area, as well as from others, began to be channeled into the two prayer groups. As we depended more upon the resources of God, solutions to problems, along with new insights, began to come. A leader of one mission action group felt the need of being a member also of a prayer group. The necessary interaction between prayer and mission action was becoming clearer.

The pastor of First Baptist devoted an entire evening worship service to the crisis situation. A presentation was made of what was being done; a delineation

of major needs; suggestions for new ministries there; and then a prayer service was conducted. Little by little things began to move: the church retired the sick mission pastor, caring adequately for his needs; an interim pastor, a white man, was employed along with a dedicated black associate. Not all problems have been solved, but changes are coming as the people have a greater vision of an all-powerful God who is ready to work through the cleansed lives of His children and through their skills and talents offered to Him.

Often women in First Baptist would hear individuals say, "We just aren't doing anything; our church is not relevant; we are not moving out into the community fast enough." Surely it was not all God wanted, but exciting things *were* going on at the same time through many other mission action groups and projects: ministering to adult personnel at the Baptist Children's Home as well as to the children themselves; being a friend to adolescent girls in the juvenile detention quarters and also at the mental hospital; teaching the deaf to speak; visiting in hospitals and nursing homes; befriending internationals and teaching them to speak English; conducting "Happenings" once a week for residents at the nearby YWCA; planning a bridal shower at the church for a seminary student from Liberia, who was a relative of a Baptist world leader; conducting bi-annual clothes drive and stocking emergency food pantries at the missions through a rotating system in the Sunday School. Obviously there was a great need for communication within the large church itself. To help with this problem the women prepared a brochure and organized a tour to the various points where the church was involved in the community. Members of the Missions Committee served as tour guides. Buses were furnished free by a local bus company.

While numbers of women moved out into the community to help with needs, some preferred to use their homes in applying the gospel. By this I mean not only all of us *being* Christian in the home, but opening homes and hearts to individuals with needs. Often this comes with natural contacts through a Sunday School class or other organization. Some women have a natural bent toward working with economically *privileged* people, whom we often forget in mission action. While there are no material needs, there may be many spiritual needs. Some women involve themselves in luncheons, coffees, home Bible and fellowship groups with the purpose of helping women who think they have everything to know Christ and to grow up in Him. Whether using our homes, or moving out to meet community needs, the local church remains central, a reminder that Jesus is the head; we help make up the body.

Several months ago our family moved to Atlanta, where one phase of my husband's work is to help coordinate the mission activities of Second-Ponce de Leon Baptist Church. It has been particularly interesting to us to discover how church members are applying the gospel through this church.

Scores of women in this 4,000-plus membership are involved in such activities as helping with inner-city missions, a well baby clinic in a black community, the state Baptist children's home, Georgia Baptist Hos-

pital auxiliary and visitation, internationals, juvenile work, literacy, responsible citizenship, senior citizens, clothing room and sewing for mission needs. This month a sewing class for internationals has begun. One of the unique ministries in this particular area is that to Cuban refugees.

I wish you could see how Mrs. Louise Boyd's face almost glowed as she shared with me some of her experiences in working with Cuban refugees through the church. "Tante Luisa," as she is affectionately called by many Cubans, has been involved, as have countless other individuals, for many years in helping Cubans to become re-established in their new land.

Our church began such a ministry when Dr. A. H. Letton gave an opportunity to Dr. Maria Martinez to practice with him in Georgia Baptist Hospital. Women and men of the church located a house; and they borrowed, bought, and even painted furniture. When Dr. Martinez' three children and her parents arrived from Miami, all was ready—even clothes for the children and a food shower in the pantry. A transportation committee helped the family to find its way in the large city, bringing them also to church where they were warmly received. Within the circle of Christian friends, the father soon found a job; and as their living conditions stabilized, this family began to assume responsibility for house rent and other expenses. No one put pressure on the family, but through love in action the father and mother came to be a part of the fellowship of believers as they opened their hearts to Jesus.

Church members contacted the Home Mission Board for names of other Cubans who wanted to move to Atlanta, and the process of resettlement continued. Not all Cubans joined the church; this was by no means a requirement. However, there soon developed a nucleus for Spanish Bible study, then several classes, and then a worship service. Last summer this mission called its first pastor, Reverend Ruben Machade, who also had come out of Cuba. Today membership in the mission is forty with about seventy attending Bible study. Each year the Cuban congregation is assuming larger proportions of its own budget. Not only are they maturing as a mission, but also their industriousness and ingenuity to make something from little is an inspiration throughout the community. Their presence within our church also helps to remind us of our world-wide commission.

Women often respond to need when those needs are clearly presented. As an alert Sunday School teacher, Mrs. Ida Patterson, watched an interview on television, she became interested in Renewal House, a new residential center for therapeutic rehabilitation for drug abusers. She led her class to set aside time to hear the chairman of the Board, a Southern Baptist minister who also heads up the alcohol and drug rehabilitation program for the penal system of Georgia. Other classes were invited to join. Soon numbers of church members (men and women) responded to needs presented: many individuals, as well as the Missions Committee of the church, gave money; several women give their time; one, Mrs. Jane Branch, has become Vice-Chairman of their Volunteers. Today this government-funded facility houses thirty-one residents (both black and white) who are accepted as

they are, but who have a desire to be reclaimed through a self-help program under the guidance of a competent staff. Residents, men and women, range in age from one grandmother to three fifteen-year-olds probated by the Juvenile Court.

Recently the generosity of a layman in donating much-needed materials caused a staff member to respond, "I really believe the Lord is in this place." Recognizing that drug abuse is primarily a spiritual and mental "sickness," the Board of Directors is moving toward adding a chaplain to its staff.

While my assignment today is to share experiences of women's involvement through the local church, I do want to relate one incident about a men's Sunday School class. This class of eighteen young executives chose for their class project the rehabilitation of six dilapidated houses in an all-black residential area. As one class member pointed out, "People give food and clothing to those in need, but improved housing is something which is not often provided." Located on either side of a dirt road, the houses had no indoor plumbing and lots were too small for septic tanks. The class, incorporated into Vanguard Housing Corporation, sought to rehabilitate the dwellings, selling them at no profit under the Federal Government's 221-H Program (now 236).

Finances were provided by each class member and a contribution by the church's Missions Committee. Construction loans were borrowed from one of the banks. Jim Pilcher, teacher of the class, donated his legal fees. So that each class member could be involved, committees were organized. The biggest frustration was that this project, originally slated to be completed in six months, dragged out over a period of two years because the first contractor faded out of the picture after the first week, and the second contractor was involved in many projects at the same time. Now completed, all six homes have been sold to residents whose monthly payments are from \$43 to \$58 a month. Where six shacks used to stand near a dirt road, now six attractive three-bedroom, one-bath houses stand on a paved, well-lighted street.

These men took time to get acquainted with leadership in the community, and at the groundbreaking not only was the county commissioner present but also black residents in the community. As they later enjoyed refreshments in a nearby home, one Sunday School class member said, "This is the first time I have ever met socially with black Americans." Finally six families were found who seemed to be ready for assuming the responsibility and joys of home ownership.

In this incident there were no goals related to spiritual welfare but hopefully these men, or some other group from the church, will enter to help with spiritual needs as well as to continue to help alleviate other physical problems.

While the experiences I have shared today are only some from just two churches, women across the nation are increasingly becoming involved. Some may have become too involved and unthinkingly neglect their own families. However, I believe we are beginning to learn some vital truths about applying the gospel through the local church. I am glad I could relate at least one incident about men's involvement. Recognizing what faithful women have done through the

years in personal service, community missions, and now mission action, I feel our churches can never accomplish what Christ intended until *every* born-again believer—man, woman, youth—becomes in the words of Dr. Trueblood “both service-centered and Christ-centered” (page 33, *The New Man for Our Time*).

**GOD HAS COMMANDED US TO BE HOLY** (Lev. 20:7);

The *kind* of instrument we are is most important. While we cannot wait until we are perfect before we are involved in service, we must keep a careful balance between *being* and *doing*.

**CHRIST HAS COMMANDED US TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER** (John 15:12);

I long for the day when having had an encounter with Jesus, we discover the talents and skills He has given us. Then we move out together to serve Him in our unique way, not critical of each other, but respecting the rights of others not to be in our mold—each helping the other toward wholeness—as we love each other devotedly.

**CHRIST HAS COMMANDED US TO LOVE GOD AND OUR FELLOWMAN** (Mark 12:30-31);

As citizens of two worlds, our love is incomplete unless we carry a dual concern for man’s physical needs *and* his spiritual needs. Realizing we may not have opportunity to try to help with both at the same time, we nevertheless must be prepared and available.

**CHRIST HAS COMMANDED US TO GO INTO ALL THE WORLD** (Matt. 28:19-20);

Our world today is wherever our lives touch another life. Let us go urgently. And as we go, using all the technical and scientific resources available, let us move out in confidence and joy through the enabling power of our Living Lord.

To Him Be The Glory!

## On Mission to the Community

### Hull Youngblood

It is with a considerable degree of amazement that I wonder what I am doing here. As you will soon discover, I am not a theologian or a preacher and certainly, as the printed *Proceedings* of this meeting will illustrate, I am not a writer either. All these things are really what most of you are. Very simply, I am the President of a manufacturing corporation in San Antonio, Texas which employs about two hundred and fifty people. We manufacture security equipment for keeping people in and keeping people out. I’m a deacon at Trinity Baptist Church and my background is in the Baptist church from way back. When I was nine years old I remember a clear conviction during a revival meeting that I surrender my life to Jesus Christ. I certainly did not know much about Jesus Christ at

that time nor did I know much about my life. Yet, as much as was within my power, I made the decision to surrender my life to His Lordship. My story is simply what God has done since that time to take me at my word and proceed in directions that have been more amazing to me than to anyone else.

