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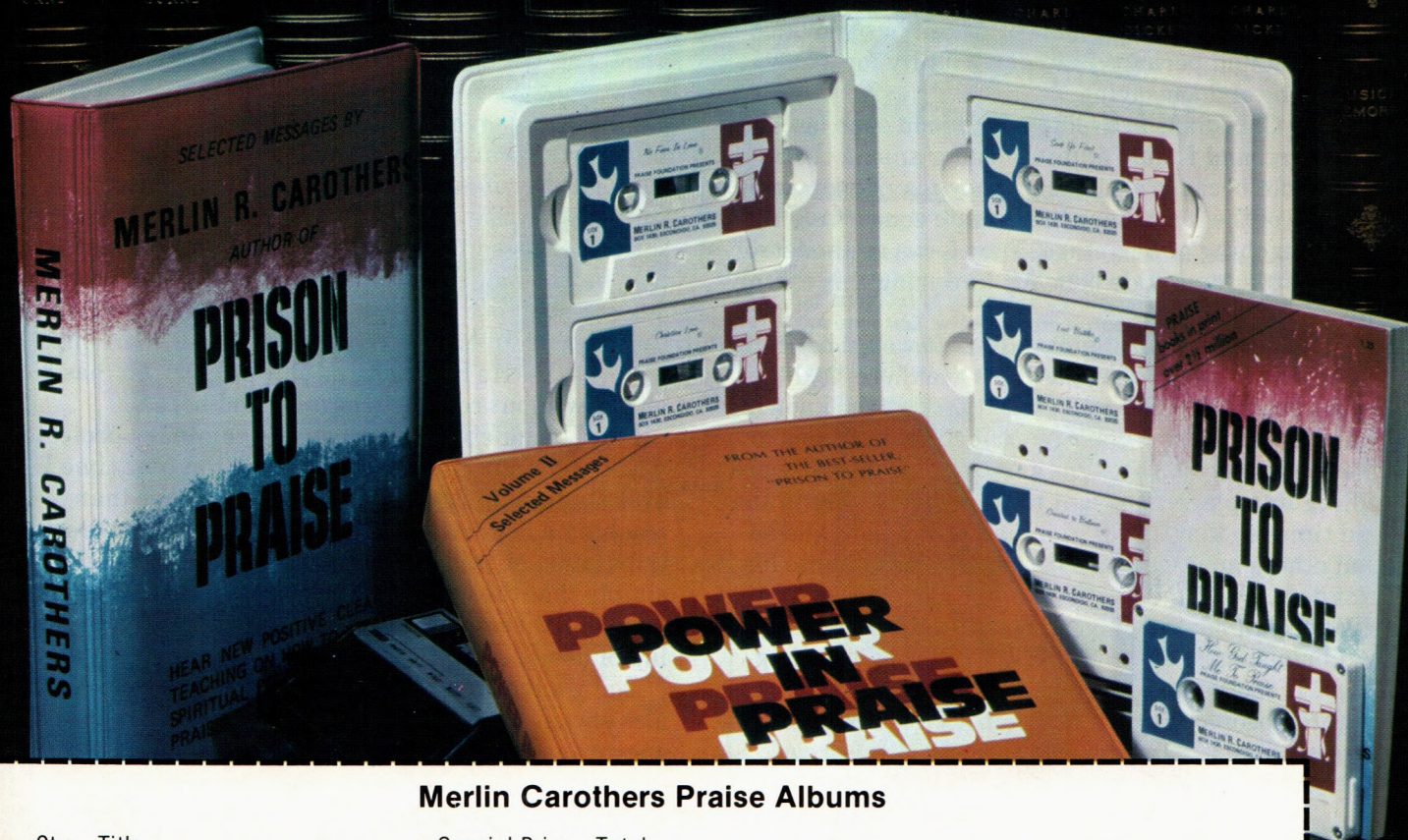
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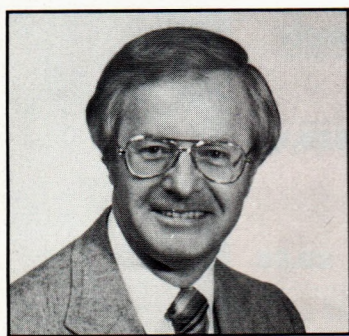
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EDITORIAL

There Is Hope in the Last Days



It seems to be a rule of thumb that, whenever any world crisis takes place, a new rash of Armageddon prophecies is thrust upon us by anxious Christians. The current unrest in the Middle East has provided the latest, and perhaps best, opportunity for a new avalanche of doomsaying.

Many Christians are reluctant to read such last-days literature, and I must admit to being among them. This is not because of the fears they may generate but because of the imbalance they create concerning the whole teaching of Scripture. They focus on the terror but do little to provide hope for us during this earthly life.

These certainly are the last days. It would be foolish not to acknowledge that the signs are there, and the Spirit bears witness to them. But most of us, knowing that the end is near, want more than calculations to prove whether all the signs and prophecies really are falling into place. We want to know how to *live* in the end times so that God is glorified in our lives and so that others may see Jesus Christ and be won into his kingdom.

Much can be said about the preaching of hellfire and brimstone, the wrath of God and the Last Judgment. It should be preached, but not simply to frighten people into the kingdom. Once the crisis passes, there is the danger that many of those con-

verted by judgment teaching will become apathetic and fall away.

In this issue of *Logos Journal*, three of our authors provide scripturally based teaching and information about the last days. They go beyond the signs and show what the Bible says about living in and working for the kingdom of God while all the signs are popping up in front of us. They deal with commitment rather than commotion and with the promises beyond the prophecies.

All of us need the encouragement that, no matter how bad things may look or may be, the Lord is still our rock and our fortress. He has promised to give us the strength to endure any tribulation or hardships for his sake. He has given us of his Spirit and has not left us without resources of faith and hope.

I will be indebted forever to the seminary professor who taught our Sunday school class the first time I ever studied the book of Revelation. Rather than teaching a dogmatic course in pre-tribulation, post-tribulation or mid-tribulation theology, he taught simply that the book of Revelation is God's message of hope to a threatened church. That has made the reading of doomsaying literature much more bearable.

God wants our writings to be not only prophetic but also encouraging. We pray that you will find hope and encouragement in this issue of *Logos Journal*.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Harold Hostetler".

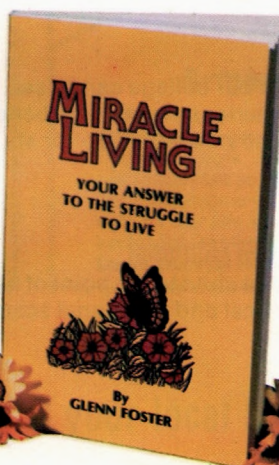
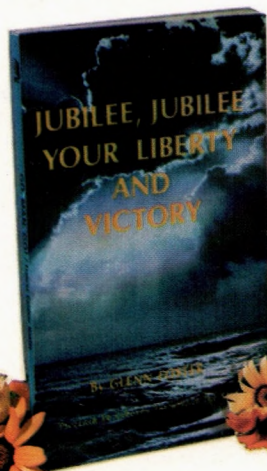
Harold Hostetler
Managing Editor

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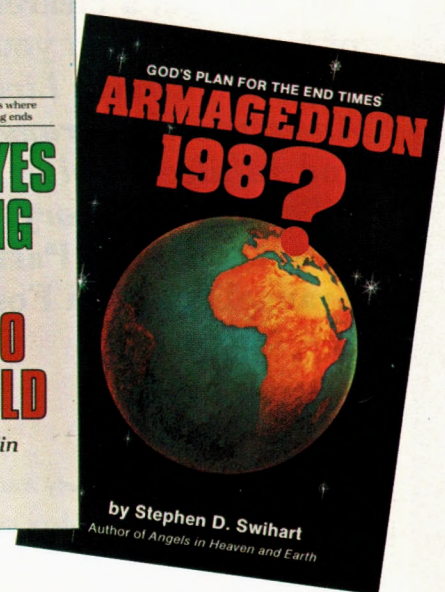
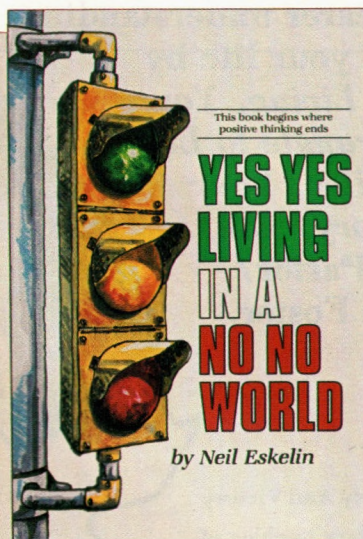
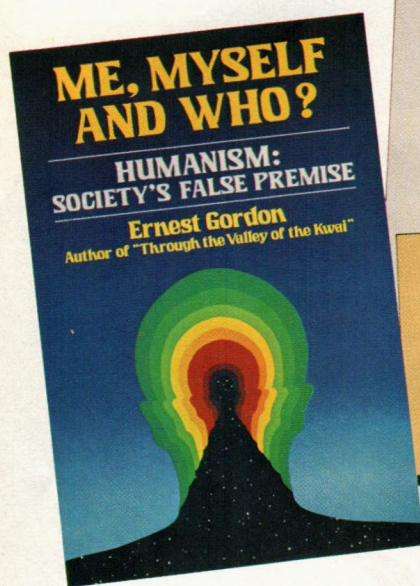
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LETTERS

Faith and Prosperity

What an excellent article by Dennis Roberts on Christian Prosperity [May/June]. A sensible, well-analyzed perspective on the current "fad teaching." It's time we spoke out on these false teachings, regardless of the teacher!

The Rev. Dennis L. Gorton
Salt and Life Ministries
Farmington Hills, Mich.

Dennis Roberts' article is a disservice to many readers who might take it at face value and be very confused about what they can and cannot believe in God's Word. It is too bad he has so completely missed all the blessings he could have experienced through confessing God's Word.

Lillian R. Walker
Orlando, Fla.

Hallelujah for Dr. Charles Farah and Dennis Roberts. Their FORUM articles reflect true Christian maturity, and I praise God for it. For several years I have conducted my own Bible study on these very subjects and came to their same unpopular conclusions.

My study began when I saw friends turn into cold, unreasonable "faith robots" standing on God's Word for cars, success, jewels, etc. My spirit simply could not accept this, although I tried. Finally out of sheer frustration I did what I should have done from the beginning: I turned to the *whole Word of God*. Here I discovered *exactly* what Dr. Farah and Mr. Roberts discovered.

Priscilla S. Davis
Greenville, Ala.

Charles Farah is right in stating that faith teaching often has "dev-

astating results," but they cannot be blamed on the teaching itself. While the well-established "faith teachers" were teaching this doctrine in its original, pure form, other unknown fly-by-night evangelists took this message, twisted it (either willingly or unwillingly) and gave it back to the church differently. Members then accepted it, tried it and, if it didn't work for them, called it false doctrine.

The original faith teaching is a good thing when taught by those whom God has chosen.

Robert Grano
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Congratulations and thank you for Dennis Roberts' article regarding Christian prosperity. It was a breath of fresh air and a balance to a lopsided teaching.

Chaplain Bill Payne
Transport for Christ Int'l.
Omaha, Neb.

Please cancel our subscription *immediately!* Never have we read such garbage as the articles on prosperity and faith. These men apparently have no revelation knowledge of the Bible with the scriptures they used.

Praise the Lord you at least had a Kenneth Copeland article.

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Lambert
Norris, Tenn.

I was a victim of this exact type of [faith/prosperity] teaching when I was a new Christian. But instead of prospering and growing in faith, I became confused, anxious, depressed and lost all my joy.

As my discernment matured and my knowledge of the Word grew, I began to question the rightness of

these doctrines, but on the advice of fellow believers who firmly held to the teachings I put aside my doubts and tried harder. The harder I tried, the worse I got, and the worse I got, the more depressed I got. I actually began to believe I didn't have what it takes to be a good Christian.

It wasn't until I made the decision to turn my back completely on these teachings and throw myself on the mercy and goodness of God that I became well both mentally and spiritually. Please keep on telling the truth as it really is, because I know what happened to me. How I wish someone had had the courage to speak out when I needed it.

Rita M. Butler
Sharon Hill, Pa.

BLACK AND WHITE

Thank you very much for the splendid articles on blacks and by blacks in your May/June issue. You have a fine magazine, with many fine writers, but I notice that you have no black writers, and so this letter is to ask you if it is possible to have blacks write for your magazine on a regular basis.

The Rev. K. Joseph Fraggiosa, SSJ
St. Alphonsus Church
China, Tex.

PRAYING FOR LEADERS

I very much appreciated the Joy Dawson article, "Righteous Leaders, God's Top Priority in Prayer" [May/June]. It is a powerful call to prayer with scriptural undergirding and obvious contemporary relevance. Thanks!

Eugene A. Shoemaker
Community Baptist
New Testament Church
Topeka, Kans.

NEWS

'Washington for Jesus': A Turning Point?

WASHINGTON, D.C.—In the eyes of many, it was a “Christian rally.” To *The New York Times* it was a “Jesus lobby.” The secular world saw it as a form of political pressure, and even liberal Christians worried that it might be reactionary.

But to hundreds of thousands of evangelical and charismatic Christians, “Washington for Jesus” was a national day of repentance, fasting and prayer that could move God to withdraw his hand of judgment against the United States and heal our nation.

Top personalities of the evangelical world alternately led the crowd (variously estimated at from 200,000 to 500,000 persons) in prayers of repentance, in songs of praise and in denunciations of various forms of national wickedness. By all accounts it was the biggest and most significant Christian gathering in America.

Today “Washington for Jesus” stands as a historical event that some see as a turning point in the nation’s direction, a time when Christians *really* began to call America back to God and to demonstrate their own commitment through sacrificial living. While the experience for some was only a momentary glow, the lives of others have been changed.

Many of the organizers and participants in the April 29 event agreed that a new unity was developing among evangelicals. “It hasn’t been popular for charismatics and evangelicals to work together, but the Lord has broken down the barriers,” said John Gimenez, chairman of the national steering committee. And, “I’m not a charismatic, but I love the char-



ismatics,” said Bill Bright, program co-chairman and president of Campus Crusade for Christ.

The atmosphere on the Mall between the Capitol and the Washington Monument was festive without becoming a carnival. Doctrinal and denominational barriers were thrown to the wind as the chants and raised arms proclaimed, “Jesus is Lord!”

And God himself seemed to approve. The preceding day’s rain clouds parted for a day of such dramatic good weather that a secular newsman exclaimed, “It’s enough to make a believer out of anyone.” (Weather satellite photos showed the cloud pattern completely encircling Washington, but the capital was in the clear.)

Southern Baptist evangelist James Robison struck perhaps the

greatest note of unity and exhortation when he said, “This nation will crumble if we do not immediately turn to God. . . . America needs to hear the message: Wake up!” He called on preachers to reclaim the gift of prophecy to call our nation back to righteousness; then he led the assembled crowd in a prayer of “total commitment,” calling for “heavenly fire and holy living.”

