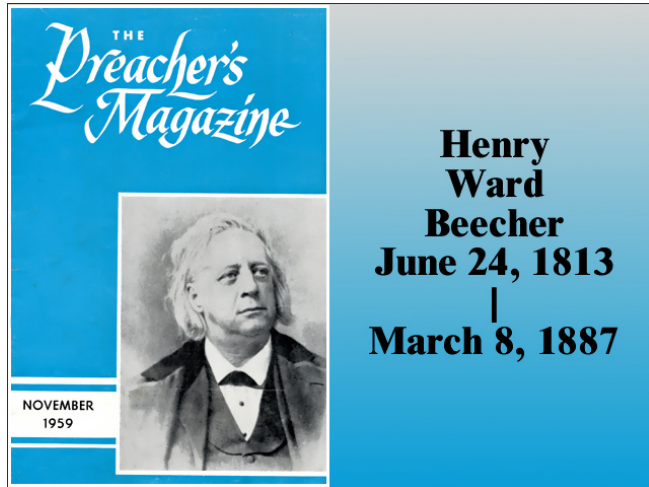


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THE PREACHER'S MAGAZINE
Lauriston J. Du Bois, Editor

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01 -- THE PREACHING OF HENRY WARD BEECHER -- James McGraw Professor, Nazarene Theological Seminary

I remember that flock which I found gathered in the wilderness consisted of twenty persons. Nineteen of them were women, and the other was nothing. I remember the days of our poverty, our straightness. I was sexton of my own church at that time."

This is not the life story of a home missionary pastor whose years were spent hewing out a kingdom where the gospel of full salvation is preached, but it is the reminiscence of a man who for forty years pastored the Plymouth Congregational Church in Brooklyn, and after the first two years received an annual salary equal to that of the mayor of the city -- \$20,000. This is the way he started, like the way so many great preachers have begun their ministry, in the close community of a small but sympathetic congregation. This is the story of Henry Ward Beecher.

The first struggling attempt at pastoral ministry for Beecher occurred some twenty miles south of Cincinnati in a village named Lawrenceburg, Indiana. His next charge, in Indianapolis, was more fruitful and rewarding, and was followed by terms with Park Street Congregational Church of Boston, the Old South Church in the same city, and then his outstanding pastorate in Brooklyn, where he became known as one of the unique preachers of his day. Lewis O. Brastow in his book *Representative Modern Preachers* writes of him that "by most he has been estimated as superior in popular effectiveness to all other American preachers of whatever period, and by not a few as the greatest pulpit orator of the Christian church."

Henry Ward Beecher was born in Litchfield, Connecticut, on June 24, 1813, into the home of one of the foremost preachers, reformers, Calvinists, and controversialists of his day -- Rev. Lyman Beecher. Speaking of this home, the cynical Robert G. Ingersoll has charged in one of his diatribes that "Henry Ward Beecher was born in a Puritan penitentiary, of which his father was one of the

wardens-a prison with very narrow and closely-grated windows In this prison the creed and catechism were primers for children, and from a pure sense of duty their loving hearts were stained and scarred with the religion of John Calvin." Taken at face value, this is a serious indictment. Seen in relation to its atheistic source, it is understandable.

A truer picture of Beecher's home is seen in the words of Paxton Hibben in *Henry Ward Beecher: An American Portrait*. He writes: "His house was the rallying place of those who opposed the loosening of the strait ties of Calvinism upon the spirit and the constricting bonds of puritanism upon the behavior. Armed with the twin weapons wielded by the clergy of his day -- education and the terror of divine wrath -- Lyman Beecher and his fellows were conservative because it was simpler to compel men to fit their spirits into the mold of rigid dogma than to write a theological prescription that will meet the needs of mankind . . ."

Beecher's own recollections of his early life paint a picture of a father who was above all a good man. Henry is quoted in his son's book, *A Biography of Rev. Henry Ward Beecher*, as saying that his father never once set a poor example before him. "I remember particularly," Henry says, "that I never heard from him a word of uncharitableness, nor saw a symptom of envy or jealousy." As for his mother, who died when he was a child, she left an indelible impression upon his life. Joseph Howard, in *Life of Henry Ward Beecher*, points out that "her face, her temper, her goodness, along every line of family development, were constantly used as illustrations in his writings and his sermons."

One thing must be said in behalf of Lyman Beecher's wisdom in dealing with his son Henry. Had he used less tact and patience, his illustrious son might never have entered the ministry. For young Henry had his mind set on a career at sea and was intent on joining the navy. Long before most of the child and adolescent psychology books were published, the astute father talked this matter over with his son. He assured him if he wanted to be a sailor, not just the common, ordinary sailor, but an officer, he must study mathematics, navigation, and many other such subjects. The lad agreed, and off he went to school at the age of fourteen. It was while he was engaged in his studies at Mount Pleasant that a great religious revival broke out, and Henry was genuinely converted. His biographer son points out that never once afterward was anything said about going to sea. From that time forward his goal was the ministry of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Graduated from Amherst College, Henry entered Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, where his father, Lyman Beecher, was president of the seminary and professor of theology. While here he experienced an even more satisfying religious awakening. Lyman Abbott comments that "from the time of that revelation he seemed never to have had a doubt respecting his mission, or a hesitancy about endeavoring to fulfill it, only hesitancy about the path to be taken towards its fulfillment."

What was there about the preaching of this man who at the age of thirty-four began a forty-year pastorate in one of the most influential pulpits of America, and became known as one of America's great pastoral preachers?

The influence of a great preacher-father, the lasting effects of a wholesome, religious early home life, the natural endowments of a gifted personality, the normal results of a thorough and adequate training and preparation for his work all these without question played their part. But more specifically, and more significantly, there were other factors. A study of his methods reveals some of these.

Henry Ward Beecher loved and understood people. His close contact with them had its effect on his preaching style and made his ministry effective. The study of men seemed important to him, according to Lyman Abbott, who writes that "it was partly this study of people who so molded his preaching and gave him his vivid imagination . . . and dramatic personification of every character he wished to portray."

Examples of this style of dramatic personification can be seen in his sermons. In "The Courtesy of Conscience" (1 Corinthians 10:28-29: "Conscience, I say not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?") he speaks of certain church people who murder the king's English, sing cantering hymns, and "shout out their prayers from catapults." In this sermon he likens the dogmatic conscience to "the bulldog who rushes out and sits down on the doctrine and everybody is judged by it." In his sermon "The God of Comfort," such phrases as "God's love letters written in dark ink," and, "You were gold in the rock, and God played the miner, and blasted you out of the rock!" are expressions his listeners can feel as well as understand.