During the years of my schooling including a degree from the University of Texas, the Lord kept me involved in various church activities. Although they didn’t seem too important, I did “keep my hand in,” so to speak, through teaching and other similar work.

After a few years in commercial radio and TV and ten years in the advertising agency business, I joined the Southern Steel Company some twelve or thirteen years ago. It was a small family-owned corporation that ranked about fourth or fifth among nine or ten companies in our field. I hope you get the impression thus far that this was a fairly prosaic, but satisfying and comfortable existence—because it was! But it was not to remain so for very long.

About eleven years ago, the Howard E. Butt Foundation (HEB) opened one of the first “Lay Academy” retreat centers in the United States, called “Laity Lodge.” Howard Butt invited a number of us to the opening weekend retreat. Elton Trueblood was there to lead us in studying one of his latest books at that time entitled *Your Other Vocation*. If you read Buckner Fanning’s book, *Christ in Your Shoes*, you will read what happened to my pastor’s ministry in the years following that meeting. Now, here is what happened to mine.

The turning point came when I underlined Ephesians 4:11-12 in my Bible. At that time I discovered that God’s purpose—for pastors and teachers and prophets, and in fact most of you here today—is not to do my job for me but to equip the “Saints” for the work of the ministry. Frankly, I thought only Roman Catholics could become “Saints.” I was astounded to find out that “Saints” meant me, too. I was astounded to find out that the work of the ministry was really to be done by me, not by the preachers and the staff. In the margin of my Bible, I wrote the New English translation of verse 12, “to equip God’s people for work in His service.”

This three-day session at “Laity Lodge” in the Texas Hill Country with these great Christian leaders seemed to set fire to all the paper and kindling wood I had been storing up in all those years of “going to” church. For the first time, I discovered I *was* the church. Obviously, if the church organization has to evangelize the community, the job will never be done; but if the purpose of the organization is to train Christ’s people to do His work in the world, then the whole thing really fits together, and the world *can* be penetrated and changed for Christ. For the first time, I saw it as something you can really give your life to. For instance, the ten percent tithe you kick into “central headquarters” is in part to help *them* train and equip *you* to spend the other ninety percent the way God wants you to. And that makes sense!

I guess the strategy of penetration was what really “turned me on.” We talked about Jesus referring to His people as salt, light, and leaven. None of these were pictures of a great mass roundup of sinners; but rather each one is a picture of God’s person getting so deeply into the world that he changes the very

character of it, making it better for everyone, and in so doing, glorifying God right where he is. *SALT 72* is the theme of our meeting here, and it's a perfect picture of the Christian's calling in today's world—right where he is.

The salt goes into the meat, loses its own flavor—but it makes the meat better. Light penetrates the darkness invisible by itself until it strikes another object. Then you see the other object clearly, not the light itself. Leaven makes bread taste like bread. You never taste the yeast if it penetrates properly and loses itself in the dough. Your only comment is that the bread is *delicious*.

What a feeling of purpose and freedom when I discovered that all along God had been calling me to do His work right where I *was* (not some other place) and to use the skills I *had* (not give them up for something “more religious”). It meant that my life, and my job, was as important to God as that of a pastor, or a teacher, or an educational director, or a missionary. In fact, of all those, I suddenly felt more like a missionary than any other. To me it meant that God wanted all of my training and knowledge right along with everything else and this I could give him. Instead of the “Christian businessman” idea that I had lived with all along, it suddenly dawned on me that the Lord wanted a Christian in business, where he had called me. And this is something else! When you see yourself as called to a particular business or trade, it doesn't mean being second rate because you are “good” it means being first rate in your job because you are a Christian called to that job. The very image of Christ in you is on the line every hour of every day. The degree of excellence with which I fulfill my occupational obligations is as important in the eyes of God as the degree of excellence with which my pastor fulfills his because, in both cases, other people are examining Christ at work in the world.

How simple when I saw it! My calling is to my family, and to two hundred and fifty employees, and their families and dependents—which total well over fifteen hundred persons. It was right in front of me! All these lives and incomes depended on my actions in the place God had called me to work. Do you think a failure of that company, low wages, or clever racial discrimination would have been the kind of witness Christ would have provided had *He* led that business in person, instead of calling me to do it? I don't think so! Reasonable wages, good working conditions, human self-respect, pride in the job, a good world in which to work—these are the things which honor Christ in the place where He had called me to work and only then would what I say about Him make any difference to the people who knew me best.

My calling is to be the salt and the leaven that makes jobs secure and makes them better. It makes life better for everyone, whether they know it or not. My calling is to produce a profit in the business. Reward the good stewards, the people who cooperate the best and sweat the most to make business succeed for everyone. Jesus didn't require everyone to produce alike; and hence, neither do I. But he did require everyone to do his best and this, too, is what we require. The man who had the talent and did not use it was cut off, our Lord said; but the wounded man on the road to Jericho who could not help himself was given help until he

could. I think when God called me to my place of service He expected me to learn and then to follow these same guidelines.

The most difficult battle over many months, however, was for me to surrender this business to Christ—to honestly put Christ in first place—so that, if I were faced with a real choice, I could say like the missionary, “He called me to work here, so here I am; if He calls me to move on, I'll go.” Now, don't get the idea that all problems were solved or that there were no worries, because just the opposite came to pass. We almost lost the whole ballgame at one point—business and all. But precisely because of this new freedom in Christ, we survived. *Now* there must be ten times the problems we had then, but God has given me the freedom to use resources instead of having resources use me. The freedom to risk is an essential ingredient to any business.

During this time I really decided if the Lord was calling me to be one of His “penetrators,” I would be willing to go. I am still wondering what hit me after that!

The Southern Steel Company grew! We became the oldest and largest company in our field in the United States. Designing and building modern detention institutions in every state, over 5,000 in all. This field requires giving close study not only to inmate and law enforcement problems, but to problems of rehabilitation throughout the land. We have for fifty years employed parolees from the Texas Prison System and other state prisons and consistently have tried to work with persons coming back into society from the world of guards and regimentation. Getting parolees started in meaningful work is a tremendous job. Overcoming their “built-in” difficulties is a problem of enormous proportions.

Possibly because of our experience in this field, or for other reasons (I do not know), I received a call from the White House during the Administration of President Johnson. I was asked if I would volunteer to come to Washington for a special meeting of some businessmen concerning the availability of jobs for the unemployed. As is usually the case with such phone calls, I “volunteered” to go. When I arrived in Washington, I found that the proposal was not a government bureau but a non-profit corporation called the National Alliance of Businessmen (NAB). Henry Ford II was the first chairman.

People like the Chairman of the Board of Coca Cola, the Aluminum Company of America, Pepsi Cola, and Chrysler were there. What I was doing there, I will never know! Vice President Humphrey said, “The government has spent billions to hire the hard-core unemployed, but they are still unemployed. Six out of seven jobs in the country are in the private sector. Maybe we should have done this twenty years ago but now we are turning to you businessmen, asking that you find them the jobs. The government will provide money to cover the cost of training them if you need it.”

It was “simple,” they said. Just get employers across the nation to hire 600,000 people off welfare rolls and get them on payrolls between March, 1969 and July, 1971. To make it even more difficult, the people we were to find employment for were not just the “unemployed” persons, but the “hard-core” unemployed! These “hard-core” people are the ones who have given

up, the ones that the competitive system has passed by. They live on islands of poverty in the American sea of affluence. By some standards, they are called "lazy," but they are not really. For complicated reasons they want to work but are afraid to try for a job anymore because they genuinely feel inferior and have been consistently passed over.

This is the description the government gave us of a typical hard-core unemployed person. He has a sixth grade education, or less; he's been unemployed for eighteen months; he's never received intensive skill training. His parents were unskilled; he lives with an average of one and one-half families; he needs eye-glasses or dental work, and has seen a physician only once in his life. He is married with at least three children; he has absolutely no transportation and can afford to eat only twice a day. He has probably spent at least thirty days in jail, and contrary to public opinion, he is desperately afraid of being fired. He doesn't understand most printed forms and is so afraid to cash a check he may quit his job if you don't pay him in cash. In addition, he has probably never been seriously impressed with the necessity of being on time to any job, nor does he really think this is important.

At this Washington meeting in 1968, I was told our San Antonio goal was to hire, train, and retain 3,000 persons by 1971. And one last piece of information, we had no budget, no staff, and no office! That was when I knew it really was a non-profit corporation and not a government program.

Since I am no sociologist—I have no formal training for this kind of thing, I said, "Lord, why me?" Yet, I did know how hard it was for unemployable ex-convicts to get a job with a prison record and no job skills, except making license plates. I accepted President Johnson's appointment as Metro-Chairman for our city and county of approximately 900,000 people. Somehow, it seemed to me these "unemployables" were truly "the least of these"—the people Jesus talked about on many occasions.

When I returned home, I told Buckner Fanning that the Lord really knew how to call a fellow's bluff in spades. When I said, "Here am I," the Lord called me into a world I had never seen before. It was a world that had been right outside my office door all the time, but only my commitment to Christ made me really aware of it. You can't be any more unprepared than I was, but I began to see what it meant for the Lord to call us "where we are," and with the talents we already have. From Washington I did not go "some place else" (although I felt like it), I went right back to San Antonio to my friends with the Chamber of Commerce and the Public Service Company. They loaned me some full-time executives to work as a staff—free of cost—for the National Alliance of Businessmen in San Antonio.

The next step was to contact several friends who were chief executives of their businesses. I had grown up with most of them. I simply asked them to hire some of these unemployable persons as an example for other businesses. Needless to say, the response was *underwhelming*. After using all the pressure I could exert, my friends came through and our NAB program got started. After these first few businessmen "volunteered" to hire the hard-core unemployed and reported good results, we were able to reach an ever-widening

circle of businesses. Ultimately 150 companies hired over 4,500 hard-core unemployed persons and, in addition, provided summer jobs for slightly more than 6,000 youngsters coming from poverty areas. But *numbers* are not the point of this story. The point is this was something that I had never dreamed of doing, and yet it was exactly what I discovered I have been given the capability to do.

