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THE SWORD AND TRUMPET monthly magazine is a faith ministry directed by a Board representing various constituencies of the Mennonite Church. It is committed to defending, proclaiming, and promoting the whole Gospel of our Saviour and Lord, Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures. It emphasizes neglected truth and contends for "the faith which was once delivered to the saints." This publication exposes and opposes doctrinal error which compromises that faith and leads to apostasy.

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IN THIS ISSUE

1. **PERSON OF THE MONTH: Henry E. Lutz** 1
 2. **Christmas, Act II** 2
 3. **FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK:**
 Since When Is It Sin ... ? 4
 4. **THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS** 5
 5. **NEWSLINES** 10
 6. **Rediscovering Expository Preaching** 13
 7. **SERMON OF THE MONTH:**
 The Villains of Christmas 23
 8. **One Day** 25
 9. **SONG OF THE MONTH:**
 "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" 26
 10. **COUNSELING FROM THE WORD:**
 Counseling in a War Zone 28
 11. **BEGINNING ISSUES:**
 Ancient Man: What Can We Learn From Him? 30
 13. **Index** 32

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Treasures of the Snow, The, Oct 18
Martin, Ivan Jr.
 Crossbearing, Nov 12
Martin, Wilmer S.
 "Command Your Children to Observe to Do," Sep 31
Mast, Hans—Newslines
 Jan 17; Feb 11; Mar 12; Apr 12; May 13; Jun 12; Jul 13; Aug 11; Sep 11; Oct 15; Nov 9; Dec 10
Mayhue, Richard L.
 Rediscovering Expository Preaching, Dec 13
Meyer, F. B.
 Living the Life of Jesus, Aug 17
Miller, Daniel E.
 Safe Mode, May 5
Miller, Paul A.
 Pastoring Includes Counseling, Jul 26
Miller, Verlon
 Christian Accountability Forced? or Biblical Brotherhood?, Nov 26
Mong, Lauren
 Reflections From LA, Mar 15
Moore, Russell D.
 How to Teach Open Theism at Vacation Bible School, Nov 31
Mullett, John
 Ancient Man: What Can We Learn From Him?, Dec 30
 Are Chimps Your Relatives?, Jul 23
 Are You Feeling the Heat?, Jun 26
 Arguments to Avoid, Feb 36
 Can Man Create Life?, Aug 25
 Devastation of Compromise, The, Apr 23
 Did Ancient Man Have an IQ Problem?, Sep 19; Part 2, Oct 28; Part 3, Nov 22
 Distant Starlight and a Biblical Time Frame, May 33
 Good Defense, A, Jan 35
 Joshua's Lo-o-ong Day, Mar 35
Nell, Allen
 Joy Is Not an Option, Jan 2
Nettleton, Asahel
 Professing Christians, Awake!, May 19
Newton, John
 True Patriotism!, Jan 9
Nolt, James K.
 I Can Do Anything I Want, Sep 24
Parker, John D.
 Maintaining a Heart for God, May 2
Phillips, Richard D.
 Masculine Mandate: God's Calling to Men, Nov 29
Rice, John R.
 God's Perfect Creation in Six Literal Days, Oct 2
Rudolph, Simeon
 Bringing Up Children as Servants, Nov 15
Ryken, Philip G.
 Art and the Church, Jun 36
Schaeffer, Francis A.
 No Little People, No Little Places, Mar 19
Schrock, Simon
 Should Christians Be Diligent Obeyers?, Aug 14

Schrock, Virgil
 Discipleship Amid Affluence, Mar 2
Schumacher, Eric M.
 Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood, The, Apr 17
Shetler, Ryan
 To Text or Not to Text?, Jan 7
Showalter, Jewel
 From Cablegrams to Computers, Jul 24
Showers, Renald A.
 Ultimate Reason for God's Anger and Wrath, The, May 30
Spurgeon, Charles H.
 Christ's New Commandment, Sep 28
Stauffer, Bruce A.
 Learning From the Flu, Apr 5
Stearns, Rodney
 Shopping, Nov 3
Steinhauer, David
 End of Normal, The, Jun 22
Stoltzfus, Floyd
 Jewish Evangelism, Jul 21
Tiner, John Hudson
 Priscilla Mullins, Nov 1
Waldner, Ben
 Sowing and Reaping, Feb 4
Wambold, Roger L.
 "And Lord, Haste the Day . . ." Oct 7
Warren, Larry
 "Keep Yourselves From Idols," Jun 4
 Lack of Knowledge, Sep 2
 Villains of Christmas, The, Dec 23
Weaver, Arlin
 Claiming Christ's Inheritance, Jul 6
 Problem of Tongue Control, The, May 29
Weaver, Chester
 An Open Letter to All Laymen, Mar 36
Weaver, Clair R.
 "Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath," May 27
White, Timothy
 Mesmerized by Technology, Apr 15
Whitney, Donald S.
 Why Join a Church?, Aug 28
Williams, Arthur F.
 Is the Day-Age Progressive Theory of Creation Heretical?, Oct 29
Wilson, Dan
 Shepherding "Pornified" Men: Leading Strugglers Out of the Wasteland, Feb 14
 Why So Many Men Are "Pornified": Sexual Idolatry, Sexual Wasteland, Jan 23
Witmer, Larry
 Wrestling the Scriptures, Jun 29
Yoder, J. Otis
 Rahab—Converting Faith, Jul 19
Yoder, Marcus
 Third Wing, The, Jun 31
Yoder, Melvin L.
 Landmarks, Mar 34

Person of the Month:

Henry E. Lutz
(1891-1959)



Henry E. Lutz was born in Rheems, Pennsylvania, to Abram B. Lutz and Anna Erb Lutz on August 4, 1891.

At the age of 19 Henry was converted to Christ on January 30, 1910, under the preaching of John W. Hess at the Kraybill outpost, and later baptized on April 23, of that same year.

After his conversion he was actively involved in the Sunday school at Kraybill.

At some point Henry E. Lutz met and married Ruth N. Nissley. They moved in with Ruth's parents in Mt. Joy, Pennsylvania, and stayed within that township the rest of their lives. God blessed their family with the births of four children.

On March 16, 1922, at the age of 30, Brother Henry was ordained as minister for the Kraybill-Mt. Joy district. In 1927, the first of his articles, "Separation From the World," was published in the *Gospel Herald*. At the age of 37, he was ordained as a bishop for the Landisville-Erisman district on March 6, 1930. From 1930-1937, he did evangelistic work in such places as Ephrata, Manheim, Hammer Creek, Millersville, Rohrerstown, Stauffer, and also in Paradise, where fifty-five people confessed faith in Christ in 1931.

Henry Lutz served as the assistant secretary, and eventually secretary, of the Bishop Board from 1935-1949. During the mid-thirties he was a short-term instructor at EMS. He also had a mission focus: serving with the first area Mennonites in the country of Tanganyika in 1938. Unfortunately, while there he contracted malignant malaria and was very ill. In 1939, at the age of 48, he became one of the faculty members of the newly founded Ephrata Bible School as well as becoming a member of the Examining Committee of the Mission Board. Brother Lutz served as the moderator of Lancaster Conference in 1949, after the death of the former moderator, W. W. Graybill, and held this position until 1959. It was during his tenure as conference moderator that Lutz had the greatest influence. In those years the Discipline was revised and many facets of the work of conference were expanded. By this time his own responsibilities as bishop ranged from York's Corners and West Union to the small town of Bath in the Finger Lakes region of New York state. Amidst all of his responsibilities he still had time to serve on the Kraybill School Board as well as the Philhaven Hospital Board.

After the death of Henry's first wife God provided him with another partner, Elizabeth (Harnish) Nissley. They were married in 1955 on August 4th—Brother Henry's 64th birthday!

While preaching at a series of meetings at Beaver Run on the evening of November 15, 1959, Lutz suffered a stroke and stopped all work for the next two weeks. However, on November 28 he became very ill and was taken to Lancaster General Hospital where he went home to be with the Lord four days later on December 2, 1959, at the age of 68.

The funeral service for Brother Henry E. Lutz was held in the Mt. Joy meetinghouse with burial in the Kraybill's Cemetery.

— Gail L. Emerson

Christmas, Act II

by Richard Innes

Max Lucado tells how, in 1989, a terrible earthquake in Armenia killed 30,000 people. Among those uninjured were a man and his wife. Their son Armon was in an elementary school that collapsed. The father rushed to the school. He had always told Armon that he would come for him if he was ever in trouble. He worked intensely removing debris trying to find Armon. After thirty-eight hours he heard his child's voice and with the help of other workers freed Armon and the other children.

Armon said, "I told them you would come because you had promised. I told them you would always be there for me. I knew you would come."

As we approach the Christmas season, we are again reminded of Christmas, Act I, when God showed His eternal love for mankind by sending His Son Jesus Christ to earth to be born as a babe in Bethlehem so that, some thirty-three years later, He would give His life as a ransom to die in our place on a cruel Roman cross. This was to pay the just price for all our sins so we could be freely forgiven by God and live with Him in Heaven forever after life here on earth.

Just as Armon's father promised his son he would always come for him, before Jesus returned to Heaven He made the same promise to His disciples and followers assuring them that He would come again to take them to be with Him forever (John 14:3).

Immediately following Jesus' return to Heaven, two angels appeared to the disciples and affirmed Christ's promise, saying, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will

come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11 NIV).

"I told them you would come because you had promised."

As inspiring and wonderful as was Armon's father's promise to his son, it pales in significance compared to the promise made by Jesus to His disciples and followers.

CHRISTMAS, ACT II

Jesus *IS* coming again. This will be Christmas, Act II. But you ask how can we be sure Jesus will come again?

First of all, Christ's first coming is an indisputable fact of history. This event was repeatedly promised and prophesied about in the Old Testament over a period of several hundred years.

For instance, 700 years before Christ was born in Bethlehem, Micah wrote, "But you, Bethlehem . . . though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel" (Micah 5:2 NIV).

A thousand years before Christ's death David the psalmist predicted how Jesus would die. "They have pierced my hands and my feet," he wrote (Psalm 2:16 NIV). This happened at Christ's crucifixion. This is even more remarkable when considering that in David's time, death by crucifixion was unknown. This inhumane, torturous death was first used by the Persians centuries later.

David also predicted that Christ would be betrayed by a friend, that people would "throw dice" for His clothes, and that He would die with criminals (Psalm 41:9; 22:18). He also predicted the dying Saviour's cry: "My God, my God, why have you

forsaken me?” (Psalm 22:1 NIV). All of these predictions came true.

Six hundred years prior to Christ’s coming Daniel predicted when it would be. One hundred years later Zechariah told how Christ would enter Jerusalem riding on a donkey; how he would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver; and how this money would be used to buy a potter’s field (Daniel 9:25, 26; Zechariah 9:9, 10; 11:12).

Just as all these prophecies in the Old Testament section of the Bible—written hundreds of years before Christ’s first coming—were fulfilled in minutest detail, we can be just as certain that all the prophecies concerning Christ’s second coming written in the New Testament will also be fulfilled in minutest detail.

The exact day of Jesus’ return is known only to God (Matthew 24:36). However, God’s Word does give us some indication as to the nearness of that time. As Jesus said, “As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken and the other left. Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come” (Matthew 24:37-42 NIV).

According to some Bible scholars it may have taken Noah about 100 years to build the ark. However, long before the flood happened, the people of Noah’s day had a continual warning that the flood was coming. Tragically, all but Noah’s family disregarded the warning and believed only when the flood came—and then it was too late.

Today’s world has had 2000 years since Jesus promised that He would come again. He warned, “For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are say-

ing, ‘Peace and safety!’ then destruction will come upon them suddenly like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape” (1 Thess. 5:2, 3 NASB).

“Every eye will see him.”

The way today’s world is under threat of terrorism, nuclear expansion, and worldwide political and financial upheaval, don’t be surprised if a charismatic, powerful political leader arises and promises world peace and safety. This will be another sign of the nearness of Christ’s return.

Jesus also said, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14 NIV). With today’s revolution in modern communications we are getting closer every day to seeing this prophecy fulfilled.

Furthermore, from the Old Testament God’s Word predicted, “But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase” (Daniel 12:4 NASB). Ours is certainly a day of people going back and forth all over the world. And we are certainly living in a time of an incredible explosion of information and knowledge especially with the computer, the Internet, and all of today’s electronic means of communication.

The beginning of the end of time as we know it will be marked by Christ’s return to earth. When this happens, Jesus said that every eye will see him (Revelation 1:7 NIV). TV, the Internet, and modern technology has made this possible.

Jesus *IS* coming again. He promised He would. The angels of God promised He would. And God in His Word, the Bible, promised that Jesus would come again. Christmas, Act II, may be much closer than we think. The important thing is to be ready for Christ’s return. As Jesus said, “So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man [Jesus] will come at an hour when you do not expect him” (Matthew 24:44 NIV). ■

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From the Editor's Desk



Paul M. Emerson

GUEST EDITORIAL

Since When Is It Sin . . . ?

by Randy Hynes

“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.” – 1 Thess. 4:7

A pound to a pennyweight, a gig or a gallon, and it is no secret that we are surrounded today with every kind of weight and measurement. From dinners to diets, it is how many calories and how much caffeine, how much sugar and how much saccharine, how much fiber and how much fat. From our cereal boxes to cake mixes we see the standard clearly marked as to the sodium or the serving size. Our computers and our calculators clearly mark for us how much and how many. The calendar and clock constantly measure our minutes and passing moments. If it comes in a bag, a box, or a basket everything in life is metered or measured.

Although these standards surround us the one that ought most to concern us is . . . *“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.”* God has set a standard by which all things in the spiritual life can be and must be measured. Our thought life is marked by . . . *“whatsoever things are pure.”* Our lib-

erty is measured by . . . *“love edifieth.”* Our lifestyle is evaluated by . . . *“walk as children of light.”* Our relationships weighed by . . . *“In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.”* Our plumb line prayer is as the Apostle Paul prayed . . . *“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.”* The sacred Scriptures clearly outline for us God’s standards for capacity, proportion, volume, and quantity.