His graphic language sometimes brought criticism as well as admiration. He is accused by Sinclair Lewis of being sensational. Lewis writes: "He was a powerful writer of trash, and all over the land, families got out the carry-all to drive to town and hear him speak on everything from 'The Strange Women' to the cozy theory that a worker who did not rejoice in bringing up five children on a wage of a dollar a day was a drunken gunny-sack." But Lewis' harsh words serve only to emphasize a quality in the message and content of Henry Ward Beecher's preaching that was practical, down-to-earth, and vivid. He spoke to people's needs, and he loved and understood them with their problems.

Add to the factors of natural gifts, adequate training, deep religious experience, devotion to Christ, and this unusual love for the understanding of humankind in their everyday problems of life, another significant factor in the success of Henry Ward Beecher as a pastoral preacher. He possessed an unusual dramatic gift and did not hesitate to make use of it. He appealed to the emotions equally as well as to the intellect and to the will.

Robert Crew, student at Nazarene Theological Seminary, who did research on Beecher's life -- which provided much of the material used in this article -- expresses this in his summary of Beecher's preaching style: "He used his imagination, his feeling, his sympathy, as the organ of religious knowledge." Beecher could describe with singular exactness the movements and speech of a drunkard, or a blacksmith, or a fisherman, or a farmer. He could change his voice and delivery to suit the content, from a quiet, gentle tone to the most penetrating severity. His eyes would flash fire and his cheeks would glow red, or his eyes would fill with tears and his audience would weep copiously with him when his feelings changed."

Henry Ward Beecher used illustrations freely and expertly. There are at least seven full-length illustrations in addition to some metaphors and analogies in "Conflicts of the Christian Life." In this same sermon he quotes twenty-six times from the Bible -- seven from the Old and nineteen from the New Testament.

He preached from notes, but was at his best when, under the inspiring influence of his audience, he let his thoughts come to him as he went along. More evangelistic than doctrinal in his emphasis; he always used the extemporaneous style of delivery.

Edna Dean Proctor and A. Moore compiled from their notes on Beecher's sermons some of his thoughts; and they preserved the following as one of the statements which was very characteristic of his preaching:

"The most you can do to a good man is to persecute him; and the worst that persecution can do is to kill him. And killing a good man is as bad as it would be to spite a ship by launching it. The soul is built for heaven, and the ship for the ocean, and blessed be the hour that gives both to the true element."

Henry Ward Beecher practiced this way of life. Persecuted viciously by his enemies -- even involved in a moral scandal, which was of course never proved -- he maintained his faith in God and his boundless love for people and he left an example of preaching ministry which every pastor may well follow.

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**02 -- IT'S DANGEROUS TO SERVE A SMALL CHURCH -- Milo L. Arnold
Pastor, Moses Lake, Washington**

It's dangerous to serve as pastor or evangelist in a small church which stands in the shadow of larger churches. There are some occupational hazards to which men are exposed here which take a serious toll.

Preachers are human beings and, being humans, they like to live significant lives. They are normal and, being normal, they like to stand tall among men who are

tall. Every human being needs some area of domain, some project or position in which he excels. The Christian minister should want to succeed. If he does not want to excel, there is something wrong with him. He wants to be a respected member of the community and to know the dignity of being important in his office.

Serving a very small congregation which meets in a small or inadequate house of worship while being surrounded by splendid churches can pose a problem to the preacher's emotional health. It is easy for him to feel insignificant. The minister placed in such a situation must guard his own attitudes, for he is exposed to some very dangerous temptations.

He may be tempted to resign himself to smallness. If he does this he is likely to be permanently stunted. His entire ministry can become limited to narrow fields. He who once contents himself to be a small preacher because he is in a small field will accept mediocrity in his entire pattern. His sermon preparation, his study and self-development, his mental habits, and his soul culture will all become dwarfed. When a man allows himself to think in small terms, he is a small man.

An occasional man is tempted to pity himself. This is deadly! When a man yields to this he becomes resentful of his district leadership, his budgets, his community situation, and his total assignment. He soon feels unappreciated by his people and oppressed by his board. He becomes irritable and difficult in a continually expanding area of his contacts. His preaching becomes sharp and lacking in kindness. The demand for him diminishes fast. Once this complex becomes deeply seated, there is little likelihood that he will ever again be very useful.

Other men seeking escape from the feeling of smallness seek an emotional crutch of one kind or another. Some will buy a bigger car or drive faster than other ministers. They are unconsciously seeking to satisfy their aspiring to excel. There is not a thing wrong with a man in a small church owning a good car if he can afford it, nor is fast driving a sin so long as it is legal and safe. But if the car is an effort to prop the emotions, it is dangerous. The pastor will incline to spend more and more time in his car and less and less in his study. Even fishing and hunting, as fine as they are, become serious if they are actually a way to escape a feeling of ecclesiastical smallness.

The small church situation has made some men vulnerable to the temptation to become radical and narrow. They begin to rationalize and soon explain their smallness as a virtue. They soon say they are put in a small place because of their standards. Purity is a virtue to be cherished, but if radicalism is used as an escape from a feeling of inferiority, the man is destined to become productive of more harm than good.

There is only one safe inoculation against the perils attendant upon serving the small church. That safety lies in a constant awareness of the dignity of the

divine calling. There is no small place if it be God's assignment. The gospel we preach is great whether it be preached to a handful in a hut or to a crowd in a cathedral. A man can preach big sermons regardless of the size of his physical surroundings. He can pray big prayers, conduct a big program, and produce big services even in a small church.

There may be reasons for small buildings and small congregations but there is no reason for small preachers. No congregation is so small as to deserve a small sermon. No church is so small as to deserve a poorly planned service. No meeting is so small as to be handled without dignity. It is ennobling to a preacher when he aspires to preach a better sermon than he has ever preached before, regardless of the size of the attendance. It does something for a preacher when he builds a big service in an effort to honor his great God. Building big services and big sermons builds big preachers even in small churches.

The small church is not a mere steppingstone to a larger church but rather a building site where bigger preachers are built. There is no disgrace to having a small kingdom but there is disgrace to being less than a king. We need to remember that the finest work is often done in smaller churches. Most of our preachers and missionaries come from these churches where the pastor is exposed more intimately to his people.

* * * * *

03 -- STILLING THE RESTLESS SPIRIT -- Lauriston J. Du Bois

We were talking last month about the spirit of unrest which is characterizing our day and which is finding its way into the work of the Church and the life of the minister. We must see that this has a twin thrust -- it affects the people to whom we minister and it affects the one who is doing the ministering. It is one of the very serious problems of our day.

We suggested that there perhaps were some corrective measures which we might take to keep this spirit from blighting our service to God. Let us look at some of these, which, if heeded, will make a difference in our work.