We found thousands of people who wanted out of the poverty cycle just as badly as we wanted to get them out. One man in another town said, "It's like we were living in a cave with a glass wall between us and the outside world. They can't hear us shouting, but if we break through and come out all cut up they won't have nothing to do with us." A black lady from Alabama summed it up very simply when she said, "Welfare is where you go when you ain't going nowhere!"

In every city like San Antonio there's a communication's network which the "non-black" or "non-brown" man seldom penetrates but the word got out that the business community was actually doing something to try to help. It's because what we were doing was real that it began to build a little integrity—a small bridge, but an important one—and only the mind of Christ could have ever let me see it or could have helped me know what to do about it.

During 1969 and 1970, some terrifically tense racial situations developed in the San Antonio inner city. An Urban Coalition was formed, made up of the three B's—Black, Brown, and Business. I was invited to participate because I was in business and also because of our NAB activities. The black community said they thought the NAB businessmen would at least listen, even if they couldn't be trusted.

In organizing, the Urban Coalition couldn't agree on a chairman so they selected one chairman from each of the three groups; each presiding on a rotating basis thirty minutes during the meetings. Everyone distrusted everyone else!

After about six months of this, I received a call one night from the Chairman of the Urban Coalition Nominating Committee. He said they had considered twenty different people for chairman of the Urban Coalition and rejected all of them. He said that because of the NAB program, I was the only one the Nominating Committee thought they could trust and that if I didn't take the job, the Coalition would go out of existence.

Now think about this! This is the last job in the world any white person should accept. I had every good business reason to turn it down. But the mind of Christ gives us the ability to see people and problems around us we couldn't otherwise imagine. I couldn't turn them down! Two years before, I would never have been close to the problem, let alone faced with the responsibility of heading up this organization. I have no knowledge of race relations or the background in psychology or sociology to handle a group of businessmen, ghetto residents, and the Barrios Betterment League—all in the same room. But once again, it was very clear. The call was there—right where I was! I took the job for only one reason: *I was concerned*—through Christ all things are possible—and we just might be able to build some *trust* where only a suggestion of tolerance had begun to grow.

To make a long story short, I accepted. We followed the same procedure of getting loaned-executives to help the Urban Coalition. It was the same procedure we had developed with the NAB. In 1971, I reported to President Nixon that San Antonio had become the only city in the nation where the National Alliance of Businessmen, Urban Coalition, and the Chamber of Commerce all operated from the same building. There were terrific difficulties and arguments, but we did build some trust and a willingness to talk with one another.

Then, another unexpected thing happened. The idea of actually doing something took hold of Christians and non-Christians alike. Men from the Chamber of Commerce, others involved in NAB, women from various clubs, and other citizens became truly interested in doing something about housing, food stamps, schools, clinics, and playgrounds. Among other things, a brand new skill center was developed with a capacity for training 150 persons in marketable skills. It has been operating in full capacity for eighteen months.

The point is this is not a Christian success story. It is just a beginning. What I do know is God led me into it. I would never have been in it except for Christ's working on me for many years. Only Christ maintained a spirit of eye-level-acceptance between me and our black and brown members for over a year.

After that year as Chairman of the Urban Coalition, I was able to tell the Steering Committee that I felt it was Christ's calling that led me to help in getting things started. In my report to the President at a White House dinner, I told him and other NAB business leaders there that I felt it was my calling as a Christian to help people who could not help themselves and to do it in the name of Christ--and more particularly to help in the way I knew best, by getting people jobs and job training.

It is great that my experience is not, and should not, be your experience as far as places and facts are concerned. That is *my* unique calling. What is important is that all of this transpired because of Christ's *doing* inside of me and Christ *in us* can be anyone's experience.

There are other events still going on in this Pilgrimage of mine. It is a real adventure story that unfolds a little more each day. But this I know, wherever the "Saints" are (and I still put the word in quotes) God will provide for people for us to minister to. Whatever occupation we choose is the place God is most likely to call us to minister. I don't know "who" or "where" it is for anyone else but myself, but I do know there is a "who" and a "where" for every Christian on earth. Our mission is in our world among the people who know us best, among the ones who need to see what it is like when Christ works hour by hour and day by day through us. In this way people can not only hear what we say, but more important, they can see *what* we do and know *why* we do it.

I have no more business than a jackrabbit addressing this group of speakers, preachers, and teachers, or talking to other businessmen about hiring the hardcore unemployed, or discussing racial problems, or fooling with any of the other dozen things that have come up in my business. This is where I am and I suppose that's the answer. Most of you already know you have been chosen to help equip others. You are

desperately needed to keep the headquarters going behind the front lines and to keep supplying us with fresh spirit. Train us, prompt us from the wings of the stage! Help us to hear our calling, and once heard, to understand the grandeur and dignity of everyday life! Help us to wake up our spirit, look around and start where we are! Once you start a *live one*, there's no telling where he'll be led as one of Christ's penetrators. We're His leaven, His light, His SALT. And our effect on the world can be like Bernard Ramm's illustration of the lavender factories in France. It seems these factories are the center of small communities where most of the townsfolk are employed processing the lavender brought in from the fields. All during the day the people work in the factory processing the lavender blossoms into scented compounds for soaps, oils, and lotions. Then in the evening at sundown as the people leave the factory, for a few moments the entire village is permeated with the sweet scent of lavender carried by each of the workers going to his home. As our Lord said about the Good Samaritan who helped the man after others passed him by, "Go ye and do likewise."

## The Black Church Applying the Gospel

Kelly Miller Smith

"... the Gospel demands that first fundamental revolution which is called 'conversion' . . . that conversion is not merely internal and spiritual, it affects the whole man, his physical and social as well as his spiritual and personal being . . . the Gospel has always been the most potent ferment of deep social change." (From 16 Bishops of the Third World, as quoted in *New Theology* No. 6.)

"The sole reason for the existence (of Christian theology) is to put into ordered speech the meaning of God's activity in the world, so that the community of the oppressed will recognize that their inner thrust for liberation is not only *consistent* with the gospel but *is* the gospel of Jesus Christ." (By James Cone in *A Black Theology of Liberation*.)

"I heard the preaching of the elder  
Preaching the word; Preaching the word.  
I heard the preaching of the elder  
Preaching the word of God."  
(Black Spiritual)

.....  
"Free at last! Free at last!  
Thank God Almighty, I'm free at last!"

These quotations express what I have to say perhaps much better than I can do it with the amount of verbiage usually required by an occasion of this sort. It is a bit weird that in our business it is expected that you consume a certain amount of time using enough words to "justify the occasion." We are rarely ever willing to admit that it would probably be much better if we ceased and desisted verbally when someone else has already said it. But, so be it.

*Introductory Statement on the Gospel and the  
Black Experience*

Black people in this country not only identify with Third World sufferings in terms of the conditions, the hopes and the aspiration, but we can also identify with the words of the Bishops of the Third World in their comment on what the gospel does: The Gospel has always been the most potent ferment of deep social change." (This statement will be difficult for those caught up in the white religious experience to comprehend.) Blacks have always had a black theology although it has not been called that and had not been worked out in academically respectable terms. Perhaps it is all summed up in the words of the spiritual "I heard the preaching of the elder" and "Free at last! Free at last!"

I submit that the black religious experience and the white religious experience in America are vastly different, that they work toward different goals, that the image of such experiences is quite different in the different communities.

The black church was born as a protest movement and has, therefore, always been more or less on the case for liberation. The white church has hardly ever had the cause of liberation on its agenda at all. The black church has not been caught in the tight mechanistic bag while the white church has given great importance to structure. The black church has readily altered its program to serve its people according to the insights and vision of the pastor. The white church has generally been far more polemical in the defense of certain doctrinal positions than have blacks. This is not to absolutize on either but, rather, to suggest the general direction of both.

American Christendom has hardly considered the black religious experience as more than an amusing aside. It is often seen as an emotional band of illiterate and/or unthinking people who substitute hand clapping for programmatic concerns and the aesthetic of sound for relevant content. When some audacious blacks started insisting that this corpus of experience should be taken into serious account in the curricula of theological seminaries, it was considered by many to be an intrusion in theological education. Others assigned it a token posture—a kind of adjunct to the *real* program of the theological seminary for the purpose of keeping the natives from getting restless. Precious few have seen in it something that is of value for us all as we endeavor to deal with the flesh and blood reality of our world. Since the black church has always been addressing itself to the Third World conditions under which black people live, those of us who have the concerns as suggested by the theme of this conference should set out to learn more of this experience and to see what it can say to us in the present situation.

This window may be dark, but it is not opaque. It is a translucent darkness.

So Vincent Harding,

AN AMERICAN History which cannot contain in the full story of the black pilgrimage is no more worthy than an American society that cannot hear the full and troublesome black presence in its midst.

Just as America can know no survival worth considering unless it finds a way of facing its black

counter image, so too, our history is a tale told by fools if it does not incorporate the Afro-American experience with unflinching integrity. As such open encounter between black and white history should produce the same insecurity as we now experience in the human encounter, so much the better. (*New Theology* No. 6, p. 168.)

*Liberation Is the Content of the Gospel*

The intent of the slavemasters' pastors and church leaders was that religion would serve to tighten the chains about the slaves. It was calculated to make them docile, grinning and cooperative with the system. It was designed to make them obedient to their masters and "whatsoever state they found themselves in, therein, to be content." It seems, however, that God's revelation sometimes bypasses the schools of higher learning and the seminaries and goes directly to those who can do most with it. Without exegetical sophistication, these untutored children of oppression somehow got the message that there was a liberating quality to the gospel.