So it is sad to see beliefs, standards, and measurements that were one day accepted and held dear, now being scrutinized, analyzed, and the final conclusion
(continued on page 9)

PAGE 4

SWORD AND TRUMPET

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS



A Devotional Commentary



by David L. Burkholder

DECEMBER 5, 2010

God Cares for His People

Isaiah 40:1-8, 25, 26, 28-31

The Book of Isaiah will be the focus of our lessons for December and January under the general theme of Comfort for God's People. All of the lessons, with the exception of the lesson for December 19, are taken from the last section of the book (Chapters 40–66), dealing with future events and the spiritual deliverance to be ushered in by the Messiah. Thus Isaiah is aptly called the evangelical prophet. His ministry covered the reigns of four or five kings of Judah, with a span of approximately 60 years. He is one of the most preeminent and distinguished of the Old Testament prophets.

Keep in mind that these passages have both an immediate, local significance, and also look forward prophetically in a spiritual sense. In Chapter 39 Isaiah predicts the Babylonian captivity. Here in Chapter 40 he predicts the end of that captivity and Israel's restoration to her homeland with God's attendant blessings. Then in the next breath he predicts an even more future event, the coming of the Messiah, Israel's and the world's spiritual deliverer.

God is speaking words of comfort to His people. Here in the first two verses He informs them that they have served their time, they have been pardoned, their captivity is at an end. Whatever implications this may have for the return from Babylon, the next verses speak primarily to the future advent of Israel's

spiritual deliverer. He was to be heralded as a coming king, with the way prepared as for royalty. This speaks specifically of the ministry of John the Baptist, Messiah's forerunner (see Matthew 3:1-3). Though flesh passes away as grass (vv. 6-8), the Word of God is sure and steadfast, it stands forever. What He has said will happen.

As we jump down to verses 25 and 26 we are confronted with the majesty and supremacy of this great delivering God who created all things. There is none like Him. He has no equal. What He has promised will come to pass. In this Israel, and by extension all subsequent generations, can have comfort and certainty.

In the concluding verses of the lesson, verses 28-31, we see again the power, wisdom, and preeminence of our great God. He is eternal. He does not suffer from human frailties. Instead, He supplies strength to those who are faint and weary. We think of youth as a time of strength and vigor but they also need a source of power and strength outside of themselves.

That strength, the strength to endure, comes to those who put their trust in the eternal, all-powerful, and untiring God. This speaks to spiritual stamina. They will soar above the earthly struggles of daily life. They will not become worn down or weary. They will continue moving forward with the blessing and empowerment of the God of the universe, the One who cares for and delivers His people who put their trust firmly in Him. Isn't that where you want to be?

For thought and discussion

1. It will help your study of these lessons to understand the historical setting of Isaiah's prophecies. Do some background research and study.
2. How has God comforted you? In what circumstances? Good for discussion.
3. This passage speaks to the brevity of life and the endurance of God's Word. Allow it to challenge you to a deeper commitment to be faithful to that Word throughout your life. Your eternal destiny depends on it.
4. How does your observation of the created world help to establish your faith? Discuss.
5. Do you know the energizing, keeping power of God in your life? Have you thanked God recently for it? How has He responded?

Lesson emphasis: The keeping, energizing power of our Creator God.

Key verse: 25

DECEMBER 12, 2010

God Preserves His People

Isaiah 41:8-10, 17-20; 42:1-4, 9

The first part of Chapter 41 (verses 1-7) foretells the havoc to be inflicted on idolatrous nations by Cyrus, God's servant from the east. However, (verses 8-10) God promised to protect and preserve His people from impending disaster. God has a vested interest in Israel; they are His chosen ones, the seed of His friend Abraham and His servant Jacob.

God had a plan for the redemption of mankind from the foundation of the world. He initiated that plan through the call of Abraham and expanded it through his descendants, especially Jacob the progenitor of the nation Israel. God's plan was to be brought to fruition through the nation Israel. Israel, as a nation, was God's servant, therefore God promised to protect them and provide for

them continually.

Though disaster threatened, God told Israel not to fear; He would be with them. They were not to be dismayed. He was their God. He would strengthen, help, and uphold them with His strong hand. Who could harm them if He was protecting them? No one. That was to be their confidence. (Read the intervening verses, 11-16, for further evidence of God's protecting care over Israel.)

Not only would God protect His people Israel, He also promised to provide for them and sustain them. He would provide water to assuage their thirst. He would plant trees to shade them and supply their needs. All this would be done in such a miraculous way as to assure them it had to be God's hand at work. In fact He says that will be their conclusion (v. 20).

As we move into Chapter 42 we see the greater significance of God's preservation of Israel. It was to usher in through them His greater servant, His Son, the Messiah. God's Spirit would be upon Him (Matthew 3:16, 17; Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18, 19). He would bring justice to all nations, indicating the worldwide scope of His ministry.

Messiah was to be calm and meek. He would treat people with compassion and tenderness, giving encouragement to the faint-hearted, judging all with truth and equity. His ministry will be ongoing. It will not be thwarted by His opponents. No one, no force, will be able to stop Him. His ministry will be worldwide in scope (v. 4).

In verse 9 Isaiah refers back to fulfilled prophecy to assure Israel, and us, that predicted future events are sure to happen. If God worked in the past, certainly He will work in the future. All human events are part of the plan and under the control and direction of the Creator God, the God of the universe. His word is sure.

As Israel was God's servant in the Old Testament, fulfilling His plan and pur-

pose, so Messiah is God's representative in the New Testament era, accomplishing His purposes for all mankind.

For thought and discussion

1. Have you had an experience where God's promise in Isaiah 41:10 has been especially meaningful to you? Want to share it with your class?
2. Does God still supply the needs of His children? Has He supplied your needs in a special way? How?
3. What experience or event has convinced you of God's faithfulness to His promises? Good for discussion.
4. God had a plan for Israel and He enabled them to fulfill His plan. How has God enabled you to fulfill His plan for your life?
5. Review the history of Israel as a nation. They have suffered much over the centuries from problems within and without. Be sure to understand God's purposes for preserving them and what He still intends for them in the future.

Lesson emphasis: That God has a plan and a purpose for His people and He will preserve them in order to accomplish His purposes.

Key verse: 10

DECEMBER 19, 2010

The Promised Redeemer

Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:1-9; Matthew 1:21-23

The Christmas message is beyond doubt one of the most important and encouraging messages in the whole of Scripture. It gives eternal hope to mankind because of the salvation God's Son provided for the human race. Our passages today portray the fulfillment, promised and actual, of Isaiah's understanding of God's purposes for the nation Israel. The coming of Messiah was the culmination of God's plan begin-

ning with the call of Abraham many centuries earlier.

As with all of the prophet's messages these passages no doubt held significance for the immediate time. However, our focus today will be primarily on the wonder and scope of the Christ advent as well as the character of the Messiah.

The two verses from Isaiah 9 speak to the character and scope of the work of this coming child. He is designated the supreme ruler, the mighty God, everlasting Father, the prince of peace. He is to be a wonderful counselor, full of wisdom, and fair in all dealings. His expanding kingdom, on the throne of His father David, will be everlasting, having no end. It will be a kingdom where fair judgment and justice will reign, established by the zeal (intense enthusiasm) of the Lord of hosts.

Chapter 11 speaks to the human origin of Messiah, calling Him a branch, or offshoot of Jesse, father of King David, of the tribe of Judah. This passage again speaks to His character, enabled by "the Spirit of the Lord." The description here somewhat parallels His description in Chapter 9. He will be full of wisdom and understanding, capable of making fair and wise decisions and giving sound, helpful counsel. His counsel and encouragement will direct souls into the fear (reverence) of the Lord God. His judgments will be without regard to one's position or status, given in righteousness and faithfulness which are hallmarks of His character.

Verses 5 to 9 speak of a future time when universal peace shall reign on the earth, a time ushered in by the Prince of Peace of whom Isaiah has been prophesying. The natural order under which the earth operates as a result of the fall will be reversed and restored to Edenic grandeur. Animosity between species and between man and beast will be changed to peaceful coexistence. It will be a new day with the Lord's peace covering the earth as waters cover the sea.

In the passage from Matthew 1, the angel of the Lord assures Joseph of the legitimacy of Mary's pregnancy, naming the yet-to-be-born child and quoting Isaiah's prophecy to confirm his announcement. This son will be the long-awaited Redeemer, saving His people from their sin. His mission will be to serve as God's presence among men, teaching them God's way and demonstrating that way by His life and death.

At this Christmas season, reflect again on God's goodness and mercy in providing a Redeemer. And rejoice with angels and shepherds that God has intervened in man's condition and established a reign of peace in the hearts of those who accept His gracious gift.

For thought and discussion

1. Study the various descriptive names of Christ the Messiah. What do they tell you about His character and function?
2. Have you ever wondered why God chose what may seem to us as a long, roundabout way to provide for man's salvation from sin? Think about it. Discuss the implications.
3. You will see from the human-historical side of Messiah that God used a wide variety of often insignificant people to achieve His purposes. How does that knowledge impact your commitment to be and do whatever God may require of you?
4. Are you looking forward with anticipation to that time of universal peace on earth? Today would be a good time to pray for God's fulfillment of that event.
5. God is still with us, though not in visible form. Are you aware of His presence? Are your life and actions worthy of His presence?

Lesson emphasis: To rejoice in the fulfillment of God's plan of redemption.

Key verse: Isaiah 9:6

DECEMBER 26, 2010

God Protects His People

Isaiah 43:1-7, 10-12

In today's lesson we move back into the sequence of Lessons 1 and 2 taken from Chapters 40, 41, and 42 of Isaiah. The last several verses of Chapter 42 depict the consequences of Israel's disobedience to God's laws, the unleashed fury of His righteous wrath. However, they were still His people and He had not completely cast them off. God's purposes through His chosen people would not be thwarted even though His people were not always faithful to His will. He would accomplish His purposes.

Chapter 43 begins with God's affirmation to preserve Israel in spite of their perfidy. He had called them and established them as a nation and, after punishment for their iniquity, had redeemed them. He now claimed them as His own, His special people. His purposes for the nation would yet be accomplished. Therefore He assured them of His care and protection.

Just as He had led Israel through the Red Sea, He would continue to protect them from flood or fire. They were precious in His sight. He loved them and would shield them from harm and danger, just as a father cares for and protects his child. God says He will even destroy other nations in order to preserve His chosen nation, using examples from the history of Israel to establish His point.

Again God tells His people (v. 2) to "fear not," He is with them. Furthermore, He will gather the scattered nation from the four corners of the earth and establish them again in their homeland. While this undoubtedly refers prophetically to their return from Babylonian captivity, it also carries spiritually redemptive overtones. Ultimately His people will be gathered to Him from east, west, north, and south, from the very ends of the earth (see Isaiah 11:11, 12 and

Matthew 8:11 and context). His purpose for His people is to bring glory to Him as His saving and protecting care is recognized throughout the world. This applies equally to Israel and to His spiritual children.

In verses 10-13 God states His sovereignty, His uniqueness, and His power. There is no god like Him and Israel has witnessed that sovereignty and power in His deliverance of them from their antagonists and captors. In this passage God unashamedly calls attention to Himself as the Lord God above all gods. He is eternal. He has acted unilaterally in the past; He will do so in the future to accomplish His purposes upon earth for the benefit of mankind.

As we today look back at God's redemptive dealings with His chosen nation Israel, it should give us confidence in His projections for the future, not only for Israel, but for His spiritual children. We have a great future which is assured us as we put faith in this God above all gods, the One who loves, protects, and provides in so many ways for His children.

For thought and discussion

1. How can we live without fear and with the confidence that God is protecting us? How does verse 1 help in this regard? What is another source of assurance?
2. Has God delivered you from dangerous situations? Care to share with your class?
3. How does this passage help us deal with prejudice against those of other races, nationalities, and cultures?
4. God says in this passage that His children are His witnesses. Discuss ways we can be most effective in our role as witnesses for Him.
5. God says (v. 11) that He is the only Saviour. And we believe it. But how do you counter the arguments of those who say there are many ways to God and all religions have validity? What are the fallacies of such arguments?

Lesson emphasis: That God has a vested interest in His people and that He will protect them for His great name's sake.

Key verses: 1 and 11 ■



SINCE WHEN IS IT SIN . . . ? cont'd from p. 4

is . . . *"But it's not sin."* From media to music, dress to drink, people have every excuse today why they can partake of or why they can participate in. Sadly the response is often . . . *"But you can't say it's a sin."* But since when is sin the standard by which we measure our spiritual lives? The Bible clearly states that the standard is a Holy God. The measurement is *"Be ye holy; for I am holy."* The gauge is *"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation [behavior]."* This God in whose presence the angels cover their faces is the one and only measurement. This God to whom heaven cries "Holy, Holy, Holy" is the true gauge. This is the very God who declares *"Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God."* It is clear to see the measuring stick is God and His character, not sin and its corruption. The call is for us to walk ever so close to *"the One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy";* not to lay out the yardstick and see how close to sin we can get. *"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."* ■

—Reprinted with permission from *Convention Herald*, July/August 2010.

Newslines . . .

by Hans Mast

incidents events occurrences facts illustrations episodes committees vignettes proceedings problems
experiences crises adventures transactions meetings tragedies scoops reports conferences happenings
bulletins questions reports affairs dramas encounters personages actions tidings et cetera

Israeli Bombs Messianic Jews

“An Israeli man accused of planting a homemade bomb that almost killed the son of a Messianic Jewish pastor in Ariel, Israel, has been declared competent to stand trial. Jack Teitel, 37, who in November was indicted on two charges of premeditated murder, three charges of attempted murder, and numerous weapons charges, is expected to enter a plea on Sunday (Sept. 5).

“David and Leah Ortiz, parents of the teenage victim, said that the 10 months since the indictment have been difficult but their stance toward Teitel remains the same: they have forgiven him for the attack but want him to face justice before a judge and seek salvation from God. If nothing else, they said, they want him incarcerated to keep other Messianic Jews from being attacked either by Teitel or those following his lead. Sunday’s plea will open the way for a trial expected to start within weeks and last for more than six months.

