

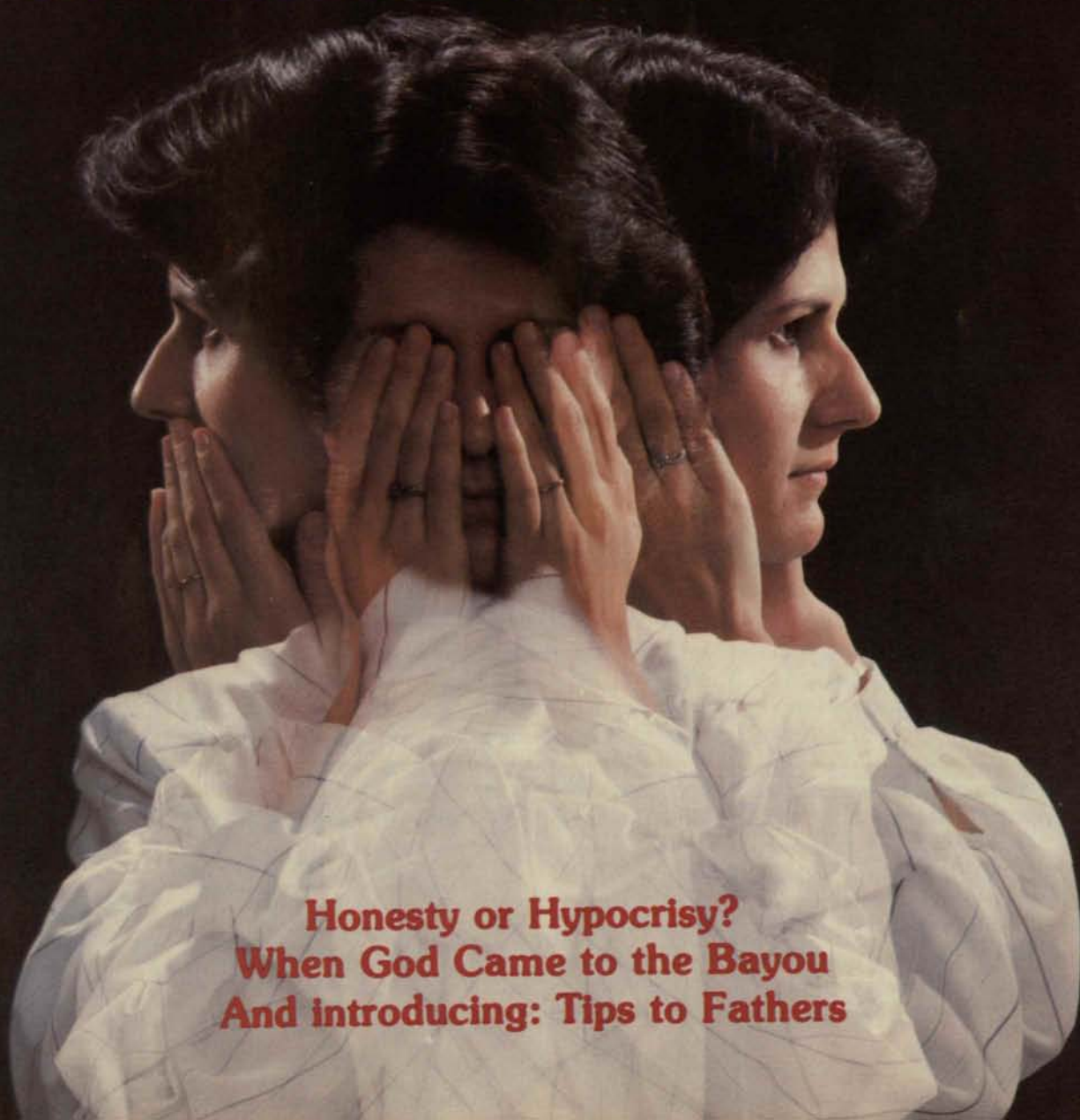
# Magazine **New Wine**®

Help for reaching our destiny in God.

May 1981

## **Facing Reality**

**Our need to come to grips with life as it is**



**Honesty or Hypocrisy?  
When God Came to the Bayou  
And introducing: Tips to Fathers**



thank Thee that I am not like other men...."

But in His infinite wisdom God, who loves us just as we are, also knows what is best for us. Therefore, not just because we are heirs to a fallen Adamic nature, *but by divine design*, we must time and again face some painful aspect of reality which both dismays and challenges us. Some health or economic crisis jolts us out of our physical self-indulgence, or some relational confrontation strips off our mask of hypocrisy to force us to look at ourselves from a painfully different perspective. God intends such times to drive us to honest re-appraisal and cause us, repentant and chastened, to yield ourselves anew to His will and purpose.

Often such fresh and prayerful surrender releases a dramatic, even miraculous, resolution to the crisis, for the God we love and serve is a God of miracles. But, more often, God's intention seems to be to deliver us *through* the experience rather than save us *from* it.

I believe the Apostle Paul must have shared the same point of view we are trying to articulate when

Just as we can identify with the cry of Paul's heart in these verses, I trust that when it is time for us to face reality in some new and painful way, we will find the necessary grace and flexibility of spirit to also identify with Paul on the victorious side, when he declares, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13 NAS).

*Don W. Basham*

Don Basham  
Editor

There is a natural desire in all of us to want to slip through life without facing certain hard and unpleasant realities about ourselves and our circumstances. In our efforts to dodge reality, we become quite adept at maneuvers which further our self-delusion and which postpone the painful day when we finally face the truth. Many of these "reality-avoiding" techniques are familiar to us all, both the unacceptable ones like drugs, alcohol and sexual immorality, and the "respectable" ones like over-eating, addiction to TV and movies or abusing our credit to live beyond our means.

Such obvious escapes are bad enough. But added to them is an even more dangerous escape from



# EDITORIAL

reality we Christians fall prey to—one which the Bible calls *hypocrisy*. Our born-again, charismatic Christian experiences notwithstanding, we fall into the trap of using religious words and pious attitudes to convince ourselves of how good we really are. We may even make a point to participate in genuine spiritual activities to adeptly gloss over pride and selfishness until we feel so good about ourselves that, like the Pharisee Jesus described, we can pray with real fervency, "Father, I

facing the reality of his own weaknesses of the flesh, as he wrote:

For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.

O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 7:22-25).





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**DO YOU KNOW** that a person can be almost totally involved in religious activity yet know very little about God, remaining almost totally ignorant of how He acts, thinks or feels? God Himself makes this point through the prophet Isaiah with the following declaration to the children of Israel:

For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord (Is. 55:8).

In this article we want to examine some attitudes which cause us problems in the Christian life and then suggest some practical steps which will help us think God's thoughts after Him and center our lives more perfectly in His will.

Some years ago I wrote a book called *True and False Prophets*. As I was engaged in extensive biblical research on the book I became painfully aware of how "religious" most of us are, working busily for God, yet understanding so little of how God sees things. I came to see how much of my own thinking was unscriptural, and how some things people did that I thought were horrible, God scarcely noticed; while other things I thought weren't all that bad, God abhorred. More specifically, I found myself severely limited in my understanding of how seriously God regards matters having to do with hypocrisy, self-righteousness and lack of integrity.

### Two Contrasting Examples

Two scriptural examples will help illustrate what I mean. One is the example of David and Bathsheba in 2nd Samuel 11 and in Psalm 51 and the other is the example of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts chapter 5.

The story of David and Bathsheba, as recorded in 2nd Samuel 11, is the history of a very black and sordid chapter in David's life. After David had committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of

# Honesty or Hypocrisy?

by Don Basham





Uriah, a soldier who was away in battle, he discovered Bathsheba was pregnant. So he gave orders to have Uriah slain in battle and then married Bathsheba. Plainly stated, David was not only guilty of adultery, but murder as well.

But in Psalm 51 we find a profound expression of David's confession, repentance and plea for forgiveness for having Uriah killed and taking Bathsheba as his own wife.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgression: and my sin is ever before me.

Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight:

Behold, *thou desirest truth in the inward parts*: in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom (vss. 1-4,6).

There is no question that David received the forgiveness he sought. What's more, even with that severe flaw in his character, he is still referred to as "a man after God's own heart." Most amazing of all is the fact that even after David's sordid moral lapse, God not only did not desert him, but ordained that it would be through David's lineage that Jesus, the Savior of the world, would eventually be born.

I relate these facts, not to imply in any way that God winks at immorality, but rather to point out that God understands human weakness. Despite David's terrible mistake, once he had confessed his

sin and been forgiven, God continued to bless and use him for His divine purpose.

This incident in David's life stands in striking contrast to the story of Ananias and Sapphira recorded in Acts chapter 5. The incident involving these two biblical characters took place during the first days of the early Church's existence when such power and grace were being manifested among the believers that the whole nation of Israel was standing in awe. At one period during those exciting days those who owned extra property sold it and brought the money to the apostles for distribution.

But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet.

But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? (vss. 1-3)

The story records the sudden and awesome judgment of God upon these two early believers for their duplicity, resulting in their instantaneous deaths. But what I want to stress is the drastic contrast between how God dealt with David, who was guilty of adultery and murder, and how He dealt with Ananias and Sapphira, who only practiced what seemed to be a little deception about the amount of money they gave to the church. Or is it possible that their offense was much more grave than

it appears?

David lusted for another man's wife and killed to get her. Ananias and Sapphira simply wanted recognition for being better Christians than they really were. David was an adulterer; Ananias and Sapphira were hypocrites. Obviously, more was involved than the sinful acts themselves. The attitudes of these sinners must be taken into account. David confessed his sin before God, repented and was forgiven. But Ananias and Sapphira *conspired* to lie to God, and then persisted in the lie once they were confronted.

Still, the contrast of the two incidents should say something to us. When we compare the adultery and murder David committed to the hypocrisy of Ananias and Sapphira, we are not suggesting that God is not angered by immorality. It is just that He appears much more offended by hypocrisy and dishonesty.

### The Hypocrisy Religion Brings

The fact that even today so many of us often fall prey to hypocrisy and dishonesty simply indicates the truth of what we have already noted: the difference between what deeply offends Christians and what deeply offends God stems from the fact that we have not yet learned to see things as God sees them.

Formal religious tradition and narrow religious beliefs serve as the incubator where dishonesty and hypocrisy are spawned and the hot house where they best flourish. *Religious* dishonesty and hypocrisy seem to be much more of an affront to God than just plain thievery and lying—after all, the ordinary thief or liar doesn't pretend to be religious or holy.

But the faults we are trying to expose are both so deadly and so powerfully entrenched in "religious" people that, once they are exposed, violence and murder may result. This was why the scribes and Pharisees wanted to



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put Jesus to death, as we can see from John chapter 5, where Jesus defied Jewish tradition and healed a man on the Sabbath.

The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which made him whole.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God (vss. 15-18).

The hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders so blinded them to true values that they could actually interpret an act of mercy as a crime punishable by death. Is it any wonder, then, that God considers hypocrisy so despicable?

Or take the stoning of Stephen in Acts chapter 7. When the hypocrisy of the leaders of the synagogue was laid bare by the anointed preaching of Stephen, they stoned him to death.

When truth confronts hypocrisy, one of two things will happen: either the hypocrite will be stripped of his pretense and be set free, or else murder will manifest in his heart.

If you need additional confirmation about how the Lord feels about hypocrisy, read Chapter 23 of Matthew, Jesus' denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees. Apart from the time He drove the money-changers from the temple, there is no other occasion in Scripture where we see Jesus reacting with such blazing indignation and

whom God held responsible for the spiritual life and health of the nation of Israel. But by their hypocrisy, they had distorted and diluted the majesty of God's commandments with hundreds of unworkable rules and ceremonial requirements which pandered to their own religious pride and served their own selfish purposes. They had utterly failed in their priestly and pastoral responsibility to Israel, and that dismal failure had grown to such tragic proportions that it grieved and angered the heart of God. And at the center of that failure was the sin of hypocrisy.

### A Warning for Us

We need to bear in mind that our generation is in no way exempt from the same problem, for with every fresh move of the Spirit of God among His people, the ingredients are always present which can lead to the rise of hypocrisy. It is much easier to recognize the symptoms in the beliefs and practices of others than it is to expose them in ourselves.

What's more, it is a real struggle to believe in and actually practice kingdom honesty. We are so used to religious performance, so conditioned to pretend to be nice and religious and holy—regardless of what inner resentment may be raging—that many times we are incapable of removing our masks and “letting it all hang out.” Like the scribes and Pharisees of old we surround ourselves with rules and religious traditions intended to represent the spiritual reality we believe in but which, in fact, provide a convenient hideout where we can escape facing the real truth about ourselves.