Even the Bible thumping, fire and brimstone proclaimer of the Word, in order to be consistent, would have to admit that this was a primary concern of Jesus. He was careful to find the passages of scripture which more nearly expressed what he felt to be his mission when he went into the Nazareth synagogue to get things started.

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me; He has sent me to announce good news to the poor, To proclaim release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind; To let the broken victims go free, To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Luke 4:18,19 NEB).

In view of Jesus' showing that his social ministry is based upon the anointment by the spirit and is not in opposition to it, how can conservatives act as if those matters which pertain to human liberation are somehow off limits for those with "spiritual" concern? Carl F. H. Henry has a strange position. In *Evangelicals at the Brink of Crisis* he allows social and political action to come under his "permissive will" and even comes to the brink of giving such action his blessing. Yet, for some curious reason, he considers such action as off limits for the church. The gospel, then, becomes applicable to the individual, but not to the agency to which he relates as a Christian. There must be some brilliant reasoning here, but it eludes me.

Since liberation is the content of the Christian gospel, even when it is proclaimed with distortions and misrepresentations and is proclaimed unfaithfully, it often accomplishes more than its proclaimer intended. The slaves ferreted the message of liberation out of the gospel garbage and debris thrown in their direction.

In like manner, missionaries have aided and abetted the cause of freedom even when they did not intend it. While many, perhaps most of their hearers, accepted the message as its interpreter presented it, there were always those others who could see something deeper—something more significant in it. Perhaps this is a testimony concerning the persistence of the eternal quality of that gospel.

Much of the good that is to be found in the structures of our nation is attributable to the good that is

in the gospel of Christ. At least the pretenses we make with regard to the value of human life and freedom generally—these emanate more from that gospel than from any other source.

The Bishops of the Third World go so far as to assert that “the gospel has always been the most potent ferment for social change.”

The good news, then, is LIBERATION. It is freedom. It is a state of existence which enables a person to rise up to the fullness of his potential to say with deepest meaning and reality: FREE AT LAST! FREE AT LAST! THANK GOD ALMIGHTY, I'M FREE AT LAST! Its implications for us during these times include:

(1) Our looking at radical social change to determine whether the changes taking place are for the better or for the worse. Do these changes free or enslave? This is a serious consideration.

(2) Recognizing that change which is taking place which is moving in the direction of liberation of the oppressed, to decide that God is at work here and, therefore, to join him in that work.

(3) Taking advantage of the technological advances which are part and parcel of this age of radical social change and to use these advances for the cause of liberation of the oppressed.

(4) Refusing to allow ideological differences to deter us in our labors for the cause of liberation when those engendering positive radical social change do not represent that which, in fact, is self defeating although their structures and orientation may be radically different from our own.

### *Liberation and Love*

Those who would give full place to something which they call “spiritual freedom” while seeking no relationship between this profession of faith and the social implications of the gospel are missing the heart of the gospel message. Liberation is relational. It necessarily involves other persons—other selves. It seeks to correct the I-it relationship and change it to I-Thou.

To be sure, to obtain liberation in its fullest sense, one must fight for it. He must strategize for it; he must do many things in order for it to become a reality for him. The reason, of course, is that the privileged do not give up any part of their advantage without a struggle. The haves do not willingly give up what they have for the have-nots. Those who comprise the power structures of our society do not give up the economic advantages which they receive from the practice of oppression without a struggle. That is what the struggle for liberation is all about. That is why the issue of economics is so important. Many of the recently liberated nations of Africa are still in the position of having their former colonizers hold great economic power over them. They may have formally given up the powers of government, but that economic stranglehold gives them tremendous power and authority.

Liberation calls for struggle and it is relational. We find ourselves caught up in the throes of a serious problem when we recognize that the Christian faith demands of us the principle of love as a regulatory factor in our relations. But how are we to love those whom we must fight?

I would like to make some observations on the practical level with regard to the issue of love and liberation. I purposely chose to make these comments on the practical—nontheoretical plane because I feel that we may well fail to deal with the real issue if we get involved in some of the ivory tower discussions of the classical concepts of love.

*Observation 1:* Self-love is a basic requirement for loving others. Those who do not love themselves can not really love others. (“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”) The most serious harm done black people, in this country, by far is that which has been done to the minds; to the self-esteem of blacks. Colonization of the mind is a result and blacks, all too often, have negative self-images. The liberation sought has liberation of *the mind* as a basic aspect.

One of the practical effects of the Black Power movement has been to correct this negative self-image on the part of many blacks. The phrase, “Black is beautiful,” aims at correcting the notion that that which is black is, by virtue of its blackness, ugly.

This is taken far enough to include the development of black communities where blacks will have only to deal with themselves. Julius Lester points out that this is not hatred of the white man; he says that we have no energy nor time to hate him. We simply ignore him. We have things to do which will help blacks build their own self-esteem and self-love.

Perhaps love of others is farther down on the agenda.

*Observation 2:* Love becomes profound when those who love are free—free enough to choose between the deeds of love and the deeds of the opposite of love. (Between violence and non-violence, for example.) People who are not liberated; who have no self-determination; who are not in a position of power where they could do evil if they desired, are not in a position to express profound love. Liberation, then, becomes something of a prerequisite for profound love.

*Observation 3:* Many persons of the black community agree with novelist John Killens that profound love can only be experienced between equals. This view is challenged by Vincent Harding and others, but the notion does prevail.

Perhaps there is a harsh side to love. Perhaps this love is like that of a surgeon who must perform a painful operation which subjects the patient to the possibility of death, but it is a necessary corrective and is designed to yield only good.

It may be that the matter of seeking the place of love in the task of liberation can best be met if we see Jesus as the personification of love. He was tender at times and he was tough at times. He lifted weighty burdens from the stooped shoulders of his confused contemporaries but he also did not mind telling it like it is to the pro-establishment, Pharisees and law and order and scribes. He gave directions to the response to this need. It is a recognition of certain realities that have been overlooked all too often.

That which has carried the banner of racial integration has more often than not been just another instance of the application of white power to black people. (Someone has referred to this as powerless conscience being confronted by conscienceless power.) Black people in so called racially integrated religious organizations, social organizations, and the like have found out that they are merely going through charades

when they attend the meetings because the decisions will already have been made when they get there. Powerlessness is debilitating and demoralizing. It is a chief enemy of dignity and equality.

James Cone has called the black church the precursor of black power and Rosemary Reuther refers to it as black power actualized. It has been a microcosmic example of the kind of liberation and power sought by blacks on all levels.

### *The "Otherworldly" Emphasis*

Some have felt that the black church was not really coming to grips with the problems of powerlessness because of otherworldly emphasis. Of course, it must be confessed that this has at times been an escapist route taken by some black churchmen. This may well be a reflection of the white influence upon the black religious experience. There is more that could be said about this, however.

(1) Much of the otherworldly emphasis of black religion in the past is a direct indictment of the white power structure. It is not unlike the position which separatists take regarding the unimprovability of white people—particularly those who are in positions of authority. To take the otherworldly route is to suggest that things are not going to get any better as long as The Man is in control. It is to concede that the white oppressors are devoid of the capacity to become more humane. Therefore, the only route is to find some area where his "conscienceless power" can not become a problem.

(2) Many times the otherworldly emphasis was used by black people as a vehicle of defiance of their white slavemasters. For example, they had been told by their slavemasters' pastors that God was the author of segregation and that, in order to be consistent, God would have Heaven segregated. Blacks began to sing! "I've got a robe; you've got a robe; all of God's children have got robes. When I get to heaven, I'm going to put on my robe and I'm going to shout *all over* God's heaven."

(3) Of course, there were times when otherworldly terminology was used as a camouflage for the real meaning. During slavery the promised land was often Canada, the terminal point for the Underground Railroad.

### *Social Programs and Black Churches*

Black churches are currently involved in many social programs which are interpreted as responsive to the gospel and which certainly spell good news for the powerless.

The work of Dr. Leon Sullivan in Philadelphia and all across this country is a case in point. He recognized the economic plight of black people and started a movement to improve that lot. First, it was a protest movement which served to open doors to blacks. Next, he began a gigantic training program which has taken thousand of black persons—and others—off the welfare rolls and places them on pay rolls.

Many black pastors have led in housing programs and in other kinds of programs which greatly improve the lot of their people. These are persons who have found ways of making the system work for them. This does not negate the reality of Malcolm X' statement that black people are not members of American

society; we are victims of that society. Some clergymen and their churches have worked successfully to change that to a significant extent.

### *The Black Caucuses*

Some effort has been made to recapture something of the preemancipation aggression of the black church by forming what some have termed "the black power clergy groups." Virtually all of the predominantly white denominations have black caucuses. They are aggressive groups of blacks who are not leaving the predominantly white denominations nor are they going to let their power structures rest. The unrelenting demands of these black churchmen have yielded much good already.

Money from large denominations has been placed in black banks; black staff persons have been added and many of these have served great and useful purposes in the interest of black people. (To be sure, whites have at times selected the kind of people who would defend the status quo also.) Significant social programs have been started by these religious groups as a result of pressure from the caucuses. A new look at Africa and its needs and our responsibilities has resulted. The formation of the National Committee of Black Churchmen is a result of this development.

### *Summary Statement*

We do not deny that there are black churches and black pastors who are not on the case for liberation and who are as addicted to "verticalism" as are some whites. Yet, the other side of the picture must not be overlooked. The church is ministering to the black community in exciting ways. Liberation is, indeed, the content of the Christian gospel and Jesus Christ is, first and foremost, the Great Liberator.

We invite you to join us in this vital ministry of liberation. And after liberation, let us delve into the meaning of reconciliation.