“Officials at a hearing to be held this week, possibly the same day as the scheduled plea, will decide whether or not Teitel will be moved from the mental hospital where he has been held for most of his detainment. It is possible Teitel will enter no plea at all on Sunday. He has publicly stated that he doesn’t ‘recognize the jurisdiction’ of Jerusalem District Court.

On March 20, 2008, Ami Ortiz, then 15, opened a gift basket that someone had left anonymously at his family’s home in Ariel; the ensuing explosion destroyed much of the Ortiz home and shattered Ami’s body. His father is well known in Israel, both for his activities in the Jewish community and for his efforts to expose Palestinians to the gospel.

‘He said the reason why he wanted to kill me was that I was the most radical in evangelism, so I had to be first,’ said David Ortiz, who has seen transcripts of Teitel’s confessions.”

—Reprinted excerpt from “Alleged Bomber of Christian Boy in Israel to Stand Trial” under license from *Compass Direct News*.

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Megachurch Bishop in Scandal

“Bishop [Eddie L.] Long’s New Birth Missionary Baptist Church includes a multimillion-dollar network of charities and businesses, a private school, and the Samson’s Health and Fitness Center, where he holds court and pumps iron with young people. His message that God wants people to prosper has attracted celebrities, professional athletes, and socialites, swelling the membership to 25,000.

“Four former members of a youth group he runs have accused him of repeatedly coercing them into homosexual sex acts, and of abusing his considerable moral authority over them while plying them with cash, new cars, lodging, and lavish trips. The accusations center on the LongFellows Youth Academy, an exclusive group of teenage boys handpicked by Bishop Long for spiritual mentoring. The boys went through a bonding ritual, known as a ‘covenant ceremony,’ in which Bishop Long gave them jewelry and exchanged vows with them while quoting from Scripture as ceremonial candles burned, according to court complaints filed against the pastor. Reciting Bible verses, the pastor promised to protect them from harm and called them ‘spiritual sons.’ [The four boys’ lawyer says,] ‘There are biblical and spiritual passages that were given to them to make them comfortable and make them believe that they were not gay.’

“Bishop Long cuts a flashy figure in Lithonia, the Atlanta suburb where he lives and has built his church. He is often seen in a Bentley attended by bodyguards. He tends to wear clothes that show off his muscular physique. He favors Gucci sunglasses, gold necklaces, diamond bracelets, and Rolex watches. He lives in a 5,000-square-foot house with five bedrooms, which he bought for \$1.1 million in 2005. His lavish display of wealth is in keeping with his theology. In his sermons, he often tells his congregation that God wants them to be wealthy and asserts that Jesus was not a poor man.

“In 2005 *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* published tax records showing that from 1997 to 2000 Bishop Long had accepted \$3 million in salary, housing, a car, and other perks from a charity he controlled. ‘We’re not just a church, we’re an international corporation,’ he told the newspaper in justifying his compensation. ‘We’re not just a bumbling bunch of preachers who can’t talk and all we’re doing is baptizing babies. I deal with the White House. I deal with Tony Blair. I deal with presidents around this world. I pastor a multimillion-dollar congregation.’ ”

—Excerpts from “Sex Scandal Threatens a Georgia Pastor’s Empire” (<http://j.mp/AtlantaLong>) in *The New York Times*

* * * * *

News Snippets

MLB Reds’ pitcher Arlodiis Chapman broke the record for fastest major league pitch with a 105 mph fastball on Sept. 25. Chapman is a defector from Cuba who spoke with the press afterward through an interpreter. —AP

A radical environmentalist, who took three hostages at Discovery Channel headquarters while wearing an explosives vest, was shot and killed by police. The terrorist had posted a manifesto online before the incident which railed against “parasitic human infants” (increasing population) who were destroying the planet. —ABC/Wikipedia

A new poll from Ohio shows voters wish Bush would still be in office rather than Obama by a 50-42 margin.

—*Charleston Daily Mail*

A sign at the entrance to the Orthodox Jewish village of Kiryas Joel, NY, admonishes visitors to make sure that they are:

- * Wearing long skirts or pants
- * Covered Necklines
- * Sleeves past the elbow
- * Use appropriate language
- * Maintain gender separation in all public areas

and then says, “Thank you for respecting our values.” A woman who disregarded these instructions reported being the recipient of many stares and glares. —*CBS New York*

A NYC man tried to commit suicide by jumping off a forty-story building, but survived after crashing through a car’s windshield and landing in the back seat. The car’s owner is convinced the rosary beads attached to the mirror slowed him down. —*FOXNY*

The book *Predictably Irrational* tells the story of subscription cards to *The Economist*. They have three options: Online Only for \$59, Print Only for \$125, or Online + Print for \$125. In a study where people were given that subscription card or a subscription card with only the first and last options, the three option card garnered 84% choosing \$125 and 16% choosing \$59. The two option card had 32% at \$125 and 68% at \$59. The point that this study shows is that we treat the value of things relative to our options. When presented with a false baseline option (Print Only for \$125) we see the option that we are being directed towards as more attractive (Print + Online for \$125). We see this by non-subtle marketers such as bartering merchants setting initial prices at 2-3x the proper price or cheap TV commercials marketing something as “~~\$399~~ ~~\$199~~ ~~\$99~~, now only \$49!” But it’s sobering to notice that such a well-educated and successful demographic as *The Economist* readers would be swayed by this psychology when applied subtly. —*Predictably Irrational*

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Israeli-Palestinian Deaths

Since the year 2000, 7,454 people have died in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, according to B’Tselem (an Israeli human rights organization that is against the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories).

6,371 Palestinians died. (Some people fall into multiple categories.) 1,317 (21%) were

minors. 2,996 (47%) were not fighting when they died. 2,193 (34%) died while fighting. 248 (4%) were Palestinian police officers and 240 (4%) were targets of assassination.

1,083 Israelis died, of those 741 (68%) were not fighting, 124 (11%) were minors, and 342 (32%) were security personnel.

I think the point this organization is trying to make is that there is a roughly 70% to 30% split on both sides of innocents to combatants killed.

(For perspective's sake: 300,000 have been killed in the ongoing Darfur, Sudan genocide since 2003. 92,000 were killed in the Haiti earthquake.)

—Source: *The Jerusalem Post*

Somali Christian Killed; Four Children Kidnapped

“NAIROBI, Kenya, September 7 (*Compass Direct News*) – Another member of an underground Christian movement in Somalia has been murdered by Muslim militants in a continuing campaign to eliminate converts from Islam. Area sources said al Shabaab militants entered the house of Osman Abdullah Fataho [during] the night of July 21 and shot him dead in front of his wife and children. Fataho was a long-time Christian deeply involved in the activities of the small, secret Christian community, sources said. Area Christians said they suspected someone had informed the militants of Fataho’s faith. The assailants abducted his wife and children, later releasing her on the condition that she surrender the little ones to be trained as soldiers, sources said.

“‘We know they have taken the children to brainwash them, to change their way of life from Christian to Muslim and to teach them the Quran,’ said one source. Abducted were 5-year-old Ali Daud Fataho, 7-year-old Fatuma Safia Fataho, 10-year-old Sharif Ahmed Fataho, and Nur Said Fataho, 15.

“A Christian leader who attended Fataho’s funeral on July 22 said that one of the slain man’s relatives noted that the militants had targeted him because he had left Islam. The incident has spread fear among the faithful in the lawless country, much of which lies in the grip of ruthless insurgents

intent on rooting out any person professing Christianity. Leaders of the Christian underground movement have been forced to flee their homes to avoid being killed by the insurgents, said one leader who along with seven others has temporarily moved to an undisclosed area.”

—Reprinted excerpt from “Somali Christian Killed, Four Children Kidnapped” under license from *Compass Direct News*

WalMart Thief Crushed

A thief in Ohio stole \$1000 worth of things from a WalMart and then seemingly disappeared into thin air. Actually, he did nearly permanently disappear after he hid in a dumpster out back and was picked up by a trash truck. He was repeatedly compacted by the truck and finally gave in and called for police help on his cell phone. The 911 operators read his GPS signal, officers located the truck, had the driver dump his load in the street, and took the man to the hospital with extensive injuries.

—Source: *UK Daily Mail*

Russian Police Raid Opposition Magazine

“Russian police, some armed and masked, raided a prominent opposition magazine on [Sep. 2] as part of an unspecified investigation, the deputy editor of the magazine told *Reuters*. ‘About five, some in masks and some armed, came to the office to carry out what they called “investigative actions,”’ said Ilya Barabanov, deputy editor of the *New Times*, a weekly magazine. The *New Times* is one of Moscow’s few prominent opposition media outlets and has published exposes of high-level corruption. The weekly attracted international attention in April after a libel action was brought against it following publication of an investigative article about the much-feared riot police, called OMON.”

—Excerpts from “Russian police raid opposition magazine” (<http://j.mp/RussiaCorruption>) in *Reuters*

Feedback: hansmast@hansmast.com

Rediscovering Expository Preaching

by Richard L. Mayhue

Biblical preaching's authenticity is significantly tarnished by contemporary communicators' being more concerned with personal relevance than God's revelation. Scripture unmistakably requires a proclamation focused on God's will and mankind's obligation to obey. With men wholly committed to God's Word, the expository method commends itself as preaching that is true to the Bible. The method presupposes an exegetical process to extract the God-intended meaning of Scripture and an explanation of that meaning in a contemporary, understandable way. The Biblical essence and apostolic spirit of expository preaching needs to be recaptured in the training of men newly committed to "preaching the Word."

Every generation shares the kind of dire circumstances that Amos prophesied for Israel: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD" (Amos 8:11). The last several centuries have proven this need again.

REVIEWING RECENT TRENDS

In an explanation of Hebrews 8:10, the Puritan commentator William Gouge (1575-1653) remarked,

Ministers are herein to imitate God, and, to their best endeavour, to instruct people in the mysteries of godliness, and to teach them what to believe and practice, and then to stir them up in act and deed, to do what they are instructed to do. Their labor otherwise is likely to be in vain. Neglect of this course is a main cause that

men fall into as many errors as they do in these days.¹

To this editorial by Gouge, Charles Spurgeon (1834-1892) adds a word about nineteenth-century England:

I may add that this last remark has gained more force in our times; it is among uninstructed flocks that the wolves of popery make havoc, sound teaching is the best protection from the heresies which ravage right and left among us.²

John Broadus (1827-1895) decried the death of good preaching in America too.³ G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945) noted,

The supreme work of the Christian minister is the work of preaching. This is a day in which one of our great perils is that of doing a thousand little things to the neglect of the one thing, which is preaching.⁴

The following typical laments evidence that little improvement had been made by the mid-twentieth century:

Except for the growing worldliness of its members, the pulpit is the church's weak spot.⁵

But the glory of the Christian pulpit is a borrowed glow. . . . To an alarming extent the glory is departing from the pulpit of the twentieth century. . . . The Word of God has been denied the throne and given a subordinate place.⁶

Yet it remains true that "whatever be the marks of the contemporary pulpit, the centrality of Biblical preaching is not one of them."⁷

In a tradition that focuses on the centrality of the written Word few subjects are more important than the interpretation and proclamation of

that Word. Everyone stresses the necessity of a solid exegesis of the text, but few are adept at providing such an exegesis and preaching effectively from it.⁸

By the mid 1980s a national Congress on Biblical Exposition (COBE) convened to urge a return to true Biblical exposition.⁹ COBE's recurring theme demanded that the American church must return to true Biblical preaching or else the western world would continue its descent toward a valueless culture. Commenting on the uniqueness of America in contemporary culture, Os Guinness noted with concern that ". . . in all my studies I have yet to see a Western society where the church pews are so full and the sermons so empty."¹⁰

John MacArthur's review of preaching patterns in the late '80s led him to observe,

Specifically, evangelical preaching ought to reflect our conviction that God's Word is infallible and inerrant. Too often it does not. In fact, there is a discernible trend in contemporary evangelicalism *away* from Biblical preaching and a drift *toward* an experience-centered, pragmatic, topical approach in the pulpit.¹¹

As the '90s dawn, an irresistible urge for a focus in the pulpit on the *relevant* seemingly exists, with a resultant inattention to God's *revelation*. Siegfried Meuer alerted the 1960s to the same "contemporary danger."¹² He likened the direction of his day to the earlier trends of Harry Emerson Fosdick who wrote in the '20s, "The sermon is uninteresting because it has no connection with the real interests of the people. . . . The sermon must tackle a real problem."¹³ Meuer noted that Fosdick opened the floodgate for philosophy and psychology to inundate the modern pulpit with unbelief.

Fosdick's philosophy sounds alarmingly similar to the advice given in a recent publication on relevant contemporary preaching:

Unchurched people today are the ultimate consumers. We may not like it, but for every sermon we preach, they're asking, "Am I interested in

that subject or not?" If they aren't, it doesn't matter how effective our delivery is; their minds will check out.¹⁴

The implied conclusion is that pastors must preach what people want to hear rather than what God wants proclaimed. Such counsel sounds the alarm of 2 Timothy 4:3: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears."

What is the necessary response? We assert that it is to rediscover and reaffirm expository preaching for the coming generation of preachers facing all the spiritual opportunities and Satanic obstacles of a new millennium. We agree with Walter Kaiser's appraisal:

Regardless of what new directives and emphases are periodically offered, that which is needed above everything else to make the Church more viable, authentic, and effective, is a new declaration of the Scriptures with a new purpose, passion, and power.¹⁵

REVISITING SCRIPTURE

When warnings about a drift away from Biblical preaching sound, the only reasonable response is a return to the Scriptural roots of preaching to reaffirm its essential nature. In a reexamination of the heritage of Biblical proclamation, two elements emerge: the mandates to preach and the manner of preaching.

Mandates to Preach

The Gospels, Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation provide many examples and exhortations to preach the truth in fulfillment of God's will. As a reminder of the apostolic legacy and a reaffirmation of the Scriptural authority for Bible-based preaching, five significant mandates are representative of the larger number of passages.

Matthew 28:19, 20 – "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever

I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

1 Timothy 4:13 – “Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”

2 Timothy 2:2 – “And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

2 Timothy 4:2 – “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.”

Titus 2:1 – “But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine.”

Manner of Preaching

In his discussion of **khrrsv** (*kryss*, “I preach,” “I proclaim”), Friedrich notes at least thirty-three different verbs employed by New Testament writers to portray the richness of Biblical preaching.¹⁶ In the following discussion, the four most prominent of these are examined briefly.

