

HOME MISSIONS

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LETTERS

From Our Readers

Big Brother and Birth Control

Only in the past year have I come to hold my present views supporting compulsory birth control. This position I have achieved only after years of study and involvement in the population problem. I fully expect, as I learn more, to move beyond my present thinking on this and all other subjects. This process of continual learning, self criticism and reevaluation will continue, I hope, so long as I am privileged to lend my energies to the solution of human problems.

I would argue that Big Brother and 1984 are unavoidable without a policy of compulsory birth control. Complete freedom is anarchy. If freedom may be thought of as the right to swing one's fist, then freedom stops where someone's nose begins. This crude but picturesque analogy serves to illustrate both the relative nature of freedom and its relationship to the population explosion: the more people there are, the less freedom there is.

Some people are prone to argue that education can solve the population problem. But even a superficial analysis shows that education cannot solve even the education problem. Laws are made to correct deficiencies in the educational process itself. It seems a little ridiculous then to suggest that we rely solely on education to persuade individual parents not to have too many children. Certainly education is necessary but it is not sufficient.

Another indictment of compulsory birth control often made is that government does not have the right to limit births. If those who hold this position are to be consistent, however, they must also deny the government the right to limit death.

In the last 100 years, Western medicine has practically eliminated smallpox, diphtheria, scarlet fever, polio and other man killers. In America all children are now inoculated against disease—in effect life is imposed upon many who, if natural selection were allowed to operate, would not survive childhood. And when we are old every medical technique available is marshalled to maintain life beyond the point at which death would naturally occur.

Compulsory death control has been practiced throughout the Western world for over a century. There are laws which compel us to be vaccinated, to maintain minimum health and sanitation practices, to seek medical attention for children, etc.

I am not persuaded by the argument advanced by some religious authorities and laymen that compulsory birth control would constitute an unjustified interference with their beliefs. Such reasoning was not sustained in the past when members of the Church of God refused to pay income taxes because to do so would imply recognition of some power other than God. Neither was it upheld when the Mormons of last century argued that plural marriages were part of their religion. The Amish have been forced to send their children to school beyond the eighth grade and the Christian Scientist has been compelled to accept medical attention for a critically ill child.

Perhaps our biggest problem in dealing realistically with birth control is that sex is involved. The traditional American perspective views sex as evil and shames us for expressing sexual desire. Modern physiology and psychology are now telling us, though, what we should have known all along. Just as hunger is more than filling the belly, so sex is more than producing offspring.

Given the proper setting, sexual union between a man and woman in marriage serves to create in both a sense of oneness with each other and with life. It elevates tenderness to a level not otherwise knowable to either of them. Sexual union thus seen becomes an expression of love and serves perpetually to remind both husband and wife of the past they have shared and the future they anticipate.

This ideal sexual union between man and woman can be attained, however, only if the expressive and procreative functions of sex can be separated. If the couple must be concerned about an unwanted pregnancy, then their relationship will never approximate the ideal. If the wife is chronically tired because of too many children and the husband is anxious about mounting debt, both their marital relationship and their parental role will be destroyed.

If we can rid ourselves of outmoded values concerning laissez-faire parenthood and establish sensible and compulsory limits to family size, we shall eliminate a host of problems not otherwise solvable. If we cannot, then we must quit our practice of compulsory death control and let nature reestablish its own balance of births and deaths.

I have recently completed an article called "The Case for Compulsory Birth Control" in which the above ideas are more fully developed. I will gladly send a copy to anyone who writes to me and asks for one.

ED CHASTEEN
William Jewell College
Liberty, Mo. 64068

Recent issues of HOME MISSIONS have had many good articles for stimulating thought and discussion. Especially interesting to me was the article on birth control and the reaction of those who read and wrote.

As an employee of the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, I have been much impressed by the progress made when only a limited amount of technical help has been given to some nations.

India may soon be an example of this fact. Food production is up in India and according to many reports will continue to climb rapidly. As a matter of fact there is much valid evidence to indicate that in the providence of God, there is "enough and to spare" of the natural resources needed for food production for the present world population. The big problem is that men and nations are not using these soil resources, and instead choose to become involved in war and other activities, rather than use to the fullest extent all of the food producing resources God has blessed us with. God has

put the potential here to produce food for all of the people, if used wisely and if all of the modern technology we have can be constructively applied throughout the world.

This is not an argument against birth control, as I do believe that a Christian must prayerfully consider this option, seeking God's will for his life in this area, as he would in other areas of life. It would seem we have a Christian obligation to teach and to offer such information and hope that others will accept and use this knowledge also. Freedom is precious in this area and we must accept the individual's right to choose.

DEAN F. JACKSON
Maysville, Mo.

I had I not read *The Biological Time Bomb* first, Ed Chasteen's article on compulsory birth control might have disturbed me as much as it apparently disturbed some of those who have written to you. But having read that book which outlines the recent breakthroughs in the biological sciences and the advances anticipated for the new future, I find the Chasteen proposals rather tame. My personal experience as a pastor, amplified by letters such as some of those which you have printed, have convinced me that a frightening number of Americans, in general, and Southern Baptists, in particular, simply do not know what is going on in this world now. Heaven help them and us when the changes which are being anticipated in the biological sciences for the next 10 to 25 years become common practice.

Thank you for your courageous, far-sighted reporting. If there is enough of this kind of prophetic work soon enough, perhaps we shall be awakened to the truth which Jesus said would make us free before we destroy ourselves.

ROBERT D. DAVIS
Fremont, N.C.

Adult Christian Bars

I would like the author's explanation of a phrase in the article, "A Stupid Feeling Inside" (September, 1968). In the list of "other ministries in the planning stage" he mentions "adult Christian bars."

Mrs. LAWRENCE R. SHIPLEY
Virgie, Ky.

The adult Christian bar is exactly what it says—a bar with the plushness usually attributed to those in hotels except the drinks are coffee, tea and soft drinks. There are supportive services, including counseling.

Allen Walker, a Methodist minister in Sydney, Australia, is the creator of the Christian bar concept. He believes many inhabitants of bars go there primarily for conversation and fellowship. The resurgence of men in Australia to the Christian bar proves this.

A small membership fee is required but the use of office hours is astronomical. The concept is further described in Walker's book, *As Close as the Telephone*.

VAN H. SAVELL
Atlanta, Ga.

The Second Great Commandment

As a Baptist who grew up in Monroe, Iowa, as a member of a Regular Baptist Church, as an American Baptist in Fairbury, Neb. from 1953 to 1955 and as a Southern Baptist since moving to Little Rock in 1955 and to Kansas City in 1966, I have been particularly concerned about the application, and sometimes lack of application by Baptists, of what Christ called the "second great commandment" having to do with loving one's neighbor.

It was for this reason, I suppose, that I left railroad work after 25 years and joined the Office of Economic Opportunity as a regional office field representative in May, 1966. Since January, 1968, I have had a special assignment to enlist more church and local support for the various Community Action programs in Iowa. The response has been most gratifying. In five selected Community Action agencies a check was made from Jan. 15 to Mar. 15 and these five agencies had increased the dollar value of their programs over \$52,000 or about 20 percent of their total program costs. These contributions came in the form of space for Head Start and neighborhood outreach centers, volunteer workers to tutor school "drop-outs" and counsel the disadvantaged, and cash donations. College students have responded in an amazing manner.

Whenever it becomes necessary to spend federal tax dollars for such things as space for Head Start or neighborhood centers, (space which often could be donated by churches) or for workers who could well be enlisted as volunteers, the effectiveness of the local program is greatly reduced and the cost to the taxpayer increased.

The Community Action program is unique in that it is the one state or federal program which seeks local guidance and direction by local people in an effort to break the generation to generation cycle of poverty so many people are trapped in. Usually this is done by providing educational or job training programs, counseling and motivation by "outreach" workers or through "neighborhood multipurpose centers" which can bring many of these, or related programs, provided by other state or federal agencies, into the areas where the economically and culturally deprived people live. It seems to me that this approach is a better application of Christ's "second great commandment" than the welfare check, the Christmas basket or the donation to charity—as worthwhile as these things may be. I would urge every Baptist to learn the name of the Community Action program director in his area, and ask to visit local programs and see what is being done.

RALPH CROGER
Kansas City, Mo.

RA Songs

I was enjoying the October issue of HOME MISSIONS until I reached the page 22 reference to an official Royal Am-

bassador songbook containing a song, "RAs, the Pride of All the South."

The official songbook the Brotherhood Commission produces for RAs, *Songs For Royal Ambassadors*, does not contain this song. However, it does offer one which states:

In Christ there is no East or West,
In him no South or North;
But one great fellowship of love
Thru-out the whole wide earth.
ROY JENNINGS
Memphis, Tenn.

Tension on the Sore Spot

The HOME MISSIONS magazine always keeps before us the issues of the day. Therefore, I try to keep abreast of the tides of opinion by reading it. The emphasis that is given concerning the holistic view of man is certainly commendable. We must minister to the whole man. However there are some dangers I think. The main thrust of the New Testament message is Jesus is Lord. I really hope that we will not substitute good deeds for the redemptive message. T. B. Maston frequently would say to his students concerning social issues: "Keep tension on the sore spot."

Another fear is that John Brown abolitionist zeal becomes fanaticism. This nullifies what advances that are being made. A wholesome, balanced approach to the perplexities of our day should strike the proverbial "happy medium" between an abolitionist and a gradualist approach.

PAT McCAY
Jonesboro, Ark.

Thank God, Southern Baptists are getting their heads out of the sand. The church must relate to today's world. I don't mean change the message—but change the tactics. I pity all those pious people who wear "ceremoniously clean" robes and write in to cancel their subscriptions to HOME MISSIONS because it carries articles about Negroes, the sex revolution and hippies. How are they ever going to be happy in Heaven?

MRS. R. L. STEPHENSON
Palm Bay, Fla.

As I read "Summer Missions: No Rules To Play the Game" (October) I found a real proud lump come to my throat. It distresses me greatly to see only the bad that college students do find its way to print. The experiences gained by (these) students are ones they shall long remember. It is a shame more students are not willing to give of their time and talents.

It is due to 10 very rewarding weeks in Wyoming, the summer of 1967 that I am (back) here now teaching school. Those 10 weeks of VBS, census, camping and church painting meant the turning point in seeking God's will for my life.

LIZ WOODWARD
Casper, Wyo.

HOME MISSIONS

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to learn nothing of this for his son, and all the frustration, love, hope, optimism, maintain life today—see pages 5-23.

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THE TENSION OF AWARENESS

EDITORIALS by Walker L. Knight

Man's newly-found ability to communicate instantly with other men anywhere has given us what one calls the "global village." However, we have yet to learn how to use this ability with maturity and responsibility, and the coverage of major news events such as riots and political conventions are prime examples.

With the advent of electronic communications have come revolutions in patterns of living, movement from rural to urban life, civil rights, shifts in value questions and an awareness of affluence and poverty. Some of these changes are the result of our instant communications. These changes in turn affect the communications media and how we feel about the media. Communications is such a factor in our lives that we cannot always separate cause and effect.

Seeing the changes reported, some are prone to blame the media for causing them. Because we stand at the threshold of new abilities and new knowledge, we have an immaturity in both using and in accepting them. It is resistance to the new knowledge which creates the gaps of communication.

I remember Roger Shinn telling religious editors last year in Chicago that he sees Christians dividing on the basis of temperament rather than on doctrinal grounds: those who favor change against those who oppose change, the "go go" crowd versus the "status quo" crowd.

Southern Baptists, too, are reaching for greater maturity in communications.

I can remember 20 years ago when state papers reported few differences of opinion within the denomination. It was not that the differences did not exist, but rather that the editors did not feel their readership would accept such reporting. The editors had reason to feel this way, for they knew of colleagues who had been fired for this reason.

A new era of Baptist journalism flowered when Texas editor E. S. James opened his paper to differing opinions, took strong editorial stands and printed the letters of readers in reaction. I remember another editor asking James how to get such letters, and James told him to take an editorial position on the Revised Standard Version and on civil rights. The other editor answered, "If I do that I'll not be around to get the letters."

Such a conversation would appear mild today, but many long for us to return to yesterday's reporting of only the good things that we are doing, since such reporting encourages some people to do likewise, promotes giving and gives the impression that everything is perfect.

The only trouble with this is that it does not report accurately what is happening, and if such principles had been followed by others, we would not even have a Bible. The writers of both the Old and New Testaments did not hesitate to report both the good and the bad. Christ lived amid a whirling sea of controversy. Paul wrote to points of tension.

One-sided, "positive" reporting assumes that the readership is not mature enough to accept all of the truth, that they do not have the ability to make their own decisions, and that we must protect them from the reality of life. Such reporting also asks less than integrity from the reporter.

The rule by which a reporter and a publication should be judged is on a responsible handling of the truth. Is the picture presented an accurate one or is it distorted?

The position of truth does not absolve a communicator from responsibility. This is the agony of television today, when immediate, truthful communication of a riot spreads the disorder by inflaming others.