1. To recognize the problem is, of course, the first big step in finding solutions. The stating of the problem will immediately cause the more alert to set up adequate safeguards. Of course, in all of this we must keep in mind that, since this unrest is rooted in the fever-ridden day in which we live, we shall not find deliverance in every instance. However, we must find peace in the midst of unrest. Herein is the red-blooded challenge to our faith and to our message. That is, can we find an application of our gospel to this day which will work? Certainly our hope is not in decrying conditions which we cannot change, nor in clamoring for a generation which is past, which we feel (rightly or wrongly) somehow was better suited to the poised, restful living of the child of God. But this is the day of our

calling! Not fifty years ago or even ten years ago! This day has its problems, and all will admit that it is far from ideal in many respects. But it certainly does present just the kind of situation which challenges the ministry and the gospel; it says to us, "Just show us what your message can do!" Let us not abdicate at the strategic time. Let us prove to a restless generation that when Jesus promised His children, "My peace I leave with you," He meant just that.

2. In all of this we must be sure that we have before us a true Christian philosophy of the Church's task. We need to review this in our thinking again and again. It is so easy for the philosophy of the world around us to seep into our minds.

Our whole idea of values must be kept straight. We are citizens of another world living in this world in order to "colonize" it and to interest the citizens here in that other world. We must ever be on our guard lest the value system held to be supreme by those around us does not begin to attract us and seem to be of worth to us. When our church people begin to vie for position and seek to outdo each other and those around them to have better things, when preachers are more concerned with salary and parsonage and prestige and lose sight of the basic Christian values in souls and in the poured-out life of the follower of Jesus, then we are taking on the philosophy of the world and have turned to follow its value system. And when we accept the world's philosophy we take on also its panic and the accompanying unrest.

Following closely here is our concept of success. When do we succeed in the ministry? Much of our unrest comes when we are frustrated over failure to measure up to a particular pattern of success. Frustration is a twin to anxiety as a modern cause of mental ills. To avoid this unrest we must find a satisfaction in our work -- in the basic task to which we are called. There are too many of us who are basically unhappy in our work. This arises out of the fact that we blow up beyond its rightful proportion the work we are not getting done and we do not find enough relaxed satisfaction in the work we are getting done by the help of God. Too many of us are doing what we are doing in the spirit of a highly competitive business world. Our "quotas" give us ulcers and our "averages" keep us awake nights. In the face of this our temptation is to seek artificial and unnatural ways to show progress, to prove to ourselves (and others) that we have really succeeded. And hence a spirit of unrest prevails. But our real task is a spiritual one. While it is true that statistics do play a part in our success, and there can hardly be success in the church without a commensurate change in statistics, still our principal motivation should be spiritual, we are not called upon to follow the heart-attack pace of our competitive world. We are called first to be faithful, each in his own place and each in his own way. We are called to be faithful shepherds and not primarily successful salesmen. God is the One who finally speaks the "well done" (which is the acme of success in God's business) and not one's colleagues, or friends, or even the church. A right concept of success will help measurably in stilling this spirit of unrest.

Basic in all of this, of course, is the matter of one's personal devotion to God. Lukewarmness is repulsive to God and it is devastating to the individual Christian, whether he be layman or preacher. We just cannot keep the right perspective with cold hearts. Our sense of values and our criterion of success are the very first casualties of spiritual drought. In the midst of our many duties, our "administrivia" as one has called it, within the church we must not fail to keep our fellowship with God rich and real. It must never become casual. We must not allow ourselves to get to the place where the business of the Kingdom becomes mere business. We cannot conduct the work of God in the cold, formal manner in which we would operate a corner store. Here, then, is the prescription: more prayer, more warmth of the spirit, more of the blessings of God, more of reality in Christian fellowship. This is good medicine for our people and it is good medicine for the physician.

3. Beyond these basics there are some practical, everyday steps which we can take which will help keep unrest from plaguing our lives. Rules here could be multiplied but we select a few which seem to be the most relevant to the minister.

Too many of us have not learned how to select from among the multitude of duties which confront us those which should have priority. We cannot do everything that someone wants us to do. We cannot give time to even every good project. We must learn to screen from the total requirements of a given day those which are the most relevant to our principal task. We must put these on our schedule and not fret over the tasks which we have had to lay aside. We jokingly say when there is work to be done, "Let's get organized!" In a practical sense many of us should do just that. We are living out our lives with chaos and hodgepodge as our only guiding principles.

We also should learn the art of a "change of pace" in our work. While many times the real problem of the pastor is to find any period of time when he can settle down to do a particular job without interruptions, yet he can become the victim of tension just as the businessman or the salesman. The pastor who tends to overdo his study and office work should-when that begins to "get on him"-move out among his people. The pastor who is on the go most of the time, with pressure to meet this appointment and then another, should purposefully move into his study to meditate, to pray, to prepare his heart and mind. We must learn to fill the day to the full with a proper mixture of different types of work. It is not the load of work that causes breakdown; it is rather the tension and pressure of the work. A "change of pace" will help.

We must make a spiritual adjustment to our day if we are going to keep the day from eating in on us. We must learn to meditate on the move, to pray at the stop signs, to keep poised, and to react as Christians in the midst of a jangling, bell-ringing, horn-honking, siren-wailing generation. Too many of us have been told that we must meditate like the mystics if we are to be spiritual. Yet when we see the duties of the pastorate in the present day and attempt to keep up with all of them,

we find no realistic way to live up to the ideal. In the average parsonage (as in the average Christian home) family devotions are mixed with breakfast mush and a school bus honking. The private prayer life of too many preachers is interrupted day after day by the jangling of the telephone or pushed aside by the very real need to run the mimeograph. Yes, we must seek to find ways to combat these inroads into our devotional lives, but beyond this we must learn to refuel spiritually "in flight." Perhaps this is what Paul meant when he exhorted to "pray without ceasing."

We must find ways to still the unrest of our hearts and minds. The poise of the Christian minister is one of his greatest assets, especially so in this hectic day. We must not easily cast it aside even in the face of constant pressures to do so from our generation.

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04 -- CARNAL OR SPIRITUAL -- WHICH? -- Maynard G. James Evangelist, Oldham, Lane, England

It is clear from scripture and human experience that there are two classes of Christians. They are the spiritual and the carnal.

In his first Epistle to the Corinthian church Paul writes: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal" (1 Corinthians 3:1).

Although they were undoubtedly "born again," these Corinthian believers had within them a great hindrance or impediment to their spiritual life. It was carnality or the "flesh." The Greek word translated "carnal" in this scripture means "fleshly"; and so the passage could be rendered, "Ye are yet fleshly."