Kryss sees general use throughout the Gospels, Acts, and the Epistles. John the Baptist (Matt. 3:1), Jesus (Matt. 4:17), and Paul (Acts 28:31) all engaged in the action of preaching as indicated by this verb. To Timothy, Paul commended this same activity, telling him to preach the Word (2 Tim. 4:2).

Eaggelzv (*Euaggeliz*, “I preach the gospel”) is practically interchangeable with *kryss* (Luke 8:1; Acts 8:4, 5). Paul and Barnabas preached the Good News of the Word of the Lord (Acts 15:35).

Martyrv (*Martyre*, “I testify,” “I bear witness”) is a legal term picturing the communication of truth from one who has a firsthand knowledge. John the Baptist bore witness to the light (John 1:7, 8) and John the Apostle testified to the Word of God (Rev. 1:2).¹⁷

Didskv (*didask*, “I teach”) focuses on the purpose and content of the message transmitted, without excluding elements of the three previous verbs. As part of the Great Commission, Jesus commanded His

disciples to teach (Matt. 28:20). Paul recommended teaching to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:2; 2 Tim. 2:2). Teaching is sometimes associated with *kryss* (Matt. 11:1) and *euaggeliz* (Acts 5:42). The content of what is taught focuses on the way of God (Matt. 22:16) and the Word of God (Acts 18:11).¹⁸

In addition to these four prominent words, there are many others that significantly enhance the Biblical manner of communicating God’s Word. For example, the Ethiopian eunuch invited Philip to “guide” (or “lead”) (**dhgv** [hodge]) him through Isaiah 53 (Acts 8:31). Paul “explained” (or “laid out”) (**ktuhmi** [*ektithmi*]) the kingdom of God (Acts 28:23; cf. 18:26). Paul told Timothy that he was to “entrust” (or “commit”) (**paratuhmi** [*paratithmi*]) what he had heard from Paul to faithful men that they might teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2).

Jesus’ interaction with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus adds further dimensions to Biblical preaching. He “explained” (or “interpreted”) (**diermhnev** [*diermneu*]) the things about Himself in the Old Testament from Moses to the prophets (Luke 24:27). They in turn marveled at the way He had “opened” (or “explained”) (**dianogv** [*dianoig*]) the Scriptures (Luke 24:32; cf. 24:45).

A study of additional words such as **nag-gilv** (*anaggell*, “I announce, declare”) (Acts 20:27), **naginskv** (*anaginsk*, “I read”) (1 Tim. 4:13), **parakalv** (*parakale*, “I exhort, comfort”) (1 Tim. 4:13), **jhgo-mai** (*exgeomai*, “I declare”) (Acts 15:12), **lalv** (*lale*, “I speak”) (John 3:34), **dialgo-mai** (*dialegomai*, “I discuss, argue”) (Acts 17:17), and **fuggomai** (*phtheggomai*, “I utter”) would be profitable. Yet this brief survey is enough to conclude that the one common link in all the Biblical terms in their contexts is a focus on the things of God and Scripture as exclusively central in the preacher’s message. Without question, this feature alone marks the uniqueness of Scriptural preaching. A Biblical and theological content is the *sine qua non* of New Testament proclamation.

With this Biblical foundation, an identification of the contemporary mode of New Testament preaching is possible.

DEFINING EXPOSITORY PREACHING

Discussions about preaching divide it into three types: topical, textual, and expository. Topical messages usually combine a series of Bible verses that loosely connect with a theme. Textual preaching uses a short text or passage that generally serves as a gateway into whatever subject the preacher chooses to address. Neither the topical nor the textual method represents a serious effort to interpret, understand, explain, or apply God's truth in the context of the Scripture(s) used.

By contrast, expository preaching focuses predominantly on the text(s) under consideration along with its (their) context(s).¹⁹ Exposition normally concentrates on a single text of Scripture, but it is sometimes possible for a thematic/theological message or a historical/ biographical discourse to be expository in nature. An exposition may treat any length of passage.

One way to clarify expository preaching is to identify what it is not.²⁰

1. It is not a commentary running from word to word and verse to verse without unity, outline, and pervasive drive.
2. It is not rambling comments and off-hand remarks about a passage without a background of thorough exegesis and logical order.
3. It is not a mass of disconnected suggestions and inferences based on the surface meaning of a passage, but not sustained by a depth-and-breadth study of the text.
4. It is not pure exegesis, no matter how scholarly, if it lacks a theme, thesis, outline, and development.
5. It is not a mere structural outline of a passage with a few supporting comments, but without other rhetorical and sermonic elements.
6. It is not a topical homily using scattered parts of the passage, but omitting discussion of other equally important

parts.

7. It is not a chopped-up collection of grammatical findings and quotations from commentaries without a fusing of the same into a smooth, flowing, interesting, and compelling message.
8. It is not a Sunday school-lesson type of discussion that has an outline of the contents, informality, and fervency, but lacks sermonic structure and rhetorical ingredients.
9. It is not a Bible reading that links a number of scattered passages treating a common theme, but fails to handle any of them in a thorough, grammatical, and contextual manner.
10. It is not the ordinary devotional or prayer meeting talk that combines running commentary, rambling remarks, disconnected suggestions, and personal reactions into a semi-inspirational discussion, but lacks the benefit of the basic exegetical-contextual study and persuasive elements.

Before proceeding further, consider the English word group "expose, exposition, expositor, expository." According to Webster, an exposition is a discourse to convey information or explain what is difficult to understand.²¹ Application of this to preaching requires that an expositor be one who explains Scripture by laying open the text to public view in order to set forth its meaning, explain what is difficult to understand, and make appropriate application.

John Calvin's centuries-old understanding of exposition is very similar:

First of all, Calvin understood preaching to be the explication of Scripture. The words of Scripture are the source and content of preaching. As an expositor, Calvin brought to the task of preaching all the skills of a humanist scholar. As an interpreter, Calvin explicated the text, seeking its natural, its true, its scriptural meaning. . . . Preaching is not only the explication of Scripture, it is also the application of Scripture. Just as Calvin explicated Scripture word by word, so he applied

the Scripture sentence by sentence to the life and experience of his congregation.²²

Exposition is not so much defined by the form of the message as it is by the source and process through which the message was formed. Unger poignantly captures this sense:

No matter what the length of the portion explained may be, if it is handled in such a way that its real and essential meaning as it existed in the mind of the particular Biblical writer and as it exists in the light of the overall context of Scripture is made plain and applied to the present-day needs of the hearers, it may properly be said to be *expository preaching*. . . . It is emphatically not preaching about the Bible, but preaching the Bible. "What saith the Lord" is the alpha and the omega of expository preaching. It begins in the Bible and ends in the Bible and all that intervenes springs from the Bible. In other words, expository preaching is Bible-centered preaching.²³

Two other definitions of exposition help clarify what it is:

In preaching, exposition is the detailed interpretation, logical amplification, and practical application of a passage of Scripture.²⁴

At its best, expository preaching is "the presentation of biblical truth, derived from and transmitted through a historical, grammatical, Spirit-guided study of a passage in its context, which the Holy Spirit applies first to the life of the preacher and then through him to his congregation."²⁵

In summary, the following minimal elements identify expository preaching:

1. The message finds its sole source in Scripture.²⁶
2. The message is extracted from Scripture through careful exegesis.
3. The message preparation correctly interprets Scripture in its normal sense and its context.
4. The message clearly explains the original God-intended meaning of Scripture.
5. The message applies the Scriptural

meaning for today.

The spirit of expository preaching is exemplified in two Biblical texts:

So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading (Neh. 8:8).

Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (Acts 20:26, 27).

A particular example is Jesus' expounding of Isaiah 61:1, 2 in the synagogue (Luke 4:16-22). He later gave a thematic exposition of Himself to the disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27, 32, 44-47). Philip in Acts 8:27-35 expounded Isaiah 53:7, 8 for the Ethiopian eunuch. Stephen preached a historical/biographical expository sermon to the Jews before they stoned him (Acts 7:2-53).

Greer Boyce has aptly summarized this definition of expository preaching:

In short, expository preaching demands that, by careful analysis of each text within its immediate context and the setting of the book to which it belongs, the full power of modern exegetical and theological scholarship be brought to bear upon our treatment of the Bible. The objective is not that the preacher may parade all this scholarship in the pulpit. Rather, it is that the preacher may speak faithfully out of solid knowledge of his text, and mount the pulpit steps as, at least, "a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth."

The preacher's final step is the most crucial and most perilous of all. It is to relate the biblical message both faithfully and relevantly to modern life. At this point all his skill as a craftsman must come into play. We must be warned that faithful exposition of a text does not of itself produce an effective sermon. We need also to be warned, however, that faithfulness to the text is not to be sacrificed for the sake of what we presume to be relevancy. This sacrifice too many modern preachers seem willing to make, producing as a result,

sermons that are a compound of moralistic advice, their own unauthoritative and sometimes unwise opinions, and the latest psychology. Expository preaching, by insisting that the message of the sermon coincide with the theme of the text, calls the preacher back to his true task: the proclamation of the Word of God in and through the Bible.²⁷

UNDERSTANDING THE EXPOSITORY PROCESS

Discussing the Biblical foundations and the definition of expository preaching, while essential, is relatively easy. The real challenge comes when one has to move from the classroom to the weekly pulpit. Unless the preacher understands clearly the expository process, he will never achieve his potential in the craft of expository preaching.

As a frame of reference for discussion, we propose that the expository process include four standard elements: preparing the expositor, processing and principlizing the Biblical text(s), pulling the expository message together, and preaching the exposition. The four phases need equal emphasis if the exposition is to be fully effective in the sight of both God and the congregation.

Preparing the Expositor²⁸

Since God should be the source of expository messages, one who delivers such a message should enjoy intimate communion with God. This is the only way the message can be given with greatest accuracy, clarity, and passion.

Seven areas of preparation qualify a man to stand in the pulpit and declare, "Thus saith the Lord!":

1. The preacher must be a truly regenerated believer in Jesus Christ. He must be a part of God's redeemed family (John 1:12, 13). If a man is to deliver a personal message from the heavenly Father effectively, he must be a legitimate spiritual son, or the message will inevitably be distorted.
2. The preacher must be appointed and gifted by God to the teaching/preaching

ministry (Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Tim. 3:2). Unless a man is divinely enabled to proclaim, he will be inadequate, possessing only human ability.²⁹

3. The preacher must be inclined and trained to be a student of God's Word. Otherwise, he cannot carry out the mandate of 2 Timothy 2:15 to "cut straight" the Word of God's truth.
4. The preacher must be a mature believer who demonstrates a consistent godly character (1 Tim. 3:2, 3).³⁰
5. The preacher must be dependent upon God the Holy Spirit for divine insight and understanding of God's Word (1 Cor. 2:12, 13). Without the Spirit's illumination and power, the message will be relatively impotent.³¹
6. The preacher must be in constant prayerful communion with God to receive the full impact of the Word (Psalm 119:18). The obvious one to consult for clarification is the original author.³²
7. The preacher must first let the developing message sift through his own thinking and life before he can preach it. Ezra provides the perfect model: "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments" (Ezra 7:10).

Processing and Principlizing the Biblical Text

A man in tune with God's Spirit and Word is ready to begin a process to discover not only what God originally meant by what He said, but also appropriate principles and applications for today.³³

1. Processing the Biblical text.³⁴ A man cannot hope to preach effectively without first having worked diligently and thoroughly through the Biblical text. This is the only way the expositor can acquire God's message. Two preachers from different eras comment on this essential feature:

A man cannot hope to preach the Word of God accurately until he has first engaged in a careful, exhaustive exegesis of his text. Herein lies the

problem, for competent exegesis requires time, brain power, “blood, sweat, and tears,” all saturated with enormous doses of prayer.³⁵

You will soon reveal your ignorance as an expositor if you do not study, therefore diligent reading will be forced upon you. Anything which compels the preacher to search the grand old Book is of immense service to him. If any are jealous lest the labor should injure their constitutions, let them remember that mental work up to a certain point is most refreshing, and where the Bible is the theme toil is delight. It is only when mental labor passes beyond the bounds of common sense that the mind becomes enfeebled by it, and this is not usually reached except by injudicious persons, or men engaged on topics which are unrefreshing and disagreeable, but our subject is a recreative one, and to young men like ourselves the vigorous use of our faculties is a most healthy exercise.³⁶

2. Principizing the Biblical text. Preaching does not stop with understanding ancient languages, history, culture, and customs. Unless the centuries can be bridged with contemporary relevance in the message, then the preaching experience differs little from a classroom encounter. One must first process the text for original meaning and then principize the text for current applicability.³⁷ One’s study falls short of the goal if this step is omitted or slighted.

Pulling the Expository Message Together

At the third stage the expositor has finished his deep study and asks himself, “How can I blend my findings in such a way that my flock will understand the Bible and its requirements for their lives today?” In a sense, the art of exposition commences here.³⁸

Nolan Howington uses a graphic description to relate exegesis and exposition: “Thus an exegete is like a diver bringing up pearls from the ocean bed; an expositor is like the jeweler who arrays

them in orderly fashion and in proper relation to each other.”³⁹

Titles, outlines, introductions, illustrations, and conclusions enter the process at this stage. The message moves from the raw materials mined by exegesis to the finished product of exposition, which the hearers hopefully will find interesting, convicting, and compelling. The key to this step is remembering what distinguishes exposition: explaining the text, especially parts that are hard to understand or apply. It is equally important to remember not only the text, but the audience as well.