Pharisees, why He resorted to sharp, stinging rebuke, was that He knew it would take that kind of blunt, shocking confrontation to crack their hard veneer of outward self-righteousness, if indeed it could be cracked at all.

All of us know people who parade around in that shell of self-righteousness as if they were truly spiritual. Years ago, in my first pastorate, I had an elder who was like that. Chairman of the Elders' Board for twenty years, Sunday School superintendent for ten years, he could pray the most humble and sincere prayers at the communion table that you could ever want to hear.

But he also ruled the church by a combination of false piety and an uncontrollable temper. The tragedy was that he actually believed he was a “truly righteous man.” Every time something happened in the church he didn't approve of, or



some board decision failed to meet his approval, he would puff up like a toad and begin to lecture and criticize.

I was very disturbed by what I saw him doing, and being a young, zealous (and inexperienced) pastor, I resolved to challenge his behavior at his next outburst. So one night at a committee meeting, when he began to object to some

**Remember: Friday, May 1, is a national day of prayer and fasting.**

anger. I believe this is because the leaders He rebuked were the ones

I believe one reason why Jesus was so hard on the scribes and



proposal and to pontificate about how in all his thirty years as an elder the church had never done anything like this before, I interrupted him.

"Mr. Butler," I said, "why is it that every time you fail to get your way you feel you have to lose your temper and tell everyone else how wrong they are?" That was as far as I got. The pompous old elder began to tremble with rage. His face turned livid and I was afraid he was about to have a stroke. He

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**...many of the tragic divisions which plague the Body of Christ...are the result of hypocritical and unethical behavior.**

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was shaking so badly that he could scarcely speak. He was holding a pencil which he snapped in two like a twig and then pointed both nubs at me as if he were holding a sword.



"Angry?" he bellowed. "Angry? I'm not angry; *I'm filled with righteous indignation!*" And the sad fact was, he really believed it! Behind that self-deception were years of bigoted, self-centered religious posturing that no one had had the courage to challenge. And I might add that my one attempt didn't even make a dent in his veneer of hypocrisy.

### The Problem in Our Midst

Unfortunately, such behavior is not found merely in people steeped in the tradition of historic denominationalism. Ministers and leaders in all Christian circles fall prey to the same deceptions. Usually it is not as obvious as the example I just gave, but it is there nevertheless.

There are Christians in significant positions of leadership whose ministries are blessed of God but who operate by a damnable double

standard. Consequently, many of the tragic divisions which plague the Body of Christ today are not primarily the result of honest differences of opinion or divergent spiritual convictions—they are the result of hypocritical and unethical behavior.

I know of an honest but controversial pastor who is seeking reconciliation with a man bent on destroying his ministry by public denunciation. In a spirit of humility, and motivated by a deep desire for reconciliation, the pastor wrote a personal, private letter to his critic, outlining what he believed to be some sensitive areas of difference, asking forgiveness for any personal offense and suggesting a time and place for a meeting to try to work out their differences as brothers in Christ.

But did his critic respond with a willingness to meet? No. Instead, filled with self-righteousness, he deliberately refused to answer the letter but selected excerpts from it and published them out of context in his own newsletter as admissions of guilt, thus continuing his vendetta against his brother in Christ. Such grievous hypocritical and self-righteous behavior seems to be spreading like a plague across the Body of Christ. Tragically, it seems as if some Christians take the

very anointing of God upon their own lives and ministries as authorization to judge and condemn other Christians. Or, if not to condemn, then to exploit them.

### Some Practical Steps

Finally, I would like to comment briefly on six practical steps for recognizing the danger of becoming a hypocrite and for dealing with hypocrisy.

1. *We are in danger of falling into hypocrisy any time we begin to trust in our own righteousness.* In the parable of the Pharisee and the publican in Luke 18, Jesus spells out clearly the dangers of hypocrisy. The Pharisee bragged on himself because of his outwardly righteous acts; the publican knew he was a sinner and sought God's mercy. Significantly, the parable is introduced by Luke with the statement that Jesus "spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others" (vs. 9).

If you believe you are where you are or have achieved your standing in God because of anything you have done or for any reason other than the pure grace of God, watch out. You're beginning to trust your own righteousness and are on the brink of falling into hypocrisy.

2. *We are in danger of falling into hypocrisy when we believe that we are the only ones really doing the will of God.* One time John said to Jesus, "Master, we saw one casting out demons in Thy name and we forbid him, because he followeth not with us" (Lk. 9:49). Do you know what John's problem was? He believed the disciples he was with were the only ones who were serving God properly.

Then in the next few verses James and John, in even more drastic fashion, were ready to call down fire from heaven on those who dared to stand in the Lord's way. Jesus simply told them that they were partaking of the wrong



kind of spirit, for He knew from His experience with the Pharisees and scribes that hypocrisy indulged tends to lead to violence.

3. *We are in danger of becoming hypocrites when we become more interested in being doctrinally correct than we are in serving one another.* Jesus said, "But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant" (Matt. 23:11). (I don't recall ever meeting a man who was happy serving others who had much of a problem with hypocrisy.) Most hypocrites are proud, and pride demands recognition. The hypocrite thinks he is much better than he is and he expects others to agree with his opinion of himself. A real willingness to serve provides a powerful antidote for our hypocritical tendencies.

4. *We are in danger of becoming hypocrites when we are more dedicated to recruiting than we are to redeeming.* When we are more interested in having people join our fellowship or church than we are in meeting their needs after they have joined, then our primary motive is suspect. Increasing numbers can be an outward sign of success, but in itself it is no assurance that we are in the purposes of God. In one of his harshest criticisms Jesus said:

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves (Matt. 23:15).

We must always be on guard lest our desire to have people join what we're doing is for *our* reputation and benefit, rather than for their welfare.

5. *We are in danger of becoming hypocrites when we major in minors.* By the phrase, "majoring in minors," I mean the tendency we have to become preoccupied with things God never intended to be all that significant, while

## Just Around the Corner

### Handling Disagreement

Dealing with our differences redemptively



slighting other concerns which are deeply significant.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel (Matt. 23:23-24).

How many Christians have you known who want their teenagers in church on Sunday morning but who take little heed in where they are or what they do the rest of the week? Or the father who gets terribly upset if his son doesn't make good grades at school, but hasn't found time to take the boy on a weekend camping trip in the last ten years? Or the church congregation that can spend a half million dollars on a new building in which to worship, but have neither money in the budget nor plans in the program for ministering to the poor in their own neighborhood?

6. *Finally, we are in danger of becoming hypocrites when we are more concerned with image than character.*

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto

whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity (Matt. 23:27-28).

It is perfectly understandable that all of us want to be seen and appreciated by others for our good points. And no one is to be criticized for his efforts to present his best face to the public. The problem comes when, in our desire to be admired and appreciated, we resort to deceit, trickery or deliberate guile in order to appear much better than we are. We know we have a problem with hypocrisy when we act and live one way in private and another way in public. We Christians are especially guilty of trying to appear righteous and holy in a way that is really not consistent with what we are really like.

One of the things I have so appreciated through the years of my relationship with Charles Simpson, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince and Ern Baxter is that they are essentially the same in public or in private. None of them presents an image to the public that is in any way inconsistent with the private man. Such naturalness, then, provides a strong basis for a lasting and fruitful relationship. Among the five of us, as far as it has been within our ability, we have been and are honest with each other.

I believe that if our hearts are really right toward God and toward each other, and if we continue diligently to walk in integrity, to spurn hypocrisy and to strive for Kingdom honesty, no matter how tough things become, no matter how bruised and battered we may become through all the tests we must endure, that God will find us mature and trustworthy and useful disciples to whom He can say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." ♣



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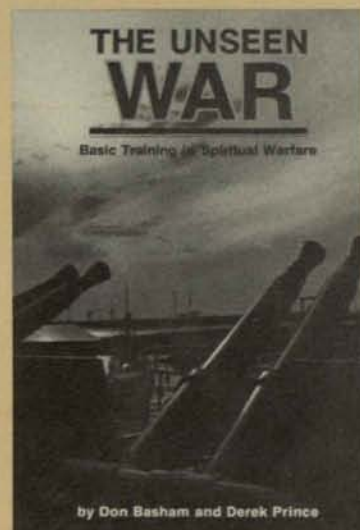
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# Facing Reality in a Saltless Society

by Charles Simpson



Everyone will be salted with fire.

Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other (Mk. 9:49-50 NIV).

**MOST OF US**, I am sure, have heard sermons on salt. Ministers make many applications of the spiritual significance of salt—how it preserves, or how it adds flavor. However, the quality I want to emphasize as we examine the topic of facing reality in a saltless society is that salt is *cohesive*; it sticks together.

Anyone familiar with farm life has no doubt seen the salt blocks placed in the pastures for the cattle to lick. Although left out in the sun, the rain and the wind for months, those salt blocks will not dissolve or break apart. Salt sticks together. A pile of sand in the same location would soon disintegrate. Even if it were not subjected to the wind and the rain, the sand still would not stick together.

The difference between salt and sand is that salt is cohesive, sand is not. When salt loses its ability to remain cohesive, it becomes scattered and is no longer fit for use. As with salt, so it is with the people of God.

The choice is very simple: stick together or scatter and be defeated. The enemy is waiting to trample us under foot. Scripturally, our enemy is a spiritual enemy. Whether Satan uses flesh and blood or some demonic force to confront us, either way his intent is to walk all over us, to defeat us. The antidote to that kind of defeat is cohesion, the ability to stick together.

## The World Coming Apart

In Daniel 2, King Nebuchadnezzar's vision of the huge statue is depicted by Daniel as the five great world kingdoms which were all humanistic—Babylon, the head of gold; Medo-Persia, the chest and arms of silver; Greece, the thighs of brass; Rome, later the divided kingdom, the legs of iron; and the end-time kingdoms, the feet made from iron mingled with clay. The significance of the feet is interpreted by Daniel in verse 43 of chapter 2 to mean that the people living in the divided kingdoms of that day will be a mixture and will not remain united. The King James Version says, "They will not adhere to one another."

It is interesting to note that the image does not evolve from something worthless into something wonderful. Rather, it *devolves* from something beautiful into something very weak and ineffectual. Historically, humanism does not *evolve* into something better; it *devolves* into something worse. Though it may seem valuable and cohesive in the beginning, it will become disjointed and worthless in the end.

This is what we see in the world today. Though technology is rapidly improving and increasing, human character and relationships are coming apart. In virtually every significant area of world society we see a propensity to division. There are twice as many nations today as there were fifteen years ago. With the increasing rise of nationalism and tribalism, it



seems as if no single group is able to remain cohesive. Neither is the Church exempt, because there are literally thousands of new groups and denominations springing up all the time. The world is not uniting; it is dividing. It is breaking up.

The problem in Jesus' day was that the Jewish religion was not cohesive. Even with Israel's knowledge of God, the Scripture, the commandments and with its expectancy of the Messiah to unite them, Israel was divided into the Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, Essenes and Zealots. Not only that, deep rancor still seethed between the northern tribes of Judea and the southern tribes. Into this context of competing religious and political factions, Jesus, who was God in the flesh, came to bring Israel to reality and to make it face the truth of its own saltlessness, saying, "Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with each other." By implication he was also saying, "If you don't have salt in yourselves, you *won't* be at peace with one another; you will come apart." In addition He said, "All those who don't have it will be salted with fire." I believe we can derive a saying from His words: "Either *have salt or be salted*." The world will either have salt or be salted. Either we will become cohesive or we will fall apart.

Secular voices in our generation such as General Lewis Walt in his book *The Eleventh Hour*, William Simon in his book *A Time for Truth*, and many others are warn-

ing us that something is radically wrong with our society. Many such men are saying that in our generation something is happening to the average citizen which is causing a dramatic increase not only in the dissolution of family life but also in the rejection of family life as the proper foundational unit for society.

Just as our society is experiencing a degree of disintegration, Israel was a society that was coming apart and was on the verge of being judged when Jesus came into it. I'm not talking theoretically now—I'm talking historically, because forty years after Jesus visited Jerusalem it was literally destroyed. Jesus was dealing with Israel's lack of cohesion in the face of impending doom.

### Facing Certain Realities

In this context of Israel's disintegration, Jesus right from the beginning of His ministry introduced a message to His disciples about facing certain realities. In the remainder of this article, we will examine incidents which reveal certain realities we all must face.

### The Reality of Suffering

In Mark 8:31 Jesus talked about the very unpopular subject of suffering:

...the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and...he must be killed and after three days rise again.

Jesus said, "the Son of Man *must* suffer." Not may, not could but *must*. Scripture tells us that Jesus spoke plainly about this. By contrast, humanism is based on self-preservation, and anything that threatens the individual's interest is something that humanists (and all of us for that matter) would prefer to ignore.