It is important to realize that the word "flesh" in Scripture can be used in at least three different senses:

(1) It can refer to man as a human being -- body, soul, and spirit.

In Matthew 24:22 we read: "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved" i.e., no human beings should be saved.

(2) It can describe the material substance which covers the body.

When Naaman, the leper, had dipped seven times in the Jordan, "... his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean" (2 Kings 5:14).

(3) It can mean that inbred sin with which every human being has been born.

When the Apostle Paul said that "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other," he was not referring to the human body. Likewise, when he declared that "they that are in the flesh cannot please God," it is obvious that he did not mean that any man who has a body of flesh and blood cannot please God. The human body is to be the "temple of the Holy Ghost." Paul himself did not hesitate to testify: "The life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God."

The use of the term "flesh" in Galatians 5:17; Romans 8:8; and 1 Corinthians 3:3 is clear. It refers to that inward antagonism to the will of God which is found in all those who are not entirely sanctified. The late Dr. Dale of Birmingham is reported to have declared: "There is something in me that objects to God." This fleshly or carnal mind within the Corinthian Christians had a threefold effect upon them.

First, it hindered their growth in grace and affected their behavior.

In spite of their years of Christian experience and their claim to wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit, they were still only "babes in Christ."

A babe of six months is a delight to its parents, but a babe of sixteen years of age is a disaster. George Fox, the Quaker, tells of his visit to a farmstead in the north of England, where he saw a child of eleven still helpless in his cot. In answer to Fox's prayer the child was instantly healed and was soon playing in the street, to the intense joy of the parents. The Corinthian church was a tragedy indeed and was in some respects just like a nursery with its quarrelsome infants. They used the precious gifts of the Holy Ghost as if they were toys with which to play. The gift of tongues was made to sound like a rattle -- drawing attention to the person using it and bringing confusion in the church. Like babies, the Corinthians were petty and factious, and were jealous of one another.

The Church of Christ today is still crowded with infant believers -- those who are "babes" in spiritual matters.

Secondly, carnality weakened their moral constitution.

Carnality in the heart deprived these Corinthian Christians of moral strength to stand upon their own feet and labor in the Master's vineyard. Like babes, they were without teeth and unable to eat strong meat. Paul had to feed them with "milk" and not with the "meat" of God's Word. Their offspring can be seen in most churches today. They are those who always clamor for entertainment and spicy items in the church program. But when it comes to solid Bible study, the prayer meeting, and the open-air witness, they are missing.

They are never heard in prevailing prayer or in bold testimony for their Lord. They remind us of the picture drawn in the first chapter of Job, where we read of the oxen who were plowing in the field, and "the asses feeding beside them."

Few indeed are the real labors in Christ's Church today, but the indolent are always to be seen lazing around.

Thirdly, carnality blurred their spiritual vision and fostered sectarianism.

The most gifted assembly in Christendom failed to see that Christ alone was the great Head of the Church and that the apostles were but channels who conveyed the glorious message of salvation. In their spiritual blindness the Corinthians made favorites of God's servants and split themselves into sects. "Every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas."

"While you thus boast," said Paul, "you are carnal -- a set of babes."

It is tragically possible for Christians to be "blind," so that they cannot see afar off (2 Peter 1:9). Painful indeed is the spectacle of believers who will argue for hours about water baptism, the gifts of the Spirit, and the keeping of a certain day of the week as the Sabbath -- and yet are woefully deficient in the deep things of God. Perfect love and the fullness of divine power are missing, and in their stead is a sectarian prejudice which is a caricature of a truly Spirit-filled life.

Praise be to God, there is another class of Christian mentioned by Paul in his Epistles! It is the "spiritual" man.

In 1 Corinthians 2:15 Paul writes: "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things . . ."; and in Galatians 6:1 he exhorts: ". . . ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness . . ."

Such a person is rare. He is in the minority, but he is the one who counts in Christ's kingdom. He can be depended upon to faithfully carry out those tasks assigned to him by the Master, no matter how hard and difficult they seem to be. His constant spirit cries:

Reckon on me, following Thee,
Living forever Thy servant to be;
Cloudy or fine, Lord, I am Thine,
Until Thy face I shall see.

Like the young prophet Isaiah after his experience of sanctification, the spiritual Christian responds gladly to the divine call and exclaims, "Here am I; send me."

Who are the "spiritual" Christians? The answer is plain. They are the Spirit-filled believers -- those who are entirely sanctified. For the filling of the Holy Ghost is as sure to expel all carnality from the human heart as the flooding of a room with light is bound to dispel all darkness from that room. The Day of Pentecost meant

that 120 disciples of Christ "were all filled with the Holy Ghost." And the emblem of the glorious filling was a cloven tongue of fire. Pentecost is the cure for carnality and is the power that makes the child of God radiantly spiritual. God gave them the Holy Ghost, purifying their hearts by faith (Acts 15:8-9).

God still waits to fill His children with the Holy Ghost. The conditions are laid down in His own Word. They are threefold.

First, there must be an earnest seeking for this purifying, empowering baptism (Luke 11:13; Matthew 5:6).

Secondly, there must come an unreserved consecration of body, soul, and spirit to God (Romans 12:1-2). God gives the Holy Ghost to those who obey Him (Acts 5:32).

Thirdly, there must be a simple, unwavering faith in the promises of God. The Day of Pentecost has fully come. There is no longer the need of waiting ten days in an upper room. The moment we have laid our all upon the divine altar and have cried from our hearts for the sanctifying baptism of the Spirit, that moment we can receive in simple faith the promised blessing. Paul makes it crystal-clear in Galatians 3:14 -- ". . . that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." We are sanctified by faith that is in Christ Jesus (Acts 26:18).

If an almighty God commands His people to be instantly filled with the Holy Ghost (and that is made clear in Ephesians 5:18), then the moment the three conditions are fulfilled, that same moment God fills the trusting heart with the promised Comforter.

Let the seeking soul look away from any particular outward manifestation as a proof of the Spirit's fullness in the heart. God is sovereign and He distributes the gifts of the Spirit as He willeth. Leave the outward manifestations to the wisdom of the Giver. He knows what is best for His children. The all-important thing is that the Holy Ghost himself comes in to purge away carnality and fill the heart with perfect love and with power to witness unto Christ.

Then indeed will come the joy and peace that are the marks of him who is "spiritual."

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05 -- JESUS WORKED A MIRACLE! -- Vernon L. Wilcox
Pastor, Portland, Oregon.

Scripture: Mark 4:35-41

He said . . . unto the sea, Peace, be still.