F. B. Meyer offers this advice when thinking of the listeners and what sermonic form the message will take:

There are five considerations that must be met in every successful sermon. There should be an appeal to the Reason, to the Conscience, to the Imagination, to the Emotions, and to the Will; and for each of these there is no method so serviceable as systematic exposition.⁴⁰

Preaching the Exposition

The final decision to be made by the expositor relates to his preaching mode, whether from memory or from notes. This step is perhaps the most neglected in preparation by those committed to true exposition. Too often expositors assume that proper work done in the study will ensure that the pulpit will care for itself. It is true that there is no substitute for hard work in the study, but equally hard work in the pulpit will reward both the preacher and the flock to a much greater degree. James Stalker effectively draws attention to this challenge:

Ministers do not get enough of result in the attention, satisfaction, and delight of their hearers for the work they do; and the failure is in the vehicle of communication between the study and the congregation—that is to say, in the delivery of the sermon. What I am pleading for is, that there should be more work to show for the coal consumed.⁴¹

At the point of delivery, it is essential for

the expositor to be clear in his purpose. Otherwise, the message preached may be far afield from the message studied and the message of Scripture. J. I. Packer makes this point by contrasting what preaching is not with what it is:

The purpose of preaching is not to stir people to action while bypassing their minds, so that they never see what reason God gives them for doing what the preacher requires of them (that is manipulation); nor is the purpose to stock people's minds with truth, no matter how vital and clear, which then lies fallow and does not become the seedbed and source of changed lives (that is academicism). . . . The purpose of preaching is to inform, persuade, and call forth an appropriate response to the God whose message and instruction are being delivered.⁴²

Also of importance is the language used in communicating the message. It should be clear, understandable, picturesque, and most of all, Biblical. The following strong warning issued over twenty years ago is still applicable:

I urge adherence to Biblical terminology. Much modern preaching has taken a psychological and sociological turn. It is mysterious and mystical. It sets forth psychiatric ideas, often using the terms of the psychiatrist rather than those of the Christian evangelist. It speaks of repression, fixations, traumas, neuroses, and syndromes, world without end. I claim that in the main these are not terms that the Holy Spirit can use effectively.⁴³

Another crucial matter is the dynamics of speech, i.e., audience relationship and communicative effectiveness. Vines and Allen outline three basic principles for every expositor:

In short, effective communication from the pulpit must be informed by Aristotle's rhetorical triad of *logos*, *ethos*, and *pathos*. This involves a thorough knowledge of the subject matter and here is where there is no substitute for thorough exegesis. It involves a thorough knowledge of the speaker-

audience dynamic such that the preacher must speak from integrity and his audience must know of his sincerity and genuineness. Finally, it involves a knowledge of people and how they respond to the spoken word.⁴⁴

Above all, the expositor must expound the Word like Paul did in Corinth (1 Cor. 2:1-5). He did not come as a clever orator or scholarly genius; he did not arrive with his own message; he did not preach with personal confidence in his own strength. Rather, Paul preached the testimony of God and Christ's death, and this, with well-placed confidence in God's power to make the message life-changing. Unless this kind of wholesale dependence on God marks the modern expositor's preaching, his exposition will lack the divine dimension that only God can provide.

In summary, of the four steps of the complete expository experience—preparing the expositor, processing and principalizing the Biblical text, pulling the expository message together, and preaching the exposition—no phase can be omitted without seriously jeopardizing the truthfulness or usefulness of God's Word mediated through the expositor.

CONSIDERING EXPOSITIONAL ADVANTAGES⁴⁵

Expository preaching best emulates Biblical preaching both in content and style. This is the chief benefit. Besides this, other advantages listed in random order include the following:

1. Expository preaching best achieves the Biblical intent of preaching: delivering God's message.
2. Expository preaching promotes Scripturally authoritative preaching.
3. Expository preaching magnifies God's Word.
4. Expository preaching provides a storehouse of preaching material.
5. Expository preaching develops the pastor as a man of God's Word.
6. Expository preaching ensures the highest level of Bible knowledge for the flock.

7. Expository preaching promotes thinking and living Biblically.
8. Expository preaching encourages both depth and comprehensiveness.
9. Expository preaching forces the treatment of hard-to-interpret texts.
10. Expository preaching allows for handling broad theological themes.
11. Expository preaching keeps preachers away from ruts and hobby horses.
12. Expository preaching prevents the insertion of human ideas.
13. Expository preaching guards against misinterpretation of the Biblical text.
14. Expository preaching imitates the preaching of Christ and the apostles.
15. Expository preaching brings out the best in the expositor.

RECLAIMING EXPOSITORY PREACHING

As the twentieth century sets and a new millennium dawns, we must reclaim the method and art of expository preaching for the coming generation. No one said it would be easy. It is quite the opposite. No other method of preaching requires so much work. At the same time, no other method rewards so richly.

If the suggestions which have been offered are well founded, it will be obvious that expository preaching is a difficult task. It requires much close study of Scripture in general, and much special study of the particular passage to be treated. To make a discourse which shall be explanatory and yet truly oratorical, bearing a rich mass of details but not burdened with them, full of Scripture and abounding in practical applications, to bring even dull, uninformed, and unspiritual minds into interested and profitable contact with an extended portion of the Bible—of course, this must be difficult.⁴⁶

While the growing trend among today's preachers is toward consumer satisfaction and contemporary relevancy, we reaffirm that Biblical preaching must be first directed toward divine satisfaction and kingdom relevance. Reflect carefully on Mark Steege's clarion call to expository

preaching and its note of Biblical authority:

Through our preaching the Lord seeks to change men's lives. We are to be evangelists, to awaken men to their high calling in Christ. We are to be heralds, proclaiming the messages of God to men. We are to be ambassadors, calling men to be reconciled to God. We are to be shepherds, nourishing and caring for men day by day. We are to be stewards of the mysteries of God, giving men the proper Word for their every need. We are to be witnesses, telling men of all that God has done for them. We are to be overseers, urging men to live their lives to God. We are to be ministers, preparing men to minister with us to others. As we reflect on each of these phases of our work, what emphasis each gives to the importance of preaching! What a task the Lord has given us!⁴⁷

Although R. L. Dabney wrote over a century ago, we join him today in urging,

. . . that the expository method (understood as that which explains extended passages of Scripture in course) be restored to that equal place which it held in the primitive and Reformed Churches; for, first, this is obviously the only natural and efficient way to do that which is the sole legitimate end of preaching, convey the whole message of God to the people.⁴⁸ ■

1. William Gouge, *Commentary on Hebrews* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1980 rpt.) 577-78.
2. C. H. Spurgeon, "Sermons—Their Matter," *Lectures to My Students* (Lecture 5, Book 1; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977 rpt.) 72.
3. John A. Broadus, *On the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Ap&A, n.d.) x.
4. G. Campbell Morgan, *Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974 rpt.) 11.
5. Jeff D. Ray, *Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1940) 14.
6. Merrill F. Unger, *Principles of Expository Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1955) 11-15.
7. Nolan Howington, "Expository Preaching," *Review and Expositor* 56 (Jan 1959) 56.
8. Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Exegesis and Preaching: The Principles and Practice of Exegesis," *Covenant Quarterly* 34 (Aug 1976) 3. For other comments on the decline of expository preaching in America, see Lloyd M. Perry, *Biblical Preaching for Today's World* (Chicago: Moody, 1973) 9-12.
9. Brian Bird, "Biblical Exposition: Becoming a Lost Art?" *Christianity Today* 30/7 (Apr 18, 1986) 34.

10. Ibid.
 11. MacArthur, "The Mandate" 4.
 12. Siegfried Meuer, "What Is Biblical Preaching?" *Encounter* 24 (Spring 1963) 182.
 13. Harry Emerson Fosdick, "What Is the Matter With Preaching?" *Harper's Magazine* 47 (July 1928) 133-41.
 14. Bill Hybels, et al., *Mastering Contemporary Preaching* (Portland: Multnomah, 1989) 27. A similar comment is, "The wise interpreter begins with a human need today, and chooses a passage that will enable him to meet this need" (Andrew W. Blackwood, *Expository Preaching for Today* [New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1953] 13).
 15. Kaiser, *Exegetical Theology* 242.
 16. Gerhard Friedrich, "khrssein, et al.," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1966) 3:703.
 17. See Klaas Runia, "What Is Preaching According to the New Testament," *TynBul* 29 (1978) 3-48 for further information in khrssv, eaggelzv, and martyrv.
 18. For an expanded discussion of didskv, see Homer A. Ken, Jr., "A Time to Teach," *GTJ* 1/1 (Spring 1980) 7-17.
 19. Horton Davies, "Expository Preaching: Charles Hadden Spurgeon," *Foundations* 66 (Jan 1963) 14, calls exposition "contextual preaching" to distinguish it from the textual and topical types.
 20. These ten suggestions are derived from Faris D. Whitesell, *Power in Expository Preaching* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1963) vii-viii.
 21. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass.: Merriam-Webster, 1988) 438.
 22. John H. Leith, "Calvin's Doctrine of the Proclamation of the Word and Its Significance for Today in the Light of Recent Research," *RevExp* 86 (1989) 32, 34.
 23. Merrill F. Unger, *Principles* 33. See also William G. Houser, "Puritan Homiletics: A Caveat," *CTQ* 53/4 (Oct 1989) 255-70. Houser proposes that the power of the Puritan pulpit diminished as the mechanical form of the message took precedence over the process of forming the message. Coupled with boring deliveries and exceedingly long messages, Puritan preaching influence quickly declined when these factors become dominant.
 24. Ray, *Expository* 71.
 25. Hadden W. Robinson, "What Is Expository Preaching?" *BibSac* 131 (Jan-Mar 1974) 57. For other definitions, see Broadus, *On the Preparation* 119-20 and J. Ellwood Evans, "Expository Preaching," *BibSac* 111 (Jan-Mar 1954) 59.
 26. R. B. Kuiper, "Scriptural Preaching," *The Infallible Word* (3rd rev. ed., ed. by Paul Wooley; Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1967) 253, asserts strongly, "Exposition of Scripture, exposition worthy of its name, is of the very essence of preaching. It follows that it is a serious error to recommend expository preaching as one of several legitimate methods. Nor is it at all satisfactory, after the manner of many conservatives, to extol the expository method as the best. All preaching must be expository. Only expository preaching can be Scriptural."
 27. Greer W. Boyce, "A Plea for Expository Preaching," *CJT* 8 (Jan 1962) 18-19.
 28. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones devotes a whole chapter to this subject (*Preaching and Preachers* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1972] 100-20).
 29. James Stalker, *The Preacher and His Models* (New York: Hodder and Stoughton, 1891) 95-99; cf. also John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990) 37-46.
 30. Louis Goldberg, "Preaching With Power the Word 'Correctly Handled' to Transform Man and His World," *JETS* 27/1 (Mar 1984) 4-5.
 31. Kaiser, *Exegetical Theology* 236.
 32. Charles H. Spurgeon wrote, "If you do not understand a book by a departed writer you are unable to ask him his meaning, but the Spirit, who inspired Holy Scripture, lives forever, and He delights to open the Word to those who seek His instruction" (*Commenting and Commentaries* [New York: Sheldon and Company, 1876] 58-59).
 33. Nicholas Kurtaneck, "Are Seminaries Preparing Prospective Pastors to Preach the Word of God?" *GTJ* 6/2 (Fall 1985) 361-71.
 34. Specifics of the exegetical process will be outlined in a forthcoming essay in *The Master's Seminary Journal*. See Snodgrass, "Exegesis" 5-19 for a basic nine-step approach.
 35. John A. Sproule, "Biblical Exegesis and Expository Preaching" (unpublished lecture at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Ind., 1978) 1.
 36. Spurgeon, *Commenting* 47.
 37. H. Cunliffe-Jones wrote: "We must be able to say not only 'This is what this passage originally meant,' but also 'This passage is true in this particular way for us in the twentieth century.'" (*The Problems of Biblical Exposition*, *ExpTim* 65 [Oct 1953] 5).
 38. It is helpful to distinguish between a homily, and an exposition. "Homily" comes from the Greek **mola** which, like the Latin *sermo*, means "conversation" or "talk." The Latin word is the basis of the English "sermon," so in a general sense, all three are the same. For the purpose of this article, however, we choose to use the phrase "expository message" or "exposition" so that its source, process, and purpose are unmistakably distinguishable from the other two terms.
 39. Howington, "Expository" 62.
 40. F. B. Meyer, *Expository Preaching Plans and Methods* (New York: George H. Duran Company, 1912) 100.
 41. Stalker, *The Preacher* 121.
 42. J. I. Packer, "Why Preach?" *The Preacher and Preaching* (Samuel T. Logan, ed.; Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986) 9.
 43. William W. Ayer, "The Art of Effective Preaching," *BibSac* 124 (Jan-Mar 1967) 41.
 44. Jerry Vines and David Allen, "Hermeneutics, Exegesis, and Proclamation," *Criswell Theological Review* 1/2 (Spring 1987) 333-34.
 45. James W. Alexander, *Thoughts on Preaching* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1988 rpt.) 228-53, develops some of these advantages in more detail.
 46. Broadus, *On the Preparation* 124.
 47. Mark J. Steege, "Can Expository Preaching Still Be Relevant in These Days?" *The Springfielder* 34 (Mar 1971) 261.
 48. Robert L. Dabney, *Sacred Rhetoric* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1979 rpt.) 78-79.
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Sermon of the Month



Each month we will feature a Biblical sermon in this column. We would like to emphasize expository preaching and ask our readers to submit good expositional sermons for consideration. Please send typewritten copies by "snail mail" or E-mail to: Editor, Sword and Trumpet, Box 575, Harrisonburg, VA 22803; swandtrump@verizon.net.

The Villains of Christmas

by Larry Warren

Herod said to the wisemen, "Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also."

Albert Banks wrote: "At the birth of Christ there was only one villain seeking to block the heaven-sent light with his gloomy influence. Only one of the blackguard searching for a way through false pretence to destroy the celebration, and the Divine Light of the World, whose birth the celebration was meant to honor.

"Herod's expressed interest in this greatest phenomena ever recorded was 'that I may come and worship Him also.' Only God knows how many of the blackguard have infiltrated the celebration with the same evil motive, to destroy, not the celebration, but the One for whom we are celebrating."

Each year at this holiday season we see mounting manifestations of hatred toward Jesus Christ. These manifestations are more widespread and blatant each year. Christmas cards, Christmas greetings, Christmas carols, and nativity scenes are being forced from the season's activities. In Rochester, Minn., two girls were reprimanded for saying "Merry Christmas" in a school skit. In South Naplewood, NJ, the school district banned religious Christmas songs, even in instrumental versions. Last year in Denver they had their annual

parade, which in the past highlighted Christmas. Every reference to Christmas in last winter's parade was banned.