We want to find a way out of suffering. That was Peter's philosophy, too. So when Jesus said, "There is no way out for me; I'm going to be rejected and killed," the Bible says Peter took Jesus aside to rebuke Him. We don't know how far he got into that process before Jesus spoke sharply to him: "Get out of my sight, Satan. You don't have in mind the things of God." Besides rebuking the devil, what Jesus was saying to Peter was, "You're not thinking like God; you're thinking like a man." Why? Because Peter was thinking about Jesus' self-preservation. That's the way men think. That is what human philosophy is all about—the belief that somehow man can always find a way out.

But what we must be concerned with is not self-preservation, but the preservation of the will of God.

Many doctrines arise within religious movements that are never actually written down. One that has grown up in the charismatic movement is: If God is in it, it will be easy. The testimony goes like this: "The Lord led me to sell my house and a week after I put it on the market, it was sold! It had to be God because it all worked out so well." That's the doctrine: If it's God, it's easy.

How many of you know that is not always true? Things working out smoothly may be evidence of God at work, but not *everything* God tells you to do is going to be easy. And if you assume that *every* time someone is having a hard time they are *not* being led by God, you are wrong again. When Jesus



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came, things didn't go easily for Him. When Paul ministered, everything didn't work out smoothly. I'm sure many of Paul's critics said, "Paul really missed God; otherwise he would never have landed in jail." The predominant philosophy is that any venture that does not immediately prosper must not be the will of God. But only eternity will fully declare what was the will of God and what was not. Jesus made the disciples face the reality that there is suffering involved in accomplishing the will of God.

### The Reality of God's Sovereign Choice

Jesus went on to show the disciples other realities about the Kingdom of God. For example, He showed them that God's choice is sovereign, and it's not always based on obvious qualifications. In the story of the transfiguration in Mark 9, Jesus divided His disciples into two groups, taking only Peter, James and John up with Him on the mountain. Contrary to what we might think, God's selection wasn't based on good behavior. (Remember just a few verses earlier Peter had totally missed the Holy Spirit by rebuking Jesus.)

God often chooses people to do what He wants them to do for reasons that are known only to Him. Do you ever wonder why certain people get to do certain things? "Why him, Lord? Is it because he is more qualified?" Obviously, Peter was not more qualified to go up the mountain than any of the others; God just sovereignly chose him to go.

As Jesus led Peter and James and John up the mountain, they were probably grateful to have been selected, yet they were totally unprepared for the experience they were about to have. As other accounts of this story record, when they got higher up on the mountain and Jesus began to pray, Peter, James and John fell asleep.

While Jesus was praying, the

presence of God was manifested in supernatural ways. The Bible says Jesus' whole countenance changed and His garments became white. Then Moses and Elijah appeared and began to talk with Him.

Peter woke up in the presence of God's glory, and like most religious people, felt he should *do* something religious. He said, "Let's build three tabernacles: one for Moses, one for Jesus, and one for Elijah." It was a foolish utterance. Foolish, in the first place, because when God is talking it is not the time for us to be talking. He should have been listening to God. Secondly, he foolishly put Moses and Elijah on a par with Jesus. Thirdly, he was totally unaware of the sacredness of the moment. He should not have interrupted.

One thing we can learn from what happened to Peter is that there are profoundly higher aspects to moving in the presence of God than we have yet learned, and we need to be very attentive when God is moving in a powerful way.

While Peter, James and John were up on the mountain, Group Two was down at the foot of the mountain, probably wondering why they had been left out of Group One. They were having to face the reality of God's sovereignty in choosing whom He will.

### The Reality of Failure

While they were waiting, they faced yet another reality when a man whose son was tormented by demons sought them out. It is a great honor to be one of Jesus' disciples. But it can be embarrassing if Jesus is not there when someone comes for help. This was the case when the father came looking for Jesus, leading his troubled son behind him.

When the disciples gathered around to pray for the boy, nothing happened and he continued to have a seizure. The father said, "Why don't you do something?" They continued to pray and per-



spire, attempting to free the boy from the demon's torment.

Into this scene, with the father crying, his son convulsing, the disciples sweating, the theologians arguing and the crowd increasing, came Jesus returning from the Mount of Transfiguration. He came upon the scene with Group One which had failed on the mountain, to face Group Two which was failing at the bottom of the mountain.

Group Two was facing the reality that following God doesn't guarantee you will always succeed. In fact, you are fortunate if you succeed any time. Jesus helped His disciples to face the reality of failure.

### The Reality of the Time Factor

When Jesus asked what was going on, the father, who had iden-





tified with the suffering of his son for so many years, answered, "I brought my son to your disciples to have a demon cast out and they could not." To this Jesus responded, "Oh, faithless generation, *how long* will I be with you?" Jesus was not just expressing frustration at the disciples' inability to handle the situation; He was looking at the time factor. Wrapped in that question "How long" is the truth that sooner or later all of us have to face reality. Jesus was saying, "You cannot live in unreality indefinitely; there is a 'how long' involved."

You can't live as though you and your wife are loving each other and are getting along when you are not, because sooner or later there is a "how long." You can't go on in unreality forever. You cannot pray for things that don't happen and go on confessing

that they are happening. I don't care what your reality is, you have to face it. If it is pain, face it. If it is death, face it. Because if you don't face it, it will become a deception which will destroy you.

Down in south Louisiana the residents talk about the great hurricane of 1916. Of course, in 1916 they did not have early warning systems like we have today—so hurricanes were usually unexpected and often devastating. In one little town along the Louisiana coast, a group of people, instead of preparing for a possible hurricane, decided to ignore the sheriff's warning and have a hurricane party. Because those people ignored the reality of the approaching danger, the storm hit them and they were never heard from again.

You say, "Well, in 1916 people were like that." But in 1969 when Hurricane Camille hit the Gulf Coast, another group chose unreality. They too had a hurricane party, and when a 36-foot tidal wave hit their house, the 23 people at that party were never heard from again.

You cannot live in unreality. Sooner or later the wave will hit you. Facing reality doesn't mean surrendering to doom and gloom. In actual fact, doom and gloom result from living in *unreality*. But if you face reality with God, there is resurrection. Facing reality in the grace and will of God is the only way to survive. We need to see reality when seeing it will save us, not at the judgment day when it will be too late.

### The Reality of Violence

Yet another reality that we must face is the reality of violence. Scripture says that when Jesus approached the boy who was being tormented by a demon, that spirit caused a *violent* disturbance. No one likes violence. We need to realize that violence is not something that God invented. God is not the one who is violent; Satan is. The enemy is not simply out to

hurt, he is out to *destroy*. No matter what is said about people becoming more civilized, violence is still a reality. The atrocities we read about today are as evil as those in any other period in history.

Declaring the Kingdom of God and the cohesion of God to a saltless society will sometimes bring us face to face with violence—not because we are violent, but because the enemy is violent.

It is interesting to note, however, that Jesus was not drawn into the violence of the situation facing Him. One sure way to fail in ministry is to be drawn into the violence of the moment. I used to wonder why God called Don Basham into the deliverance ministry. Then I noticed a distinctive difference between his approach and those of others in the ministry. I have seen him say in a very calm voice "Come out in Jesus' name" and have more results than other ministers who screamed at the demons until perspiration dripped from their fingers.

We were in an Episcopal Church one night where Don was ministering on deliverance when suddenly a man sitting in the back of the church screamed as if he had been stabbed, sending waves of shock through the auditorium. Not one soul turned around—the entire congregation just froze. A gun at the back of their heads couldn't have prompted a more fearful, rigid reaction. Without blinking an eye or raising his voice, Don said, "Hold on, brother; I'll be through in a few minutes and we'll minister to you then." He refused to react to the enemy's violent disruption of the meeting.

This was exactly the case with Jesus. There was the young man the disciples had tried unsuccessfully to help still foaming at the mouth while the crowd was milling around; yet in the midst of the confusion Jesus spoke, not to the demon, but to the father. "How



long has he been like this?" The Lord refused to be drawn into the

belief." He was facing yet another reality—the reality of facing your

## If we are going to move in society, we must learn to go up the mountain when Jesus goes.

enemy's violence. Instead He strengthened the father's faith in preparation for the boy's deliverance.

### Facing the Reality of Your Responsibilities

Another interesting thing to me is the fact that Jesus held the father responsible for his son's condition. I believe that God is going to call many fathers to account for the conditions of their sons before long. Jesus addressed the father about the boy. The father replied, "Ever since he was a little boy, this spirit has thrown him into the fire and the water, trying to kill him." Then he added something very moving. He said, "If you can do anything, have mercy on us. Have compassion on us."

When I read the word "us," tears welled up in my eyes. I said, "God, that's what touched You." It would have been easy for the father to say, "My wife had this baby and he has really been an embarrassment to the family. It would be good if you could help him." Instead, the father said, "Help us," because when the boy was thrown into the water the father had gone in after him; when the boy fell into the fire the father was there with him too; and when his son writhed in pain on the ground, the father's heart was writhing with him in pain.

### The Reality of Your Doubts

When the father said, "If you can, please help us," Jesus replied, "What do you mean 'if'? All things are possible for those who believe." The father was a realist; he wasn't phony or religious. He said, "Lord, I believe, but help my un-

doubts. If you have doubts, don't feel condemned. Just remember that God knows your heart better than you know it and remember that even faith is a gift from God. When the father faced the reality of his doubts, saying, "Help my unbelief," the Lord looked at the boy and commanded the spirit to leave, saying, "Come out of him and don't ever enter him again," and the spirit left him.

### The Reality of Touching God in Prayer

The disciples asked, "Lord, why could we not cast the spirit out?" and in replying, Jesus brought up another reality: principles alone won't work—you have to pray. In essence, Jesus told them, "You cannot stay down here and handle problems unless you learn to pray, too. You need to see some of the glory and power of

God if you are going to minister to social needs."

If we are going to move in society, we must learn to go up the mountain when Jesus goes. One weakness of the contemporary church is that it is trying to move in society when it has never learned how to move in the Spirit up the mountain. It is not wrong to identify with the needs of society; God does not want us to live forever on the mountain, never ministering to human need. We must minister to poverty, to disease, to ignorance, to confusion and to other problems. But we must also remember the words of Jesus, that "this kind can come forth by nothing but by prayer and fasting." We must not rely solely upon human strength and ingenuity. We need to receive power from time on the mountain with God before we try to minister to the world.

### The Reality of Discipline

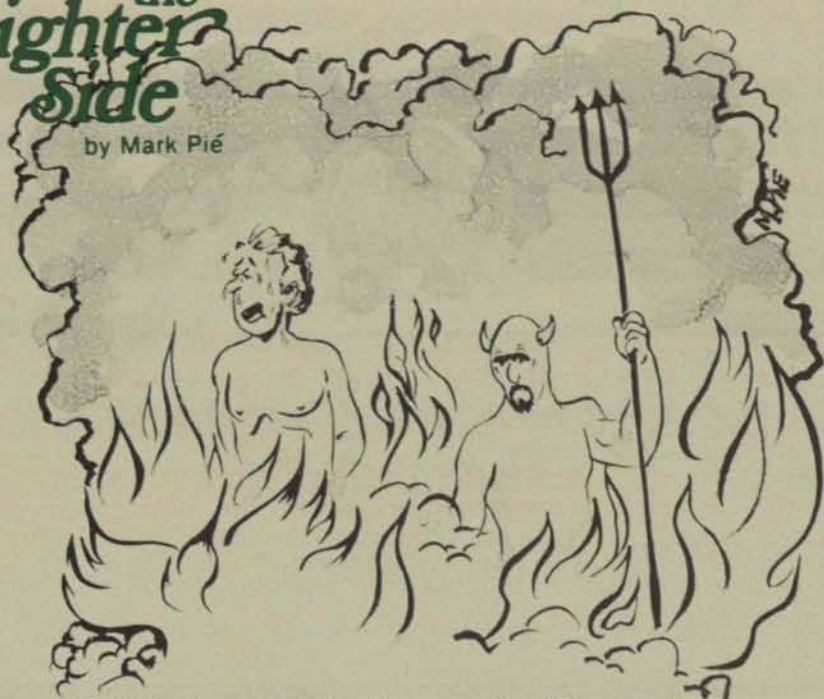
The thing I love least in my life is the war that it takes to get me up the mountain. Yet the thing I love most is the joy that awaits when I have succeeded. As we have seen, there are many realities in life that





## the Lighter Side

by Mark Pié



I'd like to speak to the parole officer, please.

we must inevitably face. We can be moving along successfully in the Spirit when suddenly we come face to face with some old problem we thought we would never face again. And God says, "You know it has been there all along and now you must face it." "God," you cry, "isn't there a way around this thing?" And God says, "No, you must face it and then go beyond it." That isn't because we have backslidden; nor because God doesn't love us. But God's faithfulness requires that before we go further or higher we must go deeper. Then, when problems have been exposed and dealt with, our cohesion will be more complete.