There are "miracles all about us. A few days ago I saw in downtown Portland "the miracle mile," consisting of a number of fine retail stores. Then there was the persistent advertising of the "twenty miracle miles," a fast-growing development on the Oregon coast. The word miracle is applied to certain foods, or soap, or whatever may be supposed to be a bit out of stale ordinariness. This seems a part of our American optimism -- everything is wonderful, terrific, and stupendous. Even fruits come in only three sizes: mammoth, gigantic, and colossal!

In a more serious way of thinking, a miracle is performed when a higher law takes over on a lower plane. For example, when I pluck an apple from a tree before its time, I perform a miracle to the vegetable world. Last evening I looked into a Japanese Bible. The characters made utter nonsense to me, but the missionary picked up the book and read rapidly from it. So far as my intelligence was concerned, it was a miracle!

But this is not the truest meaning of miracle. It helps us, however, to see the true meaning. God comes down into human experience and works in our hearts and lives by His Holy Spirit. Why should we, and how could we, doubt such a thing? Cannot the God who made us and the world intervene on behalf of His own to deliver them from their enemies? Should He not be called on to help them in their time of need? It is not a hard thing with God to perform a miracle for His children. Let us notice this miracle of Jesus stilling the storm and sea.

First, it was a miracle within the bounds of reason. We would not say that it is fully explained by reason, but it is still believable. It was not an outlandish thing, with no relation to the reality of the disciples' need. It was not a capricious breaking of the laws of nature, but control of them by the One who had made them. He did not abrogate the laws of nature, so that the wind might blow and no waves appear, or vice versa; He did not suddenly shrink the Sea of Galilee until it was the size of Walden Pond, so they could wade ashore. Certainly He could have done these (to us) irrational things, but He didn't. Rather, Jesus exercised the control of the laws of nature that He had had all the time -- the laws of the universe He had himself created.

This is something for us to remember. We should not ask the Lord to do for us the outlandish, the irrational, just to prove something to us. "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign."

In the second place, this miracle was based on the power of the Master. Certainly the disciples were powerless to bring the boat to land. They had done their best -- and it was a good "best," for they were experienced men with a boat. They had done all they knew to do, but had come to the end of their knowledge and ability.

In order to receive the miracle-working help of Christ we too must come to the end of our own resources and resourcefulness. There must be an acknowledging of our helplessness, and of His divine power, before we can expect His help. So long as we struggle and flounder around, trying to solve our problems alone, He will let us. Not that He will let us sink, but He will let us think we are going to sink, so that we are willing to admit our powerlessness in ourselves. Then He can do something for us.

This does not, of course, mean that we are not to do our best. We cannot ask the Lord to do for us what we can do for ourselves. But it does mean that, when we have done our best, we must still recognize it is not enough.

Again, it was a miracle based on faith in Christ. The disciples were at first afraid the boat would sink in the terrible storm, not realizing that it was unsinkable so long as they had Him on board. They were like us modern Christians when we are anxious about the Lord's work. Sometimes we pray, "Lord, don't You care?" This was exactly what the disciples were asking while they were arousing Him from sleep, "Carest thou not that we perish?" Jesus wondered at their fearfulness and said, apparently puzzled, "How is it that ye have no faith?"

What we must remember is that He cares for His work and for His worker. This does not mean that we are to put forth no effort, but that we shall do so in full confidence that we are "workers together with God." This changes the whole picture, so that now we see in full perspective the ultimate purpose of God, the high values of the Kingdom, and our place in the divine scheme of things. When we see this, we see that the boat is the Lord's, the storm is the Lord's, the sea, the disciples, even the pillow -- all are the Lord's! So we work, but don't fret; we are concerned, but not worried. Outward circumstances do not defeat us because we have inner resources of faith. As someone has said, we are not rowboat Christians doing everything in our strength; nor sailboat Christians, depending on favorable weather; but steamboat Christians, with inner resources of fire that drive us on.

Finally, the miracle was wrought only when the disciples called for help. We don't know how long Jesus would have slept if they hadn't called Him. From our vantage point of history we know that the boat would not have sunk with Him on it. But, at any rate, it is worthy of note that He did not wake up until they cried out in urgency, "Master . . . we perish."

God wants to do things for us today, but we are so absorbed in our own efforts we don't ask Him. We are so busy running a church, operating a machine, attending committee and board meetings, getting out publicity, that we don't wait on God. All these things are good in their place, but they have meaning only when kept in their place. After all, why should we do these other things if we are not going to have God's blessing on our lives and His presence in our hearts? We might as well run a hamburger stand or a bakery as to run a church without the presence and

power of the Spirit. For a church without the Lord is no longer a church, in the true sense of the word.

We need the miracle of Christ's presence in the church today. We have lived on the past long enough. It is time to rouse ourselves, and by faith in the Lord, and with vision for the future, to tackle a task so much bigger than we are that we must cry for divine grace and help. Then the Lord can help us.

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**06 -- APPROACH TO THE UNREGENERATE -- J. Kenneth Grider
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Missouri.**

Do some of us seem to wonder why it is that sinners don't flock to Jesus in droves? Do we figure that reason can be stacked upon reason, to support the wisdom of obtaining salvation? One becomes better respected by most after he is a Christian. He will probably become a harder-to-beat athlete, a more productive businessman, a more competent professional man. No longer will he lose money at gambling, no longer squander it on drink nor waste it on proud living in general. It might well keep his marriage going and his children in Christ's care.

Do we sometimes stack such reasons as these on top of each other, load the case for becoming a Christian, and then wonder that most who hear are so unwise as to go on in their sins?

Such was the approach of certain Greeks prior to the Christian era. Those philosophers, such as Socrates, reasoned that if a person knows what is right he will do it. But they did not reckon with the fact that natural men are sinful to the core. Ignorance, not sin, they saw to be man's ruiner.

According to the Bible, natural man's trouble is that he is an enslaved sinner. He is of his "father the devil" (John 8:44); is enslaved to sin (Romans 6:16-17); is utterly incapable of performing as his intellect dictates he should (Romans 7:15); is lost, "having no hope" (Ephesians 2:12), "miserable" (I Corinthians 15:19) -- unless he has outside, supernatural help.

The same Bible conveys the good news that natural man, enslaved in sin as he is, does have offered to him this supernatural help. Both the Arminian and the Calvinistic theologians see a heap of teaching about grace in the Bible (Ephesians 2:4-9). They both see that the Bible teaches prevenient grace (1 John 4:19) -- that is that, before we seek the Lord, He seeks us out; that the initiative is with Him, and only the response with us.