## **Applying the Gospel in the Political Arena**

**Daniel R. Grant**

I have been asked to talk about "Applying the Gospel to the Political Arena." Sometimes I feel pretty lonely in making this kind of pitch because basically I'm saying I believe we ought to mix politics and religion. This causes some of my Southern Baptist colleagues to say, "This is bad religion." We've heard all our lives that we should not mix politics and religion. Indeed, it causes many of my political scientist colleagues to say, "This is bad politics and bad political science." They want no part of the religious dimension in politics. But I happen to believe that both groups are wrong and I want to share with you some of my views in this matter of "Applying the Christian Gospel to the Political Arena." I want to focus on two broad questions. One is the question "Why?" and the second is the question "How?"

### *Why?*

Why is it important for the Christian to be in-

fluential and effective in the political arena? I think there is, first of all, an answer for all citizens, not just Christian citizens, which simply is that government is important in all kinds of ways. If I had time I would ask you, as I have asked classes in political science, to do a little daydreaming and to consider what you would like your life and your world to be in the year 2000. Look ahead and just pipe dream, if you will, on the ideal situation for you and the world in the year 2000. As soon as you have come up with this kind of picture, even if you make it a realistic one and not so much a utopian one, ask the question, "What thing or things could mar this picture of the world for me in the year 2000?" Then, start naming these things. As you start thinking of sickness, of premature death, of economic disaster, of break up of the family, of racial tensions, of poverty, and of all sorts of other things that we could name here that might mar the picture, then I would ask one more question, "Which of these things that might mar the picture are related clearly to politics and government?" I would almost defy you to name any one of these that is not. There may be one or two but on a list of fifteen or twenty, I doubt seriously if there is any one that does not have a strong relationship to government and politics. Government and politics have strong sway over the things that will make or break your life in the year 2000 and, indeed, each year between now and 2000. Now, whether you are a Christian or not, government is important to you as citizens. So, all Christians are citizens; therefore, I would argue for this reason that the Christian should be active and influential and effective in the political arena, working for the things he believes in.

But there is a specific answer to the question "Why?" I would argue that the Christian has a special stake in politics that the non-Christian does not have. And this is in at least three respects.

First of all, only through government do we have protection of religious freedom. We take it for granted in the good old U.S.A. because we have it, but rest assured it is not guaranteed. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty no matter how much that is a cliché or a trite saying. It is true in politics, and the political scientist will confirm it that if we do not work actively and effectively to maintain religious liberty, we will not have it. It just doesn't happen. So, we as Christians have a special stake in religious liberty, the right to share our faith in the marketplace. Someone has said that in certain countries you can only sing it and if you sing it too effectively in those countries, you can be sure that you won't stay very long. Religious liberty is interpreted in some countries as meaning only the right to believe within the mind a certain faith as long as it doesn't affect your conduct, affect your teaching, or affect your criticism of the state. Well, I don't need to elaborate on that but I think for this reason Christian people have a very special stake in being effective in politics.

Secondly, the government protects and encourages the widely accepted moral order of the community and the nation, and we as Christian people have an important stake in this. If for no other reason than our desire to have our children to grow up in the kind of community where they are not constantly exposed to pushers of dope and narcotics, we would

like to give them a little freer chance to make their own decision later on when they are more mature and more able to decide as to whether they will partake of this or that or the other thing. This would go for obscenity, it would go for alcoholic beverages, it would go for all sorts of other things we could name that government tends to protect because of a strong moral content in our laws.

The third reason that I feel Christians have a special stake in the political arena relates to the matter of how we love our neighbor in 1972. You know, it was fairly easy, I suppose, in a rural society and setting to know what it means to love our neighbor as an individual, in a one-to-one relationship. But here we have 3½ billion people in this world and, as I read the New Testament, each of these is my neighbor. How on earth do we love our neighbor when there are 3½ billion neighbors? It is not an easy question, but I want to go back and reread with you the story of the Good Samaritan. I am reading from the *Good News for Modern Man* version. Listen very carefully because you may not have realized what modern speech translation does to the story of the Good Samaritan.

Then a certain teacher of the Law came up and tried to trap Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to receive eternal life?" Jesus answered him, "What do the Scriptures say? How do you interpret them?" The man answered: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'" "Your answer is correct," replied Jesus; "do this and you will live."

But the teacher of the Law wanted to put himself in the right, so he asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered: "A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when robbers attacked him, stripped him and beat him up, leaving him half dead. It so happened that a priest was going down that road; when he saw the man he walked on by, on the other side. In the same way a Levite also came there, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by, on the other side. But a certain Samaritan who was traveling that way came upon him, and when he saw the man his heart was filled with pity. He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Take care of him,' he told the innkeeper, 'and when I come back this way I will pay you back whatever you spend on him'" (Luke 10:25-35 TEV).

[And on the very next day the Samaritan was returning on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem and he came upon another man who had been attacked by robbers, stripped, beaten up and left half dead. And the Samaritan's heart was again filled with pity. He poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them and then he put the man on his animal, and he took him to an inn where he took care of him. And again on the next day, he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. And again he said, "Take care of him and when I come

back this way, I will pay you back whatever you spend on him.”

And on his return trip from Jerusalem back to Jericho for the third time, the Samaritan came upon another man who had been attacked by robbers, stripped, beaten up and left half dead. And the Samaritan's heart was again filled with pity, but the mind which God gave him was deeply troubled. He began to wonder if an ounce of crime prevention was not worth many pounds of roadside cures.

While he ministered to the half-dead man and took him to the inn for treatment and care, he pondered many things, for he had been exposed both to the teachings of Christ about loving his neighbor and to Political Science 100 at Jericho University. Forthwith he proceeded to Jericho and organized his friends into the Jericho Association for the Promotion of Better Police Protection and Street Lighting on the Road to Jericho. And forthwith the JAPBPPSLRJ presented the need to the Jericho City Council and after much spirited discussion finally appropriated funds for such a program. Realizing that the suppression of crime was not the total answer, the Samaritan proceeded to lead his friends into forming another association, the Jericho Association to Provide Vocational, Educational, and Recreational Opportunities for Teenagers Who are Prospective Criminals. Because of his strong Christian commitment and political expertise, this program was also adopted by the Jericho City Council and many young people were turned away from a life of crime. When Jesus had concluded the parable, he asked the teacher of the Law, “Was the political activity of the Samaritan an act of love of his neighbor?” And the teacher answered, “Yes.” And Jesus said, “You have answered wisely.”]

Well, let me apologize for taking some liberties with the story of the Good Samaritan! But I really believe this might very well be how Christ would tell this story in 1972 in an urban society overpopulated. I think he would very well say that preventive charity is even greater than curative charity. Love that prevents suffering and pain and injustice and evil is even greater than love that eases the pain after it occurs. I am suggesting that our Christian imperative is to love 3½ billion people in a world of intensive need. And I believe that Christ wants us to love our neighbor wisely and I'm convinced that this involves in many cases more than just the individual one-to-one relationship of love which we all commend and which we are under obligation to continue. Indeed, it is an obligation; it is what we will do as Christians. But I think we need to get to the stage also of saying that we will do in groups, private groups, churches, community chest, all sorts of things that may also serve our fellowman. Ultimately in this day and time many of the things that will serve our fellowman most and best are the things that we will do through political action, through governmental action. So, basically, then, this is the question of “Why?” for influential, effective, active involvement in the political arena.

#### *How?*

The next question which you may say in some ways is even more critical and more seriously misunder-

stood is the question “How?” How does one go about being effective in the political arena? There are so many things that we could talk about as to what is involved in being effective, but let me just summarize two or three that might be grouped together into the category of the major need for most Christian people; and I would testify as a Southern Baptist. Most Southern Baptists need to unlearn some things about American politics. That is, they need to be aware that some of the things they learned are a part of a mythology of American politics. Let me mention just three of them.

Myth number one is that politics is dirty. This is probably the keystone in the arch of all the mythology about American politics—politics is dirty. You don't have to argue it, everybody believes it. There is just no need to prove it because everybody knows that politics is dirty. But I am suggesting that this is a myth. Why is it that it is always open season on dirty politicians and dishonest politicians? I suppose there are more jokes in the joke book under the heading of a dishonest politician than just about any other category in the index of any book. I heard one just the other day which defines the honest politician as the man who, when bought stays bought. We have a million of them that are just about like that. Have you ever thought, though, that in a democracy, politics is the way that people govern themselves? It is the instrument for democracy. Yet, have you ever heard anyone say that democracy is dirty? I really don't believe I have ever in all my life heard anyone say that democracy is dirty; yet, as a political scientist I say that it is simply an analytical fact that politics is the way that democracy works in the United States. Still, we all believe that politics is dirty. Why is this? Why this strange paradox?

Well, we could spend a great deal of time on this, but let me just suggest two things.

First of all, I think it is because we have required that politicians—more than people in any other sector of public life—work in a goldfish bowl. I could accept the notion that politics is dirty if by this we meant that all people, that mankind, is dirty. This is true if we are talking about original sin and talking about a sinful tendency in all people, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. If this is what we mean by politics being dirty, I can accept this. But we reserve it only for government and politics. We never say in this sense that these other sectors of life—running a business, running a bank, running a labor union, running a Boy Scout troop, running the community chest, even running a church—are dirty. We just say that running the government is dirty. The one reason for this is that we require that politicians operate in a goldfish bowl. We require by law that the press be right there while the city council is acting, while the state legislature is acting, while the board of commission is acting and making its decisions, while Congress is acting. Have you ever wondered what our attitude would be toward these other decision-making segments in American society if we also had the cameras grinding right there in their decision-making processes? For example, for the deacons' meeting in a Baptist church? You know, the image isn't all that good anyway, but if you had cameras grinding in every deacons' meeting in your church, can you imag-

ine what the image would be rather quickly? Or a bank board of directors meeting? Suppose the bank had to open its decision-making process on who got what loans in what part of town and what color of the skin was involved and whether they did or didn't get the loans? Wouldn't it be something if the press had access to banks' boards of directors meetings? Or, I shudder to confess this, what about that holy of holy faculty meeting in colleges and universities if the press were there and the cameras were grinding? I hesitate to suggest that even the press might be involved, but what about the editorial board meetings of our newspapers if the editorial policy decision-making process were opened up to the competitor newspapers and the press were there sitting in, reporting on the action of their competition?