A National Parks Service plainclothesman said he had never seen anything like it. “I’m used to confrontation and aggression,” he said. “The only thing like this was when the Pope was here. But that was different. The people stood in awe of him, and the power seemed to radiate from him.”

“But here the power isn’t coming from the platform. It’s coming from out there,” he said, sweeping

his hand over the crowd. "I don't know how to handle that."

"That's the power of the love of Jesus," he was told.

—Harold Hostetler

Seminars on Church Growth Draw 2,700

Some 2,700 pastors and church leaders attended church growth seminars in Denver and Buffalo in April to learn the principles that led Korean pastor Paul Yonggi Cho's church in Seoul to grow to more than 120,000 members through home cell groups.

Although heavily promoted in the Assemblies of God, the seminars drew about 35 percent of their participants from other denominations, said Tommy Reid, pastor of Full Gospel Tabernacle near Buffalo.

"At one time people thought Cho's cell-group concept wouldn't work in America," Reid said. "Now the interest is growing."

Calendar

July 18-20

Episcopal/Presbyterian joint charismatic conference, UCLA, Los Angeles. (Contact Hamilton Shepard, 157 Lantana, Camarillo, CA 93010.)

August 1-3

Pittsburgh Charismatic Conference for the Deaf, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh. (Contact Tom Sprinkle, 3265 Wainbell Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15216.)

August 5-8

International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit, Minneapolis. (Contact ILCOHS, Box 14344, U. Station, Minneapolis, MN 55414.)

August 8-12

Aldersgate '80 (United Methodist), Indianapolis. (Contact United Methodist Renewal Services, P.O. Box 50086, Nashville, TN 37205.)

September 26-28

Fellowship of Charismatic Christians (UCC) third annual meeting, Ravenna, Ohio. (Contact FOCUS, P.O. Box 12, Sassamansville, PA 19472.)

IF

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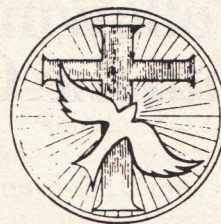
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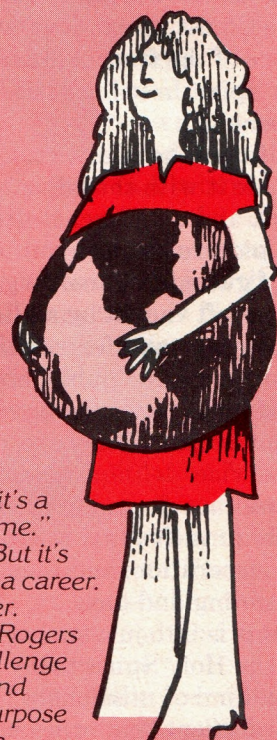
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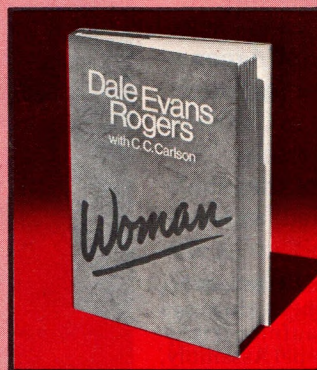
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CHURCH

Following the Spirit into the City

By Harold Hostetler

RENEWAL. The word blossoms with meaning for Christians. It is a flowering of new life in Jesus Christ. It exudes the fragrance of the fresh wind of the Holy Spirit in today's charismatic movement.

But take the noun *renewal* and precede it with the adjective *urban*, and a different, often dismal, picture comes to mind. It is one of gutted ghettos, large tracts of land left vacant by stalled building projects, and fortresslike monstrosities called "public housing."

The inner cities today evoke feelings of despair. They are rife with crime, vice, delinquency, illiteracy and welfare-dependency. Their inhabitants live in a world of fear and desperation, and they survive by cunning and luck.

Yet it is into just such a world that the Holy Spirit today is taking a new kind of missionary. Many of the traditional churches have packed up and left for the suburbs; their methods didn't work. The new missionaries are working out their own methods under the direct guidance of the Spirit, for they have had no Bible school classrooms in which to learn them.

Today the inner cities of America constitute one of the biggest mission fields available to Christians. But to win the cities for Jesus Christ will require that the workers learn the methods of the

pioneers. It isn't an easy field in which to work, say those who are already laboring there.

New York City is one of those mission fields. Long known as one of the most liberal, worldly and cynical cities in America, the nation's metropolis is now beginning to feel the influence of missionaries such as:

- Jerry Kaufman, a "completed Jew" who pastors the thriving Love Gospel Assembly in a converted synagogue in the Bronx.
- Faith Brown, former mid-western schoolteacher who, as

executive director of the Urban Youth Alliance International, shepherds a network of cell groups called The Seekers Christian Fellowships on 22 high school and college campuses in New York City.

- Jack San Filippo, for the past 23 years pastor of the Coney Island Gospel Assembly, who blends the gospel and social action in such a way that his ministry has invaded much of the fabric of his neighborhood.

These Spirit-filled Christian missionaries and many others like them are bearing considerable



"Agape clowns" attract children into street meetings in the Bronx, where they are taught about Jesus. Jerry Kaufman (right-hand page) pastors Love Gospel Assembly, which sponsors the clowns.

fruit for the kingdom of God. Their experience provides much insight for others the Lord may be calling to this harvest.

Jerry Kaufman was a heroin addict when he was led to commit his life to Christ in a Puerto Rican Pentecostal church in the Bronx. A Jew, Kaufman became so enthusiastic a Christian that he went to Bible school and then started an English-language afternoon service in the church where he first met the Lord.

In 10 years Kaufman's ministry has grown so fast that he found he had to seek his own church building last year; what he found demonstrates the irony and humor of the workings of the Lord. He was able to buy a fading Jewish synagogue whose membership was down to about 15 families, and today he fills it every Sunday afternoon with upward of 700 wor-

shippers, a mixture of blacks, Puerto Ricans and ethnic whites, many of them former addicts and hoodlums, others with master's degrees.

"The answer for these people is the local church," Kaufman says. "The big parachurch evangelistic ministries can't reach them. These are broken people, poor people, 'average' people. It takes consecrated workers who will just love them in order to win them."

Kaufman believes the Bronx "would be in a bad way without the church. The decay of the Bronx, which is one of the most deteriorated and crime-ridden communities in the country, is the direct result of the absence of the gospel."

Today Love Gospel Assembly is working to build a new Christian community, training 85 members for leadership in cell groups and placing them under eight pastors.

A tutorial program will evolve into a fully accredited private school one day.

"In our summer street meetings we average 100 commitments a week," Kaufman says. "We then do intense follow-up in the homes, because we want not only decisions but disciples."

"We go out after them. Jesus said he came to *seek* and to save the lost. He didn't tell them just to come to him. So that's what we're doing. We don't wait in our church for the people to come in."

Unlike Bronx-born Jerry Kaufman, Faith Brown had to learn city life the hard way. A sociology teacher in a suburban high school in the Midwest, Miss Brown responded to an invitation by David Wilkerson to join the Teen Challenge team in New York to work in its Christian Urban Renewal Effort.

"One thing I learned quickly was that the urban kids had to be dealt with in the local situation," Miss Brown recalls. "Anything that removed them from their urban environment made it difficult for them to reintegrate when they returned, and we had sent many of them away to camps."

When Teen Challenge cut back its programs in New York, Miss Brown was faced with leaving the city or staying on unemployment. She chose to stay and to try to work with the local church to carry on the same program. She was the only white member of the otherwise all-black Bethel Gospel Assembly in Harlem, and her church threw its support behind her.

"The only thing I was able to salvage was the campus ministry, because it required little money," she said. "So I began to develop that, using the young people themselves as the leaders rather than bring in outside leadership."

continued on page 14



CHURCH

continued from page 13

Her ministry was confirmed in a meeting with Ben Alicea, founder of The Seekers, during which a prophecy was given stating clearly that God was calling her into that ministry.

Today The Seekers is one of only two Christian organizations holding on-campus meetings in New York City's colleges. And it is the only one that also ministers in the classrooms of the city's public schools, a miracle considering the modern climate regarding separation of church and state.

"We hold our leadership training meetings off-campus," Miss Brown explains. "Then we send the kids back to their schools to form their own cell groups. When the kids are holding their own meetings, we find that the principals would rather have them meeting on-campus than off. If 'outsiders' were holding the meetings, it would be different."

She said the charismatic emphasis of The Seekers also has found great acceptance in the schools because most of the students today are from minority groups that are open to the move of the Holy Spirit. Attendance ranges from five to 75 in individual meetings.

"But we're completely cross-cultural," she said. "Often the churches are not integrated, but the campuses are."

Jack San Filippo and his wife, Veronica, began their ministry in Coney Island 23 years ago. Both grew up in Brooklyn and were familiar with the ways of the city, "but it took a very long time for the adults to trust us here," he said. "They had felt ripped off by other little missions that collected their tithes and offerings but never invested one penny in Coney Island."

The San Filippos simply began working with the poor, visiting the sick, helping the destitute fill out

welfare-application forms. San Filippo worked as a printer and held youth meetings on weekends. He played Ping Pong with the kids and took them on picnics. He counseled the alcoholics and the unemployed.

"We counseled just about every kind of problem under the sun," he said.

One by one the people began to come, until today their new church building has as many as 800 persons in its services. Many of the members who were among the first children to whom the San Filippos ministered are now responsible for cell-group meetings in area apartment buildings. These home fellowship meetings are encouraged, and the members are instructed to help meet the physical and social as well as the spiritual needs of the tenants.

"Last winter the water pipes broke in three apartment buildings that didn't have any heat," San Filippo said. "We turned the church into a disaster area where the Red Cross could help the people."

Each year San Filippo holds 30 to 35 funerals for neighborhood residents, many of them non-members. "Even those who don't go to church consider this 'their church,'" he said. Many of the funerals are for young addicts or gang members.

Church services are broadcast over loudspeakers that reach the apartment buildings all around Coney Island Gospel Assembly. In the summer many of the tenants sit on their balconies and listen.

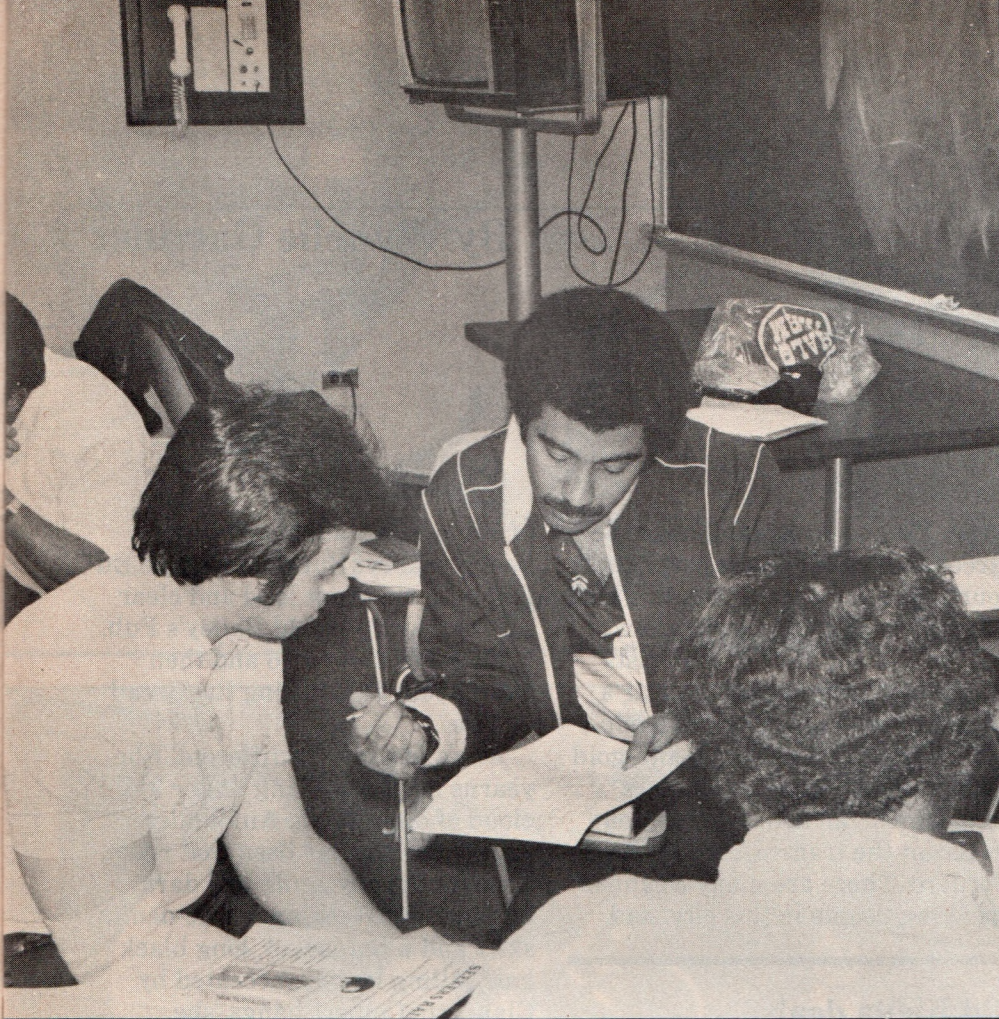
"And any time there's trouble, people will say, 'Call Brother Jack,'" he said. "'He's just as black as we are.' But others say, 'No, he just does what's right.'"

"People know who we are now. They know where we stand. They know Christ is first and all that we are doing is because of Jesus."

Some interesting parallels

Festivity also attracts children to Coney Island Gospel Assembly, pastored by Jack San Filippo (far left in photo below), while The Seekers gets down to serious Bible study in the classroom (right) under leaders taught by Faith Brown (second from left in photo at right).





evolved during the course of the interview with these three ministers. They may be the key to effective inner-city ministry. They are:

1. *Be real.* Inner-city residents have seen every trick known to man. They've seen too much deceit to trust anyone. The Christian's witness is not just what he proclaims but what he lives.

2. *Work with the local church.* The local church enables development of a real sense of community unavailable through parachurch organizations.

3. *Be wise.* The residents will test you to see if you can be "conned." If they can take advantage of you, they won't listen to you.

4. *Be caring, sincere.* It will be evident whether your work is selfless or not.

5. *Delegate responsibility.* Forming cell groups or home fellowships is one way of developing local leadership and building an indigenous church.

6. *Give direction.* Cell group leaders need direction so that they aren't doing their own thing.

7. *Minister to the whole person.* Often the inner-city resident won't believe you really care about him until he sees some of his physical or social needs being met.

8. *Educate.* Inner-city schools often have failed to provide the education necessary to prepare someone for studying the Bible. Teaching basic reading often is a necessity.