The reader or viewer also must ask, how much is the media causing the controversy and the changes and how much is it only reflecting them?

Thus we must strive for maturity, both from editors and readers, and we must realize that living on the spiritual frontiers with Christ always will result in tension. Somehow in the spirit of Christ we must avoid reaching the breaking point as we search for meaningful roles as Christians within a changing world.

Christians above all others should have a freedom and openness to search for truth, and Baptists have been proud of their contribution to religious freedom, their championship of an individual's right to express his faith as he sees it, and the absence of restrictive thought forms such as creeds.

HOME MISSIONS

Be Ye Reconciled . . .

The following statement was prepared by the executive secretary at the request of a special committee on the crisis in our nation (composed of selected members of the Home Mission Board staff and board of directors) in order to clarify further the Christian basis of the present concern:

The Bible speaks clearly of every person's need of a right relationship with God. Christ died for our sins, "the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God . . ." (1 Pet. 3:18). The Apostle Paul urged: "Be ye reconciled to God" (2 Cor. 5:20b).

The Scriptures speak also of the right relationships with our fellowmen. Jesus taught us to love our neighbors as ourselves. He set the example, loving even his enemies. He commended "the good Samaritan" for his mercy to a stranger in need.

As Southern Baptists we have an exceptional record in evangelistic activity. This we must maintain. But in troubled times like these we must show greater concern than ever before for the needs of our fellowmen and for the problems of our society. We must be concerned about our fellowmen in both their spiritual and their physical needs.

Jesus taught his disciples that they are to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world" (Matt. 5:13, 14). The Apostle James pointed out that it is not enough to say to a naked or hungry person, "Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled," without providing help (James 2:15, 16). We cannot, therefore, sit by unmoved in the face of widespread human suffering and death, hunger and discrimination, frustration and alienation, anger and hostility.

We can pray. We can yield our lives more fully to the direction and power of the Holy Spirit. We can seek ways by which to help correct the distresses of our day. We can show the sincerity of our concern for the souls of men by helping right the injustices that blight the daily lives, as well as the souls, of men. We can demonstrate love by action. We can demonstrate faith by works. This we must do, if we are to be true to Christ our Lord and further his cause in our land and around the world.

This is something of the background to the commitment made by thousands of Southern Baptists in the 1968 Convention in Houston.

December, 1968

THE EXECUTIVE'S WORD

By Arthur B. Rutledge
Executive Secretary-Treasurer, HMB

Seeking a New Peace

I like the hymn lines that have us sing, "Joy to the world! the Lord has come! Let earth receive her King . . ." The long-awaited Lord came on a mission of blessing centuries ago. He came to bring life and light to the entire human family.

"God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son . . ." Most of us who read these lines, and indeed the writer as well, are privileged persons. But within walking distance of most of us are individuals and families who desperately need a genuine faith in God. Others are lonely and ill, confused and frightened; they need to know that someone cares, and above all that God who came to mankind in Jesus Christ cares. Some express their frustrations in strange ways, different dress or habits, violent outbursts, moral collapse, alcohol or narcotics, and even suicide. Some are outside the influence of the gospel and the ministries of the churches. They need to know that Christian people care.

And what shall we say about those involved in battle, our gallant men in Vietnam, and those of other countries, and the peoples whose land and life are being destroyed? Let us rejoice in all that Christ means to us. And let us not forget that he wants to bring new life, new purposes and new peace to all men.

You and I are reaching into the ghettos of many of the cities of America. We are extending a compassionate hand to minorities. We are trying to share the gospel with millions throughout America by way of programs of evangelism and of establishing needed new churches. I am proud of our home missionaries, who serve devotedly throughout this nation and in Panama and Cuba.

Hundreds of churches, without the aid of a missionary, are expressing

Christian love and communicating the gospel through local mission actions. At Christmastime let us take a fresh view of our church fields and move toward meeting other needs and serving other peoples whom we have thus far neglected.

"Christ for the world"—this is God's desire. Around the world, in approximately 70 nations, Southern Baptists are represented by committed followers of our Lord. During recent years I have been privileged to visit many of these missionaries in Latin America and Africa, in Asia and Europe. I am proud of our missionaries abroad.

As we come to the significant annual Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and the Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions, homeland and overseas are blended inseparably. The effectiveness of our work abroad depends upon the level of Christian commitment at home. Everything we do to help America solve its critical problems strengthens the hands of our missionaries overseas. Earnest prayer for the spread of the gospel, and generous financial support are essentials. Our times call for urgent supplication and efforts for peace. I trust that every Southern Baptist church will have a soul-searching, inspiring season of prayer and giving.

"Joy to the world! The Lord has come." In this we can exult. "Let earth receive her King." We begin at the point of renewing our commitment to him as our King and Lord. From this point of renewal we move out to try to point the whole wide world to Jesus Christ as the One worthy to be Lord and King of all mankind. At Christmastime we look afresh to him for guidance to peace and justice among men, and peace with God through our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

EVANGELIZING THE POST-CHRISTIAN MAN

by George Beasley-Murray
London, England

Who is the man with this strange name? He is not simply the non-Christian man. It would occur to no one to call a pagan tribesman in a remote village of Amazonia a post-Christian man. The man we have in view is the typical member of a society which has lost the faith which an earlier generation professed. Or he is the casualty of a professedly Christian society, who finds no attraction in what he sees of Christianity nor relevance in it for life.

Some people object to this nomenclature. They hold that there's no such thing as a Christian society, and therefore there's no such thing as a post-Christian society or a post-Christian man. This viewpoint is in danger of minimizing some realities that we have no right to dismiss. Whatever one's judgment of it may be, Christendom is a phenomenon of history. There have been areas of western civilization in which the Christian religion has been acknowledged far and wide as noble and right. Efforts were made to embody in the laws of the land the biblical standards, and people agreed that it was good to live according to the Christian ideals, even if they did not do it themselves. The post-reformation Europe saw many attempts to frame society within such a context. While we believe that the state church idea was a false application of the gospel, we can at least recognize the sincerity of those who, like Calvin, tried by this means to build a society on a Christian foundation.

In our time, however, the state churches are crumbling. The paradoxical situation of the Church of Sweden,

which baptizes 98 percent of Sweden's population and welcomes 3 percent of the people to church on Sundays, grimly illustrates what is meant by the post-Christian society. It is a society which raises its hat to the church and passes by on the other side. We in Britain are in no position to throw stones. In 1886 the population of so-called Smaller London was 3,800,000, and a census in that year records that 1,167,300 people were in church on Sundays, i.e. about 30 percent of London's inhabitants. Figures are difficult to obtain today, but a common estimate of the number of church members in London's outer suburbs varies from 10 to 12 percent. Inner London is said to vary from 3 to 5 percent, but one recent estimate of actual church attendance on Sundays in London puts it as low as 2 percent. The greatest center of population in the western world is a post-Christian city, and it is tragically typical of metropolitan areas generally. It is doubtful that faith in Christ is more common in Berlin, Paris, Zurich or Stockholm than it is in London. Does it really go much better with New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Francisco and other such great cities of the U.S.A.? And if church attendance rises in Dallas, Atlanta and Memphis, is the difference so enormous as to make the post-Christian, Christian and Christ-rejector a rare phenomenon in those parts? Alas, the post-Christian man is about us everywhere. The toughness of the challenge he presents to us is increased when it is recognized that in many cases he is a post-Christian man. The hard core of in-

dustrial workers has never been won for Christ since industry began two centuries ago. We have around us men and women, from teenagers to the aged, who are removed from a living faith not by one generation but by many generations. And these people are reared in societies where a Christian church is generally only a few yards away, but from which they are separated by a seemingly impassable gulf.

What is the situation of the post-Christian man in relation to the gospel we preach? How are we to approach him with it? What is our obligation to do so?

First, our post-Christian contemporary is a sinner standing in need of the deliverance of God, as much as any other man in the world is or ever has been. Naturally he would repudiate any such judgment upon him. He tells us that sin, like God is "out." Twentieth century men don't talk like that anymore! That's quite true. Sin is not a common word in people's vocabulary, but the reality is not affected by not saying the word. We do not lessen the number of murders, rapes, robberies with violence, nor the amount of cheating, lying (especially on income tax returns), jealousy, malice and downright selfishness of people by avoiding the word "sin."

If the post-Christian man is a sinner, like the rest of men that are or ever were, the cross of Christ and the resurrection of Christ were for him, as for any other man. The Lord Christ bore in His body the sins of post-Christian man.

By the resurrection He opened the kingdom of heaven for him.

Another fact, this gospel of the sheer grace of God is the power of God to save post-Christian man, as truly as it delivers the headhunters of Nagaland. Our post-Christian contemporary may deny the truth of Acts 4:12—that there's no other name under heaven by which he must be saved—but he's due to learn it by bitter experience, if he turns from it, or by glorious experience, if he accepts it. The gospel is the power of God to save every man who has faith.

But the post-Christian man does not know this. He is ignorant of our gospel. It's made no easier by the fact that he thinks he knows, but what he knows is a caricature of the truth, not the truth itself. And he's out of touch with the people that can put him right. Generally speaking Christians, above all ministers, preach the gospel to the religious, not to the irreligious.

J. C. Hoekendijk cited a one-time prisoner of war from Russia who gave his impressions of the church as he found it on returning to freedom: "There is a preacher talking from behind the pulpit. We don't understand him. A glass cover has been put over the pulpit. This smothers all the sound. Around the pulpit our contemporaries are standing. They too, talk, and they call. But on the inside this is not understood. The glass cover smothers all sound. Thus we still see each other talk, but we don't understand each other anymore." Hoekendijk's comment

on this is that it is too complimentary a picture. It's not ordinary glass that separates people on the inside from those on the outside but distorting glass! The people outside get the strangest images of what is going on inside the church, and the church all too often is simply not communicating with the man outside.

If there's any truth in this, the task of winning the post-Christian man is a formidable one. We can assume no real knowledge of the gospel on his part, only the sure existence of his misunderstanding it, his conviction of its irrelevance and his impatience with the whole paraphernalia of religion associated with the church. In that case we ought to consider whether our traditional religious services are the right context for putting over the gospel to the post-Christian man. I would apply that query alike to our ordinary Sunday morning services and to the typical "revival" service. Revival services are fine—for people with a religious background. But is it not imperative to provide ways of evangelizing men who have absolutely nothing to revive?

As we make our plans for 1969, I would raise the question whether any week of revival services should be held that does not include at least one meeting (not a service) for the man who thinks Christianity is dead and ought to be buried, who never sings a hymn and never intends to do so, and never want to hear anyone else sing one either, but who would be prepared to walk into a meeting and give a hearing

to men trying to make a case for the view that Christianity works in twentieth century everyday life.

I would go further and ask whether some of you ought not to be adventurous and replace the traditional week of revival services by a series of endeavors to confront men and women alienated from the church with that gospel which they are not prepared to come and hear in the setting of a religious service. If many of those confrontations took place in the homes of multitudes of church members instead of in the sanctuaries, the number of the unchurched facing the claims of Christ in this crusade would be far greater than those who could be persuaded to visit church buildings. Our people would then be faced with the necessity of participating in evangelism themselves instead of leaving it wholly to the hired evangelist. The effect of this would be incalculable, not least in the production of a church learning to engage in mission to the unchurched.

Second, if we decide to go to the post-Christian man, how shall we approach him? I am not concerned with evangelistic techniques, but about the word of the gospel itself. How shall we present it? The question is not unimportant. To recall the figure adduced by Hoekendijk, how do we Christians get out of our glass building to speak so as to be heard? This is the problem of communication. The word is new in its technical sense, but the problem has long been recognized. James Stewart

Continued on page 31

Mr. Beasley-Murray, principal of Spurgeon's College in London, delivered the following address during the Continental Congress on Evangelism, a meeting of representatives of nine Baptist groups in Washington in preparation for the Crusade of the Americas.

CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

The Heritage of Isolation

by Dallas M. Lee

Robert Fraley, 45, sliced a chew of Beechnut and tucked it into his right cheek. "It keeps you from swallowing that coal dust," he said, and then he started for the narrow mouth of the mine. Without breaking stride, he threw his shoulders forward to clear the shallow ceiling and plunged into the darkness.

He shoots coal by trade. Working alone 200 feet into the mountain, with only the ghost-light of his headlamp piercing the musty blackness, this small agile man leans on an eight-foot drill, boring eight to 10 dynamite holes in the four-foot seam of coal. A mine shaft only four to five feet high is oppressively claustrophobic to the unaccustomed, causing the mind to race with television images of miners being brought to safety after days trapped deep in a collapsed mine, gasping eager testimony about God and salvation.

"*Oh Daddy, don't work in the mines today,*" the folk ballad goes, and in more tragic days of booming mines it must have been a frequent plea. But this was 1968 and there was Fraley's ghostlike image drilling holes for sticks of dynamite, stubby beams of timber bridging that four-foot seam of coal,

holding back millions of tons of sandstone mountain.