But I am suggesting we don't require this openness of any other group except the politician.

Here is a second thing. I think we really have a double standard of morality for a politician. We accept certain things in every other segment of American society except in governmental officials. If the governmental official does it, then he is branded as a scoundrel, dishonest, and dirty. He is the scum of the earth. In all the talk recently about a certain company making a contribution to a certain political party with the possibility that a decision on an antitrust suit might be affected by this, really all I have heard is "those dirty, crooked politicians." That is what the newspapers are reporting. Nobody has ever really talked about that dirty corporation. If they do, it will be a fleeting period here that struts and frets just seconds across the stage and then is heard no more, but the residue that remains will be dirty politics.

Well, I don't want to get to preaching too much there or Foy will start harassing me. I am just suggesting we have a double standard here and I personally believe that politicians are no more dirty than people in other walks of life. The politics of running government is no more dishonest or dirty than the politics of running a labor union, a corporation, a bank, a college—and perish the thought—the politics of running a church. The politics of running the government may be a little bit cleaner simply because they are forced to operate in the public limelight this way. If your attitude is that politics is dirty, then you will be less effective and less influential in the political arena. You will be more effective and more influential if you have a healthy attitude toward politics as being a part of the real live world like everything else. You have to be the Christian leaven in that lump just as you are in the other marketplace lumps. It will hamper your effectiveness if you are a party to that kind of mythology.

Myth number two is this: voting is the most important single act of the citizen in a democracy. I say this is a myth because voting is not the most important act in being influential and effective in political action to get things done that you want done for good causes that you believe in. There are several things more important than voting. For one thing, being an active member of a political party and working in it and being influential in it and being in the smoke-filled rooms where the key decisions are made. This is far more important than just casting one single

vote. Now, please don't misquote me. I am not saying that voting is unimportant. We are talking about a rank order of priority here and I am saying that active political party membership and action is far more important than voting. Secondly, being an active member of one or more pressure groups or political interest groups, working for a single issue or cause that you believe in very strongly with other like-minded individuals is far more important in being an influential, effective citizen than just casting your vote. There is strength in unity and working through one or more political interest groups, or pressure groups as they are called. In properly urging people to vote we have almost made a sacred ritual out of this voting every four years. You know it is leap year when we come up to a presidential election and it is a kind of leap-year citizenship that we are really promoting; so, all you have to do is wait every four years and then go and cast that ballot and then you have that sanctimonious, pious feeling that you have done your duty and can forget it for another four years.

We have slogans emblazoned on all sorts of advertising media: "Vote as you please, but please vote." And it almost says it does not really matter how you vote, but vote. This sort of notion is implying that voting is the most important thing.

I would suggest that the citizen who is just a voting citizen—that's about it, this is really the measure of his political action—is a kind of leap-year citizen very much like the Sunday Christian. He goes on Sunday and does his thing and then it doesn't matter or affect his life Monday through Saturday. The leap-year citizen is really a very ineffective citizen, a relatively weak and impotent sort of citizen. So, I am suggesting that while voting is important—and I don't mean to downgrade voting since it obviously is the keystone of democracy and all the other political processes of democracy would not work without it—it may be about five percent of being an effective citizen while all the other things come nearer to being 95 percent. We need to stress the importance of being a full-time effective citizen.

Myth number three is where I may step on toes; so, please wait until after the worship service which is going to make you all loving in spirit and understanding before you decide to tar and feather me! Myth number three goes something like this: the independent voter is morally and intellectually superior to the party-line voter. You have all heard that the independent voter is intellectually and morally superior to the party-line voter. This is one of the most persuasive myths in all of American politics and I won't dare embarrass you or me by having a show of hands on how many support that particular mythology. Let me suggest that it is a very, very persuasive case that is made for this. It is said that the person who does not stoop to filthy, dirty party politics but coolly, calmly, wisely, intelligently surveys all of the issues, picks the man and not the party. He is intellectually superior. He is above it all and has a rather smug self-satisfied view that he has been above dirty party politics. "I vote for the man not the party" is the slogan here. My suggestion is that if we are talking about each one of you in this room being effective and influential in politics, if that's the name of the game we're talking

about, then I am suggesting that you will be less influential as an "independent citizen, independent voter, nonparty line man, nonparty loyalist man." You will be less effective, less influential than the partyline man. You may very well be the non-participating citizen because—when you pull yourself away from party alignment and party loyalty and from the kind of mutual trust that party workers feel for each other, when you leave because you've lost a vote inside the party and say, "Well, I didn't get my way; so, I can't vote with the party anymore, I am going to leave"—you have cut yourself off from the real decision-making process in our nation.

I have heard people say, "Well, I'll wait. I'm the independent swing voter and in November I'll vote either party, whichever is the best man." But really you have cut yourself off from the real decision-making process which is several stages back of the election and back of the primary, where the real choice was narrowed down. Your choice is only a choice between two pre-picked candidates and the pick was made by the less independent types, the people who were actively involved in the political party and were committed to work in that party, losing sometimes, winning sometimes but always working for what they believed in in that party. I have often suggested this kind of analogy for the independent citizen: to me the independent citizen who refuses really to be involved in a party, is very much like the independent church member, or I should say the independent Christian who refuses to be a church member. I have really stepped on some pastors' toes here. The Christian who says, "I am not going to be corrupted by all those hypocrites. I am going to lead the pure, clean, pristine life. I am not going to get involved in the corrupting influence of joining a church or being involved in a denomination in this way. You see, I'll get my rifle and I'll go off to war by myself." I am suggesting that the independent voter is no more superior to the partyline voter than the independent nonchurch member Christian is to the church member and denomination-affiliated Christian.

Well, one other comment remains before the tarring and feathering takes place. I would like to anticipate a question or two, particularly of the pastor and his role because this is a very difficult one as it respects partisanship and commitment to the party, the pastor, the clergyman, and the denominational worker. I am not kidding myself, this is a very difficult one and there are practical limitations on the clergyman, the denominational worker, and on a church as a church in taking sides between political parties in contest. I have been talking about the individual citizen primarily, but I am not going to let you pastors off scot free on this matter of partisanship. There is a danger, of course, of the pastor or the denominational worker appearing to speak for the church or for the denomination if he becomes actively involved in politics. In spite of all we know about Baptist churches and their strong autonomy and this kind of thing, to the public it will *seem* that the pastor or the denominational worker or the President of the Southern Baptist Convention is speaking for Southern Baptists. We know that he cannot do that but much of the public does not know it. So, there is this kind of danger. I

would add it is not just an ethical problem of purporting to speak for people when you really do not—this is an ethical problem of speaking for the whole church when there may be a minority that does not agree with you. But it is also a matter of questionable political strategy for a pastor or a denomination to take a stand as a church or as a pastor in partisan issues. When I say it is questionable political strategy, I am merely saying that it is bad politics sometimes. We have seen cases where a religious spokesman steps right out and in effect commands his parishioners to vote thus and so—or he seemed to say that. It comes out in a sense trying to deliver the vote of the Protestants or of the Catholics or of the Baptists or of some other group in a given election. You know, this can cause a backlash and frequently it will just be bad politics to try to do it. Voters have a way of resisting this kind of thing. So, I am suggesting that on two counts there are practical limitations here.

But there is the opposite extreme and I would warn against this. This is simply retreating into the role of a kind of political eunuch, and we don't need this kind of role for our religious leaders either.

There are many things that the pastor can do short of party endorsements. He can encourage church members to participate actively in party politics, in party decision-making all along the line. Quite frankly I don't know of many pastors who do this and I think just in the sheer matter of helping members of the congregation to become effective in politics the pastor can do a great job in saying, "Find the party that is closest to your center of gravity and get in it and work. It is a healthy thing to do, it is a Christian thing to do, and it is effective in working for what you believe in." Secondly, the pastor can help the congregation to be informed on all kinds of little publicized facts that the public may not have access to. The pastor's job is to stay heavily informed on these kinds of facts that the congregation simply will not have access to and help members to apply the Christian faith to these issues. These are the issues that the parties ought to be taking a stand on and I think the kind of heat that pastors can build up will require parties to take stands on these issues. It will not happen, though, unless they are helping congregations all over the land to put the pressure on and to put the heat on. Finally, I think pastors can encourage their members and qualified people in general to run for office and to run for partisan office, to have a healthy attitude toward partisanship. I would say the real risk here—and I'm more concerned about this because of the pattern that we have tended to have—is that the official non-partisanship of the pastor as he wears his hat as pastor and representative of the church will be misunderstood and misinterpreted by the congregation as being an example which all church members should follow. I think he has an obligation to make it clear to church members that there is a difference between his role as a spokesman for the whole congregation and his role as a teacher to be effective in the political arena, to be salt in the political world. So, I would say the pastor has a real obligation here to be actively involved in an effective political action program.

Now, I apologize for filibustering. I think we have

a little bit of time here for questions. It is always a good technique to filibuster completely so that there are no questions, but I think what I have been trying to say to you is that the Christian has a great stake in the political arena. He has a real obligation to learn

how to be effective in politics and he needs to acquaint himself with some of these myths of effective politics. I would challenge you to do all that you can to help the Christian to learn the politics of loving his neighbor.