9. *Circulate.* Get involved in street meetings, neighborhood meetings and other social activities. The more the people see you and observe the truth of your walk with Jesus Christ, the easier it will be for you to present them with the gospel. ☞

Harold Hostetler is managing editor of *Logos Journal*. He once specialized in urban and environmental reporting for *The Honolulu Advertiser*.



SAINTS

From Wall Street . . . To Street Preaching

By Wynelle Gardner

When Edward J. Kiena leaves his New York office on Wall Street Friday afternoon, he's the typical man in a gray-flannel suit. Saturday noon, briefcase laid aside, he's no longer the average American. Wearing a pale blue leisure suit, microphone in hand, he engages in a preaching ministry on Broad Street in downtown Elizabeth, N.J. Joined by his wife Ann and five or six other helpers, Ed Kiena, accustomed to selling intangibles, deals in a more valuable commodity than the municipal bonds he buys and sells. He offers the free gospel message of Jesus Christ to all who come within ear-shot. His portfolio includes salvation, healing and abundance here and now.

Neither Ann nor Ed are ordained ministers but are simply Christians who want to tell others how Christ has changed their lives. This is their third year of so doing. They are sponsored by Evangel Assembly of God Church in the city, "but we lead people to Christ, not to a particular church," they say.

They are bringing the Christian message out of the carpeted cloister and into the city street. The pulpit they share is Broad Street in front of the Court House, with its wide esplanade leading up 21 steps to the portico with massive stone pillars. One is reminded of Solomon's Temple.

Their permit says they may preach here, rain or shine, from May to October, as long as they don't obstruct traffic. The spot is

ideal. Ed and Ann stand near the street and their helpers cover the four adjacent corners, handing out pamphlets. A traffic light allows for the ebb and flow of motorists who linger long enough to hear a snatch of song or a word of Scripture. Cars go by—a green-and-gold jeep, a silver Camaro, windows rolled down, an arm reaching out to accept the tract offered by Raul Cordero. There are many Spanish-speaking people in this city, and

Ed Kiena deals in two kinds of securities: financial and eternal.

Raul and his wife Miriam are bilingual.

"God has hand-picked the people who help us here," says Ed. There are at least eight regulars among them, including the Corderos.

"I really felt the hunger of the people today," Raul tells us. "God keeps giving me this deep feeling for everybody."

How do people react to preaching and singing at high noon on Broad Street? Some ignore it. Others grab eagerly for the word of encouragement and stay to accept Jesus Christ as Lord.

A few curse the speakers or jeer. Two black women walk by and say, "Praise the Lord!" Their five-year-old companion waves his hand and says, "Hallelujah!"

Some people, appearing uninterested, stand across the street and look for a long time in the window

of Viega's Restaurant or sit on a bench nearby. But the message Ed is giving rings out loud and clear all the way up to Old Bailey's Pub.

Ed reads John 3:16 and then talks about Jesus being the Bread of Life.

Ann's message is different. She yearns for those living under a cloud of oppression. Ann understands, for she has been that route. She has a ready smile and dark brown eyes. Wearing a blue-denim skirt and a red jacket, long black hair falling loosely, accented by Claudette Colbert bangs, she hardly looks like a woman old enough to have six grown children. Though slim and youthful-looking, she speaks as one having authority.

For several years Ann was burdened by a deep depression that almost destroyed her will to live. While watching the *700 Club* one day, she knelt to pray with the television speaker. God healed her instantly of that depression. She also experienced several physical healings and so knows firsthand God's will to heal the whole person. She has received a special touch from God for the gift of healing.

Preparation for the street ministry begins on Wednesday evening at a Bible study in the home of Bob and Rayanna Baines, where people gather to praise God and receive miracles of healing. On Friday the street workers fast and pray together.

Ann says they know when the power of God falls upon them on the street. "And we know when the Spirit lifts and it's time to leave.

"We've learned we can depend



From his Wall Street office Ed Kiena changes roles to become a New Jersey street preacher with his wife, Ann, and guitarist Al DeLorenzo.



on God's word. What he promises to do, he does. That's what we tell the people. God wants to give them freedom and peace. The first day we were on the street 25 souls were saved.

"The black people are the most receptive. A woman came up walking with a crutch and went away carrying it. Another woman cried because she couldn't see to read the Bible we'd given her. We prayed for her eyes and before we finished praying God healed her, and she went away reading her Bible.

"Once while the team and I carried on, Ed stepped aside to a grassy area and prayed with a

man whose deliverance took two hours. People thought he was drunk, but when he walked away his eyes were clear and his cheeks were glowing."

Ed mentions that not all Saturdays are so dramatic. "There are days when nobody stops. But someone on his way home may read the pamphlet and decide to give his life to Jesus."

People on the bus going by, do you hear this song? It says Jesus is the Way. On the side of the bus is a placard advertising a round-trip excursion to Las Vegas. Ed and Ann are offering a free one-way ticket to eternal life. People are

stopping: two go-go girls, a Jewish woman, a detective Ed witnessed to last year. Now he's ready to give his life to Jesus Christ.

A wrecker goes by towing a battered automobile, symbolic of the lives that are being changed. And as traffic keeps moving on Broad Street, so do Ed and Ann Kiena. Soon after this story was written, they felt God telling them to move on; there's something more they can do for him. Their house is for sale, and shortly they will be leaving to study at Christ for the Nations Institute in Dallas.

What have they learned in three years of street ministry? How has it changed their lives?

Ed says, "I have a greater sense of the lost in the world and feel an urgent need to tell them about Christ. I also know that, whatever we gave, we received back a hundredfold in blessing."

"It was no glory trip," Ann adds. "It was more like spiritual warfare, but there's a tremendous joy just to be yielded to God. He has blessed us in every avenue of our lives. It seemed as we ministered on the street, God healed our marriage and took care of our children. All our relationships are healed."

Will there still be daylight on Broad Street when the Kienas depart? God seems to say yes, for he is preparing a quiet, humble young man to take over in their stead. Ed and Ann have also shed a little daylight in Brooklyn, having helped a pastor there begin a street ministry. Who knows what street, what city will next feel the impact of their two lives, yielded to God? ☞

Wynelle Gardner of Fanwood, N.J., is author of the book, *The Church That Glowed*, published by Logos.

The End Times . . . Beyond the Signs

By Dick Mohrman

The unfolding of world events of any significance automatically precipitates a fresh spate of “end of the world” predictions. Unfortunately, some members of the church at large use these happenings to vent their urge to prophesy. Their prophecies run the gamut from ominous warnings (including date projections) to nearly giddy escapisms—and all as “Thus saith the Lord.”

Thirty years ago I attended a denominational session where we young ministers were receiving further orientation to the denomination’s view of the Second Coming of Christ. The awesome list of earth- and people-shaking events was itemized and described in scary detail. When it seemed we could take no more, the district leader paused, raised both hands and voice and declared, “You have no worries. Jesus is coming and we’ll miss it all.”

I wish I could honestly subscribe to that. I can’t—and with good reason. My understanding (and the validity) of the main doctrines of Scripture is that they must be universally applicable.

God has given to my wife, Ruth, and me a unique ministry in communist countries. Anyone traveling with us would have the joy of meeting some of Christ’s choicest saints—people who have undergone the worst kind of terror, persecution and present harassment known in the world. Thousands of Christians have paid the supreme sacrifice of laying down their lives for Jesus’ sake. I have met with



them in their deserted buildings and lofts, in wooded spots, as well as in public places. They are people of tremendous faith and courage. We cannot tell them they’ll miss it all, that Christ will “snatch them away” before the terrors of Revelation commence. They wouldn’t give me a hearing.

Recently a Chinese pastor obtained permission to return to mainland China. He had managed to escape the Mao purge when literally hundreds of thousands of believers were killed. He was eager to revisit the city of his old pastorate and to find some remnants of the church. He walked the streets, looking into the faces of people he recognized, but he could evoke not one spoken response, not even a greeting. He pursued one

man of whose identity he was sure. The man finally spoke: “Yes, I know you. How can I forget? You deceived us. You told us we would escape this. You lied, we cannot trust your word.” The saddened pastor slowly retreated with “You deceived us” in his ears.

This kind of escapism is unreal, and it builds cynicism!

Then there are those at the other extreme who would have us build underground shelters or dig caves into the sides of hills and mountains. There we are told to store a one- to three-year supply of foods and support systems. Some actually encourage us to protect our stash with arms lest we be robbed when those around us are starving. This group is telling us to dig in—we’re going through it all. This too

is unreal and defies scriptural balance.

These extremes are to be faulted at the point they major in both bodily and material survival. That is not what the coming of the Lord is all about! The subtle deception of this kind of scriptural distortion totally distracts us from what kingdom people should be completely absorbed with: the glorious truth that it is Christ, the Lord, who is coming.

Certainly we are body-conscious, and it is normal to tend to our health and well-being. Yet bodily loss is no major catastrophe. When Jesus comes, the mortality laid down will be raised immortal. Yes, the procurement of material and common necessities is essential to ongoing productivity. Surely, there is merit in savings; yet the loss of goods, and facing nakedness, famine and peril are not the end of meaningful living. Abundant scriptures teach us of God's divine provision for both the now and the hereafter.

I plead with the Christian community to face "end times" with composure, certainty and realism.

Eschatology is a biblical study of the Second Coming of Christ and those events that surround the same. At one time I used to think I knew all the answers and I would argue with friends till I was red in the face. My dogmatisms were pulpit fare that occasioned debate. I could always expect a crowd if my subject had been announced. Today those dogmatic certainties have given way to redefinition. Ministry in the body of Christ around the world has opened my eyes to areas of truth that always existed, but which I didn't see from my previously small, provincial and western existence.

More than that, I've come to appreciate the fact that it is Jesus that this coming is all about. Too long we've labored with who the

anti-Christ is when all along the Holy Spirit is trying to reveal to us the reality of the Christ. Too long we've speculated as to the mark of the beast while God is wanting to sanctify us by the Holy Spirit and establish us in holiness as his marks. Too long we've elevated demons, taught doctrines of devils and worried about the spirit of anti-Christ already at work. Christ seeks persons through whom he can release the absolutely supreme power of the Holy Spirit—attesting to his authority in today's world. I am concerned that our preoccupation with events has distracted us from divine purpose regarding the Main Event.

Then she went to the parlor to spread out some overdue sewing. Her bedroom was a mess, the kitchen a mess, the living room a mess—and she was a mess.

Then came a knock at the front door. She was startled. Instinct told her to hide; duty demanded she answer. Easing the door open slightly, she discovered three well-dressed women from the community who had come to call. "If only I had known they were coming, I'd have been ready," she said.

As we laughed through her story, the Holy Spirit was registering something more serious within. This is the important business of spiritual readiness. More impor-

"Too long we've labored with who the anti-Christ is when all along the Holy Spirit is trying to reveal to us the reality of the Christ . . . and to establish us in holiness."

In my review of facts concerning the Second Advent, the profound simplicity of Christ's own words took priority over human interpretations. Four statements surfaced with tremendous impact. They are:

1. "Therefore be ye also READY . . ." (Matthew 24:44). Jesus is in the middle of setting forth events and exhortations concerning his return. He now uses a word which in the Greek means "prepared."

Ruth and I were conducting a preaching mission for a former classmate and his wife who were pastoring a rural church in Michigan. Marjorie, the pastor's wife, related an experience. Her husband had joined some men of the church for a hunting trip in the northern part of the state. "I'll use the opportunity alone as a mini-vacation," she said to herself.

The first morning she slept later than usual. She tidied neither the room nor herself. A sumptuous brunch left the kitchen in disarray.

tant than date setting and guessing is the matter of getting prepared for coming. Read the rest of Matthew 24:44: ". . . for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." No question, our Lord is emphatically saying, "Live ready!"

2. The second statement is akin to the first. "WATCH, therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." (Matthew 24:42). Then, as though we didn't quite get the point, Jesus continues the theme by further illustration. Matthew 25 begins with the classic account of the five wise and five foolish virgins. Verse 13 is the point. Jesus dares to be repetitive: "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh." The Greek word used here means to "keep awake," to be spiritually alert.

Be watchful—of signs pointing to his coming, and yet more:

IVERNA TOMPKINS



JUST FOR YOU

Who am I really? Have you ever asked this question? Too often we are able to identify ourselves only with others. I'm John's wife (daughter) or Mary's husband (son). To the unmarried person this can be a problem. There's no husband or wife with whom to identify, and to identify with parents gives a feeling of immaturity. Some identify with a job or profession, and this in itself reveals a limited self concept.

When Moses asked God who he was, the answer came, "I am that I am" (Exodus 3:14). No words of insecurity or uncertainty from God. This sure identification was sufficient to send Moses to Pharaoh to demand the release of the Israelites.

Later, when Moses beheld God's glory from the cleft of the rock, God described himself by naming his attributes (Exodus 34:6, 7).

Who are you? Take time to discover yourself. What do you do when you don't like who you are? The fear of this is what prevents some from ever identifying with themselves. We must first realize we aren't victims of heredity, environment, culture or circumstances unless we choose to be. Every Christian has the advantage of being released from the guilts of the past through the blood of Jesus, but we have more than a clean slate. We have been given a new nature.

Instead of yielding to temper tantrums, so long accepted as a family trait, begin to rule your own spirit with your new authority as a Christian. You no longer may say, "Every man for himself," for selfishness isn't in you anymore.

Who are you really? You are a complete and beautiful you. Lovingkindness and tender mercy become you. You are honest and gracious and display a sure reason for living.

You enjoy times of being alone. You are never lonely, for others seek fellowship with you.

FORUM

watchful for opportunities to be used of God in his scheme of kingdom activities. But note: Watchfulness of signs does not imply being taken up with the sign itself. Here is where often an imbalance prevails. The sign merely points the way or states a message.

We often headquarter out of the Blue Mountain Christian Retreat Center at New Ringgold, Pa. It is beautifully situated on the northern slope of a mountain in the Appalachians. It is nestled away from heavy traffic. To find it, one must be alert, vigilant and watchful. While traveling to the center, I spotted a sign giving directions to the site. We didn't stop there and behold the sign. We simply read the message and kept moving. We didn't stop till we were actually there.

So it is with signs of Jesus' coming. Yes, signs abound with valid evidence that his coming is near—but not one reads, "Stop." They all point to the nearness of his coming and exhort us to be watchful, ever vigilant, taking full advantage of each day of grace left to us.

3. The third statement is found in Luke 19:13: "...OCCUPY till I come." Jesus is teaching us with remarkable clarity our need to be gainfully employed in kingdom ventures—and right up to the moment of his appearing. He uses a word which means "to trade." Occupy is taken from the secular world and is associated with business. Jesus is being very specific.

This is not the time to retreat, to withdraw from the system. Nor is it the time to be preoccupied with survival. Rather, while the householder is away, and before he returns, we are to submit ourselves, the gifts he has given us, and our natural and acquired abilities to Christ for his use. Kingdom living requires our willingness to be used of the King. God asks of us to show a profit on the kingdom

ledger. Our abandonment of self to him becomes the leverage by which our Lord establishes and furthers God's reign on earth as it is in heaven.