"... *I dreamed the mine was all covered with fire and the men all fighting for their lives. Just then the dream changed and the mouth of the mine was covered with sweethearts and wives. Oh Daddy, don't work in the mines today...*"

Danger. Anything but a routine. Action, that is a psychological characteristic of the mountain man. Coal runs deep in a man. The mines of eastern Kentucky, like the mountains themselves, have psychologically enslaved men. Robert Fraley returned to Greeno, Ky., a remnant of a once prosperous mining camp, after 19 years of work in Cincinnati factories.

"I had to come back home. I'd rather take my chances in the mines here than work in a factory anywhere," he had said often.

Fraley emerged from the mouth of the mine grinning, black-faced by the coal dust. His job is an art, a science of effecting maximum efficiency from explosions staggered a minute apart, loosing the coal that is sandwiched between layers of sandstone.

"You'll hear some fireworks in a minute," he said. Pleased, proud of his work like any skilled man, Fraley then spoke of his 13-year-old boy against the background of deep-thudding explosions.

What if the boy wants to work in the mines? "I won't let him. He's going to school and better his lot. I had to quit, but he's not going to have to." His eyes still flickered with satisfaction

as his trade continued to stun the mountain.

Change. In one of the freak ironies of this age of violent, immediate change, Robert Fraley left Cincinnati in 1960, returned to his home valley, and with the exception of wearing a battery-powered headlamp instead of the old carbide lamp, went to work at the same job using the same equipment.

That is the contemporary story of lingering isolation in eastern Kentucky, the heart of Appalachia. Only in such an isolated situation could a man return to the same trade and apply the same know-how to a job after nearly 20 years. And yet coal mining, plagued by union quarrels and price complexities again and again, has changed drastically. A few scattered truck mines such as the one Fraley works in still operate profitably here and there. But probably not a fifth of the number of men are employed in the mines as were in the boom-and-bust but always active years after World War II. Mammoth earth-moving equipment now strips the coal from the surface, or huge augers penetrate mountains and whirl the coal from within, using only seven-man crews.

Mechanization of the one large job-producing industry forced the outmigration that continues to depopulate the region today. Yet many, like Fraley, return as first opportunity; virtually all would if they could. There are men, like Fraley, who choose to hold fast to old places and old skills; yet they will sacrifice to see to it that their children move into the mainstream of progress that characterizes the rest of America. Roads are chunking into central Appalachia, eliminating the fundamental isolation caused by the mountains themselves; and yet, as one contemporary writer put it, "the barrier now is not a mountain, it is an attitude."

In short, everything is changing, nothing is changing.

I. O. Griffith of the Home Mission Board, who was pastor in Whitesburg, Ky. for eight years, offered a ride to an old mountaineer who spoke rather prophetically about the mountains of eastern Kentucky. Griffith, in an attempt to make conversation, said: "The mountains are beautiful this time of the year, aren't they?"

The old man looked silently out the window for a moment and then said: "Yeah, well I reckon they are beautiful. But to tell you the truth, we never thought about it much 'til these roads

continued

"I'd rather take my chances in the mines here than work in a factory anywhere."

December, 1968



by Don Rutledge



opened up and people started coming in here telling us how beautiful they were."

That statement captured more truth than the old man probably thought. The isolation of the mountains has been incredible and it has left many of the one-half million people in eastern Kentucky without perspective. What had they seen of mountains that were not beautiful? But while travelers-through spoke to the mountain people of their beautiful environment, the media and government poverty workers—eager to instill compassion in the rest of the nation—began to stalk the hollows (pronounced "hollers") depicting the stark poverty. In short, the mountain folks were told how poor they were.

The question is not whether they are poor, since by the standards of the rest of the nation many definitely are. But there is a question that is provoked by the intense pride of the people, and it concerns the relative nature of affluence. Characteristically, their wants have been few. A man would be hard put, for example, to convince 86-year-old Lizzie Crider that she is really poor and always has been. She single-handedly farmed the side of a steep mountain to raise six children and still lives in a mountaig cabin.

Mrs. Crider was farming up until "four or five years ago." She remembers riding a mule to "Virginny," she remembers the boom and bust years of the coal mines. In her farming days, after her husband had left, Mrs. Crider raised and picked corn and other vegetables, loaded her crops on a sled and peddled them in the mining communities. Believe it or not, her six sons turned out this way: a doctor, a dentist, a businessman, a lawyer, a military man and one who lives at home and now does the farming.

A year or so ago, Mrs. Crider went to Knoxville for surgery to remove cataracts on both eyes and she stayed with her oldest son there, a doctor. He offered his home to her—in fact, practically insisted she stay, she said—but she chose to return to her mountain home. One of her grandsons bought her a television, but she is not too impressed with that, either.

Mack Pressley, associational missionary in the Harlan, Ky. area, said she walks to the main road on her way to church, two miles away, and if a church member is there to pick her up, she rides; if not she walks on, following the railroad track.

"She has everything she wants—a kerosene lamp, a wood stove, a garden," Pressley said. "She's not hurting for



Jack Weller

CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

"It's not necessarily so that all the able people go; but all the unable stay."

anything. She just doesn't want anything."

Pressley, a South Carolina native, has so absorbed mountain history and culture, and is accepted so well that it seems his greatest disappointment is that he was not born in the mountains. "I may have missed a lot of things," he said as he walked down the mountain from Mrs. Crider's home. "But if somebody asks me why I've stayed in the mountains so long (10 years), my answer is people like that."

However, despite the scores of people with Mrs. Crider's stamina and pride, it is a fact that Appalachia has suffered a violent and unjust history, and part of the result is grinding poverty. Isolation has been ill preparation for dealing with the modern America that now, for better or worse, is confronting Appalachia. Highways are beginning to crisscross the region, the young and the skilled are being forced to northern cities to find work, and television—said to be revolutionizing the mountains at a greater rate than even the Sears-Roebuck catalogue did a generation ago—is beaming up virtually every hollow.

One major characteristic in what would be classified as hardcore poverty in the central Appalachian mountains is that to a large extent there is still pride and strength, a sense of manhood

—even in the face of government relief checks.

The first Appalachian crisis was population, strange as it seems. The rolling mountain ranges surely looked like paradise to the settlers moving west in the early 1700s from the Blue Ridge mountains of Virginia—rich, fertile valleys, plenty of game, mountain streams. But the valleys were small and as large families grew and expanded up the narrow creeks and "hollers," plots of cultivated land began to appear on steep mountainsides—the first portent of depression.

Settlers interested in a more stable way of life or in accumulating wealth either moved further west to the Ohio or Mississippi River plains, or stayed on the east coast. The Appalachian mountaineer, fleeing the restraints of law and order or the oppression of the state church, actually sought out and preferred the isolated creeks and valleys, and chose to remain.

The result, according to Presbyterian observer Jack Weller in his analysis *Yesterday's People*, has been an area marked by regression rather than by progress.

He writes: "Most Americans are 'progressive'; that is, we look ahead with at least some expectation of joy and encouragement. We have lived a good portion of our lives in times which have led us to believe that next year things will be better. Tomorrow will bring new opportunities, new experiences. We expect our children to have more than we have of the things that make life enjoyable and comfortable."

"The mountain man, however, has a 'regressive' outlook, for he does not look forward to tomorrow with pleasant anticipation. For generations, his life has been hard and uncertain. The sharp limit to the amount of land available for supporting his increasing family; its low productivity, because of his unscientific methods; the uncertainty of life in the mines, where he was never sure that he would come out of the hole alive after the shift; the insecurity of life tomorrow if the breadwinner were maimed or killed in the mines, and the family were forced to move; the chance of the cutoff slip coming without warning—all were factors which led the mountaineer to look not ahead to an uncertain tomorrow, but backward to a yesterday which was remembered, perhaps nostalgically, as being happier than today. Yesterday the family was all together. Children were still at home instead of away working. Parents were still alive. The old homestead was still standing. The old values held firm."

Coal brought booming times to the mountains. It brought the railroad. But it also brought the speculators, and their tragic deception of the mountaineers equals any of the low points in American history regarding cultural minorities. Mineral rights to land that later yielded up to 20,000 tons of coal per acre were purchased for as little as 50 cents an acre.

To the unsuspecting mountain farmer, whose way-out material dreams may have been nothing more than a new rifle and a few store-bought dresses for his wife, \$100 cash seemed like a fortune. But that is not the tragic part, in most cases, since the mountain man would not necessarily have been much better off if he had had thousands of dollars. The saddest result of these deals negotiated two generations ago is felt even now in eastern Kentucky—the "broad form" mineral deed.

This wordy contract, signed by so many of the grandfathers of current mountain folks, included a little-understood clause giving the holder of the mineral rights the legal privilege to do whatever necessary on the surface of the land to extract the coal (or gas and oil, in some cases). Thus, when strip mining became prevalent 15 years ago, some mountain families discovered that the mine owners had the right to move homes, strip up plowed fields, stack smoking heaps of slag (mine waste) and leave entire mountainsides dangerously weakened and subject to slides and they were left still paying taxes.

In July 1968, the Kentucky Court of Appeals upheld the right of strip-mining companies to extract coal under "broad form" mineral deeds without compensating the surface owners.

The mines are colored by a tragic history. One old Baptist preacher, who worked 43 years in mines in the Hazard, Ky. area, said: "You could pay a miner \$100 a day and still not be paying him fair wages for the work he has to do."

Almost every adult in the mountains today can tell about seeing their father, who left before dawn to work in the mines, come home after dark and go to the top of the mountain to till a small garden plot before eating and going straightaway to bed—all for a dollar a day.

Suffocating roof falls, electrocutions from the hot wires that powered electric locomotives, maiming explosions from slow-smouldering black powder, explosion-like fires racing through dust-filled mountain corridors, literally slaughtered men by the hundreds. These still are recent memories, which explains in part why men like Robert Fraley often will not even allow their sons to visit a mine,



Mrs. Lizzie Crider

CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

"She has everything she wants—a kerosene lamp, a wood stove, a garden."

much less consider working in one.

Coal companies probably built half of the small towns that exist today, such as Hellier ("hellier than hell"), Belcher, Hardburley, High Splint, Four Mile, Coalville, Sassafras, Scuddy and Carbon Glow. In some ways, the companies sought to provide for the miners. They built entire communities, often supported churches and provided church buildings, policed neighborhoods—even corrected children. But of course, such paternalism once again was not the best preparation for the encounter with the rest of America that mountain people are faced with today.

The company stores were the center of every such community, and the companies provided "scrip," a sort of currency that was issued as a loan against impending wages, which allowed the miner's wife to spend as she never imagined before. But even this had a destructive influence because it kept the miner constantly obligated to the company.

The United Mine Workers of America finally gained sufficient strength under the powerful and unyielding leadership of John L. Lewis to demand safety measures, greatly increased wages and improved working conditions. But many observers believe that the union's unyielding stand on wages prompted the

series of large mine shutdowns in the decade of the fifties and accelerated the mechanization of mining.

Thus the two major supportive industries—agriculture and coal mining—both reached their job-providing capacity quickly, and then declined. Add to this the fierce independence that has been perverted to some degree to what Weller calls a self-centered individualism, and the lack of the simple social learning experiences most Americans take for granted, and the composite is the contemporary mountaineer.

Weller, who terms the independence-turned individualism "a corruption of the virtue which was once the foundation stone of the mountain man's way of life," said many mountain families are reluctant to participate in sewing, cooking or farming classes because such mass efforts "violate their individualistic needs." A much more successful approach, apparently, is for someone to work with one family at a time on such skills.

The spirit of cooperation is growing, Weller feels, but he says there still are "many mountain communities where not a single sustained cooperative activity takes place to this day."

Fatalism, too, is characteristic of mountain people. As Weller puts it, the fatalistic nature acts as a psychological buffer against the disappointments of a harsh history. Optimism, apparently, is only beginning to prevail as more and more mountain parents strive hard to provide unparalleled opportunity for their children.

The heritage of isolation, with its psychological implications, then, explains why many will not leave the mountains to seek work elsewhere; and it also explains why abandoning the mountains is such a staggering experience for the thousands who do leave.

Entire communities in northern cities such as Dayton, Ohio, Flint, Mich., Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago are made up of eastern Kentucky and other central Appalachia people. Clannishness, if anything, is heightened by the city. (See the next issue of *Home Missions*.)

As Weller said in an interview: "The mountains have just naturally created a parochial spirit."

The Presbyterian minister-at-large, who has been in central Appalachia since 1952, said the region was suffering from selective migration.

"The people who stay are less mobile psychologically, more willing to fit with the culture. The adaptable stay, many of the skilled go. The other side is

continued

CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

selective non-migration—the poor, the lame, the halt and immobile. It's not necessarily so that all the able people go; but all the unable stay."

Consequently, the mountain hollows are home for many retired people, former miners incapacitated by silicosis, and the hardcore, uneducated poor who live on one form or another of government relief check. Many of the young, if not most of them, have their eyes set on leaving. One barometer: the educational level is dropping in many mountain counties, not because there is less achievement in this generation, Weller said, but because the more educated are leaving, lowering the average.