The Remonstrants, early followers of James Arminius, agreed on the following: "That this divine grace or energy of the Holy Ghost, which heals the disorders of a corrupt nature, begins, advances, and brings to perfection everything that can be called good in man; and that, consequently, all good works, without exception, are attributed to God alone, and to the operation of His grace; . . ." (Quoted in Wiley, Christian Theology, II, p. 352.)

Both the Arminians and the Calvinists interpret the Bible as teaching that God convicts the unregenerate of their sinfulness, urges them to repent (Matthew 9:13), helps their unbelief, and grants forgiveness when they respond to His overtures and by faith accept His pardoning grace. Dr. Wiley writes: "The powerlessness and inability of man is everywhere assumed in the Scriptures. The question of total depravity, therefore, or the loss of the moral image of God, does not mark a dividing line between Arminianism and Calvinism. In this they agree . . ." (Christian Theology, II, 353). Of repentance and faith, Dr. Wiley writes: "Both proceed from prevenient grace . . ." (Ibid., p. 358).

When we see things the Biblical way, we talk about the sinner's helplessness and God's offer of transforming grace. We talk about responding to the Father's grace, offered us because of the death and resurrection of Christ (Romans 4:25), and urged upon us by the tender influences of the Holy Spirit -- and not about some humanistic choosing of Christ as though we did it of ourselves. We talk much about the wonder of being utterly transformed at a heart-deep level, and little about the wisdom of it.

If the Greeks were right, that natural man's trouble is ignorance, we could enlighten men and see them flock to Jesus in droves. Since their trouble is instead an enslavement to sin and to Satan (Matthew 6:24), we announce the gospel of the grace of God and witness to its delivering power.

On such announcing, and with such firsthand witnessing, there might be a mass response to God's offer of forgiving grace. But when that happens, and even when there is only a scattered response, we marvel not that so many refused, but that any enslaved sinners at all were loosed from sin and Satan and transformed by the miracle-working power of a gracious God.

Christians who think in terms of a sinner's choosing to go with the Lord, as though he did it of himself, and of its being a wise choice that every thinking person ought to make, often go on to urge those who will wend their way to God to serve Him to the best of their ability. You hear this said even by some who mean to follow John Wesley's interpretation of the Bible. But surely it is not only by the wonder of God's grace that we are saved -- and sanctified too; it is by His grace also that we are kept His day by day, and not by our own ability.

James Arminius was accused of teaching the Pelagian, humanistic idea that unregenerate man is so "unfallen" and so free that he can simply rise on his own to

an act of believing faith and choose Christ. But James Arminius nowhere taught such as that. Of course He said that fallen man still possesses the "power of willing." That is, that fallen man still has a capacity for free acts. But he also taught that, because of the Fall, an unregenerate man is too much enslaved in sin to exercise his freedom unaided and choose Christ on his own. Wesley taught a similar view, and admitted that on the matter of man's utter need of grace he himself was but a "hair's-breadth" from Calvinism. The Nazarene Manual states that unregenerate man is fallen to such degree that he ". . . is averse to God . . . and is inclined to evil, and that continually" (Articles of Faith, V).

We who are Arminian and Wesleyan in our interpretation of Scripture emphasize man's free moral agency. We teach that his response to God's offered forgiveness, or his refusal of it, is a destiny-determining act. But we stress also the fact that, depraved as man is, he cannot on his own initiative choose Christ. We teach also that, even after entire sanctification, the human creature needs the keeping grace of God to remain sanctified wholly and to mature in Christian character.

Basic teachings such as these ought to make a difference in our approach to the unregenerate.

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07 -- A SPIRITUAL BAPTISM -- F. C. Meadows Kansas City, Missouri

There are many who feel there is no water in the baptism mentioned in Romans six, but few have attempted to show why they thus believe. If this opinion is correct, then there should be corroborative evidence elsewhere in the apostle's writings to support it. It has been said that the Bible is often its own best commentary, and the writings of St. Paul illustrate this. There are threads of similarity to be found in his letters which indicate that he is often presenting the same general truth to these several churches in language that is similar, though not necessarily identical. Thus a difficult passage in one Epistle may become less obscure because of something more clearly stated in another one.

Romans 6:3 is one of these texts which is related to other expressions from the apostle's pen. These other references throw light on what is meant here by being baptized into Christ.

A key verse here is 1 Corinthians 12:13. It is quite apparent that "being baptized into one body" (the body of Christ) is synonymous with being "baptized in Christ" in Galatians 3:27-28. We see this because of the similarity of the language. In First Corinthians: "Whether we be Jew or Gentile, whether we be bond or free." In Galatians: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Also notice Colossians

3:11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free." These similar expressions are all related to those which speak of "being baptized into the body of Christ," "being baptized into Christ," or the experience indicated by the "circumcision made without hands," and "buried with him [Christ] in baptism" in Colossians 2:11-12.

This baptism into the body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12:13 is a baptism administered by the Holy Spirit. The baptism into Christ in Galatians 3:27-28 must therefore be a spiritual transaction also. This seems evident because of the similar expressions found in the two references. If being baptized into Christ in Galatians 3:27-28 is a spiritual baptism, then neither does Romans 6:3 indicate water baptism.

The answer to any problem in Romans 6:4 is to be found in Colossians 2:11-12. These two verses in the Greek are separated by a comma, which would indicate that the two expressions, circumcision and baptism, are in grammatical apposition. The writer relates the two figures to express something common to both of them. The comma here does not indicate a sufficient break or variance in the subject matter of the two verses to justify the idea of a spiritual circumcision in one and water baptism in the other. The baptism like the circumcision is something made without hands. This being true, then the only other place (Romans 6:4) where Paul likens baptism to a burial, likewise, must be a spiritual baptism.

The baptism here to which the apostle alludes is not the one our Lord received at the hands of John, but the one which He himself said awaited Him, and which was subsequent to His experience with John at the Jordan. The locale is not the Jordan, but rather Gethsemane, Calvary, and the Tomb. Jesus said: "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" (Luke 12:50) James and John requested preferred positions in His coming Kingdom, and He inquired as to whether they could receive the baptism He was to receive and drink the cup He was to drink. We know that here He was referring to the suffering and death towards which He was moving.

There is no make-believe in Paul's reference to Jesus being buried by baptism into death. He is referring to His sufferings that culminated in His death on that middle Cross without the gates of Jerusalem. As Jesus died to (because of) sin, there is also a baptism for us wherein we die to sin, and sin dies in us. Though this does not imply our physical death, as was the case with our Lord, yet the spiritual change involved here is as radical as that wherein mortal life ceases. This something in us from which we are delivered has hitherto been so intimate a part of our being as to practically constitute our identity. In Galatians 2:20 Paul says: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." He also prayed: "That I might know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of [out from among]

the dead" (Philippians 3:10-11). This is the better resurrection we read about in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The apostle was writing to these churches out of his own God-wrought experiences, which indeed did much to shape the phrasing of his theology. He hesitated to go beyond what he himself had been taught of God.