### The Reality of Saltlessness

In this matter of discipline, a question we must face is the one that Jesus asked in Mark 9: "If salt loses its savor, can it be made salty again?" My answer to that question used to be, "No," but I have changed my mind. I don't believe Jesus would command us to "have salt in ourselves" if it weren't pos-

sible for us to have it, nor would He have said that people who are not "salty" will be salted unless it could actually happen. Jesus said that everyone will be salted with fire. That means the trials we must endure serve to make us more loyal.

Scripture says, "He that hates discipline hates his own soul." But in the end, discipline produces salt. It produces godly character.

Hebrews 11:34 says that through faith weak men were made strong. That was a revelation to me: that weak people can be made strong. That means if we are weak, we are not doomed to weakness. We can become strong, not simply by claiming and confessing strength, but by enduring discipline. Strength comes by not giving up, even when everything within us wants to give up. Godly character, perseverance, endurance and cohesiveness are produced by discipline.

Where does cohesiveness come from? Well, you don't obtain it in some strange, remote place—you

start obtaining it when your father says, "Pick up the trash" and your mother says, "Comb your hair," and your teacher says, "Do your homework," and your boss says, "Lock up the shop," and your pastor says, "Study the Bible," and the Church says, "Live holy." Soon, a progression of discipline will have been worked into your life until one day you realize there is something in you that won't quit—you have become cohesive. You have learned to endure in loyalty. In the seventh inning of the game, you have already lost five pounds playing in 100-degree heat and your team is losing; but you still say, "We may not win but, with God's help, I won't quit." Discipline produces that kind of cohesiveness in us.

### Becoming Cohesive

God's purpose for us is that we become a cohesive force in the midst of a saltless society. It is interesting to observe the contrast between the crowd and Jesus in the passages we have cited. When the boy had the seizure the crowd *came running*; when Jesus arrived the crowd *came running*; when the demon was cast out the crowd *came running*. Like a pile of sand which drifts with the wind, the crowd ran from place to place.

But neither Jesus nor His disciples were running. They were the salt block in the midst of a sand pile. They were cohesive, and this is what God expects from us.

We cannot be like the crowd, running from place to place—a sand pile with no cohesion. We cannot remain saltless in a world that is coming apart. We cannot allow ourselves to live in unreality. God is calling us to face the realities of our own situation and—through whatever discipline it takes—to become cohesive. Either we will have salt or we will be salted. May God grant us the ability to become what He has called us to be—salt in the midst of a saltless society. ♥

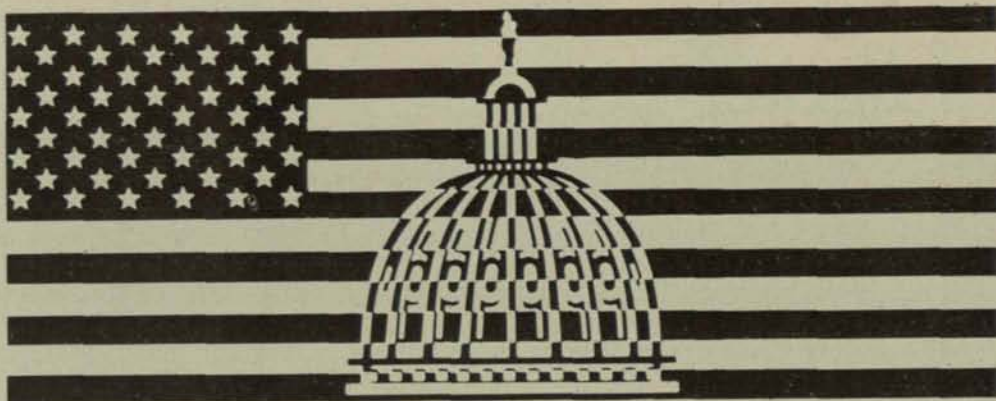


Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication *with thanksgiving* let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7 NAS).

Recently, I heard a pastor remark that there is no sin of greater magnitude and consequence in America today than the sin of ingratitude toward God. We have become weak and fat as a nation, seeking material pleasures and falling under the curse of "forgetting God" (Deut. 6:12). As a result, anxieties and fears grip many—even in the Church—and America's material blessings cannot solve the challenges and crises of the day.

Undoubtedly, our calling as Intercessors for America is to stand in this gap, repenting of our grave national sin of ingratitude and offering from our own lips the thanks due to Almighty God. It is important for us to understand that thanksgiving is essential for effective intercession. It is a vital component of the Church's total prayer ministry and should accompany our petitions (Phil. 4:6-7). God has ordained thanksgiving to be part of our daily priestly ministry to Him (Lev. 7:12; Ps. 116:17).

When Jesus' disciples asked Him about the close of the age and His return, one of His first remarks was that they should not become alarmed (Matt. 24:1-8). Neither should we be alarmists, even though we live in days of distress. Our motivation to intercede must not be fear, but rather a faith-filled response to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Thanksgiving helps us keep a positive perspective and an attitude of faith. It helps us discern between the true burdens of God and those false burdens that might be triggered by anxiety, the evening news, demonic pressures or the cares of everyday life.



# Intercessors Report

by Gary Bergel

Intercessors for America, P.O. Box D, Elyria, OH 44035

The kind of gratitude we are emphasizing should be a mark of the redeemed community. When people all around us are fearful, depressed and full of complaints, we should be known as a joyful, thankful and hopeful people. The godly discipline of thanksgiving not only cultivates faith in us; it pushes back our enemies and releases the provisions of heaven secured for us in Christ Jesus (1 Thess. 5:17; Eph. 5:20, 6:18; Rev. 5:8).

The benefits of spiritual refreshment and clarification received through thanksgiving were recently impressed upon us when our entire church held a day of fasting and thanksgiving. While it might seem contradictory to some that we would "afflict our souls" through fasting and thank God simultaneously, this was a word which "seemed good to us and to the Holy Spirit" and which was confirmed by our entire congregation of believers. So we disciplined ourselves to thank God for twenty-four hours! It wasn't easy, but it refreshed and revolutionized us in Christ.

Families met together and compiled lists of all the things each member had to be thankful for. All of us felt refreshed and cleansed in remarkable ways. Parents and children wept together in a holy joy of thanksgiving, remembering all that God had done—and all that He is doing. Our church has not been the same since that day. Our vision, our sense of purpose in God and our first love for Christ and one another have been renewed.

In the book of Revelation we find that thanksgiving is part of the life-style and atmosphere of heaven (Rev. 7:12). As we continue to intercede and believe God for full-scale restoration in our land, we must not forget that our thank offerings are actually helping to change America's spiritual atmosphere. "Through Him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name" (Heb. 13:15 NAS).



## Update on Abortion Booklet

*Last year we sent our readers copies of Gary Bergel's booklet on abortion, When You Were Formed in Secret. Since then we have received many touching responses from those affected by the booklet's message, including accounts of mothers who were persuaded by it to preserve the lives of their infants. As an update on the response from this powerful booklet, we are printing several of the letters we have received.*

Thank you so much for the abortion booklet. It's already accomplished its purpose. My daughter's girlfriend called to ask her a big favor. Knowing that her friend was worried that she might be pregnant and unmarried, my daughter stuck your pamphlet in her purse. The friend did ask our daughter to drive her to Omaha to the abortion clinic. I was proud of her answer, "I can't help you kill your baby." But lovingly she shared the pictures in your pamphlet and her friend consented to come and talk with me and we are well on the way to a better solution. Our daughter's friend said, "I was really wanting someone to talk me out of an abortion." I wonder how many times this story is being repeated. God bless you for a much-needed task done very well.

Anonymous

Please find a check enclosed to cover the cost of sending ten of the abortion booklets to me for sharing with others. As a single man I am not directly affected by this issue, but as a committed Christian I am.

David Craig  
Baton Rouge, LA



Edith and I were thankful to see the copies of the booklet on abortion. We truly are thankful for *New Wine* in taking this clear stand.

When we had the seminars for the project of *Whatever Happened to the Human Race?* two things had to be said simultaneously. First, Edith and I have never seen Christian meetings that ended with such commitment. Beyond this, waves that have gone out from the seminars, books and film have really been far-reaching, for which we are thankful. . . .

In this setting we are especially glad for the clear testimony of your booklet and we pray that the Lord will richly use it that more Bible-believing Christians may realize that this issue is not an arbitrary one. As I see it, the issue is not abortion but rather the position that there is such a thing as human life not worthy to be lived. This concept then naturally flows into abortion, infanticide and euthanasia of the aged, and many other things.

Christians should realize that this issue is a different issue than what is so-called "one-issue" thinking. There is an unbreakable link between the existence of the infinite personal God and the uniqueness of human life. Christians must stand on this issue.

I am glad that there are Bible-believing Christians that are rising to this in a clear way. We are so glad that *New Wine* has done so.

Francis A. Schaeffer  
L'Abri, Switzerland

Praise God for your booklet "*When You Were Formed in Secret*." I too faced the decision of abortion or life just a month ago. I am single, and my parents were trying to force me into having an abortion, but praise God He gave me the strength and the grace to choose life for the baby. After a friend received your booklet and shared it with me, I knew I had made the right decision.

Anonymous

We found the abortion booklet to be the most excellent work on the subject which we have come across. We intend to use it in our sex education class for ninth graders. We will also make it available to parents and people in our church who have questions. Thank you for your good work in this matter. May God use it to awaken the Church to this crucial issue.

Jo Anne Pysden  
Los Angeles, CA

I just finished reading your August newsletter on child development and abortion. This and the article in your July/August issue were such a blessing to me. You see, I am nineteen years old, unmarried and pregnant. Over two months ago I was contemplating abortion, even though I knew it was wrong. My boyfriend almost had me convinced it would be the best thing to do. I was scared, but I listened for God to tell me what to do. I just praise Him for showing me through your articles that I did make the right decision.

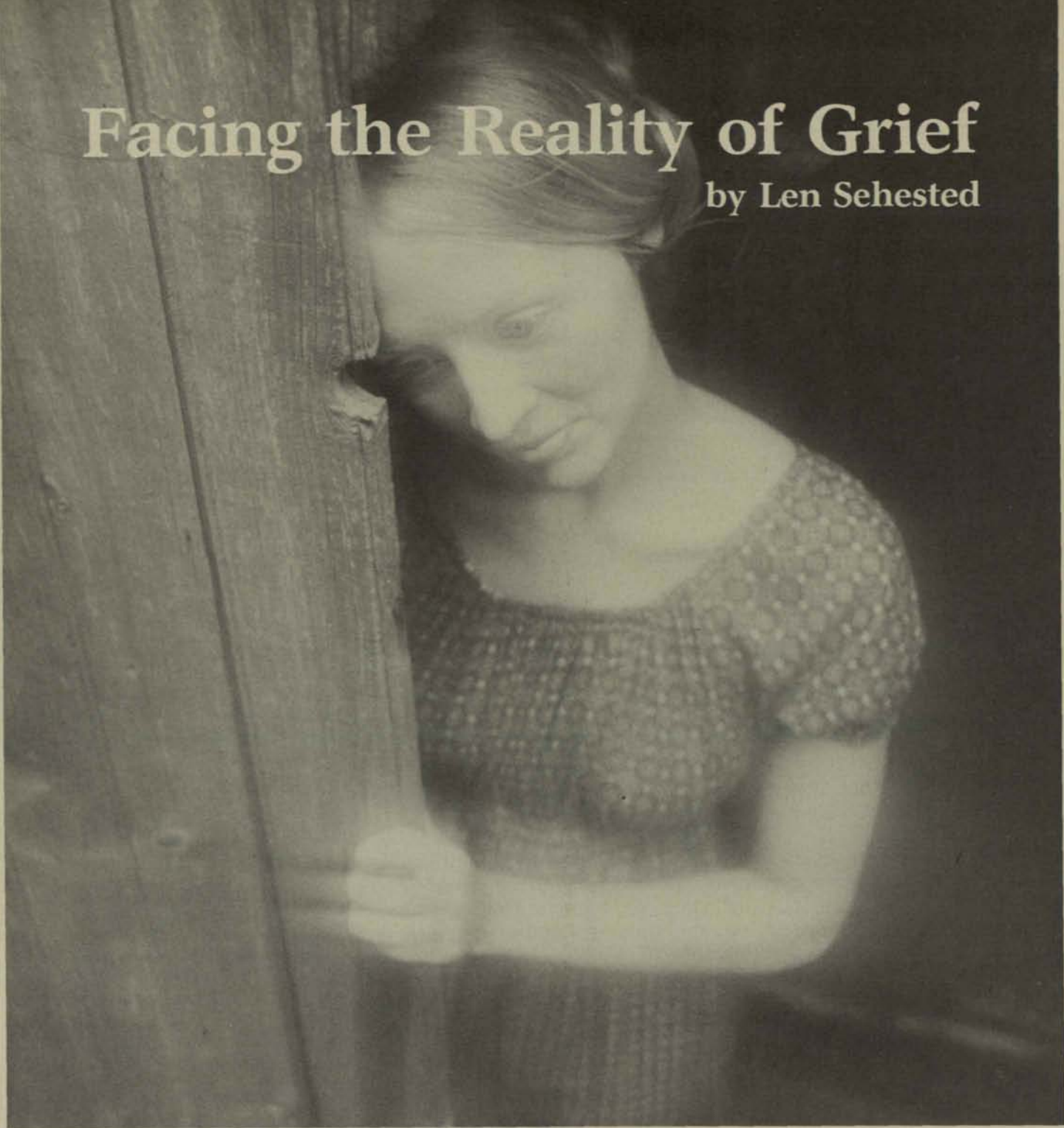
Anonymous

*Copies of When You Were Formed in Secret are still available and may be ordered in multiples of ten copies by using the order form on page thirty-four of this issue of New Wine.*