4. The last word comes as an exhortation to be joyous: "And when these things [all the terrors described in the early part of the chapter] begin to come to pass, then LOOK UP and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28). The phrase, "Look up," literally means to be happy, to be joyous. No, it is not the prospect of war, famine, national strife or personal peril that occasions this joy. What Jesus is saying is, "When you see all these events move into reality, they point to my coming. It is this, my coming, which gives you joy."

I've watched the staid English nearly giddy with joy, preparing for the homecoming of Queen Elizabeth. I've watched conservative Norwegians become ecstatic at the appearance of King Olav. Bands played, throngs sang and many even tossed hats into the air with unbounded joy. Their king had come.

But a greater-than-good queen and king is coming. Our Lord of Lords and King of Kings is coming. My spirit shouts and my soul exults in praise and adoration. The Holy Spirit is restoring to the church the kind of praise that becomes the great event, the triumph of the ages. LOOK UP! It's not a time to be downcast, woebegone, as people in defeat. This is the time for us to enter into joyous anticipation. Christ is coming for his redeemed who will share forever the eternal glories of a never-fading, never-ending kingdom. ✕

Dick Mohrman, an ordained minister, has an interdenominational international charismatic teaching ministry that often takes him to communist countries in Eastern Europe. He is author of the book *Let It Show*, published by Christian Herald.

My Never Again List

A Bold Challenge to "Speak The Word Only" Matthew 8:8.

Don Gossett

- 1 Never Again will I confess "I can't," for "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13
- 2 Never Again will I confess lack, for "my God shall supply all my need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19
- 3 Never Again will I confess fear, for "God hath not given me the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." II Timothy 1:7
- 4 Never Again will I confess doubt and lack of faith, for "God hath given to every man the measure of faith." Romans 12:3
- 5 Never Again will I confess weakness, for "the Lord is the strength of my life." Psalm 27:1 and "the people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits." Daniel 11:32
- 6 Never Again will I confess supremacy of Satan over my life, for "greater is He that is within me than he that is in the world." I John 4:4
- 7 Never Again will I confess defeat, for "God always causeth me to triumph in Christ Jesus." II Corinthians 2:14
- 8 Never Again will I confess lack of wisdom, for "Christ Jesus is made unto me wisdom from God." I Corinthians 1:30
- 9 Never Again will I confess sickness, for "with His stripes I am healed." Isaiah 53:5, and Jesus "Himself took my infirmities and bare my sicknesses." Matthew 8:17
- 10 Never Again will I confess worries and frustrations, for I am "casting all my cares upon Him who careth for me." I Peter 5:7. In Christ I am "care-free!"
- 11 Never Again will I confess bondage, for "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." II Corinthians 3:17. My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit!
- 12 Never Again will I confess condemnation, for "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Romans 8:1. I am in Christ; therefore, I am free from condemnation.

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America in Prophecy

By Stephen D. Swihart

America—"the land of the free and the home of the brave." Is this picture of the United States accurate today? Will this description be true in five years? Fifteen years? Twenty-five years? What does the Bible say about America?

Three approaches have been taken by prophecy scholars regarding the role of America in the last days:

A. The United States *is* to be found *directly* in the scope of Bible prophecy. Those holding to this position contend that the "isles" of Psalm 72:10, the "young lions" of Tarshish in Ezekiel 38:13, and the "eagle's wings" of Revelation 12:14 all refer to America in the last days. An examination of these references, however, requires a pretty extreme imagination to find any allusion to America.

B. The United States *is* to be found *indirectly* in the scope of Bible prophecy. Those holding to this position assert that because America cannot be found in any prophetic passage for the last days, it must not exist at that time as a significant power. Some teachers have gone so far as to suggest that the United States will be destroyed by atomic or supernatural power and therefore will have no voice in international affairs in the final days. But again, this approach requires a good imagination. Each argument offered in support of this view is based upon the silence of Scripture. Such reasoning seems to be weak and presumptuous.

C. The United States *is not* to be

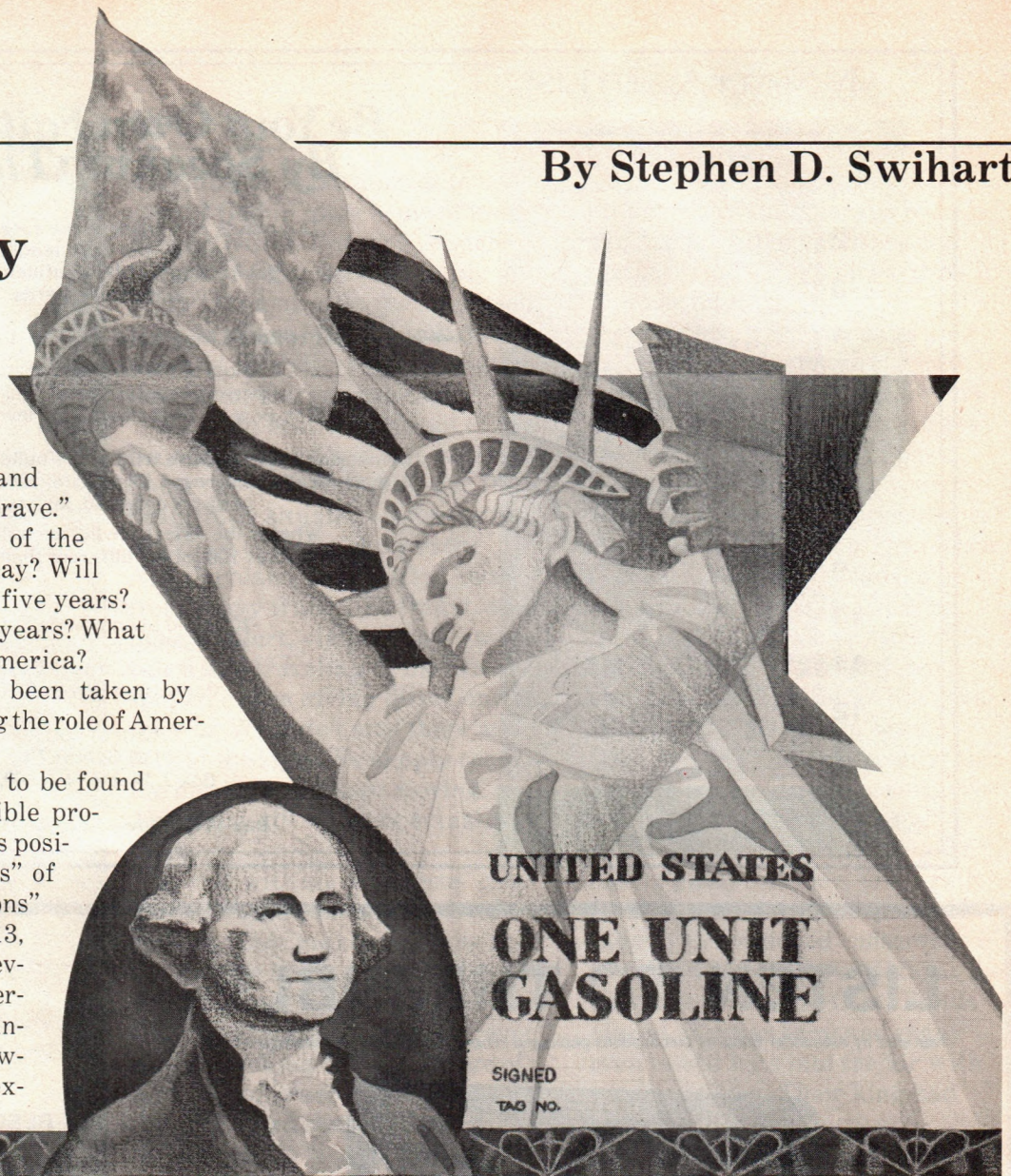
found (directly nor indirectly) in the scope of Bible prophecy. Those who take this view simply declare that, for reasons known only to God, he chose to omit any discussion regarding America. This position should not surprise anyone. The Scriptures make no reference to Australia, the Arctic, Canada, Central America, South America, or Antarctica either. Of the three views, this one has (in my opinion)

the proper assessment of the case.

When we read the Scriptures, we are made constantly aware that only one nation receives the spotlight: Israel. No other nation occupies such a permanent position as this one. In fact, for the most part, any discussion of another nation is made only in the light of how its influence will affect the nation of Israel. The Bible is Israel-centered.

Although America is not men-

When we read the Scriptures, we are made constantly aware that only one nation receives the spotlight—Israel. What, then, will become of America in the last days?



tioned by the Prophets, there still remain some scriptural principles that apply to all nations, including the United States. There is no way of accurately predicting the condition of America in the final days, but there are some rules that can be used in order to predict inevitable national consequences:

1. If America will continue to be Israel's friend, God will bless us; but should the United States ever become Israel's foe, then God will curse us. No stronger clearer words could be spoken than those found in Genesis 12:3: "I [the Lord] will bless those who bless you [Abraham and his seed], and the one who curses you I will curse."

Thus far America has stood by the side of the Israelis. Based upon current trends, there is reason to believe this interest will continue. The largest population of Jews in the world is to be found in the United States. About 3 percent of our population is Jewish. American policy has been very fair to this minority group. May it always continue to do so.

2. If America will endeavor to be a holy people, then God will bless us; but if we become a nation that does not fear and reverence God, then he must judge us. There is no nation on earth with more Christians than America. Neither is there another country with such a zealous interest in the task of global evangelization as the United States. It might be added that no other nation enjoys greater divine blessings. Still, statistics also indicate a rapid spiritual and moral decline in recent decades. The face of America in the 1980s is not the same as it was, say in the recent '50s.

The Scriptures teach that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14:34). No nation on earth can resist God's guidelines for life and then expect to prosper in the full-

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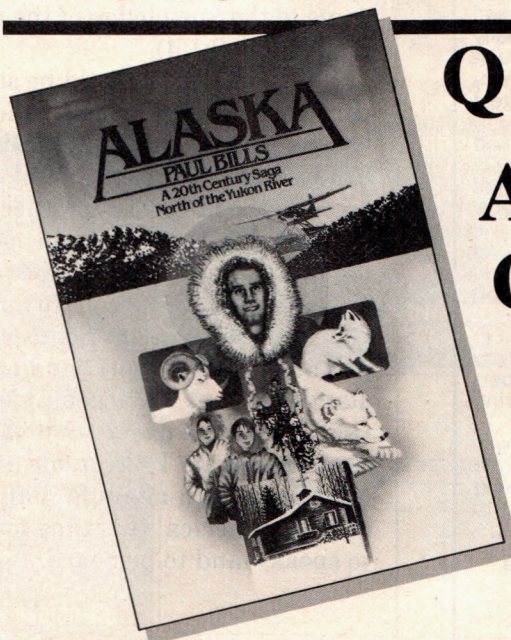
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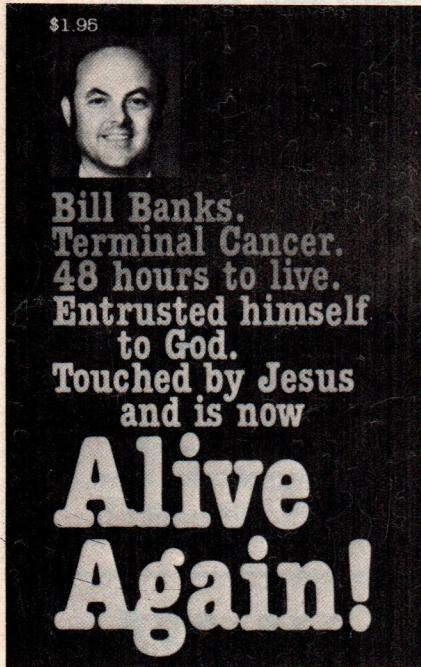
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est degree of that term. There are very, very few citizens in America, for instance, who would readily trade their citizenship with someone living in a Communist or Muslim nation. We are the freest, the most secure and the most fulfilled people in the world. But these qualities are beginning to dim. Unless America repents of her enormous attitude of self-righteousness and godless living, she will taste the bitterness of divine correction!

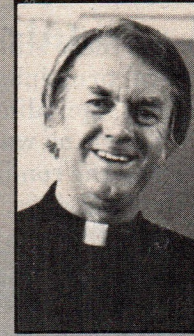
3. If Christians will pray for America, there is a far greater chance that we will continue to know prosperity and peace. Here is some sound counsel from the Bible:

"First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, in order that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity. This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Additionally, it should be stated that in the United States, where the freedom of choice still exists, evangelical Christians ought to organize their interests collectively in order to protect both the local community and the nation as a whole from succumbing to anti-Christian legislation. Let us raise a mighty voice for moral and ethical standards that are acceptable to God. There are no less than 40 million born-again Protestants and 30 million born-again Roman Catholics in America. It is time for us to speak—and to be heard. ☞

Stephen D. Swihart, pastor of Church of the Living Word in Elkhart, Ind., is author of the Logos book, *Angels in Heaven and Earth*. This article is excerpted from his new book, *Armageddon 198?*, also published by Logos.

DENNIS BENNETT



THE HOLY SPIRIT AND YOU

There's a rhyme in Milne's children's classic, *Now We Are Six*, about the old sailor

"Who had so many things which he wanted to do

That, whenever he thought it was time to begin,

He couldn't because of the state he was in!"

If you're like me, you get in the same sort of tangle. You've got so many things to do that you don't know where to start, but you feel, if you ever could get out of the state you're in, if you could ever get life simplified, you could *really* begin following the Lord. So many things get in the way. "I've got so much to do today, but tomorrow, after I get this mess off my desk . . ."

My mother used to say, "Tomorrow never comes." I used to puzzle over this when I was little, but I finally got the point: when tomorrow comes, it's *today*!

God doesn't call us away from daily responsibilities to serve him. We don't just lay down our regular work in order to do "Christian" work. God is *interested* in the stuff on my desk! He doesn't just wait for me to clear it up so I can give my attention to what *he* wants.

Since there's always going to be a succession of things to do, we must learn to love and obey God right in the middle of it all. We must let him show us which job comes first, looking for his guidance in the details of everyday life.

If you don't let God work in your life today, right now, you probably will keep on postponing. If you've accepted Jesus, God is in the spiritual center of your life. But he needs to get into the outward part too. Let him into every day. Let him show you all the little miracles he can do to gladden your heart, even the miracle of a clean desk, or a clean kitchen! "Tomorrow never comes," so praise God in your todays.