Here in Romans six is the strongest language in the New Testament revealing that radical work of the Holy Ghost in the heart of a believer whereby he enters into a new and greater experience in Christ than he had ever thought possible. It is tragic that these marvelous truths which sound the profoundest depths of the human spirit should be so perverted and obscured as to be largely lost to our day.

Perhaps some of these very pictures from Paul's pen are among the things which Peter said were hard to be understood, and which some wrested to their own ruin. John Wesley, among many others, believed that these kindred passages from Romans and Paul's other letters indicated a crisis experience of grace beyond that of initial salvation.

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08 -- ENTIRE SANCTIFICATION IS CERTIFIED BY THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT -- Earl E. Barrett
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We are sanctified by faith, i.e., by means of faith. As also kept by faith, we never get beyond faith in its broad sweep. Yet we do get beyond faith narrowly viewed; for an appropriating faith is a means to an end, not an end in itself. "I believe in order to know" (Anselm). One end is knowledge through the witness of the Spirit, the conclusive evidence that there is a second-crisis complete cleansing experience. This witness to complete sanctification is not simply His testimony in the Word (Hebrews 10:14-15); for ". . . by it the elders obtained a good report By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain... God testifying of his gifts By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death . . ." (Hebrews 11:2-6). The Spirit speaks. He speaks in and with the human spirit in a dual testimony to a unique, personal, divine-human encounter, another end of faith (see Romans 8:16).

How did God bare them witness? Not by simply sending a message, but by coming himself with the message, "giving them the Holy Ghost." In a sense the Spirit is the Witness. Like the Son, His warming, enlightening, cheering, and cleansing presence needs no validation; it is self-evident and self-validating. Faith is rewarded (Hebrews 11:6). Many a man who, like Abraham, has gone out by faith, "not knowing whither," has returned knowing where he has been. Glory to God!

"Thou couldst not seek Me hadst thou not already found Me." Pascal's paradox can be resolved thus: "Thou couldst not (ethically or spiritually) seek Me, a transcendent God, hadst thou not already (metaphysically) found Me." The omnipresence of God means that He has no space to cross in getting to us. Thus we can be more certain of God than of other persons. They are present; He is omnipresent. "Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet." Descartes was more certain of God than he was of his own existence -- both intuitions. Still separated ethically from Him by actual and inbred sin, we seek complete at-one-ment by the regeneration and purification of our natures. Our immediate apprehension of God due to His metaphysical immanence and work in prevenient grace is intensified by degrees as ethically we draw nearer God in partial and complete adjustment (repentance and consecration). As a result, God draws ethically nearer, finally taking up His abode in our entirely purified hearts. Then, manifesting himself as He does not unto the world (John 14:16, 20, 22), God is perceived with the mediated-immediacy of love (like the cognition -- feeling of music and beauty), "the soul as intimately and evidently" perceiving "when it loves, delights, and rejoices in God as when it loves and delights in anything," being "no more in doubt than whether it exists . . . an inward proof which is nothing short of self-evidence." [John Wesley, Sermons on Several Occasions, I, 88.]

This event occurs on the level of personality -- intellect, sensibility, and will: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know . . ." (Ephesians 1:18); the affections, desires, and springs of action (e-motions) being purified that you may ". . . see God" (Matthew 5:8); being inspired ". . . both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). When this is stated in philosophical and psychological terms, there always remains a "plus" that defies description and explanation -- the supernatural. For God in Christ, drawing near to men at the end of themselves and their reasoning, still discloses himself to believing, now burning, hearts (Luke 24:32). Christianity suffers when intellect and feeling get out of balance, when the fire of the strange heart-warming and emotionally-satisfying experience of John Wesley burns low. God in Christian experience is no mere idea; neither God nor "the witness" is a mere inference; not even an inference from His testimony in the Bible nor from His fruits of life. God through the Spirit of reality (John 14:17) is an immediately, directly experienced reality in a dynamic unity of idea and feeling. Who would want a merely inferred human friend? Why then be satisfied with a merely inferred divine Friend, a merely hypothetical faith, and a merely mediated witness? The knowledge by acquaintance is much more satisfactory and heartwarming than the knowledge by description.

That Jesus kept His promise to "manifest" himself to His fully sanctified friends is seen in all the outpourings. In this regard Pentecost is perpetual. The manifestations, although distinct from the Spirit's witness and incidental to it, are not unimportant. Nothing that Jesus talked of and prayed for is unimportant (John 15: 11; 17:13). "These men are full of new wine," was the world's true recognition but false explanation of the ecstasy that often accompanies a personal or a group Pentecost. Then, from the beginning of God's dealings with man, fire has been a

symbol of God's presence. Pascal must have had a powerful emotional and realistic experience to write:

"The year of Grace 1654 . . . From about half-past ten in the evening until about half-past twelve. Fire. God of Abraham . . . not of the philosophers and scholars [probably with their inferred God]. Certitude, Certitude, feeling, Joy, Peace, Forgetfulness of the world and of everything but God . . . Joy, Joy, Tears of Joy." [Bradshaw, Philosophical Foundations Of Faith, pp. 129-30.]

From the first Pentecost to the present streams a flood of celestial fire, light, glory, peace, power, grace, and love. Just a few witnesses to this fact are: Madam Guyon, George Fox, John and Charles Wesley, John Fletcher, Bishop Asbury, Phoebe Palmer, Amanda Smith, David Brainard, Charles Finney, D. L. Moody, Dr. Daniel Steele, Dr. Wilbur Fiske, J. H. Taylor, Dr. E. Stanley Jones, Dr. C. W. Butler, Dr. J. C. McPheeters, Dr. Phineas Bresee, Dr. E. O. Chalfant, Dr. J. G. Morrison, and Dr. H. F. Reynolds.

May the time never come when the testimonies of such saints sound strange; when on the occasion of some falling of the Spirit with its vivid manifestations, regular attendants of holiness churches ask, "What meaneth this?" when they no longer are able to say, "This in my heart and manifested here today is that fulfillment of Joel's prophecy"; when "having a form of godliness," they deny "the power thereof" (2 Timothy 3:5); when we lose the sense of the mysterious, mystical, marvelous, and miraculous; when we do not understand what prompted James R. Lowell to say that the whole room seemed to be full of God; what Dr. Reynolds meant by the "firm pressure" on his brow, and the spiritual illumination that permeated his being "even to the finger tips and the toes;" why Moody cried, "Lord, stay Thy hand"; and Finney, "I shall die if these waves continue to pass over me;" and what caused Bud Robinson to lie three hours in the field, "so happy that he could scarcely remain in the body!"