# Facing the Reality of Grief

by Len Sehested



*In the chapter of Face Up With A Miracle in which Don Basham tells of the time he and Alice suffered the loss of an infant daughter, he reflected upon facing the reality of death:*

*I wondered how I would measure up when the time eventually came for death to visit our immediate family. Would the sustaining love and com-*

*fort of the Holy Spirit see me through the trial, as I so confidently assured others He would? No one knows for certain until he faces such a time, and for each of us, personal exemption from life's ultimate experience is only temporary.*

*Whether in our immediate family, with elderly relatives, or with friends and acquaintances, all of us from time to time confront the*

*reality of death. Len Sehested, an international speaker and lecturer from Fort Worth, Texas, provides some sound advice in her honest account of how she learned to accept the loss of her husband and adjust to her new life alone. Her essay, originally titled "Instant Singleness: Widowhood," is reprinted from the book Solo Flight: Twelve Personal Perspectives on the Single Life.*



**ON A SINGLE DAY** in a single hour through a single event I became a single person again. It was a tragic happening to lose my mate in death, yet to waste this experience by not relating my pilgrimage would compound the tragedy. These ideas will expound on the multiple ways of taking a painful, anguishing happening and turning it into victory.

I have read many books on grief because I am interested in better understanding human behavior. In spending time with people who were grieving, I have come to realize that we are all individual in our responses. Due to individuality each person reacts and responds differently to events in life. I am Len, and you are you. You should not try to push me into having the same feelings that you have; nor should I demand that you respond exactly as I do. I hesitate to say what I feel, yet I desire to give hope to people. If a person has not faced grief, then maybe these ideas will better equip him or her to deal with sorrow when it occurs.

I realize that the normal grief process includes an interaction of degrees of shock, panic, weeping, depression, resentment, repression, guilt, physical distress, and finally hope. I did not experience many of the negative emotions. Do not misunderstand; I am not indicating that I am superhuman. In the past, I have had personal experiences that caused me to know that God is present and that he is here to help me in everything that happens. So I knew that he would be with me during my grief process.

I want to treat death as a Christian rather than as a pagan. I have watched people who have attended church regularly, gone to prayer meetings, given their tithes, and done the things that are expected of good Christians. Then, somehow, when death comes, they suddenly become pagan in their responses to death and dying. They act as if God does not exist.

As a Christian I feel very deeply, yet my faith in God transcends even my emotions. This is not to indicate that I did not go through stages of grief.

In my pilgrimage through the loss of my husband I went through these areas of grief:

1. Shock. It was a shock that the death actually happened. No one knows exactly how long life will last. I had enjoyed being with and looking after my husband. It was a joy and pleasure to love and live with him. Then the fact that suddenly he was no longer here was very difficult for me to comprehend. I could have gone all my life loving and looking after my husband. When he died, the severance of relationship was a big shock.

2. Disbelief. I had the feeling of

his death because I would talk as if he were still here. There was a degree of denial of reality in that I would make choices knowing that "this is what he would like."

3. Loneliness. I missed the companionship, affirmation, and support of my husband. When you love a person, you love the whole person. You love his mind, heart, and everything about him. When all that is suddenly removed, there is a great big void.

I missed him mostly when I went to bed. It was not just sex, it was the total absence of the one I loved. For hours I would just lie there, think, and talk to myself. I still miss the affirmation that my husband gave me. Victor Hugo summed it up best when he stated that we need affirmation more than bread! My husband was a

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**It was a tragic happening to lose my mate in death, yet to waste this tragedy by not relating my pilgrimage would compound the tragedy.**

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unreality. There were times when I realized that I was not accepting



very affirming person. He helped me to do and be more than I thought I could. He was verbally so proud of me. I miss his love, affirmation, support, and gentle touch as well as all his intimacy.

There is a certain loneliness that occurs when your routine is drastically changed. Life is not as "regulated" as it used to be. We always got up at a set time, had meals at set times, went to work at set times, and went to bed at a set time. Now I find that I will have a meal when I feel like it or do what I want to when I want to. Thus, life is not as regulated as it was.

4. Guilt. There are certain areas of guilt that surface. When a person has committed an infraction, he knows it and needs to make it right (1 John 1:9). There is an area of false guilt that plagues people at times. I have had to deal with some false guilt over happenings that really did not ultimately



matter. I have false guilt over anything that I desired which would bring an inconvenience to my husband.

5. Acceptance. The major stage of my grief adjustment was acceptance. It is difficult to pinpoint the exact event or day when I realized that I had accepted the death. In some areas of my adjustment, I was slower than in others. It took

for a long time as a missionary in India. This brought about a stabilizing effect on my character in three ways. 1) I knew I was a whole person. I did not need to have a husband to be a whole person. 2) I knew that whatever happened, the Lord would provide for me. 3) I had trusted past difficult areas of my life to God. Basic is my faith in God and past experiences

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**...in my daily walk with the Lord, I know that he is real. The Lord does not make mistakes! He is available and adequate for my every need.**

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me about six months really to accept the fact that I no longer had my husband.

I realized that I had adjusted and accepted the death when I finally began to feel that I could do something on my own and function in a way that was good—in other words, when I quit depending entirely on my friends and started making decisions for myself.

In the normal grief process there are some steps or stages that I did not go through. I did not go through negative, heavy emotions of bitterness and resentment. This was so for several reasons. If I did not believe in God, I could ask, "Why did this happen to me?" I could become angry and bitter. But in my daily walk with the Lord, I know that he is real. The Lord does not make mistakes! He is available and adequate for my every need! As far as I know, I am being honest in these statements. I know that God is working in the past, present, and future. I hear people fighting for the inerrancy of the Bible. Yet, I do not hear anyone fighting for living out the truths that are expressed in the Bible. I really believe in the Scriptures!

My personal faith pilgrimage reveals a deep trust in God and his provisions for me. I was unmarried

of his faithfulness! God is available and adequate for every situation regardless of how difficult, intricate, or impossible it may seem.

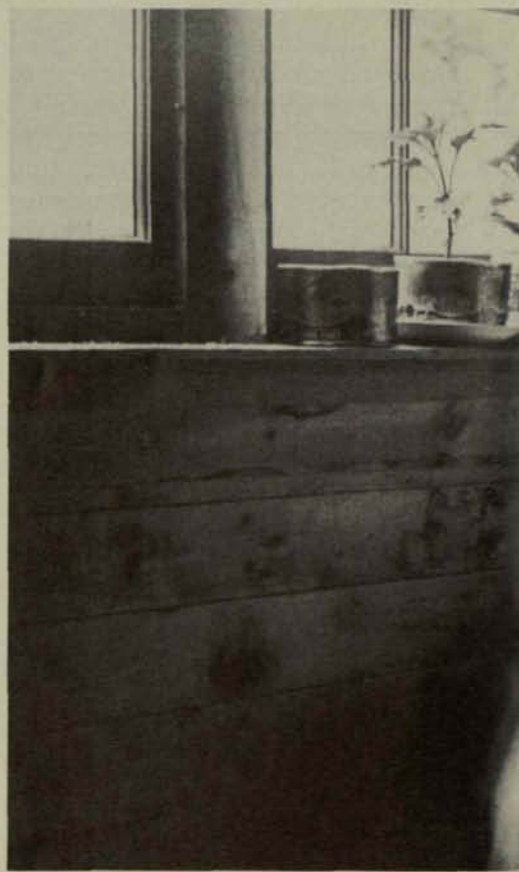
Since the Lord had been good to me in the past, I knew that he would meet my current needs. This was the stabilizing force in my grief process. Of course I cried and had my times of deep grief. There were times when I missed my husband so intensely! These times came when I wanted to share with him. It was frustrating to not be able to share as we had in the past. The tears were very positive as they washed my grief.

Some of the most difficult times in my grief process had to do with these areas: 1) Sleep. I could not sleep well. 2) Companionship. We were intimate and personal. I could say anything that I desired. Now I miss that. 3) Togetherness. We had togetherness. We enjoyed doing so many things together. We both grew because of each other. We interacted about everything. 4) Decisions. Decision-making was difficult for me.

There are specific categories of immediate and ultimate decisions that have to be made when you lose a spouse. Your mind, spirit, and body are instantly assaulted by multiple decisions. Everyone comes toward you from every angle asking questions. You think,

what do I do about this? If I make a statement, will this be the last word on the issue? Can I change my mind later? Will I make the wrong decision? I have never had to think about this type of thing. I prayed that the Lord would illuminate my mind and my senses as I had to make choices in these areas:

1. Funeral and burial. I feel that in our society we pay too much attention to all the pomp and circumstance of funerals and burial. As Christians, we need to step back and say, what has happened? One of our loving persons has died. Part of us has died. Yet we know where he has gone. There is no great mystery. We should bury the body in a simple way. The funeral service for my husband was positive as well as a simple expression of his faith. We read his favorite Scriptures and sang favorite songs. We did not want to celebrate death in a pagan fashion. As Christians, we view





death as a homegoing and victory celebration. You do not have to "go for broke" one last time trying to tell the deceased that you loved them. Funerals are for the living.

2. Finance. Get a financial advisor who is Christian and credible in knowing how to give quality advice. Most people are faced with decisions of investments, budgets, and estate planning.

3. Remain or relocate. I was faced with the decision as to whether I would remain in the same city or relocate. Since I stayed in the same city, there was the decision of whether to sell the house and move to an apartment. I determined not to make any moves for at least three years.

4. Practical matters. There are practical "nitty gritty" everyday things with which we have to deal. Things such as: repairing the house and car, doing the yard, where to continue doing business, and perhaps when to travel.

5. Dealing with children. Since

the children were already grown, many matters were already handled. I had to let them know about the death. While they were together we had to decide who would get what as keepsakes were distributed. My children made many decisions easier as they voted among themselves as to who would get what. They were generous with one another. Perhaps one of the most important areas in dealing with the children is to keep in touch with them.

6. Learning to be independent. I did not want to be one of those "clinging widows." I certainly did not want people to say negative things about my dependence on others. I wanted to be independent, yet I also needed people. So I had to make the decision to be independent.

7. Possible remarriage. One of the things that most people have to decide is whether to remarry. I do not want people to push me into dating nor remarrying. At this

point I am not ready to date. When I am ready, I will. I know that I am capable of loving and being loved, yet I do not want to be forced into anything.

There are needs for the immediate as well as ultimate adjusting to the loss of your mate. Some helpful hints for the *immediate* areas are:

1. Express your emotions. You have something very real to cry about. You have lost someone that is worthy and valuable. It is okay to weep.

2. Remember the person for who he or she was. Keep in proper perspective the positive and negative about your spouse. Do not deify nor glorify the deceased. Accept the good and bad as he or she honestly was. As you remember the person you will enjoy putting in practice the good things he or she taught you.