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...and GOD said...
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GT 19



GT 20

MARK 10: 25 & 27



GT 26



GT 21



GT 22

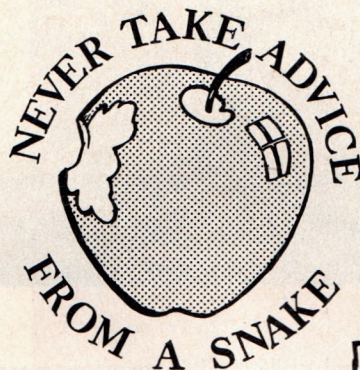
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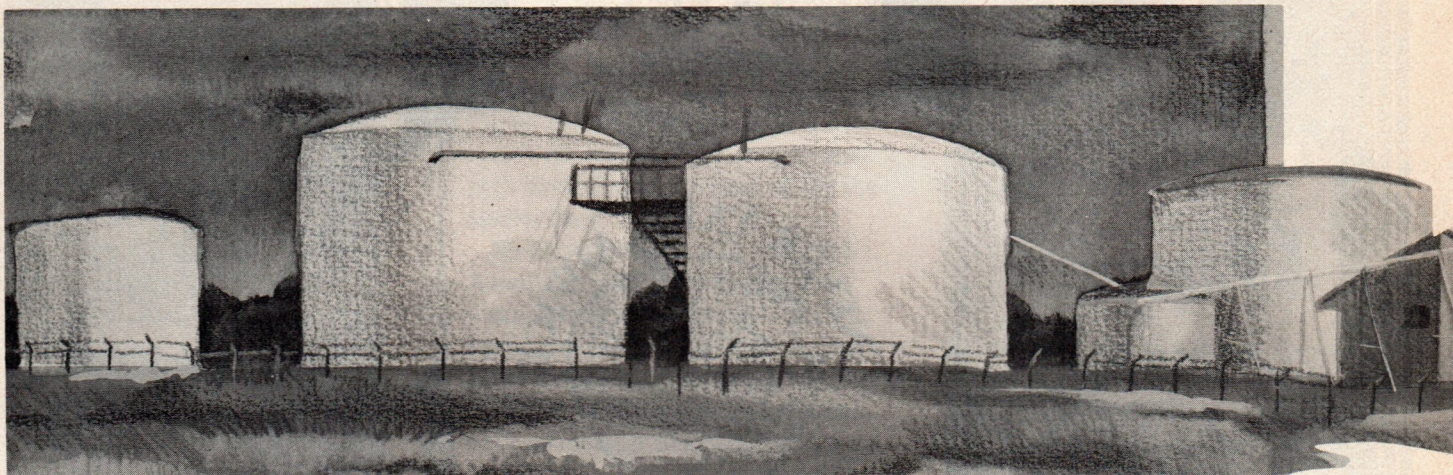
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The Coming of Age of Eschatology

By David A. Dorman



Bill and Nancy were deeply troubled over some things they had heard about the pastor of their new fellowship. Within the last six months they had been drawn to this group by the love and warmth of the pastor and of the people.

But as they learned more about the teaching of the church, they were finding that the pastor had a few fairly disturbing ideas, particularly in the area of end-time prophecy. With deep regret and hurt, they were beginning to think about looking around for another church home where they could be comfortable with the teaching.

Carl was a new convert to Christianity. He had received Jesus as his Lord at a Christian concert after hearing a very powerful message on the imminent return of the Lord and the terrible tribulation that was to come. In a few months, however, he had a conversation with a Bible study leader who scoffed at his expectations of the end times, and showed him a few scriptures that seemed to contra-

dict what he had so recently been taught was true.

Carl was at first surprised that there was a difference of opinion in such an important matter, and then he became embittered and disillusioned about the truth of any end-times teaching. Soon he found himself losing interest in other areas of Christian truth, and he began to find more and more comfort in the diversions that were a part of his old life style.

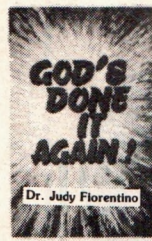
These imaginary situations may represent extreme reactions to eschatology, but unfortunately they have their parallels throughout the evangelical and charismatic world. Arguments over when Jesus is coming back and what events will surround his return have led to sharp divisions in church bodies, resentment and lack of trust between individual Christians, and even the alienation of thousands of non-Christian observers. An amazing assortment of frenzied activity, from littering city street corners with tracts to the sudden liquidation of family

assets, has been attributed to an earnest desire to be responsible to what we know of the last days. And yet the very fact that so much strife has resulted must be a sign to us that something is wrong. Surely God never intended the Scriptures to throw the body of Christ into such confusion and dissent. But what can be done about it?

We may get a clue to a possible solution by glancing back at the formation of theology throughout history. James Orr, in his book *The Progress of Dogma*, makes the point that certain doctrines were developed during certain periods of church history. For instance, in the first five centuries the questions of God's triune personhood and of the nature of Christ, both human and divine, caused the church much anguish and even bloodshed. But with the councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon came clear statements of doctrine based upon Scripture that became foundational for the understanding of future generations.

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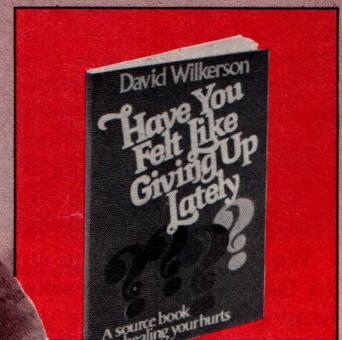
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WHERE DOES IT HURT?



the principles of ecclesiastical authority were debated. The meaning of the atonement was the center of the Reformation furor, and in those years of heroism and tragedy, a truly biblical view of the reason for Jesus' death on the cross matured and was accepted.

In more recent centuries a working theology of missions has emerged. And while there continues to be disagreement among certain groups in many of these areas, the disagreement is over the acceptance or nonacceptance of a mature doctrine and of a basic orthodox understanding of the purpose of missions.

But never has eschatology had the benefit of this process, unless in fact God in his wisdom is now bringing it into the forefront of the life of the church for that very purpose. In a sense, we cannot hope for a complete and accurate theology of the end times until the Lord returns and we find out for sure; but on the other hand, we can certainly admit that we could expect far more than the shrill and

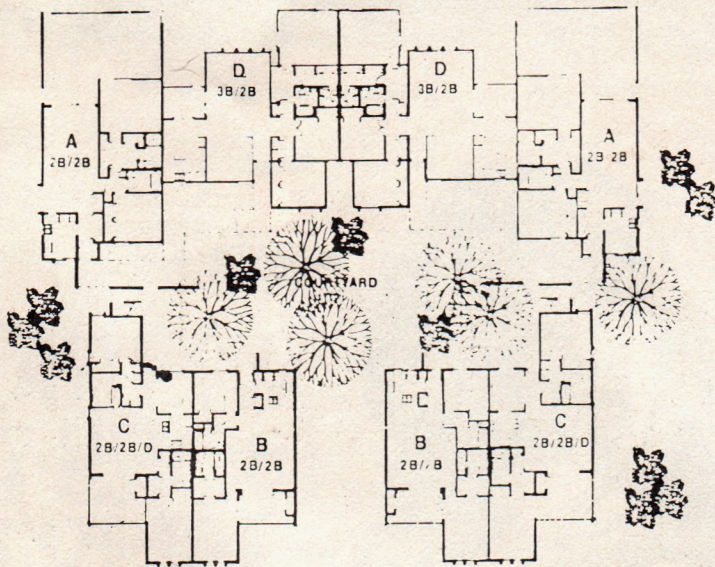
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opinionated bickering that we hear too often in connection with the appearing of our blessed hope.

Is God in the process of bringing forth from the church a more mature eschatology? The recent publication of books such as Robert Clouse's *The Meaning of the Millennium*, Armerding and Gasque's *Dreams, Visions & Oracles* and Erickson's *Contemporary Options in Eschatology*, which allow differing views of tribulation and millennium to be expounded side by side, show a new attitude of openness and communication which has never before entered into the study of these questions. Other hopeful signs are the increased emphasis on responsible study of Scripture among all Christians, and the priority of body relationships which can override doctrinal differences and create an atmosphere of healthy give and take. Most challenging is the daily appearance in newspapers and on television of events that send us searching through the Scriptures so that we can understand how they relate to God's end-time plan. God is using today's international scene to drive the church to a responsible and mature eschatology!

But just as it is in marriage when a couple cannot develop a mature attitude toward each other, so also it is in theology! God cannot move the church into a mature eschatology until the church as a whole is willing to adopt mature and responsible attitudes toward one another, and toward eschatology. Paul declared in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3 that jealousy and strife prevent us from receiving "solid food"; our self-righteous outbursts and quick judgments are not the vehicle through which God can impart truth to his church. Indeed, they are a sign that we must still only be milk-drinkers! Rather, if we are to be partners with God on this

FRUITFUL.

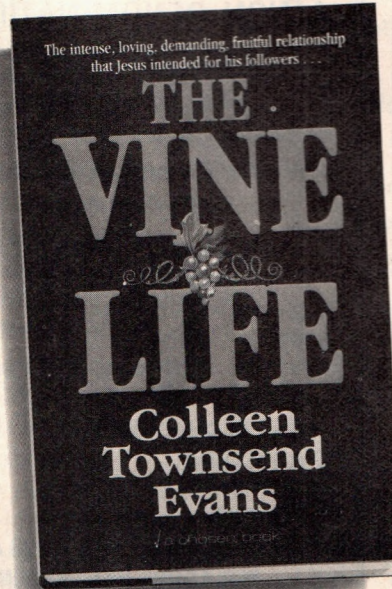
venture, we must make a decision to lay aside our old expectations and to allow God to show us new ways of looking at one another and at Scripture—provided we feel that the prize is valuable enough for these efforts. The challenge is to discover what God has in mind, what he means to say to the church concerning the end times, what points he wants to make in regard to how we are to live in the light of the glory that is to be revealed.

Scripture gives clear guidelines for healthy attitudes in the area of discovering spiritual truth. These might be grouped under the following seven headings:

1. *The attitude of love.* First and foremost, we must understand that knowledge of God's ways is futile if it is not pursued in an attitude of love. Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:15 that a crucial aspect of Christian growing is "speaking the truth in love." Eschatology has been one area of God's truth where we have always felt justified in flinging the facts dramatically in one another's faces without any real concern for the feelings of others. The attitude of love means that feelings must be a prime consideration.

Furthermore, we have no reason to expect anyone to believe a single word we say, no matter how much Scripture we quote, if our love is not in real evidence; for Jesus has told the church that teachers of true doctrine can be known by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-20). Deep knowledge of Jesus Christ may begin with factual knowledge, says Peter, but to that must be added brotherly kindness and Christian love, or we remain "blind or short-sighted" (2 Peter 1:5-9). Let us be careful to rid ourselves of short-sightedness and lovelessness, particularly in this area where our eyes must be clear to see beyond the horizons of time and space.

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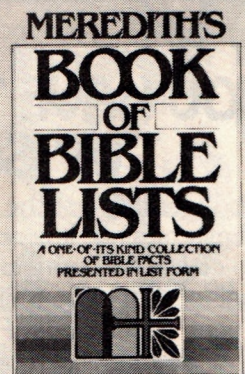
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to seek understanding with our minds, but it is in our hearts that he has taken up residence. Therefore as we reach toward one another with our hearts, and with our hearts toward the meaning of eschatology, then the full truth of God can flow into the church and throughout the church. A truth spoken in love is so much more valuable to God than a truth spoken in dogmatism.

2. *The attitude of dependence on the Holy Spirit.* As those who pursue God's truth, we Christians are reminded again and again of our own limitations in understanding. This is especially the case when we try to ferret out facts about the great end-times dovetailing of history into eternity: Our minds were not built to deal with the high purposes and processes of God. In the face of that weakness, many have turned to charts and systems and relied on mathematics and the spiritual significance of numbers in interpreting prophecy. There is certainly nothing wrong with studying in this way; the Bible is rich with this kind of significance. But there is a mistake in putting reliance on a system of interpretation. The Bible is not a system; it is a lamp unto our feet. It is not intended to be an answer book for all cosmic questions; it is intended to show us how to walk day by day.

There are aspects of God's truth that will always be a mystery to us, as Paul acknowledged when he cried out, "How unsearchable are his . . . ways" (Romans 11:33-36). That which God wishes us to know about him is revealed by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10-16), and the Spirit also controls *when* it is to be revealed (1 Corinthians 12:11). We will find answers to our questions as we prayerfully allow the Spirit to guide us through sound exegetical methods; and we can know we are progressing on the right track only when we have

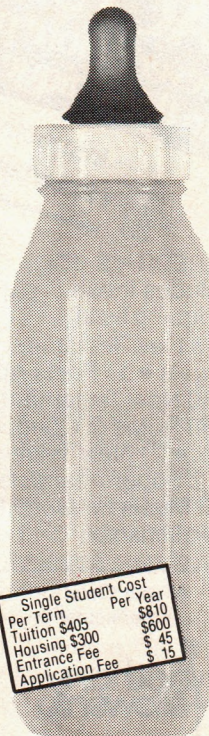
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heard "what the Spirit is saying to the churches" (Revelation 2:7).

3. *The attitude of outreach.* There has always been a special connection between preaching the gospel and the doctrine of the Lord's return. The coming of Jesus in glory has been emphasized in all major revivals, and wherever Christianity is alive and growing there has been a living expectation of the day of the Lord. Jesus himself linked the two when he said, "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come" (Matthew 24:14).

The worldwide preaching of the gospel is perhaps the most important end-time sign we are given. But paradoxically, the eschatology of some has actually prevented the going-forth of the gospel. For instance, take the evangelist who preaches so long on the Second Coming that he gives the impression that the gospel relates to the Second Coming rather than the first. Perhaps this was the problem with our friend Carl; he had discovered the Lord of the Second Advent, but not the Savior of the First Advent.

For another example, take the very large group of Christians who are watching the Middle East for signs of an approaching Armageddon. The tendency for us is to exult at each new outbreak of violence. An especially promising sign is the invasion by Russia of Afghanistan. And yet, can we really function as "the light of the world" if we are hoping, even praying, for war? Does our zeal for the "peace of Jerusalem" keep us from praying for the Arab nations and from sharing our faith with the many Arabs who live in our country? If so, then surely our systems of interpretation have led us out of God's purposes instead of involving us more closely in them.

The end-time message is a message of hope to men from every tribe, tongue, people and nation (Revelation 5:9), and our first concern must be not for our country or for any other country, but for individuals caught in the despair of these times needing to know the life that is in Christ Jesus.

4. *The attitude of respect for God's many ministries.* In the fall of 1979 a prophecy came in a faculty meeting at Melodyland School of Theology to the effect that the ministries which would survive the pressure of the 1980s would be those ministries that followed the Spirit in developing mature and responsible relationships with one another. The Scriptures depict the final days as days of cataclysmic turmoil, a time when the church must draw together for support and strength. The unprecedented miracle of the charismatic movement, which has brought a transdenominational unity wherever it has surfaced, shows the basis of this togetherness: a unity of the Spirit in the purposes of God. In this sense the charismatic movement is very much a sign of the last days.

But even within the charismatic movement there are problems with unity. Many of us have seen the phenomenon of Pentecostal and charismatic churches within the same town having as little to do with each other as they do with the local Divine Light Mission. We exhort church members to attend services by quoting Hebrews 10:25, "not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more, as you see the day drawing near," but as a church we forsake association with other churches, and so fall short of the intent of Scripture.