The world does not want to destroy all the celebrating, it only wants to remove the One whose birth we are supposed to be celebrating.

The Holy Ghost told the venerable, gray-bearded Simeon the Messiah had come. When he saw the child in the temple, he prophesied that though He would be the promised Saviour, He would also be the center of world contention. Jesus declared in advance that His short earthly ministry would end in a violent death, and His followers must also expect to be persecuted.

From Herod until now many villains have united, and are uniting to contest the righteous authority of Christ to rule over them as King of kings and Lord of lords. The villains who seek to obstruct the heaven-sent light are legion. Jesus said, "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." Christ came as the Light of the world to expose the evil which lurks in the human heart, and give deliverance from the dark, enslaving force. This stirred up an undercurrent of hatred to Him.

When His teaching became too strong for the people who claimed to be His followers, large numbers left Him, and He made no

effort to coax them back with a softer, more agreeable message.

How many ministers of our day have become one of the villains? They wheedle and flatter the people with their gentle, balmy religious platitudes. They tell funny stories or little tearjerkers to get the people to “only believe.” They honey up to the people, and the people follow the source of the honey.

Jesus said, “The world ‘hateth Me,’ because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.” As He preached truth, which exposed and condemned sin, He made enemies; and His opposition increased, making His crucifixion more inevitable. He was not crucified for being a bland, easygoing preacher, with a fine reputation for being a good mixer. Just the opposite was true. He did not fit into the common religious mix. That is the reason the world manifested such intense hostility and aversion to Him and His followers.

They called Paul a “pestilent fellow and a mover of sedition among all Jews throughout the world.” The Bible says the early Christians were “everywhere . . . spoken against.” Just how far have we tried to distance ourselves from identifying thoroughly with a Saviour who stirs up the world of darkness by exposing their sin in the light of truth? How long can we emphasize the pleasing aspects of the Gospel, shunning the disagreeable, rugged truths, without becoming one of the villains?

How long can we revel in the merriment of the celebration knowing we have avoided the reproach of the cross? The Bible says, “They that are Christ’s have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.” A. W. Tozer said Christians “henceforth walk in newness of life. Scriptural emphasis is not on self-expression, but on self-abnegation through the power of the cross. Paradoxically a believer raises and reigns with Christ in proportion to his self-abasement.

“The yearning after happiness found so widely among Christians professing a superior degree of sanctity is sufficient proof that such sanctity is not indeed present.” Is not this snugly embedded narcissism widespread in every religious group?

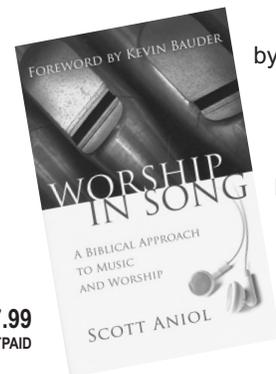
PAGE 24

How many are like Herod? Their expressed interest in celebrating the birth of Christ is carried aloft by an ulterior motive. Self is pampered and stroked gently and lovingly all year long until Christmas, the grand finale of self-indulgence. Are not these lovers of self some of the villains of Christmas? ■

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Worship in Song

A Biblical Approach to Music and Worship



by Scott Aniol

281 pages

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While not from an Anabaptist perspective, this book is an excellent doctrinal and practical exposition of the Biblical principles of both personal and corporate worship, together with an in-depth examination of present-day music issues. Michael Harding gives the following review:

Worship in Song is one of the most insightful explanations of Biblical worship that I have ever read. Pastor Scott Aniol harmonizes the concepts of God's beauty, aesthetics, affection for God, accurate theology, and musical expertise unlike any other book on this subject. I enthusiastically recommend Worship in Song as a must read for pastors, church music directors, and all Christian musicians who sincerely desire to lead their congregations to worship God in spirit and in truth.

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SWORD AND TRUMPET

One Day

by Mark D. Avery

One day. What a day! The world had heard, but failing to understand, the world had failed to prepare.

One day. The world had failed, but was unaware of its failure or at least unconcerned about it.

One day. The King of kings and Lord of lords, the God of gods, the Creator of all things mourned greatly over the sinfulness of His creation. Placed in Eden, the most beautiful garden imaginable, with benefits beyond compare, the crown of creation had violated the one restriction God had placed on him. God drove man from the Garden. Sin grew and multiplied in humanity.

Over time, human sinfulness became so odious to God that “it repented the LORD that he had made man” in the first place. The flood came, and eight, only eight, people were saved.

Some lessons are hard to learn. Before long, sin had regained a hold on humanity. For many years, centuries even, God seemed to let man go his own way. Yet during those years, prophets declared God’s way. Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, hurt with God and His people over their sins. Daniel, Ezekiel, and others declared God’s message, some with fiery denunciations of sin, others with passionate pleas to return. Some confronted sin directly; others addressed it with parables and illustrations. All pleaded with God’s people to return to a right relationship with Him.

At times God’s chosen people listened to the prophets and turned back to God. Yet charting the spiritual history of His people throughout the Old Testament history would show a series of ups and downs. Still, bright spots appeared along

the way. Isaiah prophesied about the beautiful branch, the virgin birth, the wonderful child/ruler, and more.

One day Paul said, “When the fulness of the time was come.” On the day the Father had planned from eternity past, God dispatched His Son from Heaven to earth on a mission of eternal significance.

One day. We call it Christmas. Christ worship. And the world still pauses to celebrate with us. Despite the noisy opposition, we celebrate Christmas. Some celebrations are out of focus; some are materialistic; some even refuse the mention of Christmas, celebrating a winter holiday instead. Yet the central idea of even the winter holiday is that one day Jesus came. His coming has so influenced the progression of society that the world as a whole still recalls the day He came. Two thousand plus years after the event, He is remembered.

One day. One day He came. Yet our hope is not in the past. What He did by coming has lasting effects. He is still changing lives. One day He came. One day He died. One day He rose from the dead. One day He ascended back into Heaven. One day He is coming again.

One day! ■

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Song of the Month

Douglas A. Byler, Music Editor

“ . . . singing with understanding!”

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

Lyrics: The text for this well-known Christmas carol comes from a very old set of liturgical prayers commonly referred to as the “O” Antiphons. “Antiphon” in this context simply means a short piece of text that is recited before or after a psalm, and the “O” Antiphons were, naturally, a specific set of Antiphons that begin with “O.” In its original version, there were seven of these short verses, and they were intended to be used at the Vespers services during the week before Advent (one for each evening). Each of the Antiphons addresses Christ by one of His many titles, and finishes with a request appropriate for that specific aspect of Christ’s ministry. In the original Latin text and order, the first letters of the stanzas (after the “O”) spell the acrostic “Ero cras,” roughly translated “Tomorrow, I will be with you.” As to the age of the text, most sources date it somewhere between the 5th and 8th centuries, AD.

Somewhere during the middle of the second millennium after Christ, five of the “O” Antiphons began to be sung together as a hymn (still in Latin), accompanied by the chorus almost as we know it today. It was not until 1851 that John Mason Neale published an English translation of the carol, originally using the phrase “Draw nigh,” in place of the opening “O come.” In 1867, the carol was published in *Hymns Ancient and Modern* bearing its current title.

Music: The origin of this tune was not clear for many years. Then, in 1966, it was discovered in a manuscript by Dr. Mary Berry, who tells the story:

My attention had been drawn to a small fifteenth century processional in the Paris Bibliotheque Nationale. It was Franciscan in origin and probably intended for the use of nuns rather than friars. Turning the pages, I discovered . . . a number of troped verses for the funeral responsorial *Libera Me*. . . . The melody of these tropes was none other than the tune of “O Come, O Come Emmanuel.” It appeared in square notation on the left-hand page, and on the opposite page there was a second part that fitted exactly, like a mirror-image, in note-against-note harmony with the hymn-tune. The book would thus have been shared by two sisters, each singing her own part as they processed.

With its origins in chant of this sort, this is a very effective tune to sing in unison, or to be sung against a sustained note or notes (in this case, the “la” and/or “mi” would work best). This applies best to the verse part of the carol, as the “Rejoice” part of the chorus was added later. ■

The information and quotes contained in this article were obtained from www.hymnsandcarolsofchristmas.com.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Anonymous

Veni, veni Emmanuel

Tr. John Mason Neale, 1851,
and Compilers of *Hymns Ancient and Modern*, 1861

Fifteenth Century Trope Melody
The Hymnal Noted, Part II, 1864

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som cap - tive
2 O come, Thou Rod of Jes - se, free Thine own from Sa - tan's
3 O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer Our spir - its by Thine
4 O come, Thou Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen wide our
5 O come, O come, Thou Lord of might, Who to Thy tribes, on

Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here,
tyr - an - ny; From depths of hell Thy peo - ple save,
ad - vent here; Dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night,
heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that leads on high,
Si - nai's height, In an - cient times didst give the law

Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
And give them vic - tory o'er the grave.
And death's dark shad - ows put to flight. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -
And close the path to mis - er - y.
In cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.

man - u - el Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el! A - men.



Counseling From the Word

Counseling in a War Zone

by Jeremy Lelek

What is your mentality when you sit down to counsel someone? Do you seek to be kind, loving, compassionate, merciful, quick to confront, ready to offer solutions, or eager to give the answers you know are in the Bible? Do you place pressure on yourself to have it all figured out within an hour so you will appear to know what you are doing? What tends to consume your thinking when you enter the counseling context? Have you ever considered that when you counsel, you must be mindful of God in these moments because counseling is essentially a function in which we enter one of the most rabid war zones known to mankind?

Are you aware that when you sit with others to discuss the issues of their hearts, you enter a war? When you consider the mindset with which you counsel, is this an aspect of that mindset? Think about Peter's words for a moment, "Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul" (1 Peter 2:11 ESV). What is Peter saying here? In Biblical counseling, we often refer to the heart as "active" (Powlison, 1995; Tripp, 2000; Welch, 2003). Peter's words reflect this idea perfectly. Christians are in a perpetual war, and an aspect of this war is most evident in what he calls "the passions of the flesh." Understanding this is signifi-

cant because it brings to mind the fact that when we sit down to discuss a person's disintegrating marriage, or paralyzing anxiety, or relentless craving for meth, we enter an unseen war zone of cosmic proportions.

Many Christians have exercised a tragic disservice to others by ignoring this reality, and diminishing sin exclusively to the behavioral. As such, mistakes in counseling have been made in that counselors have often focused on fixing sinful communication (a symptom of the war), offering relaxation techniques for anxious feelings (a symptom of the war), or stopping drug use (a symptom of the war) rather than addressing the war. From a medical standpoint, this would be like trying to conquer terrorism by tending to the wounds inflicted in battle. Setting a soldier's broken leg is certainly important, but it will not (in itself) conquer terrorism. The wound is a symptom of the war, not the war itself.

As a sojourner in a hostile land, do you strategically help others fight this battle, or do you get caught up in the enormity of the explosions of war? When a husband and wife are yelling at each other, are you caught off guard by this behavior or are you asking probing questions that might help you understand "the passions of the flesh" "waging war" against their souls (Powlison, 1999)? When someone is having a panic attack right before your eyes, do you stop with helping

PAGE 28

SWORD AND TRUMPET

her calm down through breathing and relaxation or do you also proceed to go deeper and consider the desires of her heart produced and shaped by the flesh? If someone feels bound by obsessive thoughts of contamination, do you exclusively revert to behavioral techniques to help him become desensitized to his fears or are you mindful of the war within that is raging with ferocity, even driving much of the obsession and fear?

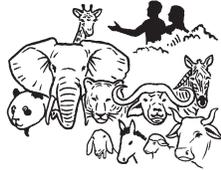
To counsel Biblically means we must approach people Biblically. Our counselees are in a war zone. Quite frankly, so are we. And the object of this war is not nebulous. The Person against whom the war is raging is quite clear. Paul helps us understand this when he writes, "For the mind set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed it cannot" (Romans 8:7, 8 ESV). The passions at war against the soul (as mentioned by Peter) are in hostile revolt against God (as explained by Paul). Not only that, but to try and contain them in our own strength will guarantee ultimate defeat. Paul tells us we cannot submit to the law of God in our own flesh. This is why we are desperate for a Redeemer. Techniques are important. Practical methods to assist others in their struggles with sin and suffering are a significant part of helping people. Medical assistance for the person addicted to a chemical substance is wise and good (to protect him or her from dangerous, even fatal complications from withdrawal). However, we must always remember we are not applying such techniques and services to a neutral being. We are applying these methods to a person (just like ourselves) who is daily visited by dark, deceptive, convincing, luring, forceful passions that shape the visible components of the battle; a person whose allegiances are not with God. And while methods are a vital part of what we do, we must be careful that it is not in them that we foster faith (either as counselors or in those we serve). Methods will never change the heart. Methods are impotent to overthrow the passions that wage against us. It is on this point that we have the glorious opportunity to visit and revisit the Gospel narrative and consider how it applies

COUNSELING CONSIDERATIONS

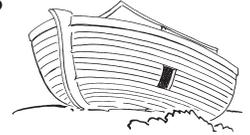
1. Be mindful of the war that is raging. To do this is to function in a reality that is aligned with Scripture.
2. Read 1 Peter 2:11. Help counselees identify passions of the flesh that may be influencing their behavior. What is their greatest longing in the moment?
3. Read 2 Peter 1:3, 4. What does it mean that God's power has granted us all things that lead to life and godliness?
4. This passage also mentions promises of God that are significant in the battle. Have your counselee search the Bible for promises that are applicable to his or her struggle. Write these on a note card, and review them daily.
5. Recognize as a counselor that you are also fighting passions that wage war in your soul. This is true even in the counseling context. When working with challenging people or situations, make sure to consider sinful passions in your heart that may be impacting your work. Are you getting frustrated because change is coming too slow? Are you fearful because the issues seem too big? What promises might apply to you as a counselor?

to even the most complex of situations.