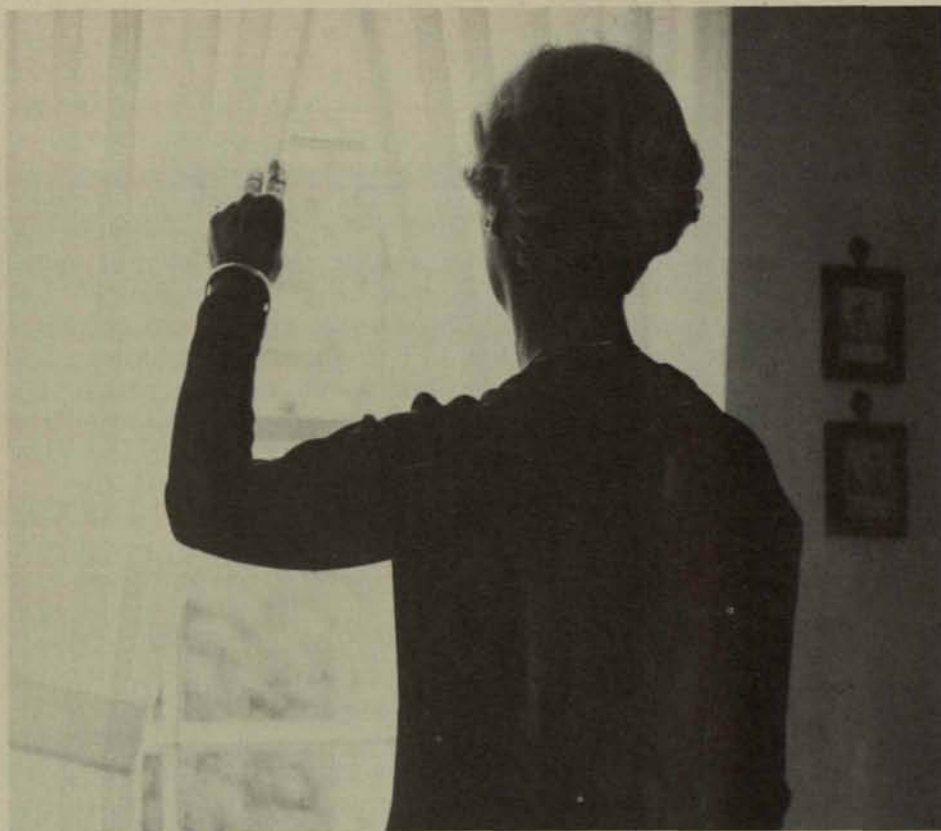
3. Talk and listen. When people want to talk, we must permit them to say anything they desire. Be a "sound post" for the person who has lost a mate. The widow must feel free to talk. As well as this verbal communication, the nonverbal touch and hug is very important to a person.

4. Remind them that God is real. He sees and knows you at this very moment. He has not abdicated his throne. He is with you all the time. He is still who he said he is! God had a Son who died. He knows how you feel. It is hard to think about God in a time of your grief, but he is thinking about you. Romans 8:18-25 proclaims that the present distress is temporary and negligible.

*Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will give us later. For all creation is waiting patiently and hopefully for that future day when God will resurrect his children. For on that day thorns and thistles, sin, death, and decay—the things that overcame the world against its will at God's command—will all disappear, and*







*the world around us will share in the glorious freedom from sin which God's children enjoy. For we know that even the things of nature, like animals and plants, suffer in sickness and death as they await this great event. And even we Christians, although we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, also groan to be released from pain and suffering. We, too, wait anxiously for that day when God will give us our full rights as his children, including the new bodies he has promised us—bodies that will never be sick again and will never die. We are saved by trusting. And trusting means looking forward to getting something we don't yet have—for a man who already has something doesn't need to hope and trust that he will get it. But if we must keep trusting God for something that hasn't happened yet, it teaches us to wait patiently and confidently. Romans 8:18-25, TLB*

There are several areas geared

to the *ultimate* adjustment.

1. Love and be loved. Do not wallow in self-pity, because you will become "hard" and "bitter." No one wants to love someone like that. Be a loving person. The only way to be loved is to start loving. It takes a disciplined effort to start loving. Be a loving person to everyone you meet.

2. Accept events you cannot change. Face reality. Face what has happened. Your spouse died and there is nothing that can change that fact. You saw the body in the casket being lowered into the ground. You know it happened. Admitting the truth will help you to cope with reality. You cannot bring him or her back and you cannot change this fact.

3. Build a better self. After all, you are no longer married. The interaction that you had with your spouse is now terminated. Relate to yourself and build a better "you." What kind of person are you going to be now that you are unattached? Are you going to be half a person? No! You are a whole

person! Is there an area of your personhood that you could not develop while married? You can work on those areas. There are several things you may want to do now. My husband did not care to swim. Now I feel free to swim as well as do some other things that he did not necessarily enjoy. I like going to the beach. Although these are small areas, they are important to me.

4. Care, share, and relate to others. Since I have had the experience of losing a mate through death, I can more clearly identify with people who have lost loved ones.

It is possible for some women to put on the widow's veil and beat their breast with their fists and say, "Woe is me!" But that is not living nor being real. It is better to be with people and interact and learn from them. This dynamic exchange is a giving and receiving which is most meaningful in human relationships. As long as I am sitting at home feeling sorry for myself, I cannot do anything for anyone. There are some widows who are doing nothing as they wait for the end of life quietly, and so they accomplish nothing. I would rather live "dangerously" in risking my life for others. Perhaps I might not live as long, but my life will have quality!

When I am tempted to give over to the negative emotions of resentment, depression, or despair, I choose to discipline myself to care, share, and relate to other people. There are so many people just shouting to be cared for.

If I could call a meeting of all the widows I would say these things. You were probably honored to have some special guy to love in your life. If it has enriched you, pass it on. If it has not, perhaps you need a new attitude.▼

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For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 1 Timothy 6:7-8

"The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself; 'God, I thank you that I am not like all other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this

"But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world." John 16:32-33

# THE WORD

tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.'

"But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, 'God, have mercy on me, a sinner.'

"I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God."

Luke 18:11-14

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge. Psalm 51:1-4

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Romans 8:38-39

## Facing Reality

"My covenant was with him (Levi), a covenant of life and peace, and I gave them to him; this called for reverence and he revered me and stood in awe of my name. True instruction was in his mouth and nothing false was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and turned many from sin." Malachi 2:5-6

To keep me from becoming

conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

"Praise be to the Lord, who has given rest to his people Israel just as he promised. Not one word has failed of all the good promises he gave through his servant Moses." 1 Kings 8:56

Scriptures are from the New International Version © 1978 by the New York International Bible Society unless marked otherwise.



New Wine features this edition of *Fathergram* as an introduction to our upcoming column, "Tips for Fathers," which will begin in our June issue.

# FATHERGRAM

May 1981 #24

P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616

Dear Father,

A wise father, Solomon, penned the following words for his sons to read: "My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding, and if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. 2:1-5 NIV).

Knowing that his sons would need much encouragement to survive the pressures confronting them, Solomon faithfully declared to them the practical wisdom that God had given him during his lifetime. Today, the book of Proverbs is an ongoing inheritance for every family that can be read and re-read with much blessing.

Four years ago we saw the need to declare faithfully to fathers their responsibility to give their children a godly heritage. The need confronting us then was based on a fourfold observation: 1) The role of a father in society was in tremendous upheaval. 2) The role of the father was vague. 3) The role of the father was essential for stability and security in society. 4) A continuing effort was needed to strengthen the fathers and their role in every home.

For the most part we feel successful in having produced a concise, informative, practical paper that serves as a "mind jogger" for fathers. But the present climate in this country presents many positive opportunities for the Church, and we are encouraged to set before you the goals for *Fathergram* which we believe will expand its usefulness: 1) *Increase circulation*. We now reach approximately 15,000 families, and our goal is to double that number by the end of this year. 2) *Increase content* through more articles and resource material that will provide helpful insights into every area of family life. 3) *Increase usage* of *Fathergram* in church and fellowship groups as a

ministry tool. 4) *Increase evangelism outreach* through a more effective use of *Fathergram* as a source of testimony to neighbors and friends.

To reach these goals we will have to make certain changes which will also increase the effort that goes into each issue. Let me tell you what is currently under way.

We are forming groups in ten major cities in the United States to gather and process material that will be current and vital to family life. They will

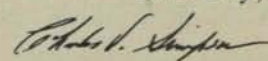
pass on insights, news articles, book reviews and other bits and pieces of information that we feel will greatly enhance *Fathergram*. My father, Vernon Simpson, and I will continue to share in the Bible Story and Heritage sections of the paper.

We want you to be a part of this increased effort to strengthen fathers. There are four specific ways that you can help. 1) Continue to share your comments about *Fathergram* and about how the Lord is working in your home. 2) Pray earnestly for the ministry of *Fathergram*. 3) Share financially with us as the Lord blesses your home. (Some are making Father's Day a special day of prayer and pledged support.) 4) Let *Fathergram* speak for you to other fathers you know. Send us

a list of fathers' names and addresses along with a contribution to cover the cost of mailing. This can be a very effective ministry through your hands.

Finally, thank you for all of your help and support over these past four years. It has been exciting to see the way the Lord has worked as we have been obedient to Him. Be assured that we will do all that we can to strengthen your home and His Church through our consistent support of fathers in the homes they lead.

Sincerely,



Charles V. Simpson





## Faithfulness

A Hebrew slave named Moses became one of the most influential men in history through his faithfulness to God. He remained true to God's calling upon his life for forty years as a prince in Egypt, forty years as a shepherd in Midian, and forty years leading God's people through the desert to the land of promise.

He was born during a time of great trouble and persecution for the Hebrew people. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, had said, "All baby boys under two years old must be killed." He was afraid that too many babies were being born to the Israelite slave families and that one day there might be enough of them to take over his country. To save his life, Moses' parents placed him in a water-proof basket, hid him among the reeds along the bank of the Nile River, and told Miriam, his older sister, to stand guard at a safe distance to watch what would happen. Pharaoh's daughter saw the basket among the reeds and sent her slave girl to get it. Upon seeing the baby inside, she decided to raise him as her own baby. Moses' sister quickly offered to find a nurse for the baby and ran and got the boy's own mother. God had miraculously spared the man of His choosing for the job which He would later give him.

Moses was raised in the king's palace and enjoyed the privileges of being a king's son until one day, in a fit of anger, he killed an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Israelite. Knowing that his deed had been discovered, Moses escaped into the land of Midian and became a shepherd. It was during the forty years at Midian that God spoke to him from the "burning bush" and called him to lead His people from Egypt to the land that He had promised Abraham.

The Lord sent ten plagues upon the people of Egypt through the hand of Moses in order to set His people free from bondage. The greatest miracle of all was the way God brought His people through the wilderness to the land of promise. Moses was tempted many times to quit, but the Lord strengthened him and he finished the job that God had called him to do.

Through Moses, His faithful servant, God gave Israel His laws, His plan for the Tabernacle, and also one of the best examples ever of faithful obedience.

## Notes to Fathers

Moses spoke these words to the nation of Israel before he died:

The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just; A God of *faithfulness* and without injustice, righteous and upright is He" (Deut. 32:4 NAS).

NEW WINE

1. Moses describes God as "faithful." We sing the old hymn "Great Is Thy Faithfulness." Discuss the ways God has been faithful to you and your family.
2. What are some other words that you could use for the word "faithful"?
3. The Bible says in Hebrews 3:1-6 that Moses was faithful in all he did for God. In what ways was Moses a faithful man?
4. Take time to review this godly character of faithfulness in your family. Have the members of your family been faithful to the Lord? To one another? Are we people who can be trusted to keep our word? God is. Moses was. How about us?

## Heritage

### "Lessons from a compost pile"—Vernon

My father had some very good ways to teach his six children. While our one sister learned housekeeping from Mother, my father had my four brothers and me cultivate a 3½ acre garden which produced not only plenty of vegetables for our house but some extra to give the neighbors.

In order to have such a productive garden, Dad built a large compost pile consisting of rotten leaves and vegetation covered with fertilizer from the cow and chicken lots. Although it was hard work to build up the compost pile, and even harder work to mulch it into the soil, it taught us the value of putting back into the soil that which would keep it productive. From this garden we raised large tomatoes, and one of the largest sweet potatoes (yams) ever grown in our town. Lots of vegetables and even fine watermelons blessed our table and that of our neighbors.

All of us learned lessons from that garden and the compost pile—that hard work often pays off, and that kindness to neighbors is a good thing. It wasn't until later that we learned another lesson—that Dad knew that by keeping his boys' hands busy it would keep us out of a lot of trouble. Surely the compost pile and that garden taught us then and still teaches us even now.

## Practical Tip

### "When Daddy comes home from work"—George Gundlach

My wife, Shari, and I had taught our sons "how to greet Daddy when he comes home after a hard day's work." They were to be poised at the hearth of our fireplace and come running to me, shouting,



"Hi, Daddy, we're glad you're home!"

Well, the other night when I came home weary and worn out, my oldest came running to me telling me all about his little disappointments and troubles, while our youngest occupied himself with his battery-operated car. Disappointed at their reactions, I said to them, "This is not the way to greet Daddy when he comes home. I'm going to go out and come in again—let's see if we can do it right this time." What followed was very gratifying as they ran to me, shouting, "Hi, Daddy. We're glad you're home," and my oldest literally knocked me over as he greeted me.

From that experience with my children I learned a valuable lesson of prayer with my own heavenly Father. We must not rush into His presence with our ills and ailments, but first come with love and appreciation and praise.