## THE CELEBRATION OF HOPE

### PRELUDE

### THE MINISTRY OF SILENCE

"Study To Be Quiet"

*An Invitation to Celebration*

(To be spoken as loudly as is necessary to be heard)

- Leader:** Can you hear me? Testing—testing, one, two, three, four—Can you hear me?
- Celebrants:** YES! WE CAN HEAR YOU. BUT JUST BARELY.
- Leader:** This is disgusting! This is no way to begin worship. What are we going to do?
- Celebrants:** GO ON WITH OUR WORSHIP, OF COURSE. WE'VE HEARD THESE SOUNDS BEFORE. THEY ARE A PART OF OUR WORLD. WE HAVE TO DEAL WITH THEM AND WHAT THEY SYMBOLIZE.
- Leader:** You mean we can worship in spite of these distractions?
- Celebrants:** YES, INDEED, AND MAYBE EVEN CELEBRATE. THESE SOUNDS MERELY BRING OUR REAL WORLD IN FOCUS, GIVING ACCENT TO THE HEIGHT AND DEPTH OF OUR WORLD-VIEW. THIS IS WHERE WE LIVE.
- Leader:** I get the idea. Celebration is God's great "nevertheless" in the midst of the loud realities of life.
- Celebrants:** RIGHT! CELEBRATION ORIGINATES OUT OF THE SOUND AND FURY OF OUR LIVES, NOT APART FROM IT.
- Leader:** That is something to celebrate. Go on.
- Celebrants:** GOD GETS THROUGH TO US WHERE WE ARE—UP TO OUR NECKS IN LIFE —CALLING US TO JOY IN THE MIDST OF DESPAIR, DEPTH IN THE MIDST OF SHALLOWNESS AND LIFE IN THE MIDST OF DEATH.
- Leader:** I know. That's the way He came to Abraham, Moses and the prophets. But it was quieter then.
- Celebrants:** YOU ARE ROMANTICIZING OUR PAST. THEY HAD THEIR TIME. NOW WE HAVE OURS. THE TIME FOR CELEBRATING GOD'S PRESENCE IN THE WORLD HAS COME. WE ARE NOT GOING TO BE THREATENED. CELEBRATION DOESN'T RUN THE COMFORTABLE MIDDLE WAY.
- All:** SHOUT OUT YAHWEH'S NAME IN PRAISE. LET GOD'S WORD BE HEARD ABOVE MAN'S WORDS. HE GIVES US THE HOPE TO BECOME VICTORS AND NOT VICTIMS IN OUR NOISY WORLD.
- Hymn: "Let God Be Praised" .....Phillip Landgrave
- Soloist:** In this life's confusion  
and man's delusion,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!  
While the wars are raging  
and hope is aging,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!
- All:** PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW!
- Soloist:** When the noises thunder  
and sense goes under,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!  
When all thoughts are cluttered  
and prayers are muttered,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!
- All:** PRAISE HIM ALL CREATURES HERE BELOW!

*Soloist:* For above the clatter  
are things that matter,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!  
They're within His power  
this very hour.  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!

*All:* PRAISE HIM ABOVE YE HEAVENLY HOSTS!

*Soloist:* Surely He will hear us  
for He is near us,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!  
For the One who made us  
would now invade us.  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!

*All:* PRAISE FATHER, SON, AND HOLY GHOST!

*Soloist:* Here we come before you  
and now implore you,  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!  
Lord come and take us  
and then remake us.  
Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised, Let God Be Praised!

#### SAYING WHO WE ARE

*Leader:* Who are we anyway?

*All:* WE ARE HUMAN BEINGS ON THE PLANET EARTH.  
WE ARE THAT GROUP OF HUMANITY FINDING MEANING FOR REALITY  
IN JESUS OF NAZARETH AND THE FATHER GOD HE REVEALS.  
WE ARE CHILDREN OF FATE AND FAITH AND THE LINE BETWEEN  
THE TWO KEEPS SHIFTING.  
WE ARE SODBUSTERS AND LANDED GENTRY.  
WE ARE CITY DWELLERS AND TOWN DWELLERS.  
WE ARE THE NEW BREED WTH OLD FEARS.  
WE ARE ENABLERS AND THE ENABLED.  
WE ARE PROGRAM PUSHERS AND PROGRAM DEFENDERS.  
WE ARE ROLE MAKERS AND ROLE PLAYERS.  
WE ARE FATHER CONFESSORS AND BROTHER SUFFERERS.  
WE ARE SEARCHERS FOR SYMBOLS WHICH REMIND US OF OUR  
HOPES AND VISIONS.  
WE ARE PILGRIMS IN THE CITY OF MAN, SEARCHING FOR THE  
CITY OF GOD.  
WE ARE AFFIRMERS THAT THE SEARCH IS GOOD AND BLESSED WITH  
CONSTANT CHALLENGE.  
WE ARE AFFIRMERS THAT THE LIFE OF CHRISTIAN SERVANTHOOD  
CAN BE AS EXCITING AND RELEVANT AS WE HAVE COURAGE TO  
MAKE IT.  
WE ARE AFFIRMERS THAT THE PROPHETIC COMMUNITY IS BLESSED  
BY THE CONTINUING PRESENCE AND POWER OF GOD.  
WE ARE THE SALT PEOPLE, SEEKING TO STIMULATE THE TASTE  
BUDS OF AN INSIPID SOCIETY.

#### *A Call To Confession*

*Leader:* Let us confess our involvement in the sin problem, lest our unforgiveness spoil the  
joy of celebration.

*Celebrants:* BUT YOU KNOW HOW DIFFICULT IT IS TO LOOK AT OURSELVES, WHERE DO WE BEGIN?

*Leader:* By simply taking the plunge with a forgiving, accepting God.

*Celebrants:* BUT WE HAVE SO MUCH UNFINISHED BUSINESS WITH OUR GUILT. THERE IS HIDDEN UGLINESS IN US. DEEP DOWN WE ARE FULL OF FEAR AND AMBIVALENCE. THE THOUGHT OF SEEING OURSELVES AS WE REALLY ARE IS ALMOST INTOLERABLE.

*Leader:* I know. I feel the same way. But we are not alone, neither in holding these feelings nor in our fear of their exposure. So come on, people, now smile on your brother and let us confess together our sin.

*All:* MOST FORGIVING GOD, HEAR OUR PRAYERS BY HELPING US SAY IT THE WAY IT REALLY IS WITH US.

OUR SIN IS HAVING THE HERITAGE OF A PROPHET AND THE PRACTICE OF A COWARD.

OUR SIN IS HAVING THE TRUTH OF A SOLOMON AND THE TIMIDITY OF A FRIGHTENED DEER.

OUR SIN IS HAVING THE ETHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF A GIBRALTAR AND THE MORAL STABILITY OF QUICKSAND.

OUR SIN IS HAVING THE PROMISE OF HOPE AND THE PRACTICE OF LETHARGY.

OUR SIN IS OUR TENDENCY TO KNUCKLE UNDER IN PRESSURE IN FAVOR OF THE LEAST CONTROVERSIAL WAY.

OUR SIN IS A LOATHING CAUTIOUSNESS THAT TURNS ITS BACK ON A PROPHETIC ROLE IN THE VOLATILE NOW.

OUR SIN IS OUR MARTYR COMPLEXES AND OUR NEUROTIC IMPATIENCE WITH THE "SLOW ONES" IN A CHANGING SOCIETY.

O GOD, WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU AND AGAINST THOSE WHOM WE CALL OTHERS.

WE HAVE NOT LOVED AND SERVED YOUR PEOPLE AS YOU HAVE COMMANDED.

WE HAVE LET YOU DOWN AS WELL AS OURSELVES AND PEOPLE AROUND US.

WE HAVE LET DOWN THE CROSS AND TAKEN UP CRUTCHES.

WE WALK AWKWARDLY IN OUR NEW WORLD. WE WALK WITH GUILT.

WE WALK IN ISOLATION. WE WALK WITH HATE AND FEAR.

WE WALK WITH THE INSIPID TASTE OF THE WORLD IN OUR MOUTHS.

Partaking of the World's Insipidity: Lament for a World That Has Lost Its Savor  
(Partake of the Biscuit As Soon As It Is Passed To You)

(We have only begun to scratch the concrete enormity of our sin. Some sin we can only utter silently and privately.)

(The Silent Confession of Private Sin)  
Be specific

*All:* O GOD, THE TASTE OF OUR PART IN THE SIN PROBLEM IS HORRIBLE. WE LACK THE GRACE OF SALT, BECAUSE OUR SIN IS SO UGLY AND DEEP.

O LORD, HELP US.

O LORD, HAVE MERCY UPON US.

O LORD, SHOW US HOW WE ARE TO DEAL WITH THE UGLINESS OF OUR SIN.

The Fluidity of Forgiveness: An Interpretation in Verse and Dance

## Kissing the Secret In Me

"A deformed and ugly child  
lives deep in the sea of each of us,  
always newly born and ours.  
We are fathers, mothers of sin,  
of eternal, twisted secrets  
from which, eyes covered,  
we flee down passages of fear.  
It is in each of us  
what we ourselves cannot forgive  
what we cannot claim as us.  
For me the child of ugliness  
is my constitutional inability  
to love without motive.  
I would be still running,  
still writhing with quiet horror,  
still hiding in the garden  
of my fallen fatherhood  
behind foliage of green destruction.  
I would be fleeing my child  
but for good news I have.

"The deformed and ugly  
new-born of me has been  
taken up, cuddled, embraced,  
lullabied and kissed.  
God himself took arms  
and lips and learned to sing,  
to love me for myself.  
All of who I am, my ugly  
and the runner away in me  
have been accepted, forgiven, loved.  
While I was yet deformed,  
from a cross Christ kissed my  
and every man's ugliness  
with slow, breaking tenderness.  
Now, such is this news  
we can dare take into our arms  
ourselves; we can bow over  
all ugliness and cuddle it.  
You can kiss the secret in me  
and I, gently, in you.  
We can, with the Lord's  
man-kissing father, O God!  
cuddle and kiss ourselves."