May we never insult the work of Jesus Christ by seeking to combat the flesh with substitute "redeemers." We are in a war, and we have a King whose "power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire" (2 Peter 1:3, 4 ESV). May we seek to be diligent students of God's Word that we may effectively employ and teach these truths to our fellow soldiers of battle. If it is indeed true that in Christ and by His power we have everything we need, then we want to be careful never to relegate this truth of truths to the dark corners of our counseling philosophy. May God help us to always be mindful of Him!*(continued on page 31)*



Beginning Issues



Ancient Man: What Can We Learn From Him?

by John Mullett

Over the last three articles we have taken an introductory look at the intelligence of Ancient Man; a look into a subject in which we only scratched the surface. I'd like to write one more time about these ancient peoples to summarize what's been discussed and to ponder what we can learn from our predecessors.

As we discovered, even a precursory look at history through some of the advanced ancient civilizations causes a common theme to emerge. Repeatedly the evidence shows the abrupt emergence of fully formed civilizations/cultures with a high level of technology. With each there is a conspicuous absence of the type of progression an evolutionary view would expect. Graham Hancock in his book *The Fingerprints of the Gods* discusses this abruptness and absence of slow progression in technology. *"The archaeological evidence suggested that rather than developing slowly and painfully, as is normal with human societies, the civilization of Ancient Egypt, like that of the Olmecs, emerged all at once and fully formed. Indeed, the period of transition from primitive to advanced society appears to have been so short that it makes no kind of historical sense. Technological skills that should have taken thousands of years to evolve were brought into use almost overnight—and with no apparent antecedents whatever."*¹ (emphasis his)

Frequently the technology, achievements, and culture of these ancient civilizations is

seen to be at its best early in its history followed by a steady decline in quality over time, and in many cases it then disappeared. With many of these cultures, including the ancient peoples of the Americas, we're left with no ready explanation as to why they disappeared. These include the Nazcas and Incas of South America, the Olmecs and Mayans of Central America and the Mound-builders (Adenas and Hopewellians) from the eastern half of the United States. As remarkable as each of these cultures were, archaeology often finds significant evidence that a superior culture preceded these advanced ancient civilizations. But where did they go? At least in most cases, they don't appear to have been overthrown with violence. Signs of war leading to their demise simply don't exist, yet succeeding civilizations arrived to find the ruins of the other. For example, when the Incas arrived in the general areas of Peru and Bolivia they discovered the ruins of an Andes (Mountains) civilization that may have been superior to their own.

So why did these cultures disappear? Where did the people go? What can we learn from them? There are many commonalities in the evidence that link them back to Babel, but perhaps the most prominent thread is their worship and belief system. Almost all of these ancient peoples' worship included some form of astrology. Each had their own version of the zodiac and each culture in some way blended astronomy (legitimate science—study of the heavens/space) with astrology (false religion

based on astronomical objects such as the sun, moon, stars, etc.). This was usually evidenced by strategic and precise placement and design of pyramids, temples, earthworks, or landscape. Most of these cultures referenced here included evils such as cruelty and human sacrifice (in their worship) at some point in their history. I believe their civilizations or empires decayed from within. When we no longer worship the true God and no longer walk in truth we are walking in paths leading to death and destruction. As glorious as these cultures and civilizations once were, and to some extent still are, today they are in ruins—mere vestiges of their former glory. ■

1. Donald E. Chittick, Ph. D., *The Puzzle of Ancient Man*, Creation Compass 1998, pg. 79.



COUNSELING IN A WAR ZONE . . . cont'd.

Counselor's Prayer

Dear King, You are very mindful of the war Your children face every day. You are even acquainted with the sorrows of the human experience as You became flesh and dwelt

among us. We live in an age of psychological sophistication. And we confess we have, at times, demeaned Your power and work in the face of such sophistication. We have been tempted to believe, at some level, people need You, but they also need more. Protect us from such deceit. In our passion to help others, keep our hearts close to You. And while we seek to offer Your wisdom in the heat of battle, help us to be wise and not narrow in our thinking. May Your Spirit empower us far beyond our own ability to minister effectively to those You send our way. May You always receive glory from our work in battle. We pray this in the name of our eternal Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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Index, Vol. LXXVIII, 2010

Index by Title

- Affirming for 250 Years, David W. T. Brattston, May 34
Affliction: Evidence of a Faithful God, Jeremy Lelek, Mar 17
Ancient Man: What Can We Learn From Him?, John Mullett, Dec 30
“And Lord, Haste the Day . . .” Roger L. Wambold, Oct 7
An Open Letter to All Laymen, Chester Weaver, Mar 36
Are Chimps Your Relatives?, John Mullett, Jul 23
Are You Feeling the Heat?, John Mullett, Jun 26
Arguments to Avoid, John Mullett, Feb 36
Art and the Church, Philip G. Ryken, Jun 36
Battle to a Beautiful Mind, The, Ed Buch, Sep 20
Bible Speaks on Alcohol, The, David R. Brumbelow, Jun 19
Bringing Up Children as Servants, Simeon Rudolph, Nov 15
Building Healthy School Morale, Luke Benneth, Apr 32
Can Man Create Life?, John Mullett, Aug 25
Christ & Culture, E. O. Jack Jones, Jan 28
Christian Accountability Forced? or Biblical Brotherhood?, Verlon Miller, Nov 26
Christmas, Act II, Richard Innes, Dec 2
Christmas Evans, Bernard R. DeRemer, Mar 1
Christ’s New Commandment, Charles H. Spurgeon, Sep 28
Claiming Christ’s Inheritance, Arlin Weaver, Jul 6
“Command Your Children to Observe to Do,” Wilmer S. Martin, Sep 31
Creation vs. Evolution—A Summary, Wesley Hoolley, May 24
Crossbearing, Ivan Martin Jr., Nov 12
Counseling in a War Zone, Jeremy Lelek, Dec 28
Dangers of Anti-Groupism, The, Denny Kenaston, Sep 14
Devastation of Compromise, The, John Mullett, Apr 23
Diagnosis or Ministry?, James Rudy Gray, Oct 26
Did Ancient Man Have an IQ Problem?, John Mullett, Sep 19; Part 2, Oct 28; Part 3, Nov 22
Discipleship Amid Affluence, Virgil Schrock, Mar 2
Discipleship Is Crucial, Fundamental for Believers, Robby Gallaty, Jul 34
Distant Starlight and a Biblical Time Frame, John Mullett, May 33
“Emergent” Deception, An, – *Faith in the Future*, Apr 26
End of Normal, The, David Steinhauer, Jun 22
Forgiveness, Lester Coblenz, May 16
From Cablegrams to Computers, Jewel Showalter, Jul 24
From Whom All Truthful Counsel Flows, John Henderson, Jan 22
God’s Perfect Creation in Six Literal Days, John R. Rice, Oct 2
Good Defense, A, John Mullett, Jan 35
Hearing the Voice of God Over and over and over and, Leah Farr, Jan 20
How to Teach Open Theism at Vacation Bible School, Russell D. Moore, Nov 31
I Can Do Anything I Want, James K. Nolt, Sep 24
“I Have Found the Book of the Law,” Mervin Brubacher, Nov 2
If Not Self-Esteem, Then What?, Brad Hambrick, Feb 28
In the Beginning, Steve Gollmer, Feb 2
Is the Day-Age Progressive Theory of Creation Heretical?, Arthur F. Williams, Oct 29
Is What We Believe Important?, James Rudy Gray, May 17
It’s the Roots That Produce Fruit, Leroy Gehman, Sep 4
Jesus You Can’t Ignore, The, John MacArthur, Oct 22
Jewish Evangelism, Floyd Stoltzfus, Jul 21
Joshua’s Lo-o-ong Day, John Mullett, Mar 35
Joy of the Task, The, J. B. Chapman, Jun 25
Lack of Knowledge, Larry Warren, Sep 2
Landmarks, Melvin L. Yoder, Mar 34
Learning From the Flu, Bruce A. Stauffer, Apr 5
Life Sentence, A, V. Raymond Edman, Feb 17
Living the Life of Jesus, F. B. Meyer, Aug 17
Love and the New Birth, David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Nov 17
Joshua’s Long Day, John Mullett, Mar 35
Joy Is Not an Option, Allen Nell, Jan 2
“Keep Yourselves From Idols,” Larry Warren, Jun 4
Maintaining a Heart for God, John D. Parker, May 2
Masculine Mandate, The: God’s Calling to Men, Reviewed by Jonathan Leeman, Nov 29
Maybe God Would Appreciate Some Soft Pretzels, Aaron Lapp, Apr 3
Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood, The, Eric M. Schumacher, Apr 17
Mesmerized by Technology, Timothy White, Apr 15
Michael Sattler—Author of First Anabaptist Confession of Faith, Edwin R. Eby, May 36
No Little People, No Little Places, Francis A. Schaeffer, Mar 19
Nonbiblical Reasons for Believing the Bible Is True, Harold S. Martin, Jun 15
Offer Hope, Mark D. Avery, Jan 36
One Day, Mark D. Avery, Dec 25

PAGE 32

SWORD AND TRUMPET

Our Environmental Responsibility, Mervin Brubacher, Aug 4
 Parental Guidance Required, Kurt Gebhards, Jan 30
 Pastoring Includes Counseling, Paul A. Miller, Jul 26
 Pastoring in Pain: Serving God When You Suffer, Bruce Martin, Apr 28
 Peace Not as the World (or Therapy) Gives, A, Jeremy Lelek, Jun 23
 Philosophy of Christian Education, Paul A. Kienel, Sep 33
 Problem of Tongue Control, The, Arlin Weaver, May 29
 Professing Christians, Awake!, Asahel Nettleton, May 19
 "Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath," Clair R. Weaver, May 27
 Rahab—Converting Faith, J. Otis Yoder, Jul 19
 Raising Girls to Be Godly Women in a Confused and Conflicted Culture, Nina Fry, Part 1, Feb 20; Part 2, Mar 28
 Rebuilding a Devastated Marriage, Jeff Colón, Apr 35
 Rediscovering Expository Preaching, Richard L. Mayhue, Dec 13
 Reflections From LA, Lauren Mong, Mar 15
 Safe Mode, Daniel E. Miller, May 5
 Shepherding "Pornified" Men: Leading Strugglers Out of the Wasteland, Dan Wilson, Feb 14
 Shopping, Rodney Stearns, Nov 3
 Should Christians Be Diligent Obeyers?, Simon Schrock, Aug 14
 Since When Is It Sin . . . ?, Randy Hynes, Dec 4
 Sowing and Reaping, Ben Waldner, Feb 4
 Splendor of Thorns, The, Jud Davis, Jun 2
 Strange Bedfellows, David L. Burkholder, Apr 34
 Taking Jesus Seriously, Harold S. Martin, Jul 2
 Thinking Theologically About Immigration, Alejandro Mandes, Aug 2
 Third Wing, The, Marcus Yoder, Jun 31
 To Text or Not to Text?, Ryan Shetler, Jan 7
 Top Ten Counseling Mistakes, Garrett Higbee and Robb Besosa, Sep 22
 Treasures of the Snow, The, Harold S. Martin, Oct 18
 True Patriotism!, John Newton, Jan 9
 Ultimate Reason for God's Anger and Wrath, The, Renald E. Showers, May 30
 Value of Voluntary Service, The, Dale R. Eby, Jul 16
 Villains of Christmas, The, Larry Warren, Dec 23
 Vindicating Ishmael, Tony Maalouf, Jul 29
 What Should I Wear?, Jeff Farnham, Nov 21
 Which Way Now?, Richard M. Jones, Mar 5
 Why Do Sunday School?, Mark Avery, Jul 18
 "Why I Will Not Divorce My Husband," Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Aug 22
 Why Join a Church?, Donald S. Whitney, Aug 28
 Why So Many Men Are "Pornified": Sexual Idolatry, Sexual Wasteland, Dan Wilson, Jan 23
 Wrestling the Scriptures, Larry Witmer, Jun 29