### "Rejoicing Together"

In a recent issue of *Good Housekeeping Magazine*, H. Sanford Howie, Jr. described the ideal family as "one in which both the parents and the children often feel that almost indescribable bond of having achieved something together." He listed six techniques to help parents get started in this adventure of achieving together.

1. *Find something at which your child can succeed.* Were you on hand to share your child's enthusiasm when he learned to tie his shoes, count to ten or finish a chore you requested?
2. *Listen to your child.* Even if your day is rushed, begin by setting aside 10 minutes a day to really hear what each child is saying.
3. *Cut down by 75% on the things you tell your child to do.* Ask less and make sure that what you do ask is enforced.
4. *Set limits and enforce them.* Children should be taught from an early age to know what is expected of them and they should know that the limits you set are going to be enforced.
5. *Set up priorities with your child.* Decide together with your child what is important in life. If asked what they consider important, most parents will list qualities like honesty, loyalty and concern for others. If you display these qualities when disciplining your children, they will learn to use them in dealing with others.
6. *Don't be afraid to admit it when you are wrong!* Nothing builds esteem so well in a child as knowing that sometimes he can be right and an adult can be wrong.

### Letters From Our Readers

#### *What they show and how we respond*

I am quite pleased with *Fathergram* and have two more friends that I feel would benefit from receiving it. You have made it meaningful and easy to read, and I appreciate the length—not overly long and "wordy."

Mr. Doug Stout  
Ann Arbor, MI

*FG: We do want to keep Fathergram "short, sweet and to the point." Most men are too busy to read lengthy articles. We attempt to remind fathers of their responsibility and encourage the active participation of fathers.*

### Insight

A reader of *Fathergram* shares a unique idea that came to him through an article he read in *Fathergram*, and through something God did in his family. David Dyke, senior pastor of New Covenant Christian Fellowship in Louisville, KY, said that he had planned to share with his family the story of the twelve memorial stones, one for each tribe of Israel, that were lifted from the bottom of the Jordan River as the Israelites crossed over, and set on its banks as a memorial.

On the day that Rev. Dyke planned to share with his family, a cold day in February, the water pipes in his house froze and burst. Later in the day the temperature rose enough so that the pipes began leaking, filling the basement of the house with water. Only a young, single lady who lives with the family and their ten-year-old son, Joel, were home. They couldn't get the water turned off and they couldn't find Rev. Dyke, who knew how to turn it off. Joel prayed, "Lord, cause Daddy to call us." Within just a few minutes, Rev. Dyke did call. He was able to tell them how to turn the water off and prevent a disaster. That evening as Rev. Dyke shared with his family as planned about Israel's memorial stones, suddenly Joel had an idea. "Why don't we take a picture of the water pipes so that we will remember what God did?" he asked. "The picture would be like one of the stones." So the Dykes began their "stone book" of pictures, and the first picture was of the water pipes so they could remember how God had answered Joel's prayer.

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*To receive Fathergram on a regular basis write to Fathergram, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616.*





# When God Came to the Bayou

an interview with Rev. Vernon Simpson

*Anyone who has heard Charles Simpson speak or has read some of his articles would be able to tell you two words that are a common thread throughout his sharing—"my dad." I knew from the first few times I heard Charles speak that his father has been a profound influence upon his life and ministry. But it wasn't until New Wine Magazine moved to Mobile, Alabama that we were able to have regular first-hand contact with Rev. Vernon Simpson and to hear him relate some of his rich experiences in fifty years of Christian ministry.*

*So when a group of Rev. and Mrs. Simpson's*

*friends made plans to accompany them on a trip back into the Bayou country in southeast Louisiana where Rev. Simpson had done work as a Baptist missionary from 1930 to 1943, the idea for an on-site New Wine interview emerged. We met the Simpsons and others in their party in New Orleans. As we travelled by van from New Orleans to the church in Algiers, Louisiana from which he was sent out, and then on board his nephew's shrimp boat to Happy Jack Landing in the Bayou Country, we asked Brother Simpson to relate the story of the revival still referred to by many local people as the time "when God came to the Bayou."*



NW: *Reverend Simpson, what made you decide to come to the Bayou to do mission work?*

VS: I moved to Algiers, Louisiana in 1930, during the Depression, and found a job driving a truck. I didn't come with the intention of doing missionary work, although I had felt called to the ministry from the time I was a young man attending the First Baptist Church in Lafayette, Alabama where I was raised. I didn't know where or when but I knew that the Lord wanted me to preach. So when I came to Algiers, I began attending the First Baptist Church there. The senior pastor was a man named Brother Sheldon, who was an independent faith Baptist missionary. Brother Sheldon has since passed away, but at that time he had quite an extensive ministry. His sermons were broadcast on over thirty radio stations, and many of his booklets were being distributed. He led the meetings when we began seeking the baptism in the Holy Spirit, praying that we might have the power to reach the people of the Bayou.

Soon after I joined the church, Brother Sheldon encouraged me to quit my job to enter the seminary, and I did. From the church in Algiers, I started going out to the Bayou on weekends to do mission work. There were nineteen of us connected with the mission at that time, including Brother Sheldon, his wife, his secretary and myself as his assistant. Our motto was "Southeast Louisiana for Christ."

NW: *When you first went to the Bayou, what was the thing that impressed you the most?*

VS: The physical and spiritual poverty of the people. The Bayou country was almost totally Roman Catholic, but people were only nominally religious. They didn't read the Bible, nor any other books for that matter. They were very poor and very uneducated spiritually.

One of the first experiences I had while down



**Reverend Vernon Simpson is the father of Charles Simpson, the senior pastor of Gulf Coast Covenant Church and chairman of New Wine Magazine's Editorial Board. Vernon Simpson did mission work in the Bayou area of south Louisiana for thirteen years and pastored the First Baptist Church of Theodore, Alabama for thirty-five years. After his**

**retirement from that church in 1976, he moved to Mobile, Alabama with his wife, Genoa, where they are actively involved in "Jubilee," a pastoral ministry to senior adults associated with Gulf Coast Covenant Church. Rev. Simpson is also co-editor of Fathergram, a bimonthly newsletter to fathers.**



*Rev. Simpson and Dick Leggatt talking about the time*

there was with another young man also doing mission work. I had tucked my Bible under my arm and he said, "You don't need to hide your Bible. These people don't even know what it is."

NW: *They had never seen a Bible?*

VS: No, they hadn't. Contrary to Catholicism now, in those days in that part of Louisiana, the priests forbade any reading of the Bible. Most men never went to church, except perhaps on Easter Sunday. Even though practically the entire area was nominally Catholic, most of them knew very little about the Christian faith.

NW: *What were the events which brought about a change in this situation?*

VS: Well, the mission trip we took that is still remembered in that area as the time "when God came to the Bayou" came soon after we had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. We had built a little trailer on the chassis of a Model T Ford, and a recent convert, Ralph Finns, and I took that trailer and headed for the Bayou. It was during the Depression and Ralph was temporarily out of work, and he wanted to do some missionary work.

First we preached at a little place called Myrtle Grove. One Spanish fellow who was converted at those meetings was a big, strapping man named Ivey Vidal. After he was converted, Ivey asked if he could





*"when God came to the Bayou"*

join us in our mission work; so when Ralph had to return to New Orleans, Ivey went with me into the Bayou to Happy Jack, a small community on the water.

Doing mission work in the Bayou was like working in a foreign country, even though it was just a stone's throw from New Orleans. The people of the Bayou were rough, hostile people and there was an element of danger venturing into that remote area. The Bayou at that time was virtually a lawless region, and at times law officers and game wardens who intruded to enforce the law were known to disappear without a trace.

Some of the people there once told me how they had robbed a man in the French Quarter of New Orleans by rolling up a newspaper and jamming it into his back. The victim only had thirty-five cents on him, but they took it anyway. That is the kind of people they were.

Well, I began to preach and soon we were drawing large crowds, which upset the priests considerably, as we soon found out. Ivey became a little nervous and headed back home to his folks in Myrtle Grove, leaving me alone in the Bayou in that little trailer.

The local religious leaders had become so angry over my preaching that one night they finally stirred up some Knights of Columbus and told them to go to my trailer and try to scare me out of Happy Jack. I

didn't know whether they would try to run me out by burning the trailer (which was the threat they had made) or by beating me up or some other method. Regardless of which method they chose, I had virtually no way of defending myself. There was a butcher knife in the trailer but I never thought of using it. Even though I had a few friends there, the predominant attitude toward me was hostile, and this particular night I was all alone.

It wasn't long until I heard the sound of a mob of about twenty men starting down the road toward my trailer. Though I was there all by myself I knew the Lord was with me; so I knelt down in that little trailer and said, "Lord, I put myself in Your hands tonight." Then I lay down on the bed and turned my good ear down into the pillow (I'm hard of hearing in one ear) so I wouldn't be bothered by any noise. Right before I closed my eyes I heard something hit the roof of the trailer and my first thought was that they had thrown a torch on top of the trailer to set it on fire. But I ignored that thought, fell asleep immediately, and slept soundly until sunup. The next morning I looked on top of the trailer and found the roots of a ragweed plant with dirt still clinging to them. That was what they had thrown onto my trailer.

That night, which I refer to as "the crisis," was the turning point in the ministry there. Soon some of the rugged men from the Bayou, the Beinchini brothers, came to me and asked me to live with them at their little camp on the river, work on their boat shrimping with them and preach to them. The following week revival broke out.

It was a revival in the grandest sense of the term. Songs were sung, sermons were preached, lives were changed. The people became incredibly happy. As a matter of fact, I have never seen a happier group of people in my life. Every day we had a service, and according to what I knew as normal tradition, I would try to finish preaching at noon. (I was still used to Baptist country back in Alabama, where the congregation expected the preacher to be through preaching at twelve noon on the dot.) But I found that at noon, they were just beginning. They wanted to keep going—they simply refused to quit. So we would sing for a while longer, and when we finished singing, they would ask me to preach again.

If I would preach about Abraham, when I was through talking about him they would ask me, "Now, who was Abraham?" Their question did not come from the fact that they weren't listening; they just knew so little about the Bible that they genuinely didn't know who he was. But they *wanted* to know, and they really couldn't get enough of the Word of God. I would tell them about Noah and Adam and when I was finished they would ask me some more questions. Then they would want to sing



again. They just didn't want to quit.

Finally we would go back to our little camp, sleep for two or three hours, then get up, drink our coffee and go out on the boat to seine for shrimp. When we came in from seining, we would eat our supper and then start another service.

**NW:** *You did that every day?*

**VS:** Every day for thirteen weeks. Often I preached three times on Sunday. After about six or seven weeks, we moved out to the nearby riverfront. Brother Sheldon brought a tent down there and we continued the revival on the riverfront for six or seven more weeks.

Throughout the revival we baptized people in the Mississippi River—ninety-one people altogether. Ninety-one meant a lot more there in Happy Jack than it would in a town or big city. Ninety-one there was a fantastic number because of the community's size and because nowhere else did we have more than five or six baptisms. That revival had repercussions all over the region.

Every time we held a meeting we would have a baptismal service. In my whole life I have never seen a more glorious time than those thirteen weeks. We organized two churches down there as a result of the revival—one on the Bayou and one on the riverfront.

People would come from both sides of the Bayou to be at the revival meetings. The people that we are going to be visiting at Happy Jack are some of the ones who were converted at that time.

*Many of the roads we had been travelling up to this time traced the route of the Mississippi River as it headed toward its mouth at the Gulf of Mexico. Beside us most of the way was the built-up grassy mound of the levee, holding back the waters of the river which were actually much higher than the level of the road on which we travelled. As we continued to talk, we made our way toward the landing where we were to board the shrimp boat owned by Rev. Simpson's nephew which would take us to*



*The Simpsons and the Ancars*

*Happy Jack Landing—for the only “roads” we could take to get there were waterways. It was inaccessible by car.*

*Winding our way by boat through the canals and waterways, we eventually came to the house of the Ancar family, which had been touched by the revival at Happy Jack. As we docked the boat and stepped onto the dock, Mr. Ancar waited there to embrace Rev. Simpson, speaking to him in English mixed with French, smiling and laughing as he did.*

*Mrs. Ancar, who had been working in her kitchen unaware of our arrival, stepped out on the kitchen steps as all of us came around the side of the house. She squinted in the bright sun, trying to make out our faces, and then, recognizing Mrs. Simpson, ran to embrace her, weeping and repeating over and over again, “You’ve come back. You’ve come back.” Clinging to her even more tightly she said, “You’ve been gone too long.” Even though they had only seen one another a few times since the Simpsons had left the Bayou in 1943, the love had not diminished.*

*Immediately, Mrs. Ancar turned to all of us and insisted that everyone come into her kitchen—she wanted to fix something for us to eat and drink. Our protests that there were too many of us and it would be too much trouble failed to dissuade her. As our entire group of eight or ten men and women both stood and sat in Mrs. Ancar’s kitchen, eating the hoecake she fried in an old frying pan and drinking the strong, dark coffee she made from green coffee beans cooked in a sauce pan, she spoke to us in English mingled with a French accent of the revival at Happy Jack and their love for the Simpsons.*

*More than once as she shared, those of us who listened would have to slip quietly out the kitchen door in order to weep without disturbing the others or interrupting her sharing. As we listened to her and her husband reminisce with the Simpsons about what God had done, God’s presence filled the little kitchen there on the Bayou.*

*Mrs. Ancar told us:*

*Brother Vernon opened our eyes so that we could see the gospel. It’s hard when you don’t know the gospel and when you don’t know Christ. But it means everything to a person when they come to know Christ. He’s your Lord and Savior, and that’s all you want. You don’t care about this world. This world is gonna go away, but the Word of God will never go away. I praise the Lord that Brother Simpson opened my eyes. When Brother Simpson came here, nobody knew the Lord. We were all bound.*

*You think about the children of Israel. When they were in bondage, they were slaves. Well, it is the same thing when you don’t know the Lord. But when you come to know the Lord, you are not a slave. I always tell my husband that we were the same as the Israelites. Our eyes were blind but now we see.*



Later, we left Mrs. Ancar's kitchen and walked over to see the old building next door—the little church that had been built on the Bayou as the result of the revival. Eventually, the time came for all of us to leave, and the Simpsons said goodbye to the Ancars. They stood in front of their house, waving until our boat was out of sight.