It is for us, then, to examine our own motives, and to allow the Spirit to lead us into new realms of

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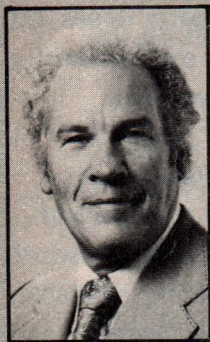
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SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Christians with a sense of humor sometimes get criticized by joyless legalists as being to frivolous.

To add credibility to the stance of austere sobriety in religious matters, those doleful individuals will use a favored text that is found in Matthew 12:36: "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

The key word in Matthew 12:36 is the word "idle." In the Greek it is *argos*, and it means "nonworking, unemployed or inactive." A is a negative prefix and *Ergon* is work. *Argos* is nonworking. Jesus used the same word in the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. Matthew 20:6 says, "Why stand ye here all the day idle (*argos*)? They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us."

Idle words are nonworking words. Jesus is admonishing us to put our words to work for us. Christians can put their words to work for them in a positive, constructive way to promote truth. We are the Lord's salesmen. Our product is the gospel and we must be winsome in order to win some.

An evangelist needs good illustrations; a pastor needs to relate experiences . . . happy or sad, laughter or tears. A teacher needs to develop parables to illuminate the truth.

There are two dangers . . . one, of being too frivolous, too facetious, joking excessively. The other extreme is being too glum, too melancholy, too dour. I believe some churches are empty today because the sanctuary is synonymous with funerals and death. I believe that other churches are hurting because they are trying so hard to be comical they have become an amusement center.

Putting your words to work for you will balance life out so that we can rejoice with those that rejoice and weep with those that weep.

FORUM

unity. God is doing one thing in these days: He is reconciling the world unto himself, through Jesus Christ and through his ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). Should we not then be ready to acknowledge the true work of God in every place his name is honored, and to recognize our own work as a tiny trickle which, added to others, will fill the earth with the glory of the Lord? In following the Spirit in this way, we can trust him to develop us into a church for the end times and, because of this, to pour out upon us a deeper understanding of the end times.

5. *Doctrine according to godliness.* The study of Scripture and of the principles of Christian living should lead us to a continually empowered quality of life before the Lord. This is what Paul means when he says in 1 Timothy 6:3 and Titus 1:1 that doctrine is in accord with godliness. We expect that a word study on, say, holiness will have an effect on our lives, and that through it we will upgrade our behavior.

Eschatology too is given primarily that we may know what to do *now*. Unfortunately, it is not always studied from that perspective. A neighbor of mine, not yet a professing Christian, loves to listen to Hal Lindsey tapes. But he listens out of curiosity, and not from a desire to express in his life the godliness of Christ. I've heard of another man, a Christian, who recently left the area to move to South America in order to escape the tribulation and other inconveniences associated with the great and terrible day of the Lord. He, too, amassed facts about the end times but failed to pick out from Scripture the weight of godly responsibility that we Christians have to our communities and to one another as we face the future.

The study of eschatology ought to lead us more and more to trust

in God's faithfulness and to develop a life style that is increasingly Christ-like. If at any point we are espousing doctrines without knowing exactly in what way they bear upon our walk today before the Lord, then we are in danger of being involved in vain speculation. John mentions the hope of Jesus' return, and says that "everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:3, NASB). For John eschatology was not a mind game, but a serious challenge to a holy life. This kind of challenge must be a part of our pursuit of mature eschatology.

6. *The attitude of confidence.* With the amazing array of eschatological theories that abound these days, and with the confusing way they seem to pounce on us from radios, car bumpers, our own mailboxes and television, we can hardly blame the many Christians who throw their hands up in the air and give up trying to come to any conclusions about eschatology. In fact, those of us who do make it a matter of study may wish from time to time that we could slip back into a state of blissful ignorance! But the deeper truth, of course, is that if we cease to study any aspect of God's counsel, we cut ourselves off from an avenue of his grace. We know that "all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16); therefore we must be careful to interact with all Scripture.

Those awesome millennial schemes cannot deter us from looking into the matter for ourselves. Confidence in God's ability to make clear his truth to us should and can characterize our study of the end times; "and such confidence we have through Christ toward God" (2 Corinthians 3:4). Paul exhorts the people of Thessalonica, "But

examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (1 Thesalonians 5:21). We can know answers to certain questions, certainly in the areas that God wants us to have knowledge. There are times we must be content with mystery. But if we have pursued God's truth with confidence, then we will be confident even in mystery, knowing it is God's guidance that keeps us from overstepping the bounds of speculation.

7. *The attitude of praise.* Eschatology is, in large part, a study of praise. In the book of Revelation, for instance, we cannot read far without encountering powerful description of worship and praise. In fact, the whole context of the eternal state seems to be praise, and it is the destiny of the human race. For this reason, it is clear that the only way we can approach the subject is in a lively sense of praise

and thanksgiving. To do anything else would seem to miss the main message of eschatology.

We want to approach eschatology with a sense of growth. We are expecting to benefit by our experience, expecting to encounter God and be changed. We see in 2 Corinthians 3:18 that it is not by encountering facts about God but only as we encounter God himself that we are transformed from glory to glory. To be seeking his truth in an attitude of vulnerability to him, and in praise of him, is to ensure that we will not be left only with the facts, but rather joined more closely to him in understanding and in joy.

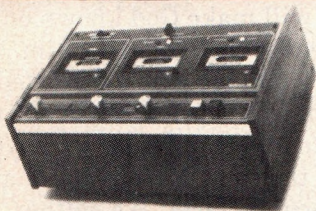
These, then, are seven attitudes which the Scriptures encourage us to have as we pursue God's truth. Our aim in seeking a mature and responsible eschatology is not to get everyone agreeing to the same

system of thought. That is beyond imagining, at this point. The question is, primarily, whether it is currently God's desire to set in the church at this time a mature eschatology, an eschatology that has come of age, and is free from the kind of narrowmindedness that has characterized so much of the recent debate. It is a question that must be answered by individuals who are willing to rise to the challenge of renewed attitude, and the monumental task of research and writing. But the question must also be faced by the church as a whole, for the church must encourage the pursuit of mature eschatology, and then be willing for her end-time child to grow up. ∞

The son of Presbyterian missionaries, David A. Dorman grew up in Beirut, Lebanon. He is acting dean of student affairs and adjunct in theology at Melodyland School of Theology, Anaheim, Calif.

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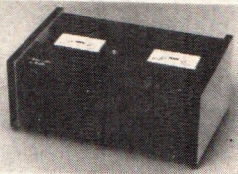


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TEACHING

It's How You Finish That Counts

By Joy Dawson

In this article I want us to stop and consider some of the reasons why people who have been used of God in the past (often mightily) are relatively ineffective today.

God wants to use it as a *warning* to those who (1) are expecting to be used by God, through obedience to revealed truth, (2) are being used by God, and as an *explanation* to those who (1) have been used by God in the past more than he is using them now (2) to show the way back, to the restoration of a fruitful anointed ministry.

There's a high price for a *sustained* anointing in ministry and intimate friendship with God. It's the price of obedience. But the rewards from God far outweigh the price.

King Josiah, Solomon, Noah, Jehoshophat, Joash, Uzziah, Saul, Hezekiah and Gideon all started well, were greatly used of God, but then failed seriously in the end. Probably not one of those leaders (or their followers) ever dreamed they would have ended that way.

We need to heed the warnings from their lives. We need constantly to ask ourselves the questions, "Was there a time in the past when the anointing of God was upon my ministry more than it is now?" and, "Have I experienced a closer friendship with God than I'm experiencing now?"

If the answer is yes, we need to stop and take time in God's presence, asking him to reveal to us the sins that have caused that decline. We must not let him go until we've heard from him, repented and

made any restitution that he should require. David and Nebuchadnezzar failed seriously, but through being known for what they really were, before God and men, and through deep repentance, they finished righteously.

God makes it clear in Ezekiel 18:21-24 that regardless of what our righteousness record has been, God judges us on what it is now. In fact, it is part of God's justice that the more light we have the more

Warning: Here are 13 sins that will cause you to lose God's anointing on your life and ministry.

accountable we are to live accordingly—and the more judgment we receive from God if we don't. James 3:1 says, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, for you know that we who teach shall be judged with greater strictness" (unless otherwise noted, references are from the Revised Standard Version).

God makes it equally clear in Psalm 92:12-14 that he intends us to have a fruitful anointed ministry into old age. It depends entirely upon the righteousness of our lives:

The righteous flourish like the palm tree, and grow like a cedar in Lebanon,

They are planted in the house of the Lord, they flourish in the courts of God.

They still bring forth fruit in old age, they are ever full of sap and green.

The following are some of the most prevalent sins that cause us to lose our anointing in ministry and, in time, the exercising of our ministry altogether.

1. Failure to spend time alone with God.

We commit this sin through failure to spend time consistently in the Word of God, getting to know him. "For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings" (Hosea 6:6). "The beginning of wisdom is this: Get wisdom, and whatever you get, get insight" (Proverbs 4:7). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is insight" (Proverbs 9:10).

We will make God known only to the degree that we know him. So many times we give a distorted view of God's character in our ministry to others, because we have not taken the time to study his character, facet by facet. We neither know him in intimacy of friendship nor understand his character or the principles by which he operates (his ways). We need to cry out with Paul, "That I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death!" (Philippians 3:10), and with Moses, "Show me now thy ways, that I may know thee and find favor in thy sight" (Exodus 33:13). Then show God that we mean it by taking time in his Word, believing that he will reveal both himself and his ways to us.

Another way we commit this sin is failure to spend time consistently in unhurried worship to the Lord. “. . . You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve” (Matthew 4:10). The order is very significant. Ministry to the Lord in worship must never be less than ministry for the Lord involving people. If it is, our ministry to the people will be relatively weak.

And a third way we commit this sin is failure to spend time consistently in intercession for others. “There is no one that calls upon thy name, that bestirs himself to take hold of thee” (Isaiah 64:7). “And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor” (Isaiah 59:16, KJV).

2 Persistent disobedience to revealed truth.

“None of the men who have seen my glory and my signs . . . and yet have put me to the proof these ten times and have not hearkened to my voice, shall see the land which I swore to give to their fathers” (Numbers 14:22-23).

Even one act of disobedience cost Saul his anointing when he rejected the word of the Lord through Samuel, although it was some time before God removed him from the position of leadership. Also, in 1 Kings 13, one act of disobedience during one afternoon cost the young prophet his life.

Solomon disobeyed God by multiplying to himself wives and horses; he not only lost his anointing and appointing, but God raised up three adversaries against him. No leader had a greater heritage, a greater start in ministry, or greater potential, than Solomon.

“And by this we may be sure that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He who says ‘I know him’ but disobeys his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him” (1 John 2:3-4).

One pastor told me he had been disobedient to God’s call to leave his pastoral position in a very large church and go into further training to enter foreign missionary service. He said the results had been: (1) His friendship with God had gone from an intimate one to a distant one; he was not hearing God speak to him nearly as often. (2) The anointing had lifted off his teaching ministry. (3) Vision for world missions had almost faded. (4) He was bored and frustrated.

He then deeply repented and obeyed the call of God. Every one of the prior results of disobedience was dramatically turned around, and today he’s experiencing the fulfillment and joy of obedience.

3. Phoniness.

This means not living the truth or not confessing publicly that we’ve failed to live the truth we’ve previously lived, before giving a message proclaiming that truth.

It includes lack of preparation before speaking to the people, by not “standing in the council of the Lord to hear the word of the Lord, and then giving God’s words to His people” as God rebukes the prophets in Jeremiah 23:18, 21, 22. We’re phony if we give other people’s messages without acknowledging the source. Verse 30 follows: “Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, says the Lord, who steal my words from one another” (Jeremiah 23:30).

It’s not sufficient to know the truth, to teach the truth. We have to *live* the truth to *be* the truth. And it’s only *being* the truth when *teaching* the truth that will cause God’s Spirit to be released to motivate other lives to receive and act upon the truth. “For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the Lord, and to do it, and to teach his statutes and ordinances in Israel” (Ezra 7:10).

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THE TEACHING WORD

During Easter season my mind was freshly renewed with resurrection truths. Most people think of graves opening up and glorious ascension to heaven. We rejoice knowing the grave will not hold our body. I am sure none of us is eager to die physically in anticipation of a glorious resurrection. No, death is an enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26).

For the born-again Christian, a most real resurrection has already happened. A new man has made a triumphal entry into our life, thanks to the likes of a grave (our old man) giving way and opening up, permitting for Christ-life to come in. Literally, a measure of heaven came in. Our spirit was quickened; thus we ascended to a new relationship with God.

Our emphasis needs to be upon the *new life* we have entered into. This is Christ's life, God's life, Holy Spirit life, Kingdom of God life, or more explicitly, *Resurrection Life*. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a *new creature*: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

Again Paul says in Colossians 3:1-2 "If ye then be risen with Christ (here now in this world), seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth." What are the *above* things?

That good thing which is beyond your present grasp is above: peace in the stead of your fears, joy in the stead of your depression, faith in the stead of your unbelief, love in the stead of your resentment.

Christian, we are presently risen with Christ and seated in heavenly places, contingent upon your believing correctly, provided you have set your affection on God's love, joy, peace, faith, etc. *Resurrection Life!*

TEACHING

continued from page 35

And we're phony if we have a double standard in our relationships—maybe a bad domestic relationship privately but a public image of a good one.

4. Unholy relationships with either sex, in thought, word or deed.

Our friendship with anyone is only as holy as our thought life in relation to that person. "But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7, KJV). "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy" (Proverbs 28:13).

We lose our anointing by failing to acknowledge and repent of these sins, or failing to make any restitution that the Lord should require, after we have sought him diligently concerning this. "Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters . . . nor revilers, nor robbers, will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). "For nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known and come to light" (Luke 8:17).

5. Lack of forgiving others who have hurt us.

"See to it that no one fail to obtain the grace of God; that no 'root of bitterness' spring up and cause trouble, and by it the many become defiled" (Hebrews 12:15).

The sin of resentment is one of the most destructive forces to our minds, bodies, souls and spirits, and therefore to our ministries. In Matthew 6:14-15 God says if we don't forgive others he will not forgive us our sins. Many a person has

lost the "cutting edge" in his ministry—and in time the ministry itself—through failure to ask for and receive by faith, God's forgiving love so that it can flow through him. One ministry of the Holy Spirit is to give this love. "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

6. Touching the Lord's anointed.

"Touch not my anointed ones, do my prophets no harm" (Psalm 105:15). "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get" (Matthew 7:1-2).

Very often the sins of open criticism, and judging wrongly are committed because of a lack of knowledge of all the facts. Sometimes it's ridicule through humorous remarks about the other person's ministry or methods. A minister once said to me, "My worst punishments from God always come from speaking against other ministries."

God's view of this sin is made starkly clear by the severity of the punishments he gave to the prophetess Miriam in Numbers 12:9-10, and to David's wife Michal in 2 Samuel 6:23. Miriam was stricken with leprosy, and Michal with a barren womb.