One 18-year-old from the Hellier area testified strongly about how dissatisfied he had been in the mountains, how he had hardly been able to wait for graduation from high school before rushing northward to big city emancipation. He still was expressing surprise and wonder at how it had happened, but there he was, back in the "holler." He had only been in Toledo for about four months, and he had taken a bride only four weeks before, when he got drunk on a Saturday night and woke up in his car, 350 miles south, near his grandfather's cabin in the old home hollow.

Nationwide, this is perhaps capitalism's finest hour—at least in terms of

production—and comfortable Americans have little patience with talk about joblessness. At the same time advertising columns are overflowing with employment opportunities, news columns are detailing destructive joblessness, inner city and out. But as Weller so descriptively points out about the mountain man, there are deep psychological implications that cannot be underestimated. A man may be somehow completely immobilized emotionally in an inner city ghetto or up a creek in eastern Kentucky.

Government programs are providing many jobs, through teacher-help pro-

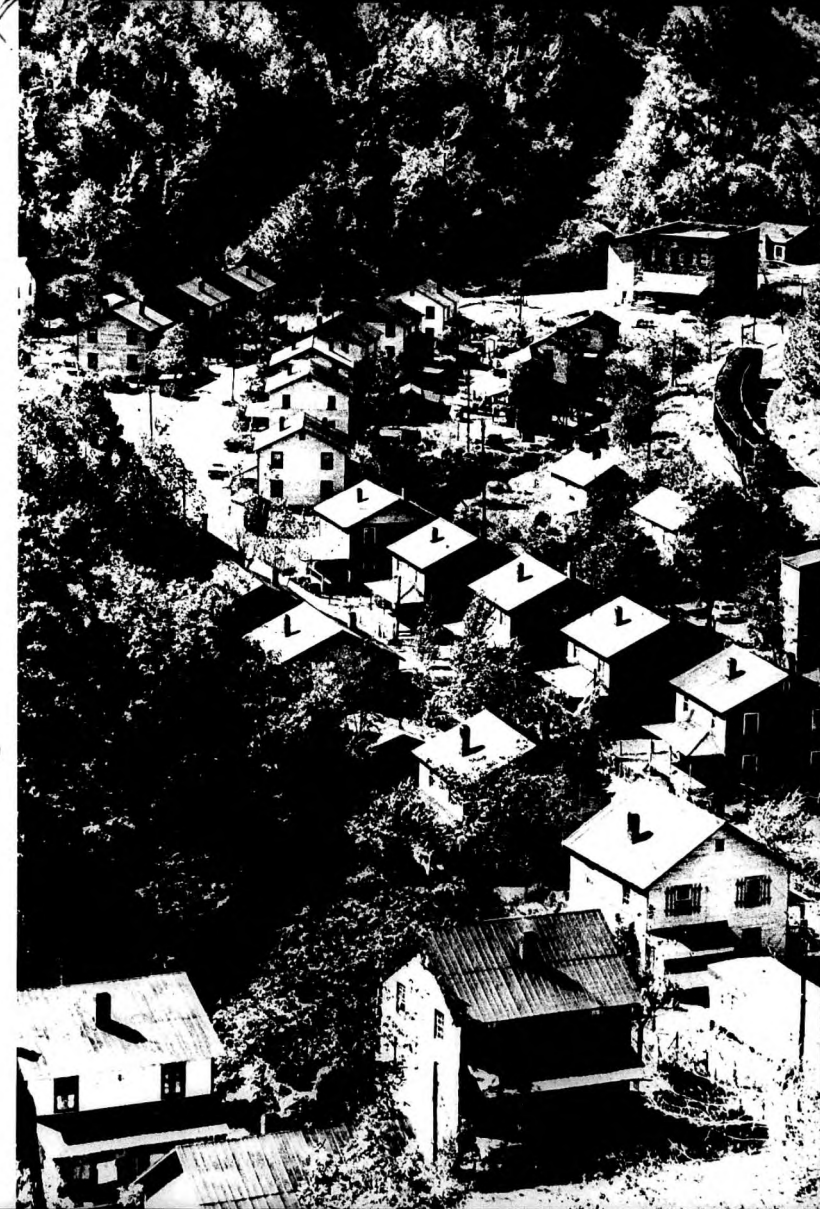
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HIGHWAYS are chunking into the deep, isolated mountains of eastern Kentucky, forcing—for better or worse—a contrast with more affluent regions of the nation. Roads, a major project of the Appalachian Regional Commission, offer some economic hope.

COAL CAMPS like Hardley, Ky., shown here, are ghostly reminders of the boom and bust years of days when the mines were the No. 1 employers in eastern Kentucky. Many of these frame houses, which were then owned by the company, are abandoned now.

HOME MISSIONS



grams in public schools, on the massive road building activity and other public work projects. Tourism, as the roads expand, is producing flickers of economic hope. But the mountains harbor a long list of seemingly insurmountable barriers to industry.

For one thing—and this may be surprising to some—lead is not available. In Perry County, for example, only two percent of the land is classified as flat enough for successful agricultural efforts. Jack Weller, who lives in Hazard, Perry County, said he thought one plot of 26 acres was the largest section of available land anywhere near the county-seat town.

Transportation also is inadequate for marketing any type of product. There is yet to be completed a major highway across central Appalachia.

Neither is there adequate housing, schools, water or public health facilities. What potential labor there is remaining is untrained. There are some resources such as salt, oil, gas and timber, but the mountains and the lack of transportation work against successful use of modern equipment.

Coal production is higher than ever and the prediction is for it to rise, but the work force is down to about one-fifth what it was 20 years ago. And even though coal mining is the one industry that has profited in the mountains, it has not reinvested or in any significant way returned wealth to the region. It has been an extractive, scarring industry.

The people, like people anywhere else, defy characterization to a large extent. They are leaving, they are re-

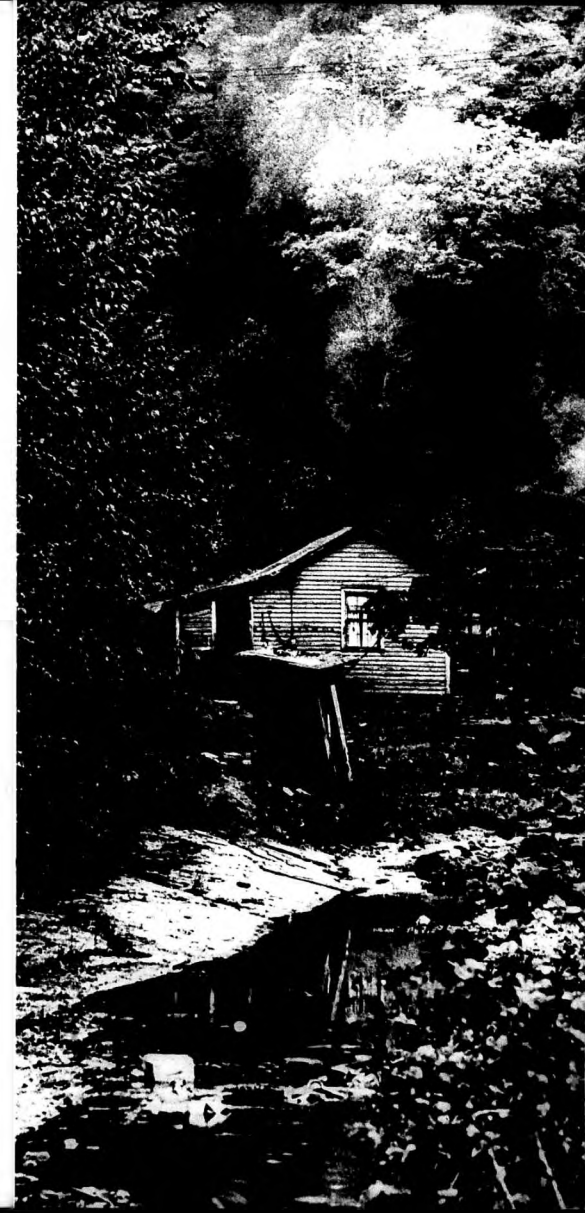
turning. They are changing, they are unchangeable. They are a profoundly simple people—in fact richly so, perhaps—and yet complex anxieties run deep beneath an apparent stoical nature, indicated by doctors being flooded with cases of nervousness.

One thing for certain, they are of the earth. They are tied to the often treacherous, occasionally productive, always beautiful land from which their people for generations have tried to wrest a living. Like Robert Fraley, they find it hard to leave; in fact, emotionally they probably never do regardless of how far north they go in search of opportunity.

Fraley will testify: eastern Kentucky is one place in all the U.S. where, indeed, a native can go home again. It's changing, but it isn't changed. ■

MOUNTAIN CABINS and outdoor plumbing still are prevalent in the scattered mountain communities. Although there is middle class affluence in some mountain population centers, the area offers little opportunity for industry and economic growth.

YOUNG PEOPLE have little to do and few places to go in the mountains. Although the steadily improving quality in education is making an impact, the young desperately need help to prepare for an encounter with America that most of their parents never knew.



BAPTISTS IN CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

The Struggle with Instinct

A hard history inevitably will forge a different style of religion than is known to the more comfortable in the faith. So it is in central Appalachia, where inbred isolation, brutal wars and a regressive economic history still are taxing the character of the people.

As Presbyterian observer Jack Weller said: "The average American is progressive, optimistic—onward and upward, and so on. Our history has sort of fostered this. Frontiers have opened and opened and opened before us. But in the mountains, where each succeeding generation not only is not richer than the one before but perhaps poorer, people develop a different outlook about tomorrow."

Hope, then, lies not in the next day or even in the next year, but in the

next life. Sermonizing in the mountains reflects it, with heavy emphasis on "the blood" and the call "to get right with God now." Favorite hymns speak it: "Farther along, we'll know all about it" or "We'll understand it better by and by" or "There may be some places I can't go, but God is real for I can feel him in my soul."

Baptist emphasis on personal salvation and access to God through personal prayer has matched the individualistic strain of mountain culture, and so Baptists—mostly old Regular Baptists dominate the religious scene.

A good example of Baptist acceptability is the case of Roscoe Douglas, 75-year-old pastor of the Pansy Baptist Church near Harlan, Ky.



Educator Aldridge
No one under 21

County Clerk Everage
A homegrown boy



Pastor Bell
No correcting influence



Ex-Area Man Pressley
Everything new except church



Retired Miner Couch
Start one, then rob it.

Years ago, when the mining camps were crowded and Douglas was a young preacher fresh out of the mines himself, a Methodist pastor heard Douglas preach and invited him to lead a month-long revival in the Methodist church in a Black Mountain community. Douglas accepted, recorded 325 professions of faith and then took 160 of those who professed Baptist leanings and started a Baptist church that he pastored for 14 years.

"We both came out way ahead," Douglas said.

A major factor in Southern Baptist strength in central Appalachia today is rooted in the active mission programs of a generation ago in which strong, centrally-located county seat churches conducted mission Sunday schools in surrounding hollows and small communities.

(Refined and souped up a little for urban situations, this same basic ap-

proach is referred to today as satellite outreach in the pioneer-area metropolises, usually taking form in home fellowships.)

Baptists do dominate the religious scene. But in more general terms, no one dominates the mountain man. He is not a joiner, he is not given to group activities of any sort, his individualism is almost to the point of a fault and he has a fatalistic attitude toward life, often depending on God to speak to him through abrupt or even violent experiences such as death in a family.

All this to say that the mountains do not harbor a Baptist paradise, as the prevalent religious strain of mountain culture might lead many to believe. Statistics on church membership range from as low as 12 percent of the population to as high as 30 percent. Either way, southern Appalachia clearly is one of the most unchurched regions of the nation.

Now in the age where inevitable change is creating potentially productive tension in the mountains, the institutional church—much like in other areas of the nation—is faced with charges of being "the last stronghold against change," of actually contributing to the perpetuation of harmful tradition and perverted instincts.

Mack Pressley, until recently associational missionary, now pastor in the Harlan, Ky. area, expressed some frustration at this point:

"The people seem often to move in every area except religion. They will send their kids off to school, buy a color TV and a new car, and so on, but spiritually remain right where they are."

The lack of mobility in regards to religion is illustrated by the fact that many if not most people will not cross the road to attend a church if their tradition is to go to another one. Other prevalent examples, especially in old Regular Baptist congregations, are: suspicion of Sunday schools and paid preachers and a sort of cult of changelessness that places a high degree of integrity on the ancient order of things.

"The church, generally speaking, is the last stronghold of non-change—that is one of the unfortunate facts of religion today," Weller said. "It sort of represents the last hope to hold on to home."

Kentucky Baptist missions director Robert Jones shared the concern, if not the exact allegation. "This is a real point of pride with the mountain man. He's unwilling to change and he is proud of it. He sees no need to update. This attitude may include no neckties or singing old songs."

continued

J.S. Bell, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Hindman for 30 years, indicated that isolation was a major factor in mountain church concepts. "Traditions have passed on without any correcting influence," he said.

"A good example is the tradition against supporting ministers. This was in reaction to being taxed by the state in Virginia to pay ministers. So the tradition built up that there should be no paid preachers."