Sorry indeed the day when at our altars no light from another world plays over the face; when no "visions of rapture now burst on my sight"; when no joyful response breaks the stillness of our services; when imprisoned saints no longer see the stones of their prisons "gleam like rubies"; when our rooms no longer "seem to be on fire;" when the walls of our beautiful churches, replacing the boards of the original barn-like structures of the holiness people, are not gilded "with glory," shining "with the glistening light of heaven!"

Is Pentecost overdue in your life? The question is not, Can I directly experience God? but, Do I? There are a distinctness of vision, a directness of knowledge, and a demonstration of spiritual realities in the baptism of the Holy Ghost that are well-nigh indescribable; you have to experience it in order to understand it. It is your sublime privilege to be filled with God; to live in unbroken fellowship with Jesus Christ, a present, conscious, honored reality in your life; to

be illuminated, purified, and empowered by the Holy Spirit today; and to be certain of it.

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**09 -- MUSIC IN THE INVITATION -- Andrew F. Cone
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The Invitation is the focal point in the evangelistic service. It is important, then, that we should develop skill in this area of our work. Naturally, in keeping with my subject, my emphasis is that music can be one of the greatest aids to an effective invitation. I am purposely cautious in making that statement because of the danger that we think of music as a cure-all. The important thing in an invitation is to make contact with the needy individual, who has been touched by the Holy Spirit, in such a way that he will, by faith, be born again. When music contributes to this end, it is good. When it hinders and dissipates the sense of urgency and conviction, it is wrong.

Tradition and custom call for a musical setting for the invitation, and usually rightly so. But here again let me restate this important truth: you do not need to be bound by custom and tradition. Neither, however, is it necessary to ride roughshod over them and strive for originality at the expense of casting away the tried and true. Dare to be different, but do it under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

Here, as in the opening part of the service, a balance between familiarity and variety in the choice of songs is best, with the preponderance of choice going to the familiar. Don't sing the same invitation hymn until it loses all appeal. Instead, have a few good ones, all of which are used often enough not to require all the attention of the people in following it.

There are two schools of thought as to the invitation singing. One group insists that only congregational singing should be used. There is a great deal to be said for this, especially in groups of our tradition. It is a method which has been used effectively for years and our people are largely conditioned to it. The impact of group singing when it is bathed in the manifest presence of God has a tremendous effect upon the sinner, particularly when the group is comparatively small. In my opinion this method should predominate in the small church.

On the other hand is the group which insists that a special number by either a soloist or a select group is the proper vehicle for the invitation song. This too has much to commend it, and probably fully as much tradition to uphold it. In a large group this is effective and sometimes almost necessary in order that the voice of the evangelist may be clearly audible to the congregation. It becomes increasingly difficult to control the larger groups in singing the invitation song without taking their attention from the invitation itself. The ability to effectively present the

invitation song while remaining in the background, so as not to become a distracting element, constitutes the genius of special invitational singing.

I would say, then, if your present system is working, there is no necessity for change. On the other hand, if for any reason you are dissatisfied, experiment a bit.

Along this same line a few words are in order relative to the work of the pianist in connection with the invitation. A good, adaptable pianist can be of incalculable help here, while a poor or unwise one can do great harm.

Simplicity is the keynote in all cases where the pianist is accompanying some other individual. Excessive volume and over-ornamentation, which draw attention to the accompanist and away from the main performers, is always in poor taste, and in the altar call can be disastrous. There is a time for the pianist to shine, and there is a time for her to fade quietly into the background. This applies especially to the altar call. Even when the invitation song is congregational, the evangelist is the "soloist" and his words must carry clearly above the background of song and instrument.

One possibility which is usually overlooked is the omitting of singing altogether. Admittedly this would not be the usual thing. Nevertheless it is tremendously effective where the weight of conviction upon the service needs barely a touch to bring souls to the altar. In fact, in such cases conviction has sometimes been dissipated in the transition from the message to the song of invitation.

Once in a great while you may wish to dispense with even the instrumental background, although this is extreme and very unlikely, while at the same time entirely permissible. Such choices will be for the pastor or evangelist to make, and the musicians should never interfere with or ignore his decisions. If there is any possibility that such a choice will be made, there should be a clear understanding with the pianist in order that there may be no embarrassing request that the pianist cease playing. The signal should be a shake of the head or a signal of the hand rather than a spoken request. Then, if the cue is missed, and the pianist has already begun playing, go smoothly along -- remembering that nothing which would distract the attention of the convicted sinner can be allowed.

Ordinarily then, the pianist, who has been sitting where she may slip unobtrusively to the piano bench, quietly takes her place either while the preacher is praying at the close of his message or as soon as it is clear that he has finished his message and is ready to pull in the net. The leader should never have to call for the pianist when ready to sing. If the pianist is able to moderate her playing sufficiently, and is versatile enough to preclude the necessity for the turning of leaves and searching for books, she should immediately begin to provide a background of a familiar invitation hymn, preferably the one which is to be used, if known in advance.

If, however, the pianist lacks this ability to improvise and adjust to the needs of the meeting and the leader, by all means let her wait quietly for the announcement of the hymn and accompany it to the best of her ability.

It is extremely necessary for the leader to remain sensitive to the leading of the Spirit in this part of the service. The original choice of song is not necessarily binding. Sometimes a change of song will change the entire tenor of the meeting.

The question often arises, Shall we have the congregation seated or standing during the altar call? I answer, Both, or standing. If you are fairly certain that the altar call will not be greatly extended, then the congregation may be called to its feet from the start of the call. If, on the other hand, you may reasonably expect a long altar call, or you feel that having them stand will break the spirit of conviction, have them remain seated for the first few stanzas or the first song. It would be inadvisable to have them remain seated throughout the invitation, however, as some people will never move unless they have already gained their feet. It is less embarrassing to step out if everyone is standing, and it is also much easier to press out to the aisle without stumbling over a row of feet. It is also inadvisable to reverse the order, having the congregation stand first and then be seated. This is of course a general rule and almost everyone can recall at least one instance when the spirit of the meeting refused to be denied and the people were reseated while conviction continued to deepen, resulting in a great victory. In spite of these exceptions I am sure that we will admit that usually when folk arise they begin to put on their wraps, expecting to be dismissed shortly, and a command to be reseated is anti-climactical.

I trust now that in our study together of this fascinating subject we have discovered that a great deal of good, sanctified common sense, coupled with a reasonable knowledge of the rudiments of music, should result in a satisfactory music program in even the smallest church.

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THE END