*Anonymous*

### *Assurance of Pardon*

*Leader:* Our eyes, ears and minds have been touched with the possibilities for our forgiveness.  
*Celebrants:* GOD'S SUFFERING LOVE KISSES OUR SIN SO THAT WE CAN ACCEPT HIS GRACE AND OUR STATUS AS HIS REDEEMED SONS.  
*Leader:* In Christ's name, we are *forgiven*.  
*Celebrants:* THAT'S GOOD NEWS.  
*Leader:* In Christ's name, we *are* forgiven.  
*Celebrants:* THAT'S GOOD NEWS.  
*Leader:* In Christ's name, *we* are forgiven.  
*Celebrants:* THAT'S GOOD NEWS.  
*All:* "FREE AT LAST. FREE AT LAST. THANK GOD ALMIGHTY, WE ARE FREE AT LAST."

The Hymn: "The Church Within Us" .....Shnider-Hustad

*Ensemble:* There's a church within us, O Lord;  
There's a church within us, O Lord;  
Not a building, but a soul;  
Not a portion, but a whole;  
There's a church within us, O Lord.

*All:* There's a church within us, O Lord;  
There's a church within us, O Lord;  
Not a building, but a soul;  
Not a portion, but a whole;  
There's a church within us, O Lord.

*All:* There's potential within us, O Lord;  
Something stirring within us, O Lord;  
Something straining to have birth,  
To be visible on earth,  
There's potential within us, O Lord.

*All:* There's a fire within us, O Lord;  
A new life aburning, O Lord;  
A fire for new life,  
Combating present strife,  
There's a fire within us, O Lord.

*All:* There's a church within us, O Lord;  
There's some building to be done, O Lord;  
Not with steel, not with stone,  
But with lives which are your own;  
It's the church within us, O Lord;  
There's a church within us, O Lord.

A Litany of Affirmation: A Situational Celebration In a Turbulent World

*Leader:* All of creation stands on its toes watching for the sons of God to come celebrating their hope in the world.

*Voice of a Skeptic:* You guys have got to be kidding! Do you want me to believe that? Hope in our kind of world? You're just not with it.

*Leader:* You heard me the first time. We are participants in God's New Creation, celebrating with hope our existence in the world because of the radical newness of life we have in Christ.

*Voice of a Skeptic:* Man, you're unbelievable. All that fancy jargon. It doesn't mean a damn thing. You're impossible.

*Leader:* Well, don't just jump on me! All these other people here are also children of hope.

*Voice of a Skeptic:* I don't believe it. I just don't believe it. Do you read the papers? Listened to a news broadcast recently? Do you really know what's happening in the world?

*Celebrants:* YES, WE KNOW. AND WE LISTEN AND CARE.

*Voice of a Skeptic:* And you still say you can celebrate? Hmmm—I don't believe it! How do you do it?

*All:* LET US PUT IT THIS WAY.

*Voice from the World:* "In the beginning God created the heaven and earth. And the earth was without form and void. And darkness was upon the face of the deep." Frank Borman reading for the crew of Apollo 8

*All:* "TO HAVE FAITH IS TO BE SURE OF THE THINGS WE HOPE FOR, TO BE CERTAIN OF THE THINGS WE CANNOT SEE.—IT IS BY FAITH THAT WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE UNIVERSE WAS CREATED BY GOD'S WORD, SO THAT WHAT CAN BE SEEN WAS MADE OUT OF WHAT CANNOT BE SEEN." Hebrews 11:1,3

*Voice from the World:* "Houston! Tranquility Base Here! The Eagle has landed.—That's one small step for a man. One giant leap for mankind." Astronaut Neil Armstrong

*All:* "MAY GOD, THE SOURCE OF HOPE, FILL YOU WITH ALL JOY AND PEACE BY MEANS OF YOUR FAITH IN HIM, SO THAT YOUR HOPE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT." Romans 15:13

*Voice from the World:* "The first day we were bound for most of the afternoon. But the next day we were not bound at all, just blindfolded. And this in itself is really a living hell. Because when you're in a situation like that and you can't see, all you've got to do is think. And there's one thing to think about—if I'm going to live or if I'm going to die."  
Lyn Johnson, Hostage at Attica Prison

*All:* "THIS HOPE DOES NOT DISAPPOINT US, FOR GOD HAS POURED OUT HIS LOVE INTO OUR HEARTS BY MEANS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WHO IS GOD'S GIFT TO US." Romans 5:5

*Voice from the World:* "One of the most controversial military trials in history came to an end in March. A court-martial convicted Army Lt. William Calley, Jr., of premeditated murder. The charges: at least 22 unarmed and unresisting South Vietnamese men, women, and children, were slain at My Lai in 1968. Calley had testified that the My Lai episode 'wasn't any big deal,' and that he was only acting under orders given by Capt. Ernest Medina." Morgan Beatty, CBS News

*All:* "WE REJOICE IN OUR TROUBLES, FOR WE KNOW THAT TROUBLE PRODUCES ENDURANCE, ENDURANCE BRINGS GOD'S APPROVAL, AND HIS APPROVAL CREATES HOPE." Romans 5:3-4

*Voice from the World:* "How long will it take? How many men must die before we can really have a free, and true, and peaceful society?" Mrs. Coretta King

*All:* "WHO—CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST? CAN TROUBLE DO IT, OR HARDSHIP, OR PERSECUTION, OR HUNGER, OR POVERTY, OR DANGER, OR DEATH?—NO, IN ALL THESE THINGS WE HAVE COMPLETE VICTORY THROUGH HIM WHO LOVED US!" Romans 8:35,37

*Voice from the World:* "My thanks to all of you and now it's on to Chicago, and let's win there." The late Robert F. Kennedy  
  
"Senator Kennedy Has Been Shot!—Is that possible—O, My God!"  
Andrew West, News Reporter

*All:* "WE HAVE THIS HOPE AS AN ANCHOR FOR OUR HEARTS. IT IS SAFE AND SURE—." Hebrews 6:19a

*Voice from the World:* "We cannot always understand the ways of Almighty God: the crises which He sends us, the sacrifices which He demands of us. But, we know His great goodness and His love. And we go on our way with no regrets of the past. Not looking back to the past. But we shall go on with courage." Mrs. Rose Kennedy

*All:* "—WE KNOW THAT IN ALL THINGS GOD WORKS FOR GOOD WITH THOSE WHO LOVE HIM, THOSE WHOM HE HAS CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE." Romans 8:28

*Voice from the World:* "O, deep in my heart, I do believe that we shall overcome some day." A Song of Hope

*All:* "CHRIST HAS BROUGHT US, BY FAITH INTO THE GRACE OF GOD IN WHICH WE NOW STAND. AND WE ALSO REJOICE IN THE HOPE WE HAVE OF SHARING GOD'S GLORY!" Romans 5:2

*Celebrants:* WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT, MR. SKEPTIC?

*Voice of a Skeptic:* .....

*Leader:* His voice is silent for a while. But he will look for another time to be heard.

*All:* AND THE WORLD WILL ALSO HEAR AGAIN FROM US. OUR VOICES AND LIVES OF HOPE WILL CELEBRATE THE PRESENCE OF GOD WORKING OUT HIS KINGDOM ON EARTH. AMEN

THE CELEBRATION OF CONTRASTS: DESPAIR AND COMFORT

Words of Comfort:  
Isaiah 40  
Richard Myers, Reader

Sights of Despair:  
Scenes of the World

Musical Background  
Robbie Basho  
Playing  
“Eagle Sails The Blue Diamond”  
From the Album *Venus in Cancer*

*Voice of a Skeptic:* You see! That’s what I’ve been talking about. All that pious verse about comfort from God. And here you sit in darkness.

*Leader:* Sir! These people who sit in this darkness have seen a great light. The light has shined upon us in the person of God’s Son, dispelling the darkness.

And this, Sir, is what *we* are talking about and living about.

“Let the SON Shine”  
From “The Age of Aquarius”

“Let the SON shine  
Let the SON shine in  
the SON shine in.”

The Covenant of the Salt: Affirmation of a World That Has Found Its Savor  
(Partake of the Biscuit As Soon As It Is Passed To You)

*The Benediction*

*Leader:* Go, now into the future. Go, confident in the awareness that the SON shines on your going. Go, using the language of promise and hope.

*Celebrants:* WE ARE THE SALT OF THE EARTH. WE ARE GOOD FOR OURSELVES. WE ARE GOOD FOR THE WORLD. WE CAN STICK IT OUT. WE CAN OVERCOME.

*Leader:* Go, celebrating the past as a prelude for the church’s radical new thrusts into the world. Go, dating our time as the eighth day of creation where things are just beginning to happen. Go, celebrating a world that is unfinished and filled with unlimited possibilities.

*Celebrants:* WE ARE GOD’S PEOPLE. WE ARE MADE OF STRONG STUFF. WE ARE BECOMING THE SONS OF GOD. WE HAVE THE PROMISE OF GOD’S PRESENCE AND POWER. WE HAVE THE SUPPORT OF FELLOW PILGRIMS. WE HAVE RECOVERED OUR LOST SALT. WE ARE READY TO GET BACK INTO THE THICK OF THINGS WITH NEW VISION AND COURAGE.

*Leader:* Then, go. Go, in the awareness that God is counting on His salt people to change the world. Go, rejoicing in that Good News and if the church does not receive it as Good News, then change the church for the glory of Jesus Christ.

Peace be with you, my dear brothers and sisters.

*Celebrants:* And with you too, our dear brother.

*Leader:* So let it be.

*All:* LET IT BE! *LET IT BE!* YES, LET IT BE!  
(crescendo to a shout)

The Ministry of Silence

“Be still and know I am God”

The Doxology