This tradition probably contributed to the fact that for a long time Baptist church members were such poor givers financially. Robert Jones tells of one church where the congregation gave more to the Cooperative Program in one month this year than they gave to all causes during an entire year a decade ago.

The fact is that the problems of institutional churches in eastern Kentucky or the rest of Appalachia are the same confronting congregations all over the country. In most general terms, the basic problem seems to be one of understanding the nature of the church.

For example, there are few churches conducting ministries to physical needs in eastern Kentucky, an area teeming with retired, disabled and rootless adults and a sea of children and young people with virtually no directed activities. The director of the Baptist center in Hellier, Ky., who experiences several frantic 12-hour work days a week, often cannot even get help transporting people to worship services (see story, page 21).

The reason for this lack of response is not clear, though probably it is rooted in the pride and individualism of the mountaineer and his lack of faith in a better tomorrow on this earth.

"Religion in the mountains is often other-worldly, and you can't blame the people, really, since they have been done in so often," Weller said.

Weller, however, said salvation-only preaching has failed to challenge cultural patterns and at least in part is responsible for a lack of ministry mindedness. "The personal salvation-centered emphasis is right," he said, "except when it becomes the end-all, when you say that is all the gospel is."

Weller, who is minister-at-large in eastern Kentucky for the United Presbyterian Church, also criticized his own denomination for its heavy emphasis on education and the requirement that pastors anywhere must have seminary degrees. "We are weakened by this; we don't match the culture in the mountains."

Baptists have made Bible school education accessible through Clear Creek

Baptist School in Pineville, Ky. Its purpose primarily is to admit preachers who have yielded to the call to preach in mature years, regardless of their educational background. Admittance actually depends mostly on the recommendation from the applicant's church and pastor. The average student is 33, has left a job to attend the school and has a wife and three children.

President D. M. Aldridge said the course was comparable content-wise to a regular bachelor of divinity program. English, however, is substituted for Greek and Hebrew.

"We give preference to Kentucky and Tennessee applicants, but the 150 students come from as many as 20 states," Aldridge said. "We will not take anyone under 21, seldom under 25. If young men do enter we try to motivate them to go on to college after a year."

The three-year school operates a church furniture plant on campus to employ the men, and also provides workshop programs in which men can support their families through maintenance work on school buildings and grounds. Men students also are required to preach every Sunday, in churches, missions, hospitals, jails or even on the street.

The contribution of this school would be hard to measure. Southern Baptist pioneer areas have drawn heavily on Clear Creek graduates, and Kentucky alone has 300 graduates of the school.

Although lack of education could hardly be classified as a point of strength, one of Southern Baptists' strong points has been the faith placed in men without formal education—men like Archie Everage, for example, who works as county clerk in Hindman, Knott County, and pastors the Montgomery Creek Baptist Church in his home hollow.

Everage's conversion experience illustrates one of the primary instincts of the mountain man: protect independence at any cost. He tells it:

"There was a revival at the First Baptist Church of Hindman and this evangelist came right up the aisle to me during the invitation and said: 'Young man, are you a Christian?' Now we don't like that sort of thing. I was determined he couldn't get me to do anything—when God wanted me, he would let me know. I was under conviction but I wouldn't yield under his preaching."

"But to God I'm thankful for that guy. A few weeks later I made a profession of faith and was baptized. My wife walked down the aisle first. When I saw her move, all the devils in hell couldn't have stopped me then."

Everage later became a deacon in that church, where J. S. Bell has been pastor for 30 years. He started a mission Sunday school up Montgomery Creek and "felt the call to preach." Later, the Dwarf Baptist Church called him to preach on Sunday nights, which he did for a year. Only about a dozen people were attending, but by the end of the year 58 professions of faith and a total of 71 additions had been recorded.

Area missionary Charles Wilcox said: "Archie is a homegrown boy. He can even preach to the old Regular Baptists."

Everage offered insight into traditional religious loyalties. "I can remember preaching revivals at other churches and the converts would want to go back to Montgomery Creek, where I was pastor, to join a church. They felt some kind of loyalty to me because I was preaching when they made their profession."

Many Baptist preachers support themselves by working in the mines, on the railroads or some other secular employment.

Asbel Couch, 63, a retired coal miner and active pastor who was named for Asbel Petrie, the Baptist pioneer known as the prophet of Little Cane Creek, has been preaching since 1939. He can name at least a dozen men who have surrendered to preach under his ministry, which is no small contribution.

He worked in the mines for 43 years, and kept working when he began preaching, intentionally seeking to preach at small churches that could not afford to pay pastors.

"We couldn't survive without the small church," he said. "A great many of our people are shy and just simply don't want to go to a big church. I would help organize one church and then rob it to organize another."

Couch now is pastor of the Redhill Baptist Church in Chavies, Ky., near Hazard. He speaks a little sorrowfully about the folks from the area who had to go north seeking work. "I believe I'll see the day when we'll have factories in this part of the country. We want to leave a better church than was here when the folks had to leave."

While the small church probably is an effective institution in the mountains, too many small churches can be a pain. One area missionary said there was an intense reluctance in his area to consolidate small churches or even to develop a field of churches in which one pastor could serve several congregations. "I think they would rather take anybody in order to have their own pastor, rather than form a field of churches and have one trained pastor."

Many of the churches sprang up in coal camps in the days when many men would ask the company to hold out 10 percent from their check for the church. Now, even though the coal camps have been drained of people for the last 15 years, many of the churches are trying to hang on. One congregation in Harlan County is composed only of women.

So the fierce mountain independence rages on. There are, however, tiny cracks beginning to appear in the walls that separate Christian groups. Men like Archie Everage, for example, are so well accepted in mountain communities that they can have fellowship with little strain with old Regular Baptist groups. Some Baptist churches of different stripes even have braved a few combined special services, such as Thanksgiving meetings.

On a broader scale, the Commission on Religion in Appalachia (CORA) is beginning gently to feel out possibilities for ecumenical ministries. Sixteen denominations, including Southern Baptists (through the Home Mission Board's Department of Rural-Urban Missions) are supporting the commission in its tentative explorations for ways to cooperate in ministry. At the end of five years, an evaluation will be conducted.

"CORA is trying to get a regional perspective, to see what all government and church programs are trying to do and then chart a course in light of these," said John McBride of the Home Mission Board. "It is not an effort to establish another National Council of Churches, but to find out what we can do and cannot do together."

Project proposals now include: seminars on the church and how it should relate to migrant workers, poverty and key growth centers; compilation and correlation of research in the region; possible cooperative support of low-income housing units; and exploration into cooperative use of the mass media.

CORA's exploratory posture alone probably gives it credence. The church, though surely unintentionally, has not contributed to preparing mountain people to deal effectively with the deep human problems inherent in the region's emergence from isolation. In the place of hopelessness and escapism, the church should be able to offer the way to new life. ■

WAITING FOR A SIGN? Even though highway signs and town square benches proclaim the saving grace of God throughout the mountains, church attendance and activity are low. One report indicated church membership in the mountains to be as low as 12 percent.

December, 1968





Freedra Harris (lower right) has experienced an amazingly matter-of-fact prayer life in a world where miracles seldom even raise eyebrows anymore. In fact, so convincing and heartwarming are her accounts of answered prayer that young, blonde US-2er Diane Greene (right), who is assigned to work with Miss Harris at the Marrowbone Baptist Center in Hellier, Ky., cannot afford to take anything lightly. For example: Recently Miss Harris, director of the center, told Diane that surely two short-termers would be better than one, that the Home Mission Board should have sent a US-2 couple, and, consequently, that she was "praying for Diane a man." Funny? "Listen," Diane says, trying to impress upon visitors the seriousness of the situation, "when Freedra starts praying for something, you had better watch out." This true story does capture a spirit of truth about an uneducated mountain woman who has given her life—literally—to servanthood in Christ. She was a beautician in 1948, further south in Harlan, Ky., when she committed herself to mission work. Supporting herself by working in stores owned by mining companies in and around Hellier, she began conducting Sunday School missions "up the hollers" (see photo at left), the isolated mountain valleys carved out of tiny creeks. In 1962, the Home Mission Board purchased a building for a Baptist center and appointed Miss Harris as director. •



CENTRAL APPALACHIA:

A Matter of Faith





Volunteers still are few and the children are many, so she and Diane (East Tennessee State University, '67) spend as much as three hours a day picking up and returning children. (Photos show children racing into the building, then up to the house after a ride home.) Children's activities are conducted on Mondays, Tuesdays and Saturdays—each day for a different "holler." Usually two trips in the carry-all results in about 40 children. An equally large group respond to young people's activities such as the cookout shown at right, with Diane in the center. Another ministry involves the distribution of clothing, toiletries and medical items. The Woman's Missionary Union Christmas-in-August project, in which three missionaries are selected for

such donations, literally has flooded the center. In fact, packages are backing up in two rented buildings, the center and the top floor of Miss Harris' home. Miss Harris and Diane also provide transportation to and from the mission of the Marrowbone Baptist Church, two miles up the road. Both also teach classes on Sundays. The ministry of these two women probably touches nearly 200 people a week, which would be a fair-size mountain congregation. It has taken an enduring faith to build such an influential ministry in an area where churches simply are not ministry minded—the style of faith that would compel a woman like Freeda Harris to drive far up the hollow for one child or for twenty children, day after day, year after year. ■

December, 1968



Toward a Ministry of Evangelism

by M. Thomas Starkes

Many Southern Baptists are asking for the first time whether the gospel has any application outside the "plan of salvation." Some have decided that government service in the Peace Corps or with VISTA is the place where the gospel is brought to bear with greatest effect. A few have equated the terms "social gospel," and "liberal" and "mod-ernist" with the anti-Christ. In the midst of this crisis in Christian thought, a re-evaluation of the biblical view of the gospel, a fresh look at the secular theo-logians and a balanced appreciation of Baptist distinctives and emphases are severely needed. This article is an at-tempt to meet such a crisis in thought by showing that the gospel is both "God's power to save all who believe" (Rom. 1:16) and "your manner of life" (Phil. 1:27).¹

• **Saved and all that stuff—**
Two other Baptist ministers and I sat down at a coffee shop in the Boston airport while waiting for a plane. We struck up a conversation with a young sailor from Atlanta and the subject was soon turned to religion. His speech betrayed a common misunderstanding of the gospel as he said, "When I was nine I was saved and all that stuff but I haven't been back much since." The vague notion he had of what comes after salvation was probably the result of the unclear way it was presented to him. "All that stuff" was as specific to him as "let us follow Jesus" is to most congregations.

The ramifications of obeying the gos-pel are many. The biblical evidence reveals that the Greek word for good news is used over 60 times in connec-tion with its proclamation and willful acceptance. [See Heb. 4: 2, I Pet. 4: 6, Luke 20: 1.]

The "kernel" of the gospel message is summarized in several places in the New Testament as evidence that the early church quickly developed a common version of the essential features of the message of Christ's life, death and resur-rection. Paul summarizes in I Corin-thians 15 what he had preached in Corinth, "Christ died for our sins as written in the Scriptures; he was buried; he was raised to life on the third day as written in the Scriptures; and he

appeared to Peter. . . ." This "kernel" was a recitation of the Christ-event to remind man of what God had done through the incarnation of his Son. The believer was to respond to the event and person of Christ through repent-ance and personal trust. However, other uses of the word meaning good news in the New Testament indicates that one's initial response does not exhaust the demands of discipleship.

Paul writes in his salutation to the church in Philippi, "I am sure of this: that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished in the day of Christ Jesus. . . ." Paul then expresses his prayer that they will grow in love, knowledge and judgment so they will be able to choose what is best. The apostle is reminding them that obeying the good news is not a once-for-all matter soon to be forgotten. Paul continues in Phil. 1:27, "The im-portant thing is that your manner of life be as the gospel of Christ re-quires. . . ." Paul is saying that there is a manner of life commensurate with one's having avowed to be a learner of Christ.

Jesus himself conceived of his min-istry as incorporating much more than proclamation of the good news. When asked by John's disciples whether he was the one the baptizer had foretold, the Lord replied: Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind can see, the lame can walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf can hear, the dead are raised to life, and the good news is preached to the poor (Luke 7:22).

Jesus offered as proof of his messiah-ship the fact that persons were being ministered to in their physical maladies

Editor's note: This is the second of a series of three articles dealing with current social revolutions in the nation by a staff member in the Department of Work with Nonevangelicals at the Home Mission Board. The third install-ment will deal with black power.

as well as their spiritual depths. The gospel was good news in every area of the believer's life as Jesus ministered to him. The imitator of the Master can consider his ministry to be no less.

A revealing episode in the life of the early church is recorded by Paul in Galatians 2. It is especially meaningful in the question of whether the gospel has any jurisdiction outside of its im-portant place to the Christian as pro-claimed and believed. Paul rebuked Peter for being "clearly wrong" in al-lowing racial distinctions to interfere with Christian fellowship. Peter had been enjoying mealtime with Gentiles until some representatives from James arrived. Paul says that Peter then re-fused to eat with his former companions and all the Jews begun acting "like cowards." Then Paul declares, "When I saw that they were not walking a straight path in line with the gospel, I said to Peter, in front of them all 'You are a Jew, yet you have been living like a Gentile, not like a Jew. How then, can you try to force Gentiles to live like Jews?'" (Gal. 2:14).