*The old church building at Happy Jack landing*

As our boat went along the waterway into Grand Bayou and then headed back to the landing, Rev. Simpson continued to tell us about the time “when God came to the Bayou.”

**NW:** Who was the first person in the Bayou to come to the Lord?

**VS:** Captain Noe Beinchini and then his family. Captain Noe was the father of the Beinchini boys, who first asked me to shrimp with them and preach to them, and with whom I stayed during the revival. Captain Noe had his own boat, the one we seined from.

**NW:** How did you get to know Captain Noe?

**VS:** Brother Sheldon had met some Filipino people in New Orleans named Gomez and they had asked him to come to the service they held in their house at Foster's Canal. I went with him and met Captain Noe when he came to that service. We had quite a few people crammed into that tiny little house—about thirty in all. The wonderful thing about that particular service was that it was then that we decided to begin doing mission work down in the Bayou.

**NW:** Was Captain Noe a key figure in the community down there?

**VS:** Very much so. The Lord knew what He was doing when He let Captain Noe be the first to be baptized. In a way, his acceptance of the Lord and his baptism lent credibility to the revival in the eyes of the Bayou people.

In the Bayou, each man's pay or share of the seine was written in a book. When a man worked for the captain of a shrimping boat, at pay day he



would ask, “What does the book say?” The captain would open the book and show him how much the boat brought in and how much each man's share was. This way the man would know he wasn't being cheated. Captain Noe once told me, “When I asked you about Christ, Brother Vernon, you would always open the Book to show me the answer. That is what made me know that what you were preaching was right.”

**NW:** What was the community like after the revival?

**VS:** The whole Bayou was like heaven. It was definitely the work of the Holy Spirit. These people, who used to lie and cheat and steal from each other, were now loving and caring for one another. Only a miracle from God could have done that.

One day a man came to me and said that he wanted to explain to his relatives on the riverfront about being a Christian. The man could hardly read, so he gave me his New Testament and said, “Would you please turn down the pages where I want these folks to read in the Bible, and I will take it down to them and let them read it for themselves.” So I marked the scriptures that dealt with repentance and salvation, and he took that Bible down there with him, gave it to his relatives and said, “Read my Bible to





*Rev. Simpson spent thirteen years ministering in the Bayou.*

me." He already knew what was in there ahead of time, but they did not. As they read, the passages convicted them and they were saved. That's the way it was—their own testimony, their own talking, is what got the message over to many in the Bayou.

**NW:** *How were you supported when you were down in the Bayou?*

**VS:** When I started drawing the seine with the Bein-chinis they would give me my share of the profit, and I would put my share into the church. I had no need for money because they were feeding me and I had my clothes.

The people would bring their tithes to the church and I would receive a part of that tithe for the purpose of keeping up the church. Sometimes when they made extra money on shrimping they would give that money to the church.

When I became assistant pastor at the church of Algiers, they paid me three dollars a week. The congregation did not have very much, so that was a lot of money to them.

When I started pastoring in Theodore, Alabama in 1941, they paid me twenty-five dollars every two weeks. I also preached every two weeks in Grand Bayou, and sometimes they would give me fifteen or twenty dollars, with which I would pay my expenses

to Theodore and back. After a while the church in Algiers gave me five dollars a week for a regular salary.

**NW:** *It seems that one of the biggest factors in their receptivity to the Lord is the personal relationship that you built with them and the love between you and them.*

**VS:** Their foundation goes all the way back to the great revival; the thirteen week revival. Something happened in their hearts over forty years ago, and the impact has not left. Something eternal took place in them that time "when God came to the Bayou." ♥



*Leaving the dock at the Ancars' house*





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# Dear New Wine,

## Needs international appeal

I believe that in 1981 *New Wine* Magazine should seriously consider bringing out articles with an international slant, flavor and acceptability. When I read some of the articles, I got the impression (perhaps I was wrong in getting that impression) that these articles were only for American Christians. Couldn't articles be written which would whet and at the same time satisfy the spiritual appetites of Christians all over the world? This could serve as a written "Sword of the Spirit," cutting through social, cultural, racial and color differences, to achieve what Jesus is so earnestly praying for—Unity in Spirit and Truth.

Basil D. Gomes  
Calcutta, India

## A different perspective

Thank you for the February issue, *Perspective for a Decade*. It is refreshing to know that there are leaders who are still reaching out in faith to "see" where we are go-

ing. All the articles were excellent and we could especially relate to the "Samaritan" article by Don Basham, entitled "Getting Involved." Many times we thought we were good Samaritans only to find out we were really like "the Pharisee priest."

Steve & Irma Barnes  
Middletown, OH

## Coming into unity

One of the areas which the Holy Spirit has been speaking to me about is the area of unity—"that we all may be one." Having come from a Baptist background into an Episcopal charismatic church and from there to a Pentecostal charismatic church, I have often said to the Lord, "How is this unity—this oneness—ever going to come about? We as the Body are so easily offended, put off and unaccepting of doctrinal differences, others' weaknesses and traditions foreign to our backgrounds." I have come to the conclusion that love, which covers, overlooks, accepts and rejoices in differences and weaknesses, is the only way.

I believe that the difficulties and trials that so many seem to be facing today are God's way of preparing our hearts to love in a way that is completely beyond our understanding. It is a love born only by the Spirit of God. It calls for great perseverance and complete dependence on the Lord Jesus. By faith I believe we shall come into this promised land!

Mr. & Mrs. Bryan Unruh  
Langley, BC, Canada

## Granny & Paul Brand

I was excited to see the article in the March 81 issue by Dr. Paul Brand. Several years ago I read a biography of his mother entitled *Granny Brand*. Reading about the life of this godly woman was quite interesting and the Lord really touched my heart with her story. In the book she spoke of her son, Paul, and his work with the lepers. His article in *New Wine* was the first I had heard of him in our "Christian circle" and I was delighted. I felt like I was reading something by an old friend.

Julie Cunningham  
Freeville, NY

## Political hubbub

The editorial by Dick Leggatt in the January 81 issue is the best I have seen regarding all the hubbub about the "far-right" and the "born-again" vote, etc.

It should be required reading for all Christians—especially those involved in the political process.

It would not bother me to see you give space to more of the same.

Ken Brouillard  
San Jose, CA

## Getting prepared

I'll soon be out on parole and I'm writing to thank you for the *New Wine* Magazines. They have been very inspirational and because of them, to a certain extent, I know I'll be able to live a God-filled Christian life.

Bennie Sampson

**P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616**

The editorial policy and purpose of *New Wine* is: (1) to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom of God to all nations, (2) to work with all Christian ministries for the maturity and unity of His Church, (3) thus making ready a people prepared for the coming of the Lord. We recognize that, according to the Scriptures, God uses men given as ministries to build His Church in the earth. However, the basis of our relationship is not primarily commitment to human personalities, but to Jesus Christ as Head, to the Holy Scriptures as the ultimate standard by which all revelation and practice is to be judged and to God's purpose for His people in the earth at this time, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit. *New Wine* is a non-subscription magazine supported by the voluntary contributions of those who believe in its mission. All

gifts are tax deductible. A tax-deductible receipt for contributions is available at year-end upon request. *New Wine* Magazine is under the supervision of an editorial board which meets several times each year to provide direction and oversight. The board consists of Don Basham, Ern Baxter, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince and Charles Simpson, who receive no remuneration for their service on the board. Please use the form found in this magazine to request *New Wine*, for address changes and contributions. All foreign contributions or payments should be made in the form of a check for U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank or International Money Order for U.S. dollars.



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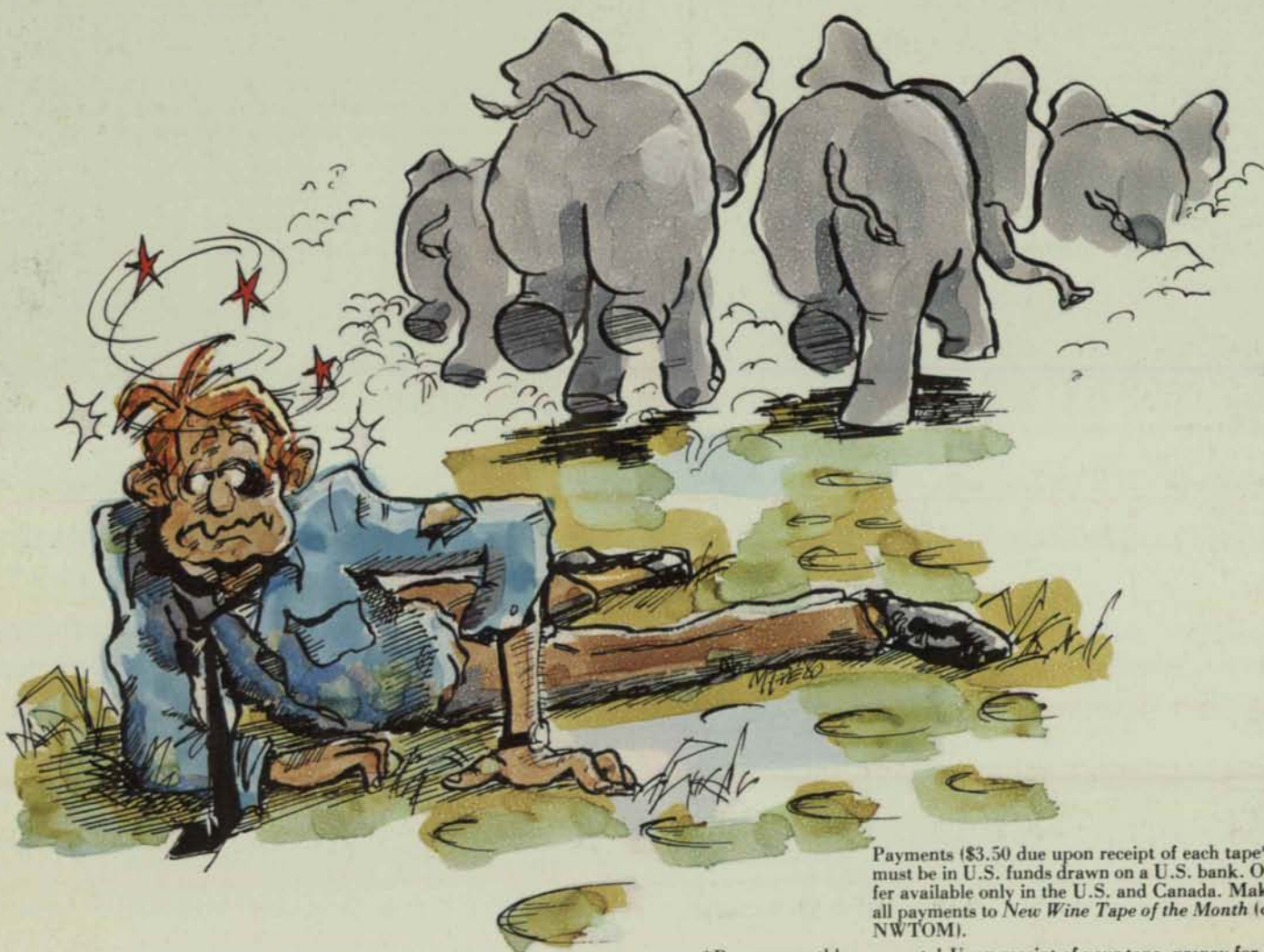
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