Index by Subject

Arts

Art and the Church, Philip G. Ryken, Jun 36

Apologetics

A Good Defense, Jan 35

Anabaptism

Michael Sattler—Author of First Anabaptist

Confession of Faith, Edwin R. Eby, May 36

Third Wing, The, Marcus Yoder, Jun 31

Beginning Issues, John Mullett

Ancient Man: What Can We Learn From Him?, Dec 30

Are Chimps Your Relatives?, Jul 23

Are You Feeling the Heat?, Jun 26

Arguments to Avoid, Feb 36

Can Man Create Life?, Aug 25

Devastation of Compromise, The, Apr 23

Did Ancient Man Have an IQ Problem?, Sep

19; Part 2, Oct 28; Part 3, Nov 22

Distant Starlight and a Biblical Time Frame, May 33

Good Defense, A, Jan 35

Joshua's Lo-o-ong Day, Mar 35

Bible

I Have Found the Book of the Law, Mervin Brubacher, Nov 2

Nonbiblical Reasons for Believing the Bible Is True, Harold S. Martin, Jun 15

Shopping, Rodney Stearns, Nov 3

Wresting the Scriptures, Larry Witmer, Jun 29

Book Reviews

Masculine Mandate: God's Calling to Men, The, Jonathan Leeman, Nov 29

Christian Life

Battle to a Beautiful Mind, The, Ed Buch, Sep 20

Christ's New Commandment, Charles H. Spurgeon, Sep 28

Crossbearing, Ivan Martin, Jr, Nov 9

Discipleship Amid Affluence, Virgil Schrock, Mar 2

Discipleship Is Crucial, Fundamental for Believers, Robby Gallaty, Jul 34

Hearing the Voice of God Over and over and over and, Leah Farr, Jan 20

Is What We Believe Important?, James R. Gray, May 17

It's the Roots That Produce Fruit, Leroy Gehman, Sep 4

Joy Is Not an Option, Jan 2

Keep Yourselves From Idols, Larry Warren, Jun 4

Living the Life of Jesus, F. B. Meyer, Aug 17

Love and the New Birth, David M. Lloyd-Jones, Nov 17

Maintaining a Heart for God, John D. Parker, May 2

Problem of Tongue Control, The, Arlin Weaver, May 29

Safe Mode, Daniel E. Miller, May 5

Should Christians Be Diligent Obeyers?, Simon Schrock, Aug 14

Sowing and Reaping, Ben Waldner, Feb 4
 Taking Jesus Seriously, Harold S. Martin, Jul 2
Christmas
 Christmas, Act II, Richard Innes, Dec 2
 One Day, Mark D. Avery, Dec 25
 Villains of Christmas, The, Larry Warren, Dec 23
Church
 Christian Accountability Forced or Biblical Brotherhood?, Verlon Miller, Nov 26
 Claiming Christ's Inheritance, Jul 6
 Dangers of Anti-Groupism, The, Denny Kenaston, Sep 14
 How to Teach Open Theism at Vacation Bible School, Russell D. Moore, Nov 31
 Landmarks, Melvin L. Yoder, Mar 34
 Open Letter to All Laymen, An, Chester Weaver, Mar 36
 Which Way Now?, Richard M. Jones, Mar 5
 Why Do Sunday School?, Mark Avery, Jul 18
 Why Join a Church, Donald S. Whitney, Aug 28
Church Leadership
 Joy of the Task, The, J. B. Chapman, Jun 25
 Pastoring Includes Counseling, Paul A. Miller, Jul 26
 Pastoring in Pain: Serving God When You Suffer, Bruce Martin, Apr 28
 Rediscovering Expository Preaching, Richard Mayhue, Dec 13
Counseling From The Word
 Affliction: Evidence of a Faithful God, Jeremy Lelek, Mar 17
 Christian Accountability Forced? or Biblical Brotherhood?, Verlon Miller, Nov 26
 Counseling in a War Zone, Jeremy Lelek, Dec 28
 Diagnosis or Ministry?, James Rudy Gray, Oct 26
 From Whom All Truthful Counsel Flows, John Henderson, Jan 22
 If Not Self-Esteem, Then What?, Brad Hambrick, Feb 28
 Is What We Believe Important?, James R. Gray, May 17
 Pastoring Includes Counseling, Paul A. Miller, Jul 26
 Pastoring in Pain: Serving God When You Suffer, Bruce Martin, Apr 28
 Peace Not as the World (or Therapy) Gives, A, Jeremy Lelek, Jun 23
 Top Ten Counseling Mistakes, Garrett Higbee & Robb Besosa, Sep 22
 Why I Will Not Divorce My Husband, Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Aug 22
Creationism
 Arguments to Avoid, Feb 36
 Creation vs. Evolution, Wesley Hooley, May 24
 God's Perfect Creation in Six Literal Days, John R. Rice, Oct 2
 In the Beginning, Steve Gollmer, Feb 2
 Is the *Day-Age Progressive Theory of Creation* Heretical?, Arthur F. Williams, Oct 29
Current Issues
 Can Man Create Life?, John Mullett, Aug 25

Christ and Culture, E.O. Jack Jones, Jan 28
 Discipleship Amid Affluence, Virgil Schrock, Mar 2
 From Cablegrams to Computers, Jewel Showalter, Jul 24
 Lack of Knowledge, Larry Warren, Sep 2
 Mesmerized by Technology, Timothy White, Apr 15
 Our Environmental Responsibility, Mervin Brubacher, Aug 4
 Raising Girls to Be Godly Women in a Confused and Conflicted Culture, Nina Fry, Feb 20; Part 2, Mar 28
Education/School
 Building Healthy School Morale, Luke Ben-netch, Apr 32
 Philosophy of Christian Education, Paul A. Kienel, Sep 33
 Why Do Sunday School?, Mark Avery, Jul 18
Emergent Church
 "Emergent" Deception, An, Apr 26
Second Coming
 End of Normal, The, David Steinhauer, Jun 22
Evangelism/Witnessing
 Jewish Evangelism, Floyd Stoltzfus, Jul 21
 Offer Hope, Mark D. Avery, Jan 36
 Reflections from L.A., Lauren Mong, Mar 15
Grief and Suffering
 Affliction: Evidence of a Faithful God, Jeremy Lelek, Mar 17
Home and Family
 Bringing up Children as Servants, Simeon Rudolph, Nov 15
 "Command Your Children to Observe to Do," Wilmer S. Martin, Sep 31
 Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood, The, Eric Schumacher, Apr 17
 Parental Guidance Required, Kurt Gebhards, Jan 30
 "Provoke Not Your Children to Wrath," Clair R. Weaver, May 27
 Raising Girls to Be Godly Women in a Confused and Conflicted Culture, Nina Fry, Feb 20; Part 2, Nina Fry, Mar 28
 Rebuilding a Devastated Marriage, Jeff Colon, Apr, 35
Hymn History
 "And Lord Haste the Day . . .," Roger L. Wambold, Oct 7
Jesus Christ
 Taking Jesus Seriously, Harold S. Martin, Jul 2
 The Jesus You Can't Ignore, John MacArthur, Sep 22
Marriage
 Rebuilding a Devastated Marriage, Jeff Colon, Apr 35
 Why I Will Not Divorce My Husband, Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Aug 22
Media/Technology
 From Cablegrams to Computers, Jewel Showalter, Jul 24
 Mesmerized by Technology, Timothy White,

Apr 15
 Parental Guidance Required, Kurt Gebhards, Jan 30
 To Text or Not to Text?, Ryan Shetler, Jan 7
Ministry/Service
 No Little People, No Little Places, Francis A. Shaeffer, Mar 19
 Value of Voluntary Service, The, Dale R. Eby, Jul 16
Miscellaneous
 Affirming for 250 Years, David W. T. Brattston, May 34
 Bible Speaks on Alcohol, The, David R. Brumbelow, Jun 19
 I Can Do Anything I Want, James K. Nolt, Sep 24
 Maybe God Would Appreciate Some Soft Pretzels, Aaron Lapp, Apr 3
 Thinking Theologically About Immigration, Alejandro Mandes, Aug 2
 Treasures of the Snow, The, Harold S. Martin, Sep 18
 Ultimate Reason for God's Anger and Wrath, The, Renald E. Showers, May 30
 Vindicating Ishmael, Tony Maalouf, Jul 29
 What Should I Wear?, Jeff Farnham, Nov 21
Morality/Sexuality
 Battle to a Beautiful Mind, The, Ed Buch, Sep 20
 Shepherding "Pornified" Men: Leading Strugglers Out of the Wasteland, Part 3, Dan Wilson, Feb 14
 Why So Many Men Are "Pornified": Sexual Idolatry, Sexual Wasteland, Part 2, Dan Wilson, Jan 23
Newslines, Hans Mast
 Jan 17; Feb 11; Mar 12; Apr 12; May 13; Jun 12; Jul 13; Aug 11; Sep 11; Oct 15; Nov 9; Dec 10
Person of the Month, Gail Emerson
 Lewis Josephus Burkholder, Sep 1
 Philip P. Bliss, Apr 1
 Daniel A. Payne, Oct 1
 Christmas Evans, Mar 1
 George B. Stoltzfus, May 1
 George M. Hostetler, Jul 1
 Henry E. Lutz, Dec 1
 Jacob J. Hershberger, Jan 1
 W. R. Hershberger, Feb 1
 John S. Martin, Jun 1
 Priscilla Mullins, John Hudson Tiner, Nov 1
 William Perkins, Aug 1
Patriotism/Nonresistance
 True Patriotism, John Newton, Jan 9
Politics
 Strange Bedfellows, David L. Burkholder, Apr 34
Relationships
 Christ's New Commandment, Charles H. Spurgeon, Sep 28
 Christian Accountability Forced? or Biblical Brotherhood?, Verlon Miller, Nov 26
 Forgiveness, Lester Coblentz, May 16
 Love and the New Birth, David M. Lloyd-Jones,

Nov 17
Redemption
 Splendor of Thorns, The, Jud Davis, Jun 2
Sermon of the Month
 Bible Speaks on Alcohol, The, David R. Brumbelow, Jun 19
 Christ and Culture, E.O. Jack Jones, Jan 28
 Christ's New Commandment, Charles H. Spurgeon, Sep 28
 Life Sentence, A, V. Raymond Edman, Feb 17
 Living the Life of Jesus, F. B. Meyer, Aug 17
 Means, Mandates, and Motivation of Biblical Womanhood, The, Eric M. Schumacher, Apr 17
 No Little People, No Little Places, Francis A. Shaeffer, Mar 19
 Professing Christians, Awake!, Asahel Nettleton, May 19
 Rahab—Converting Faith, J. Otis Yoder, Jul 19
 Villains of Christmas, The, Larry Warren, Dec 23
Sin
 Learning From the Flu, Bruce A. Stauffer, Apr 5
 Since When Is It Sin . . . ?, Randy Hynes, Dec 4
 Ultimate Reason for God's Anger and Wrath, The, Renald E. Showers, May 30
Song of the Month, Douglas Byler
 Abide With Me, Feb 34
 All Glory, Laud and Honor, Mar 26
 Breathe on Me, Breath of God, May 28
 Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove, Jul 32
 Come, Thou Fount, Oct 24
 Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss, Aug 26
 He Leadeth Me, Jan 26
 Light of Lights Our God Is, The, Benjamin Good, Sep 26
 O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, Dec 26
 O God, Our Help in Ages Past, Jun 28
 This Joyful Eastertide, Apr 24
 We Plow the Fields and Scatter, Nov 24
Sunday School Lessons, David L. Burkholder
 Jan 11; Feb 6; Mar 7; Apr 7; May 7; Jun 6; Jul 8; Aug 5; Sep 6; Oct 9; Nov 5; Dec 5
Youth
 Value of Voluntary Service, The, Dale R. Eby, Jul 16

Index by Author and Source

Avery, Mark D.
 Offer Hope, Jan 36
 One Day, Dec 25
 Why Do Sunday School?, Jul 18
Bennetch, Luke
 Building Healthy School Morale, Apr 32
Brattston, David W. T.
 Affirming for 250 Years, May 34
Brubacher, Mervin
 "I Have Found the Book of the Law," Nov 2
 Our Environmental Responsibility, Aug 4
Brumbelow, David R.
 Bible Speaks on Alcohol, The, Jun 19

Buch, Ed

Battle to a Beautiful Mind, The, Sep 20

Burkholder, David L.—SS Lessons

Jan 11; Feb 6; Mar 7; Apr 7; May 7; Jun 6; Jul 8;
Aug 5; Sep 6; Oct 9; Nov 5; Dec 5

Articles

Strange Bedfellows, Apr 34

Byler, Douglas A.

Abide With Me, Feb 34

All Glory, Laud and Honor, Mar 26

Breathe on Me, Breath of God, May 28

Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove, Jul 32

Come, Thou Fount, Oct 24

He Leadeth Me, Jan 26

Father, Whate'er of Earthly Bliss, Aug 26

Light of Lights Our God Is, The, Sep 26

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, Dec 26

O God, Our Help in Ages Past, Jun 28

This Joyful Easteride, Apr 24

We Plow the Fields, and Scatter, Nov 24

Chapman, J. B.

Joy of the Task, The, Jun 25

Coblentz, Lester

Forgiveness, May 16

Colón, Jeff

Rebuilding a Devastated Marriage, Apr 35

Davis, Jud

Splendor of Thorns, The, Jun 2

DeMoss, Nancy Leigh

“Why I Will Not Divorce My Husband,” Aug 22

DeRemer, Bernard R.

Christmas Evans, Mar 1

Eby, Dale R.

Value of Voluntary Service, The, Jul 16

Eby, Edwin R.

Michael Sattler—Author of First Anabaptist Con-
fession of Faith, May 36

Edman, V. Raymond

Life Sentence, A, Feb 17

Emerson, Gail L.

Philip P. Bliss, Apr 1

Lewis Josephus Burkholder, Sep 1

Jacob J. Hershberger, Jan 1

W. R. Hershberger, Feb 1

George M. Hostetler, Jul 1

Henry E. Lutz, Dec 1

John S. Martin, Jun 1

Daniel A. Payne, Oct 1

William Perkins, Aug 1

George B. Stoltzfus, May 1

Faith in the Future

“Emergent” Deception, An, Apr 26

Farr, Leah

Hearing the Voice of God Over and over and over
and, Jan 20

Farnham, Jeff

What Should I Wear?, Nov 21

Fry, Nina

Raising Girls to Be Godly Women in a Confused
and Conflicted Culture, Part 1, Feb 20; Part 2,
Mar 28

Gallat, Robby

Discipleship Is Crucial, Fundamental for Believ-
ers, Jul 34

Gebhards, Kurt

Parental Guidance Required, Jan 30

Gehman, Leroy

It's the Roots That Produce Fruit, Sep 4

Gollmer, Steve

In the Beginning, Feb 2

Good, Benjamin M.

The Light of Lights Our God Is, Sep 26

Gray, James Rudy

Diagnosis or Ministry?, Oct 26

Is What We Believe Important?, May 17

Hambrick, Brad

If Not Self-Esteem, Then What?, Feb 28

Henderson, John

From Whom All Truthful Counsel Flows, Jan 22

Higbee, Garrett; Besosa, Robb

Top Ten Counseling Mistakes, Sep 22

Hooley, Wesley

Creation vs. Evolution—A Summary, May 24

Hynes, Randy

Since When Is It Sin . . . ?, Dec 4

Innes, Richard

Christmas, Act II, Dec 2

Jones, E. O. Jack

Christ & Culture, Jan 28

Jones, Richard M.

Which Way Now?, Mar 5

Kenaston, Denny

Dangers of Anti-Groupism, The, Sep 14

Kienel, Paul A.

Philosophy of Christian Education, Sep 33

Lapp, Aaron

Maybe God Would Appreciate Some Soft Pretzels,
Apr 3

Leeman, Jonathan

Masculine Mandate, The: God's Calling to Men,
Nov 29

Lelek, Jeremy

Affliction: Evidence of a Faithful God, Mar 17

Counseling in a War Zone, Dec 28

Peace Not as the World (or Therapy) Gives, A, Jun
23

Lloyd-Jones, David Martyn

Love and the New Birth, Nov 17

Maalouf, Tony

Vindicating Ishmael, Jul 29

MacArthur, John

Jesus You Can't Ignore, The, Oct 22

Mandes, Alejandro

Thinking Theologically About Immigration, Aug
2

Martin, Bruce

Pastoring in Pain: Serving God When You Suffer,
Apr 28

Martin, Harold S.

Nonbiblical Reasons for Believing the Bible Is
True, Jun 15

Taking Jesus Seriously, Jul 2