The forgiveness in spite of sin which Paul had experienced led him to re-buke Peter for hypocrisy and inconsis-tency in the treatment of fellow be-lievers. Paul felt that the same accept-ance which he had found in the gospel of God should be extended to every man. He used the gospel as a standard of behavior—not merely a miraculous event to be proclaimed and accepted. This is a clear biblical indication that the gospel stands as a standard for con-duct in concrete decisions which make up the relationship called Christian dis-cipleship.

Matthew records Jesus' emphasis on the gospel of the kingdom. In 4:23 and 9:35, Matthew records that Jesus, "taught in their meeting houses, preached the good news of the kingdom, and healed people from every kind of dis-ease and sickness." Jesus emphasized that the reign or kingdom of God was at hand. After the death and resurrec-tion of Jesus, the good news was the story of him. As Jesus is recorded to have said, the word "gospel" is almost invariably linked with "kingdom." Jesus proclaimed that the day which the

prophets and faithful had desired to see was now here. God was now in the business of setting straight the evil con-dition into which the world had fallen. The sovereign lordship of God over his people and world was about to be-come a reality.

Whether Jesus had reference to a future or a present kingdom has long been a subject of debate. The "either—or" mentality which has prevailed in the discussion should be abolished. Ad-vocates of the social gospel maintain that the kingdom is to be realized by working toward it, while a common tendency among evangelicals has been to speak only of the kingdom to come at the return of Christ. Jesus spoke of the kingdom in which the kingdom had dawned with the incarnation of the Messiah. Man was still free to choose for or against Him, but the possibility of the kingdom was here. Jesus em-bodied that for which Israel hoped. At the same time, Jesus suggested that his followers pray for the kingdom to come.

Those who have maintained that the kingdom was to come have tended to believe that there is little connection be-tween God's rule and life at a particular moment. The connection between be-lieving the gospel and being in the king-dom now is never seen. Those who have said that the kingdom can be on earth have tended to stress that the reign could be brought about by their efforts. This is to forget that the realization of the kingdom is the work of God. A bal-anced view of the good news concern-ing the kingdom would include the ideas that the reign of God is a possibility now that Jesus has come and that man's role is to seek to determine what is the will of God for him and for his society in this generation and to live out that will both individually and collectively.

There is also a sense in which God's reign will be completely established at the second coming of Christ.

The biblical use of the word "gospel" reveals overwhelming evidence that it is to be obeyed not only through initial repentance but through living in ac-cordance with the love shown through it. The good news is that Jesus has come and is coming.

Unfortunately, although Jesus is good news, many Christians are bad news be-cause they see no connection between believing in and living out the gospel. Their initial experience with God by forgiveness can be described accurately as "meaningless" in relation to human need. They have failed to relate salva-tion to life. They have been converted to God but never have had the same experience with man. They see forgive-ness and love from God as being

The danger on the left is that of "secular humanism" and impotent proclamation of the truth of man's need for God. The evangelical church has formerly leaned toward the danger on the right, with loud words about man's initial encounter with God and a soft whisper about man's encounter with man.

"spiritual" qualities and say "so what" to our crisis days. To these believers the "secular" theologians sound a warn-ing that indifference and discipleship are never synonymous.

• **The Crisis in "Secular" Evangelism—**
Twentieth century theologians have caused a furor in the Christian camp over a theology for evangelism. The preconceived ideas which lie behind the idea that the Christian's primary re-sponsibility is to "save souls" have been thoroughly reexamined. After serious reflection, the emphasis among "secu-lar" theologians is now on ministry to the whole of a man's being and to our sin-sick society in its entirety. The spreading of the good news now be-comes more than the reading of the "plan of salvation" (an extra-biblical term) to a "prospect." Taking a page from the book on evangelism which Jesus lived out, current theologians are stressing at least four concepts which our traditional evangelism must take into account.

The first emphasis which the "secu-lar" theologians are giving is that on the gospel and the whole man. Rein-hold Niebuhr² and Paul Tillich³ have stressed that Christian discipleship in-volves the commitment of one's emo-tional, physical, intellectual and spiri-tual makeup to God. The disciple there-fore develops by constant searching for both "religious" and "secular" truth, emotional maturity, physical health and spiritual development. Evangelism be-comes ministering to the needs of these four aspects of the neighbor's person-ality. The pattern of Jesus' ministry was that of issuing challenges to commit-ment by ministering through comfort, healing and dialogue. Since the whole man had gone astray, the whole man was restored through Christ. The gos-pel of the kingdom was good news for every area of every man's life.

Emphasis on ministry to the whole man does not negate the interest evan-gelical Christians have shown toward man's spiritual being which they have

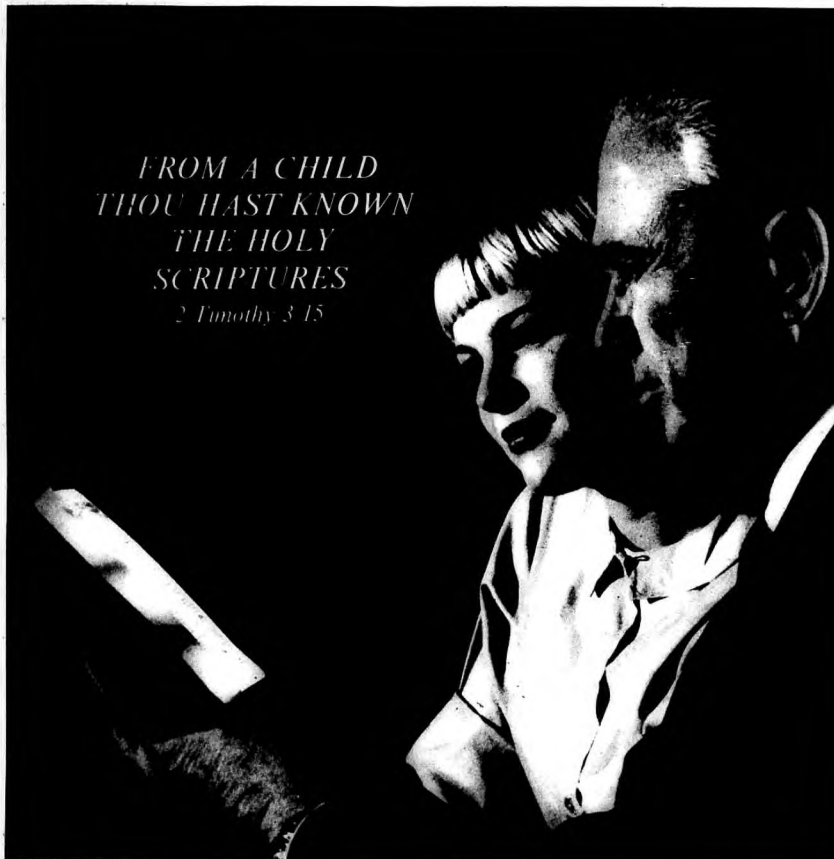
labelled the "soul." This also does not reduce the sense of urgency which has given impetus to the richly-rewarded revivalist efforts in evangelism. The effect of Christian concern displayed for the whole man is the same as the dimensio n love adds to the law—con-cern fills evangelism full. "Soul-win-ning" is saved from being a shallow approach to part of a man for a portion of his existence. Jesus showed concern for the emotional problems of the de-moni- ac of Gadara; the physical illness of the woman with the courage to touch the hem of the garment; the intellectual ferment within the mind of the lawyer who asked the identity of his neighbor; and the need for forgiveness of sin granted to the woman taken in adultery. The Christian "ministry of evangelism" can do no less and call itself Christlike. The crisis is clear in the mind of the observer of the contemporary ills of man and society. The answer is the ap-plication of the total biblical gospel.

The new theologians are also calling for the rephrasing of the good news into space-age terminology. Rudolf Bult-mann⁴ has stirred up a hornet's nest of controversy by insisting that the good news is best presented without some "prescientific" trappings found in the New Testament. For example, to try to explain to a teenager who knows much about John Glenn and Gemini that heaven is "up" from both Tokyo and Tucuman is to place unneeded ob-stacles in his deciding for the Saviour. The offense of the gospel therefore be-comes its outdated world view, rather than its challenge for the renovation of personality. Man is not allowed to choose for Christian discipleship alone, but seemingly must accept a heaven which is "up there" and a hell which may be descended into.

Bultmann has pinpointed a problem in the contemporary presentation of the gospel, i.e., how to communicate the gospel in modern terminology with-out destroying its basic meaning. "Plan of salvation," "invitation" and "being saved" are terms which communicate little outside evangelical churches. These terms are specialized and carry the ex-tra weight of theological presupposi-tions about the nature and destiny of man which may not be communicating the truth of man's need to find mean-ing by discovering God and neighbor. This is not to say that man does not live in desperate need of the eternal hope that only relation to God through Christ can provide. These needs include at least forgiveness, self-identity, ac-ceptance and love. The modern presen-tation of the gospel is the good news

FROM A CHILD THOU HAST KNOWN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

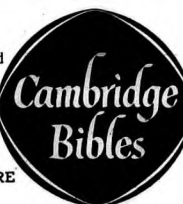
2 Timothy 3:15



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Continued from page 25

that these basic needs are met through relation to God and his highest creation—man. This message need not bear the extra weight of an outmoded phraseology, as long as the message remains unchanged. Bultmann and Tillich¹ should be heard in their reminder that rapid social and technological change necessitates a new vocabulary sufficiently "secular" to be "sacred," i.e., used of God in the communication of the good news. The gospel is always good news when properly understood. To clothe the message unnecessarily in shopworn clichés is to deprive it of its inherent freshness. Jesus of Nazareth can become the Christ of Main Street only with the proper introduction.

A third major modern movement in theology is that called the "social gospel." Walter Rauschenbusch² began his monumental work by declaring, "We have a social gospel. We need a systematic theology large enough to match it and vital enough to back it." Evangelical Christianity has historically done very little to bridge the gap between individual salvation and social justice. Christian spokesmen have ranged from evangelist Billy Graham who advocates multiple individual conversions as the ultimate cure for social ills to Rauschenbusch, who calls for the merging of "religion" and "ethics." The social gospel calls for applied Christianity and asserts that evil is as evident in the business and social world as in the sinner. Sin, it is pointed out, is never a private transaction between the sinner and God. The kingdom of evil exists through such forces as the coveting upon which a free enterprise system is based.

Rauschenbusch and the "social gospels" primarily are interested in the building of the kingdom of God. He contends that since Jesus spoke of his ministry in terms of the kingdom of God, the Christian's primary business is the affecting of this reign. This ideal contains the revolutionary force of Christianity. Theology is transformed from the static to the dynamic. This kingdom is "humanity organized according to the will of God."³ The church exists for this purpose and lives out this aspect of the gospel by surrendering every opportunity to exploit men.

This approach speaks with refreshing clarity to a world screaming for answers to social ills. The church content to define its mission almost solely in terms of "visiting a prospect" is only partially living out its true function as the body of Christ. A reexamination of the individual and the church's role in participation in the kingdom is needed

in the facing of the current crisis in theology.

A fourth major emphasis of twentieth-century theology is that the Christian church be caught up in the task of making itself heard in everyday problems.⁴ This involves more than a commitment to be "religious," honest and sincere. The time is one of social crisis. The old measure of equating discipleship with church attendance is merely ignored today by the secular world. Unless the church rediscovers the secular meaning of the gospel, it will continue to be viewed as a helpless old cripple in the battle for the cure of social ills. Another generation may bring upon us a total disregard for the church except as a social club with a few moral overtones. The churches must recognize the political and social structures of their community and be able to speak to and through that structure. It may well be the case that the most Christian act for a young man is to serve on the county commission instead of the board of deacons. A BSU group may discover that it is more Christlike to support one of their candidates for student body president than to plan a youth rally. The good news about Christ will be shown to be what it really is, a revolutionary force in every area of modern life.

These four messages to the modern Christian aid in the rediscovery of what it means to spread the good news. Evangelism in its fullness is the key to the crises in Christian theology and practice. The catch phrase for this concept may well be "the ministry of evangelism," which combines interest in the total personality with an introduction to God through the Saviour. This introduction is best made when it is true to the biblical truths about man and God but phrased in current and individually-tailored language.

The good news of the kingdom of God which Jesus so frequently proclaimed will be heard by this generation when the church of Christ becomes as radically serious about the living out of the gospel as it has been about its proclamation. Separation of "religion" from "ethics" is a false dichotomy which cannot be perpetuated if the church hopes to be heard in these crisis days. Study of social and political structures and entry as Christians into these realms will place the Christ of Wall Street, Harlem and the White House in the places where he spent his time during his ministry. Based on the Christ-event and synonymous with its reliving, the gospel will be placed in healthy tension with the cry of the desolate. Good news will be brought to bear on all the bad situations this life produces.