I was attending a convention where I was placed in charge of the counseling for women. There was a deep move of the Holy Spirit. I had been counseling a woman under the direction of the Spirit, and her needs were obviously being met, when suddenly all knowledge of what I was to do next left me.

When I asked God to reveal if there was some blockage in me that would cause his Spirit to cease flowing in the release of his wisdom and knowledge, I came under conviction of sin. God reminded me

that earlier in the day I had made a casual derogatory remark to my husband about one of the speakers at the convention.

I also remembered confessing my sin at the time to God, in front of my husband. *But I had not seen that sin as God sees it*; therefore my confession and repentance were shallow. I had touched the Lord's anointed and God wanted to impress upon me the gravity of that sin in his sight.

As the conviction became deeper I fell to my knees and cried out to God for mercy. Then it increased, until I was lying on the floor groaning under the weight of it.

When I finally felt his peace restored to me, I got up and went back to being available to God on behalf of the woman, and immediately his Spirit started flowing through me again. A change took place in my life that day—very humbling and very necessary. I had a vivid lesson in the truth of Jeremiah 15:19: “. . . And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth . . .” (KJV).

7. Pride, through taking the glory away from God and giving it to ourselves.

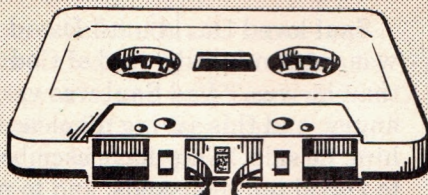
“. . . My glory will I not give to another” (Isaiah 42:8, KJV).

King Nebuchadnezzar was warned by the prophet Daniel in Daniel 4:25-27 to repent of sin and acknowledge God's supremacy. One year later, after he failed to do so, the most humiliating judgment from God fell upon him. Verse 33 says, “He was driven from among men, and ate grass like an ox. . . .”

“And now, O priests, this command is for you. If you will not listen, if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name, says the Lord of hosts, then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings (Malachi 2:1-2).

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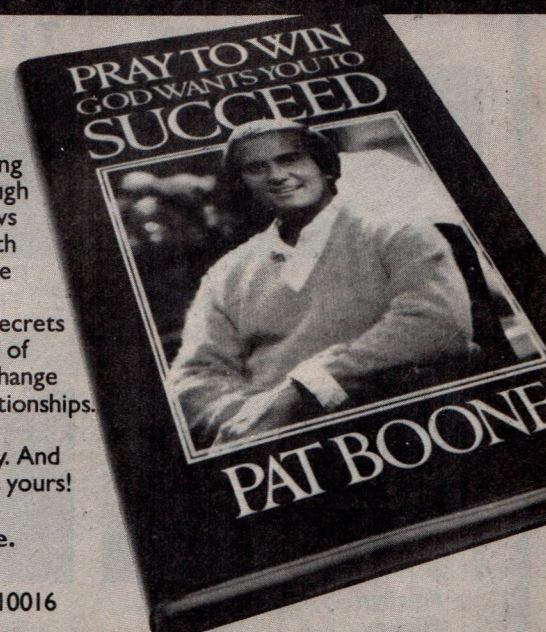
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TEACHING

continued from page 37

8. Pride, through not receiving correction from others.

We become aware of this when the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that (a) the correction is coming from him, (b) it is done in the right timing and (c) it is done in gentleness, meekness and love.

In 2 Chronicles 26:16-20 King Uzziah resisted correction from the priests because he had stepped outside his sphere of ministry and was exercising a ministry that was not his. Result, verse 21: "And King Uzziah was a leper to the day of his death . . . for he was excluded from the house of the Lord. . . ."

9. Jealousy.

This happens when we fail to acknowledge—and rejoice—when God is glorified in another's life and ministry.

Saul loved David until David was more mightily used of God than he was. "And Saul was very angry, and this saying displeased him; he said, 'They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed thousands; and what more can he have but the kingdom?' And Saul eyed David from that day on." (1 Samuel 18:8-9).

The judgment from God on this sin of jealousy was unusual and severe. Verse 10 says, "And on the morrow an evil spirit from God rushed upon Saul, and he raved within his house. . . ."

10. Lack of submission to others in authority.

We can sin (a) by not being *willing* to come under the authority of others: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21); (b) by not being obe-

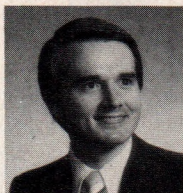
dient to God when he makes it clear we are to come under the authority of others, or (c) by failing to submit, when under the authority of a headship operating according to biblical principles.

11. Failure to wait on God, constantly, to get his up-date vision for the people we lead.

This means failing to seek God to know who are the right people, with the right ministries, operating with the methods that are according to God's ways, functioning in the right timing, to fulfill that vision. David failed badly on this one in 1 Chronicles 13. But his frustration changed into fulfillment in 1 Chronicles 15 when he repented of the sin of presumption and of failing to take the time to seek God in his leadership responsibilities. In Psalm 19:13 David prays, "Keep back thy servant also

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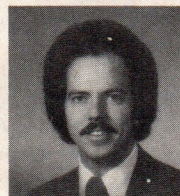
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from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless and innocent of great transgression."

12. The fear of man.

The fear of man is being more concerned with man's reactions to our actions, than with God's reactions to our actions. "The fear of man brings a snare . . ." (Proverbs 29:25, NASB).

God never releases true authority upon us in ministry until we are delivered from this snare. And the only way to be free from it is to have the fear of the Lord. We need to ask for it constantly and receive it by faith. We know we have it when our deepest concern at all times is God's reactions to our actions.

I have seen spiritual leaders lose all authority from God in ministry because of the fear of man. Only

through confession and repenting of this sin before God and in front of the people, and calling on God for the fear of the Lord, has God's authority been restored.

13. Not fulfilling daily the conditions to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

" . . . Be (continuously) filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18) by (a) having a totally yielded will to God, (b) repenting of all known sin and making restitution where God requires it, (c) asking to be controlled by his Spirit and (d) receiving it by faith.

In Luke 13:6-9 we read about the parable of the fig tree. For three years the owner had come looking for fruit and found none, and he decided to cut it down. Later he agreed to give it one more year to bear fruit; if it didn't he would have it destroyed.

God graciously gives us many warnings to humble ourselves and repent of the sins that have caused the anointing of God to be lifted from our ministries. If we persist in resisting him, we will become one of the countless numbers of God's disappointments. "Therefore I will judge you . . . every one according to his ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin" (Ezekiel 18:30).

In 2 Chronicles 35:27 we read about the "first and last" acts of King Josiah, and in 2 Chronicles 16:11 about the acts of King Asa "from first to last." How will the account of *our last* acts read?

It's not so important how you *started* in ministry—it's how you *finish* that counts! ☞

The author, a New Zealander who now lives in California, has a teaching ministry with Youth With a Mission.

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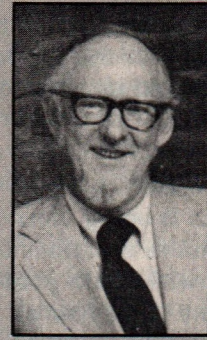
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Many months ago I learned that Le LeSourd and his wife Catherine Marshall were writing a book for Chosen, *My Personal Prayer Diary*. The book was based on their own habit of keeping a year-by-year record of conversation with God. The day begins with a portion of Scripture, followed by a meditation and a place for prayer requests and answers.

I liked the idea so much I started keeping a record of my own. Over the month three unexpected benefits followed:

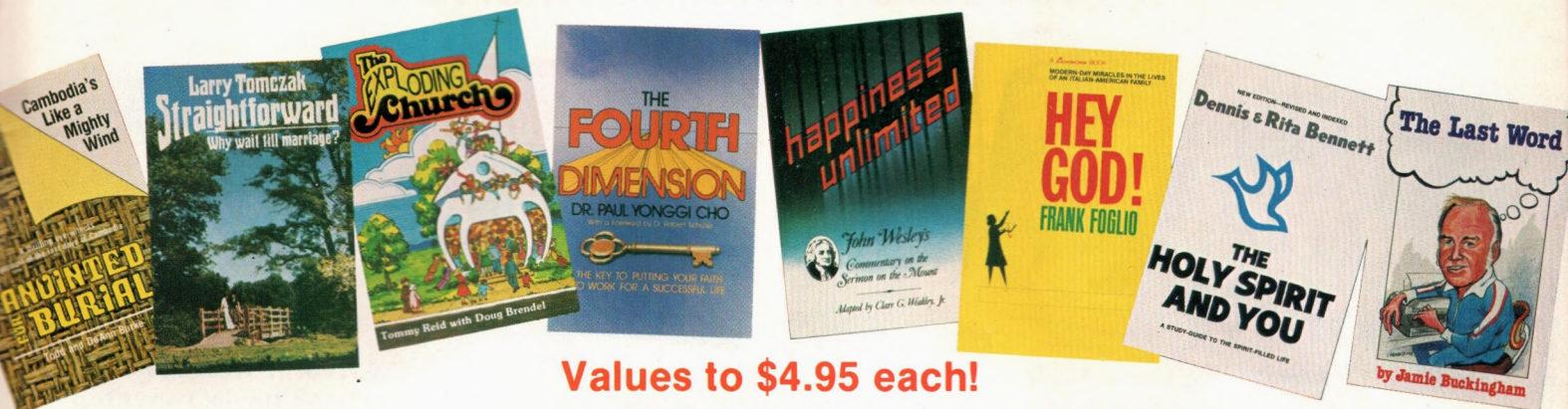
1. *Spiritual thermometer*. I find that I can look over my notebook and track my spiritual health. Some pages are filled with notes of my "conversations" with the Father. But there are other days when something is wrong. The days when I should spend more time with God, I actually spend less time. On one day, for example, I was so blue that the only notation was, "Hi!"

Nevertheless, even these days are encouraging because invariably, my notebook shows, they are followed by return to better communication.

2. *Balance*. I soon discovered that my morning time was badly out of balance. There was much intercession and there were a lot of prayer requests. But was I really *listening* to God? So I began spending more time with the Bible, listening. On the days when I was careful to follow this pattern, I found that my own concerns were put into a new perspective—God's perspective.

3. *Encouragement*. I especially enjoyed the portion of the diary reserved for God's answers. What a large percentage of the intercessions and requests really are answered—not always in the way I expect, of course, but answered nonetheless. On days when I need encouragement (my "Hi!" days) I spend a few moments going over these responses and come away with my spirit lifted.

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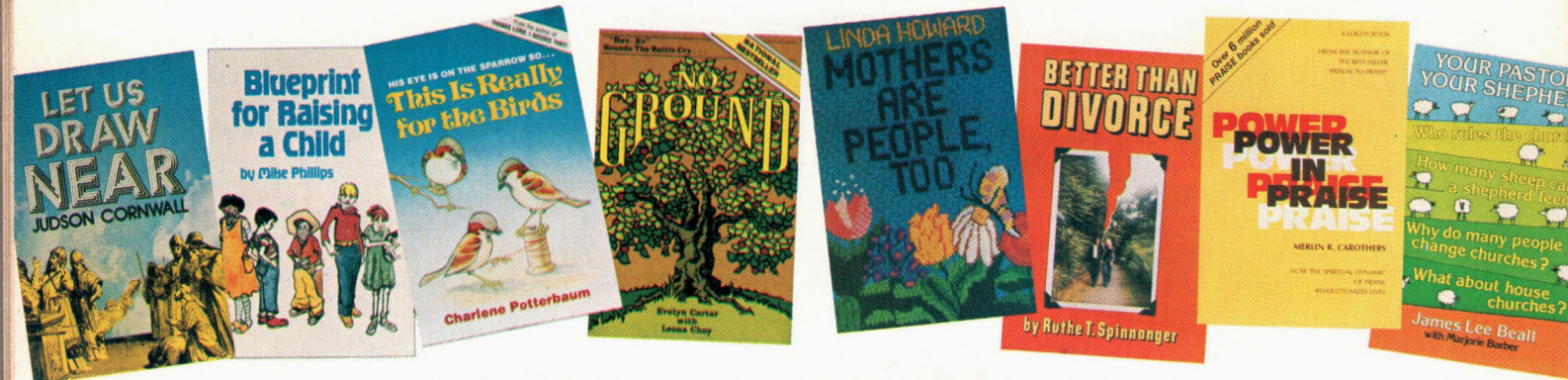
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REVIEW

Books: A Caring Critique of Mormonism

THE MORMON MIRAGE, by Latayne Colvett Scott (Zonder-van, Grand Rapids, Mich., 276 pages, \$10.95, hardcover).

I usually avoid reading anti-cult literature because it frequently seems so uncharitable and condescending toward cultists. Such is not the case with *The Mormon Mirage*, however, because the author is careful to avoid what she regards as the two major mistakes of anti-cult books: underestimating the intelligence, integrity and character of the cultists and not checking or embellishing facts related to the cult. Mrs. Scott's warm writing style enables her to challenge Mormons—and all others—with biblical truths tempered by a great deal of empathy and concern. Her sensitive and caring approach reflects the love of God; it will speak to Mormons in a compelling manner.

The book is partly autobiographical, partly didactic. At the outset, we see what the author faced when she began to question the authority of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints after having been a Mormon for nearly ten years. One churchman snapped, "How can you think such things? *You will never be happy again!*" Fortunately, the man's prophecy was erroneous, for Latayne's search for truth led her to an exciting personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The book reflects the author's deep concern for honesty and truth. Her extensive bibliography of approximately 80 titles (many of which are LDS publications) and her clear portrayal of her own personal struggles give solid credibility to this study of Mormon history,

teachings, writings, doctrines, government, finances, proselyting and worship. The book's question-and-answer appendix deals with significant questions concerning the Mormon faith. *Logos* readers will be especially fascinated by the answer to the question, "Are Mormons Charismatics?"

Mrs. Scott has successfully explained what the Mormon Church teaches and has carefully pointed out the fundamental disagreement between Mormonism and Christianity. She writes, "This is the tragedy of Mormonism. It has substituted man for God and cheated its people out of confidence in the Savior. It has denied the free gifts of God and made its people work at the impossible task of saving themselves. I do not regret my years as a Mormon. I pray that my experience may lead others to Christ." It is certain to accomplish that purpose.

—Lloyd Hildebrand

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN RELIGION: A Guide for Lay Christians, by William Gentz (Hawthorn Books, Inc., New York, 245 pages, \$5.95, trade paperback).

This book provides information on career opportunities in religious fields; it is written for the Christian layperson. The author has obviously done extensive research.

The individual who seeks an overview of the field of religious occupations will find Gentz's book a helpful tool. It appears clearly appropriate for libraries of occupational and educational information—especially at the secondary and college levels. For students who need to become familiar with the world of work,

this manual will provide a good introduction.

Unfortunately, however, the individual who seeks deeper help in career guidance will find this work somewhat disappointing. It does not give help in areas of decision making, values clarification, differentiating between one's interests and abilities, the concept of vocation, knowing God's will, or mid-career counseling.

One of the most valuable components of *Career Opportunities in Religion* is the list of addresses to which one can write for additional information concerning a wide range of occupational possibilities. The listed resources include directories, books on careers, career development centers, denominational (and nondenominational) career offices and agencies, and churches and organizations that employ workers in each of the fields surveyed.

For each career area, the reader is presented with an outline that covers responsibilities, education and training, opportunities and sources of additional information. *Career Opportunities in Religion* could well become an occupational outlook handbook for Christians and their counselors.

—L.H.

WOMAN, by Dale Evans Rogers with Carole C. Carlson (Fleming H. Revell Co., Old Tappan, N.J., 1980, 127 pages. \$5.95, cloth).

Red gingham scarves, denim, horses and hitching posts, Roy Rogers and singing—all are familiar tags we pin on Dale Evans. Yet, while her contributions to entertainment are readily recognized, we may be slighting Dale

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REVIEW

Evans Rogers by not crediting her for the perceptive spiritual insights she indeed possesses. Her newest book proves she is far more than an entertainer.

Woman is by no means a literary breakthrough in female psychology; the usual subjects one finds in a woman's book—marriage, birth of children, divorce, emotions, expectations and duties—are discussed and dealt with head on. But what is different is Dale's attitude and the approach with which she writes. Her style is so candid and simplistic, so "authentic" if you will, that you may just lose yourself in her conversation, to the point perhaps of believing that the two of you are babbling away the morning over tea and breakfast cakes. She becomes your friend, neighbor, confidante and mother all rolled into one.

A second strength of the book lies in Dale's usage of Scripture. Early on, she establishes the fact that God's Word provides all the necessary guidelines for a woman's growth and conduct; any point made thereafter receives an extra dousing or two of scriptural reference—her consistent reminder that we must be brought back to biblical law.

Each subject she discusses exudes a positive mien; for the first time since ERA and NOW, I finally felt myself rising out of the muck and mire of ho-hum, overused women's liberation jargon into a welcoming air of femininity and a newness of hope. Funny thing, though: All those new feelings of femininity, self-respect and purpose aren't new at all—they've been available to us since the day we were created. In the area of womanhood, we can choose to be "tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine. . ." but *Woman* grabs you midstream, sits you down and asks you to make a choice.

—Susan Hyldahl



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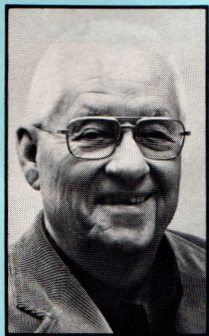
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KING'S KIDS KORNER

"Your attitudes control your actions" is a fact of life and the theme of my new book *How To Do the Bible Thing About Everything*. And doing the Bible thing about guidance from God probably saved my life a few hours ago.

I left home intending to visit the local Central Savings Bank straight up the street ahead of me. But as I approached the intersection, the Spirit seemed to say, "Go to First National instead." Having learned that obedience is better than sacrifice I turned left toward the other bank about a block away.

Then my common sense came into action. "This is silly," I said out loud, recalling the inconvenience of their parking facility. So I turned around in the middle of the road and within 40 or 50 seconds drove into the Central Bank rear entrance. Looking in through the car-deposit window, I saw a scene of total panic. The employees were in various states of shock, fear and obvious upset, grabbing for telephones and screaming at one another.

"Go away and come back later," one of them said as I prepared to transact my business. "We've just been robbed," she sobbed and ran into the vault.

Just around the corner I met a policeman who told me the rest. The armed robber was caught about two miles up the street, complete with gun and booty. Doing the Bible Thing about God's guidance had probably saved me from running straight into the arms of the robber, had I not responded to the "still small voice" inside.

The Bible Thing about guidance is to rely totally on God's statement in Romans 8:14 and simply act as though I believed that as a son of God I am continually being led by his Spirit. It is the attitude of simple faith that my Heavenly Father is in complete control of my life and affairs.

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THE LAST WORD

Modern-day Chaldeans?

By Jamie Buckingham

I admit to the anger I felt, sitting there in front of the TV. On camera was one of the Arab ambassadors to OPEC. He was commenting on the last increase in the price of oil—and why the Arabs, with all their money, had decided to sock it to us again.

“It’s time the American people changed their way of living,” he said. “You’ve had too much for too long. Now you’ll find out how the rest of the world lives.”

“What audacity,” I fumed. “What right does some Arab have to change my life style? They are just jealous over our paved streets, working sewers and kitchens with refrigerators and electric stoves. Now that they control the oil, they’re trying to pull us down to their level.”

I was angry that someone was tampering with my way of living and with my right to own three cars, a tractor and a pick-up truck.

But after my anger subsided I sat and thought. We *are* a wastrel people. We waste water. Our family throws away enough food scraps each week to feed an entire slum family in Cambodia.

Yet, as Americans we bristle when someone tries to push us around. We’re cocky. We’re independent. Especially are we independent.

Management doesn’t like being pushed around by organized labor. Working men don’t like being pushed around by bosses. Women don’t like submitting to men—even to husbands. In the church, words like “submission” and “discipleship” send us into a teeth-gnashing fury.

We simply don’t like being

pushed around: by the police, the IRS, the Iranians, our elders—even God. To live for the moment is the prevailing passion—to live for self, not for God, not for predecessors or posterity.

In his brilliant book, *The Culture of Narcissism*, Christopher Lasch says it is a “sense of ending” which is giving shape to the world today. Impending disaster has become such an everyday concern that nobody gives much thought to how disaster might be averted. Instead, people busy themselves with survival strategies, measures designed

“I was angry that someone was tampering with my way of living and right to own three cars.”

to prolong their own lives, or programs guaranteed to ensure good health, peace of mind and sensual gratification.

It’s no wonder we hate the Iranians. We hate everyone who would interrupt our last efforts to be happy.

Fiercely independent, we have developed a philosophy—even in our churches—of doing what we please, and what pleases us. Since God wants us to be happy, we preach, then we have the right to that happiness—even at the expense of others.

But what do we do when a handful of Arabs control the oil spigot of the world? We explode. We rattle our sabres in the Persian Gulf and in the name of the Almighty threaten the heathens who would shut off the oil to the kingdom of God.

I asked a fellow Christian why he attended the “Washington for Jesus” rally back in April. He said he had gone to take a stand for God and country. But one wonders: Is God calling on Americans to “stand up” for him or to “bow down” in humility? A careful reading of 2 Chronicles 7:14 might prove embarrassing to hymn-singing demonstrators. Maybe cutting off our oil will help with the answer.

Surely, though, God would not punish us Christians—especially us charismatic Christians—along with the infidels, would he? The oil crisis cannot be from God, can it? Would the God who commissioned us to buy fleets of buses, who told us to go millions of dollars into debt to the world system in order to build air-conditioned churches, who with a wave of his hand established the electronic church—all dependent on oil—would that God also shut off the oil valve to America?

If ever we seemed to have a divine mandate to set up a military blockade in the Persian Gulf, it is now. How else can we please God, who taught us to sing, “Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning, burning, burning”?

Yet the nagging question remains: If God sent the Chaldeans to give his chosen people, the Israelites, a hard time for becoming sloppy and irreverent, is it not possible that once again “men from the east” might be sent by God to call us to task—not only for our hedonistic way of life, but for our attitudes of narcissism and independence?

Or have the watchmen gone inside to watch TV? ☞

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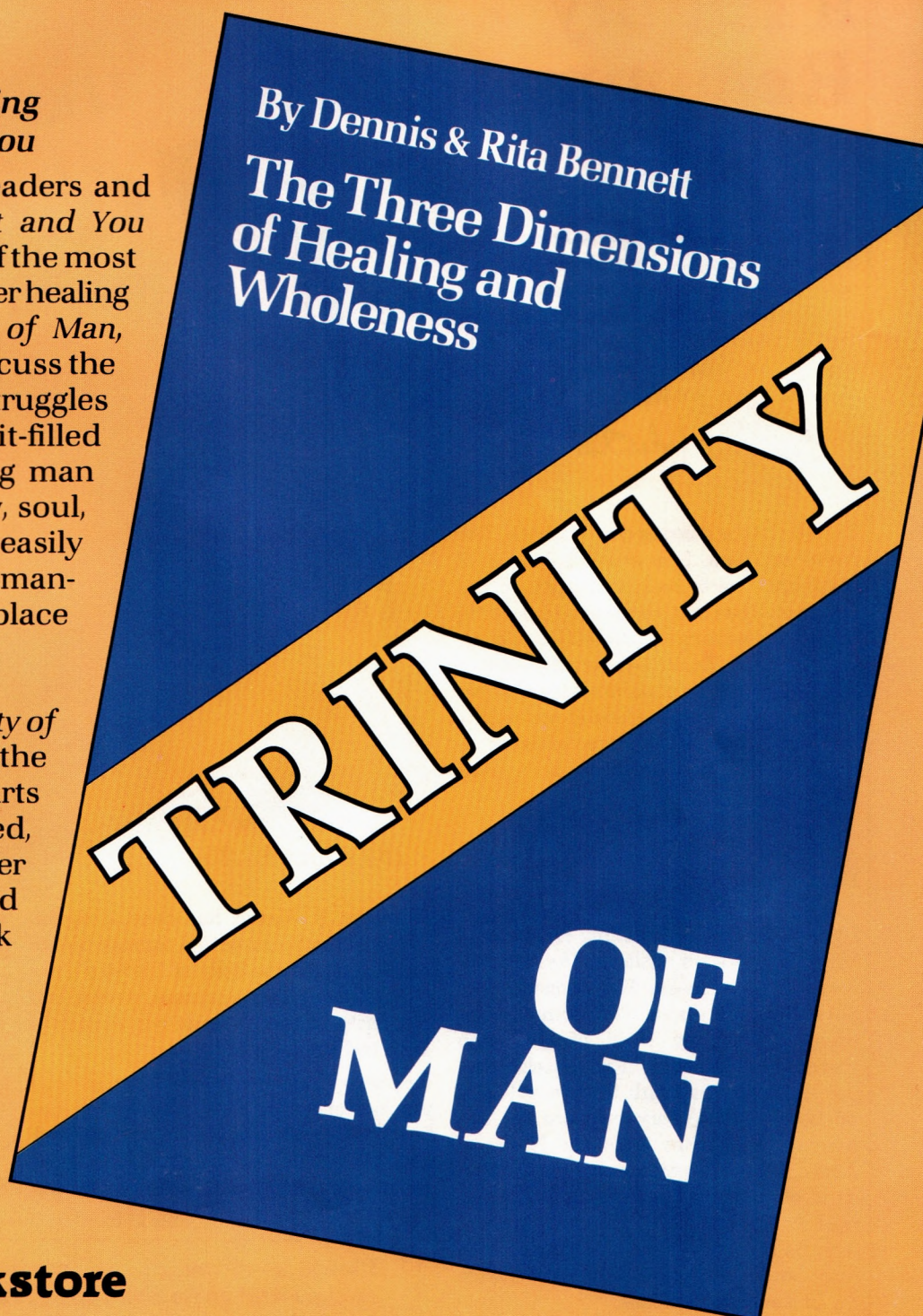
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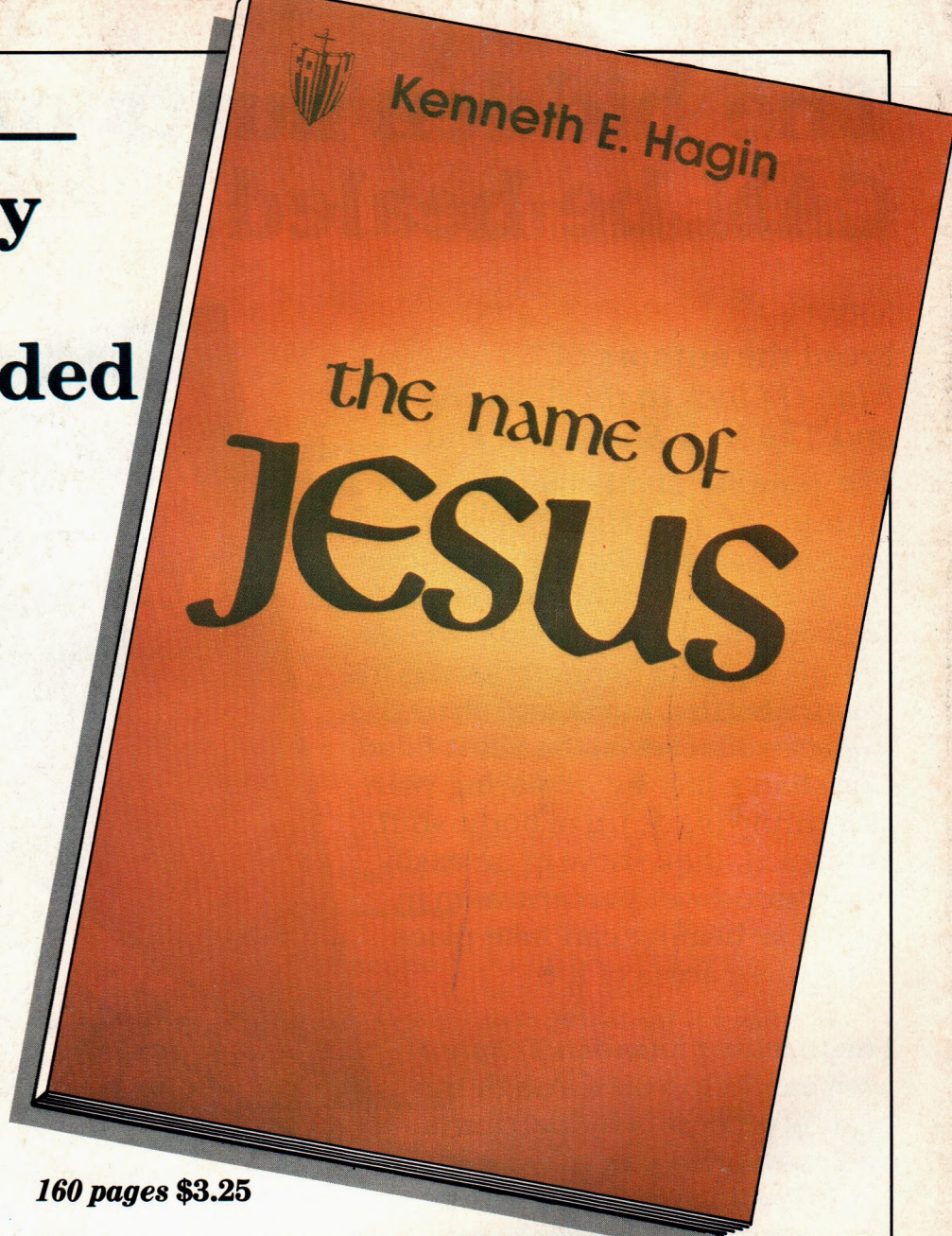
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Kenneth Copeland

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