The Christian church in America must enter the last third of the twentieth century with a current theology which might best be labeled "applied neo-orthodoxy." The neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner was produced because the church had become almost synonymous with the culture which surrounded it. The same condition prevails in America today. Christianity is equated with the Hollywood version of Bible heroes who react like suburbanites and with signs erected by the local Jaycees urging every citizen to attend "the church of your choice." To be "Christian" is equated with being a good citizen and standing for law and order to protect the image of the church.

The church is in crucial danger of ceasing to be the people of God unless the same truths of a biblical nature are stressed today that were emphasized by the neoorthodox theologians a generation ago. These truths are: the gospel is relevant for solving the practical problems of war, racial strife and economic exploitation; God's kingdom is built by recognizing and living under the lordship of Christ; social institutions are as surely a mixture of good and evil as is every man; a biblically-oriented theology stresses social righteousness as God acts in history through love shown by Christians; man makes peace with self and neighbor by encountering God through Christ. A return to a truly biblical theology without the baggage of evangelical presuppositions is a vital part of the solution to the crisis in Christian theology and practice to grab the attention of modern, secular man.

The chief danger in implementing applied Christianity is that the role of the church may be seen as the same as the "secular humanists" which would consider their responsibilities toward man to be met through secular education or giving economic support. The good news of Christ is that God has seen and reacted to man's dilemma by affording a way of peace with the Creator. Any social program which merely educates or affords "green" power is good as far as it goes, but neglects the biblical truth that man stands estranged from his Maker. Life in "3-D" is possible best through Christ who has shown simultaneously what it means to be perfect God and perfect man. The "ministry of evangelism" in the midst of a crisis is the constant reminder that man grows best when grafted to the True Vine.

• Practical Mission Application—

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begun to speak of the "unbelieving believer." This popular kind of belief has practically given up trying to correlate the "God of the pulpit" and the "God of the ghetto" or the "God of the grocery store." This believer has developed the "half-eyed stare" and is capable of half-listening to the greatest of challenges and walking away unchanged. Even when he does hear, he feels little compulsion to apply what he hears to anything at all outside the church building.

It is to the "unbelieving believer" that the church must speak first. There are dozens of people in every congregation waiting to stand amazed when they see that the good news is not totally packaged in a half-hour sermon. A recent press release told the story of the teenage members of the Christ Memorial Baptist Church of Cool Valley, Mo. who issued a challenge to the adult membership of their own church. They called for a policy of "openness, loving acceptance and ministry to all segments of society." Tony Jacobs, a ministerial student, spoke for the youth of the church when he said that the poor, the black, the uneducated and derelict, as well as the educated, middle class and upper class should be welcomed into church membership and full participation. William Little, the pastor, voiced his approval of the statement when he said, "We believe these ideals to be the teachings of Christ, and our commitment to him demands we apply these ideals to the ministry of our church."

The solution to the crisis in current theology is simply this: to rediscover the biblical definition of the gospel; and taking into consideration the best of twentieth century theology—to live out the implications of these new concepts with the same evangelistic abandon that drove Jesus to the cross!

The solution to the crisis is up to those Christians without all the answers. It is up to those willing to risk abuse from those within and without the Christian camp. It is up to those who will risk evangelism as entering into the lives of other people in the spirit of compassion while learning from them as we search together for God through Christ. The "ministry of evangelism" will have practical consequences in the face of a crisis.

Practical suggestions for those willing to run the risk of personal involvement in the tension created by the gospel might include the following: a resolution presented to your local church similar to the one at Cool Valley; weekend seminars in your church on Vietnam, racial prejudice, situation ethics, political service and the gospel's application to these issues; development of

an honest prayer life with frank admission to God, fellow Christians and "sinners" that you have failed to live out the gospel; tutoring and remedial reading classes among those of any race having trouble in school; the development of an effective counseling service through your church with a phone number listed for emergencies; volunteering as a church group for assistance in federal programs for the underprivileged, training through seminars for such service; sponsoring recreation among the migrant camps and ghettos in your community; evangelizing those you previously considered not "respectable" enough for your "Christian" group.

Involved in a crisis in theology and practice, the church today walks a tightrope. Most of the crowd has left and few in the stands are paying attention. The danger on the left is that of "secular humanism" and impotent proclamation of the truth of man's need for God. The evangelical church has formerly leaned toward the danger on the right, with loud words about man's initial encounter with God and a soft whisper about man's encounter with man. The current crisis at last has removed the net of indifference. God watches from the top of the tent while you as Mr. Christian steady yourself for the treacherous walk before the world. The crowd regathers and waits . . . for you to begin the dangerous trek that always has been synonymous with true Christian discipleship. The church is on the tightrope because you are there. Walking on the ground is much safer but from the first venturing step until the platform on the other side—Christ walks with you. Do you dare go? The crowd still waits . . . and hopes. . . .

FOOTNOTES

¹All Scripture quotations are from *Good News for Modern Man* (New York: American Bible Society, 1964).

²Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, Vols. I-III (New York: Scribners, 1946).

³Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper, 1957).

⁴Rudolph Bultmann, *Kerygma and Myth* (New York: Harper, 1953).

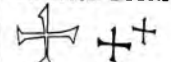
⁵Bultmann and Tillich, *The Courage To Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952).

⁶Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1945), p. 1.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 142.
⁸Gayraud S. Wilmore, *The Secular Relevance of the Church* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962).

⁹Religious News Service (New York), June 28, 1968.

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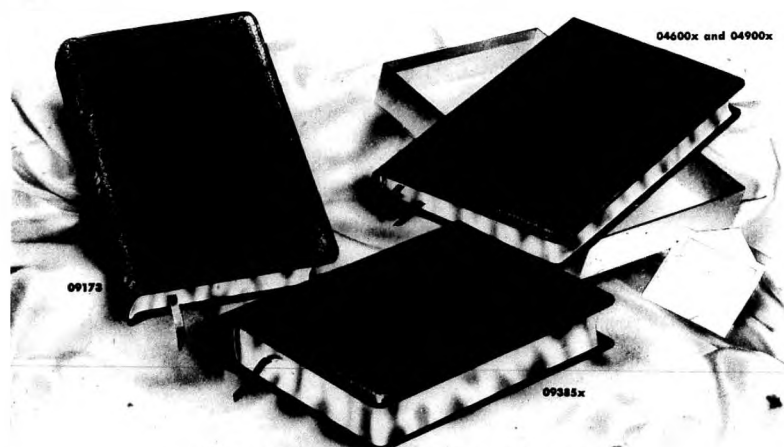
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EVANGELIZING THE POST-CHRISTIAN MAN

continued from page 7

tells how a young minister went to Joseph Parker at the City Temple in London to ask for his advice about preaching. His sermons, he said, were achieving nothing; could Dr. Parker tell him what was wrong? "Suppose you preach me one of your sermons here and now," said Parker. The young man, with great trepidation, did so. At the end of it Parker said, "Young man, I think I can tell you what is wrong. For the last half an hour you have been trying to get something out of your head instead of trying to get something into mine." Our problem as witnesses for Christ is to speak so as to be understood—not in the sense of using simple words, but of speaking compelling words that reveal to our hearers the relevance of the gospel and its power to save them. That is to say, we have to speak into the situation of our contemporaries, or, more accurately, into their individual situations, for not all have identical needs.

Many of our contemporaries will be interested that *the gospel is about man*—how he can become a real man, an integrated man, a whole man, a fulfilled person. To recognize this as a major quest of modern man was the burden of the group at the Uppsala Assembly of the World Council of Churches which framed the report "Renewal in Mission." The report begins with the statement, "We belong to a humanity that cries passionately and articulately for a fully human life." And it goes on to urge, "There is a burning relevance today in describing the mission of God, in which we participate, as the gift of a new creation, which is a radical renewal of the old, and the invitation to men to grow up into their full humanity in the New Man, Jesus Christ."

When I first met this idea I was not greatly impressed, but further reflection has convinced me of its value. There is no doubt that a key word among men and women today is "fulfilment." The artificiality of modern life and its hollowness depresses them. They feel that there must be something better than what they know, some more effective way of fulfilling the purpose of living. Not to find it is to create a sense of the futility of life.

I was reminded of Ibsen's play about Peer Gynt, which he wrote to illustrate the theme of man in search of his soul. Peer Gynt is the epitome of the man

who lives for himself. His adventures take him to many parts of the world, but as he returns to his native Norway in old age he suffers shipwreck and loses all his possessions. He goes back to the place whence he came, with nothing to show for his life's labours. He is met by the messenger of death, and he recoils in horror from the prospect of becoming nothing. The messenger replies in mild surprise:

"But my dear Peer, why all the fuss
Over a technical point like this?
Yourself is just what you've never been."

The words sink home. Filled with remorse Peer asks to be allowed to gaze on the promised land, and then to die and be covered by the drifting snows, with an epitaph above him, "*Here lies the man who never was.*"

When a man realizes that he is in that position, or is heading for it, he is surely ready for the good news that Christ came in order that he might become what he was made to become. Then perhaps he will be ready to listen to the truth that Nicodemus had to learn, that a man must be born—not "again," but "from above," i.e. from God; he must start all over again with the God who can make him a new creature, in the image of Christ the true man.

It is possible that not everybody will be impressed with that line of thinking—it may not touch their particular burden. There are multitudes, however, who will be glad to know that *Christianity is about forgiveness*—the removal of guilt through Him who lived and died and rose again to bring us to God, who takes away the heaviness of anxiety, bestows the gift of peace and gives power to live aright. This, of course, is close to the heart of the Christian message, and it is remarkable how pertinent it is to the situation of multitudes of post-Christian men and women.

O.H. Mower in the *Crisis in Psychiatry and Religion* holds that the greatest burden of man is his consciousness of guilt. For too long, he maintains, psychiatrists have taken the line that the sense of guilt has to be explained away and a permissive attitude to life adopted, but in the long run a man's conscience cannot be overrun in this manner, and he

continued

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He is reared in a society where a Christian church is only a few yards away, but from which he is separated by a seemingly impassable gulf.

will be harmed rather than helped through such counselling. Mowrer complains moreover that all too often ministers send patients to a psychiatrist to deal with a problem for which the psychiatrist is not trained and for which his profession cannot cater. These people need above all the word that brings forgiveness, and to give that word is the task of the minister of God, not of the psychiatrist.

Clearly this man would have agreed with the German theologian-scientist Karl Heim. Schiller had declared, "The greatest of all evils is guilt." On this Heim commented: "Only guilt is the absolute evil, the absolutely fearful and unbearable thing, the plainly incurable injury. Everything else that is terrible in the world weighs light over against this. If one were to lay guilt in the balance and in the other all the other sufferings of the world—an unhappy love affair which makes life a hell, lifelong forced labor in the mountain works of Siberia, years long and hopeless suffering from cancer with the only pros-

pect of a tormented end, softening of the brain which leads to madness, even so the balance on which guilt lies would sink down to the depths, and the other balance on which all the rest of suffering lies would quickly rise in the air. . . . The future hell will be nothing other than a bad conscience."

Many a man and woman trying to cope without Christ knows exactly what Heim was talking about, and has experienced the weight of that burden. It is the privilege of the Christian evangelist to point these people to the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. They will be glad to join Bunyan's Christian, and look at that man on the cross, till the burden rolls away from their backs and plunges into the depths of the Saviour's grave.

There's another word that lies at the heart of the gospel, and that is *reconciliation*. The Christian gospel is the message of a reconciliation achieved between man and God, and between man and man. Here, too, is a word as relevant as ever a message could be. For one of the most terrible realities of our time is the existence of barriers that divide men from men and create bitter hostility. These barriers are growing higher rather than lower, and they form a threat to our very existence. One has only to think of the hostility between east and west, between the Communist block and the western democracies, between the white races and the black to see the truth of this. The divisions go not only high but deep, and they are fed by the fires of hell, so that every now and again a volcanic eruption brings ruin to men and women and threatens yet more violent eruptions in days ahead. There are some whose only remedy for this seems to be to build walls that can stem the flow of lava from the volcanic craters, for example a bigger stock pile of yet more powerful bombs, or a system of apartheid to keep the races as far as possible from each other. But man needs more drastic action to relieve his plight than this. Such action has been taken through the Christ of God: by his *cross* he rakes out and extinguishes those hellish fires that are at the root of the human dilemma, and where there was clamour and strife he creates peace and concord.

Paul's words, relating to the deepest cleavage that the ancient world knew, continued

HOME MISSIONS

Jesus almost never used the term, "salvation"; he had a far simpler and appealing word: LIFE.

that between Jew and Gentile, are typical for every division of mankind: "Christ is himself our peace. He has made the two one, and in his own body of flesh and blood has broken down the enmity which stood like a dividing wall between them; for he annulled the law with its rules and regulations, so as to create out of the two a single new humanity in himself, thereby making peace. . . . So he came and proclaimed the good news: peace to you who were far off, and peace to those who were near by; for through him we both alike have access to the Father in the one Spirit."

Admittedly, this is an aspect of the gospel that needs to be embodied as well as proclaimed. Indeed it cannot be proclaimed unless it is embodied in life. It indicates the inseparability of the gospel and the church, and the vocation of the church to be a witness to the power of God to create fellowship—a mirror of the harmony that exists in the Godhead in the fellowship of the Sacred Trinity. To rise to that calling demands perpetual repentance and obedience of faith.

One more word is perhaps even more characteristic of the gospel than any of those I have mentioned, and which has even more persuasive power for our generation than they. We have an old-fashioned word that has become virtually a technical term in our evangelistic jargon, and that is the word *salvation*. I'm quite sure that it registers a blank in the minds of most people outside the churches. Jesus almost never used the term. It is found once only on his lips, in the saying, "Salvation is of the Jews." He had a far simpler and far more appealing word for the thing represented, and that is the term *life*. And that is what our faith is really about—life in the new world that came into being through the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord—the life of the new creation, abundant life that bursts through the limits imposed by the cages of society, life that death itself cannot quench, for it is life by the Spirit which raised Christ from death and which presses on to a resurrection into the likeness of the glory of the risen Lord. Life is what the world is seeking. Life is what our post-Christian man wants above all else but never finds. Our Christ has what he is looking for, and he can have it at once. This is some-

thing of which our post-Christian contemporary has never dreamed. God forgive us that we in the churches have so successfully hidden from the man in the street that Christianity is about life!

Theoretically the church of Christ knows that the Great Commission of the risen Lord is as binding upon it today as on any other generation of the church. It is not generally understood that this is a comparatively modern insight. Augustine, the greatest theologian of the early church, considered that the command to go and make disciples of all nations was given to the generation of the apostles, but that it had become needless; the world was Christian, and the church's task was to help the rulers to rule. Astonishingly enough, the reformers apparently agreed with this viewpoint. The church owes more to William Carey than it knows, but the Baptists did not immediately leap to his support. You recall what happened when, as the young minister in Northamptonshire, he propounded as a subject for discussion in the ministers' fraternal "that the command given to the apostles to teach all nations was binding on all succeeding ministers to the end of the world, seeing that the accompanying promise was of equal extent." Old John Collett Ryland burst out, "Young man sit down, sit down. You're an enthusiast. When God pleases to convert the heathen he'll do it without consulting you or me." Ryland was one of the most learned and devoted ministers British Baptists have ever had, but that was his reaction to Carey's views on mission.

We, of course, are at a loss to comprehend such an attitude. But I wonder just what difference it makes to our own congregations, in relation to the bit of the world in which they are set, that we do know better. How much greater, for example, is the impact which your church or mine is making on the pagans about us than that which John Collett Ryland's influential congregation made on the people of Northampton? So far as we are concerned in Britain we can but plead for the mercy of God that we know so much better than our forebears did, but do so little more than they did. The Lord commands us to go to our post-Christian neighbors, not simply to our religiously minded acquaintances, and make disciples of them. He calls us to a fuller obedience than we have as yet given to this command. ■

December, 1968

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ENCOUNTER

by Kenneth Day

One Shoe and a Clean Bar

Winnemucca—"One Moccasin"—was chief of an Indian tribe which for years lived in the Santa Rosa Mountains of northern Nevada. Succeeding generations have memorialized this early American (best remembered for having lost one shoe) by naming a town after him—Winnemucca, Nev. Many evidences still remain to tie this modern town of 5,000 to the early culture on which it is built.

Winnemucca is the trading center for some 10,000 square miles of this sparsely settled section of Nevada. Few settlements within a radius of 75 miles have more than 200 persons living in them. Several have fewer than 50.

During the past nine years, LaVern Inzer has become about as well acquainted with these mountains and villages as was the old chief Winnemucca. Since August of 1959, Inzer has served both as pastor of the First Baptist Church in Winnemucca and missionary to this area.

I drove into Winnemucca some months ago, on a Tuesday afternoon. There was no trouble finding the Baptist church—the townspeople know about its colorful pastor. Nor was Inzer hard to find. Wearing a hat which looked as though it might have been a "McCoy" original, Inzer was laying 30-pound cement blocks as fast as two strong bodied young men (student summer missionaries) could deliver them. The walls of their educational building were about four feet high. "The Home Mission Board has given us a loan to build this unit," Inzer said, "and appropriated \$4,000 of it for the foundation and walls up to the four-foot level. We are going to be able to save about half of this amount. We're almost four feet high now and have not spent more than \$2,000."

While he continued to lay blocks, Inzer introduced me to the beginnings of Southern Baptist work in northern Nevada. It had not been easy, nor had they enjoyed the numerical growth known in other parts of the United States. Yet responses were affirmative from almost every place where mission work was attempted. Inzer cited 14 Vacation Bible Schools which had been conducted that

summer in different villages by three student summer missionaries, along with members of the Baptist church in Winnemucca. Most of these Bible schools were conducted at mission points at which regular services are held throughout the year.

Later that evening we visited one of the missions for their weekly service. Inzer described it as "the cleanest bar in Nevada." It was located at Jungo, 35 miles west of Winnemucca. Years ago Jungo had claimed a sizeable population but had long since been deserted when the nearby iron mines were closed down. Recently the mines were reopened for a limited operation. A community of 10 or 12 families, living in mobile homes, had repopulated Jungo. Many of the old business buildings, some still in a fair state of repair, stood among the modern mobile community. The best among them was the old town bar, still equipped with a mammoth ice box, elaborate mirrors and full-length bar complete with brass foot rail.

We arrived at Jungo 30 minutes past time for the service to begin, delayed by a blowout. This was the fifth tire lost during the past three weeks on trips to Jungo. I learned, not because of the tires, but because the road was like an unending series of railroad cross-ties.

Thirty-one persons welcomed us when we pulled up in front of the "bar." Children almost mobbed the student missionaries whom they had come to know during recent weeks. More than a dozen adults fellowshiped briefly with the missionary and visitors then moved eagerly into their "Sunday School" class (though on Tuesday night) for Bible study. An unhurried lesson was led by Inzer, with more attention given to the questions and interest of the people than to the "hour."

When the class seemed satisfied to conclude the study, Inzer moved to a small portable field organ, which had been brought along with the mission team and began to play. The music brought the youth into the makeshift auditorium (the largest room in the bar) and the worship service was under way. Missionary Inzer played the or-

gan and a student missionary led the singing. Normally, Inzer doubled as chorister too, but during the summer the student had brought relief. An informal but worshipful service followed. Teacher, organist, preacher—Inzer did it all. Then when the service had ended, he forgot about having laid 30-pound blocks all day long, and moved into the different mobile homes for another two hours of coffee and fellowship with the people. Finally, exhausted but jubilant, the mission team started its 35-mile trek back to Winnemucca, praying for little bounces and tough tires. We had used our only spare on the way out and the only things that lay between Jungo and Winnemucca were Russian Thistle (tumbleweeds), sage brush, gray foxes and rattlesnakes.

The entire week was filled with mission appointments during the evenings—block laying continued during the days. Several of the mission points now have pastors, and Inzer is able to give more of his time to Winnemucca and other villages yet unentered by Baptists.

But the early days when he was the only missionary in those northern Nevada mountains are not so far removed that he has forgotten them. Take, for example, Mar. 17, 1968—a day painfully characteristic of many such Sundays during the past nine years.

When finally he returned to his home late that evening he ran a tally on his day—he had travelled a total of 574 miles and preached to five (different) congregations totaling 181 persons. He likes to think that days like this are behind him, in an era ended, and that the coming of mission pastors to several of these points is the beginning of a new era. Hopefully he will be able now to spend more of his time with his church in Winnemucca, developing a strong base for continued mission outreach.

LaVern Inzer may never have a town named after him, but the Santa Rosa Mountains and northern Nevada may as long feel the influence of his ministry as they have remembered the old Indian chief who lost one of his shoes—Winnemucca. ■

December, 1968

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DEC. 6: Calvin W. McCarter, Tex., Air Force; Harvey Joe Mills, Tex., Army.

DEC. 10: Billy M. Hayes, Miss., Army; Robert T. Latham, Tex., Army. **Gerald W. Marshall, Tex., Air Force.** **Charles D. McKnight, Tenn., hospital.** **DEC. 11:** Curtis W. Brannan, Mo., Navy; William D. Harbour, Miss., Army. **Philip E. Jenkins, Va., Navy.** **DEC. 12:** C. O. Bigbie, Okla., institutional. **Travis L. Blaisdell, Tex., Air Force.** **DEC. 13:** Gordon Van Wood, Ga., Air Force.

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| Navy.

Effective Oct. 1 the Baptist Sunday School Board reduced the amount of literature being distributed to missionaries and chaplains.

Sunday School Executive Secretary James L. Sullivan said the reduction comes because of pressures of budget, tighter mailing regulations and the difficulties of maintaining so many mailing lists.

"We can understand these problems mentioned," said Arthur B. Rutledge, executive secretary of the denomination's Home Mission Board in Atlanta, "and appreciate the willingness to continue to send free periodicals, though in smaller number."

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Missionary Appointees

1. Charles Huelett Crawford is serving the Mesabi Iron Range of Minnesota as a pastoral missionary under the Department of Pioneer Missions. A native of Fort Wayne, Ind., he had been serving as pastor of the BlackJack Baptist Church in Atoka, Okla. He is a graduate of Purdue University in Lafayette, Ind. and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. His birthday is Aug. 9.

2. Mrs. Billy Mack Wells, the former Cherrie Lucretia Boyd of Alpine, Tex., is serving with her husband in directing the weekday ministries of the First Baptist Church in Longview, Wash. She is a graduate of a Texas business college. Her birthday is Dec. 7.

3. Billy Mack Wells of Floydada, Tex. is serving the First Baptist Church of Longview, Wash. as director of its weekday ministries, under the Department of Christian Social Ministries. The former minister of music and education of the East Ridge Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn. also has served in several Texas churches. He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Tex. and Southwestern Seminary. His birthday is Sept. 30.

4. Kenneth Mack Newman, former pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Ewa Beach, Hawaii, is serving as pastor of the Hawaii-Kai Baptist Church in Honolulu under the Department of Pioneer Missions. A native of Frederick, Okla., he is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee and Southwestern Seminary. He also has served as pastor of Cavalry Baptist Church in Grandfield, Okla. His birthday is Apr. 2.

5. W. D. Sharp is serving in the Fairmont area of West Virginia as pastoral missionary under the Department of Pioneer Missions. A graduate of Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn. and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., he has served as pastor in Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia. His birthday is Dec. 23.

6. Mrs. James Daves of Cliffside, N. C., will serve with her husband at the Baptist Center in Kansas City, Kan. She attended Gardner-Webb Junior College in Boiling Springs, N. C. Her birthday is Sept. 29.

7. James Luther Daves, former pastor of Ives Memorial Church in Pinebluff, N. C., has been appointed director of the (Southern) Baptist Center in Kansas City

by the Department of Christian Social Ministries.

The Ellenboro, N. C. native is a former vocational rehabilitation counselor. He graduated from Wake Forest College (Baptist) in Winston-Salem and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest. His birthday is Aug. 15.

8. Olivia Mae Temple of Roanoke, Va. is serving under the Department of Christian Social Ministries in the weekday ministry of the Central Baptist Church of Akron, Ohio.

A graduate of Roanoke College in Salem, Va. and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary, she has served as a student appointee to the Coliseum Baptist Church weekday ministry program in New Orleans. Her birthday is May 1.

9. Lenard Olen Leftwich of Omaha, Tex. is serving with the Department of Rural-Urban Missions as superintendent of missions of the Westfield and Louisville associations in Effingham, Ill. A graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and Southwestern Seminary, he has served as pastor in Texas and Indiana. His birthday is Nov. 5.

10. William N. Smith of Chattanooga, Tenn. is serving with the Department of Pioneer Missions as pastor-director of the New Haven area of Connecticut. A graduate of Murray (Ky.) State College and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., he has pastored churches in Oregon and California. His birthday is Jan. 30.

11. Glenn Allen Igleheart, native of Owensboro, Ky., is serving the northeastern United States as area director of Southern Baptist work with nonevangelicals, based in Los Angeles. He had been serving as pastor of the Lookout Mountain (Tenn.) Baptist Church. A native of Augusta, Ga., he also has been pastor of churches in Georgia, New Mexico and South Carolina. He is a graduate of Furman University in Greenville, S. C., and Southwestern Seminary. His birthday is Nov. 7.

12. William Robert McLin is serving in the western United States as area director of Southern Baptist work with nonevangelicals, based in Los Angeles. He had been serving as pastor of the Lookout Mountain (Tenn.) Baptist Church. A native of Augusta, Ga., he also has been pastor of churches in Georgia, New Mexico and South Carolina. He is a graduate of Furman University in Greenville, S. C., and Southwestern Seminary. His birthday is Nov. 7.

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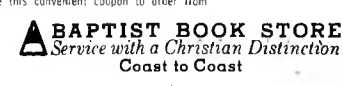
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