

Featuring  
*Back Over the Barbwire!* by Bob Mumford

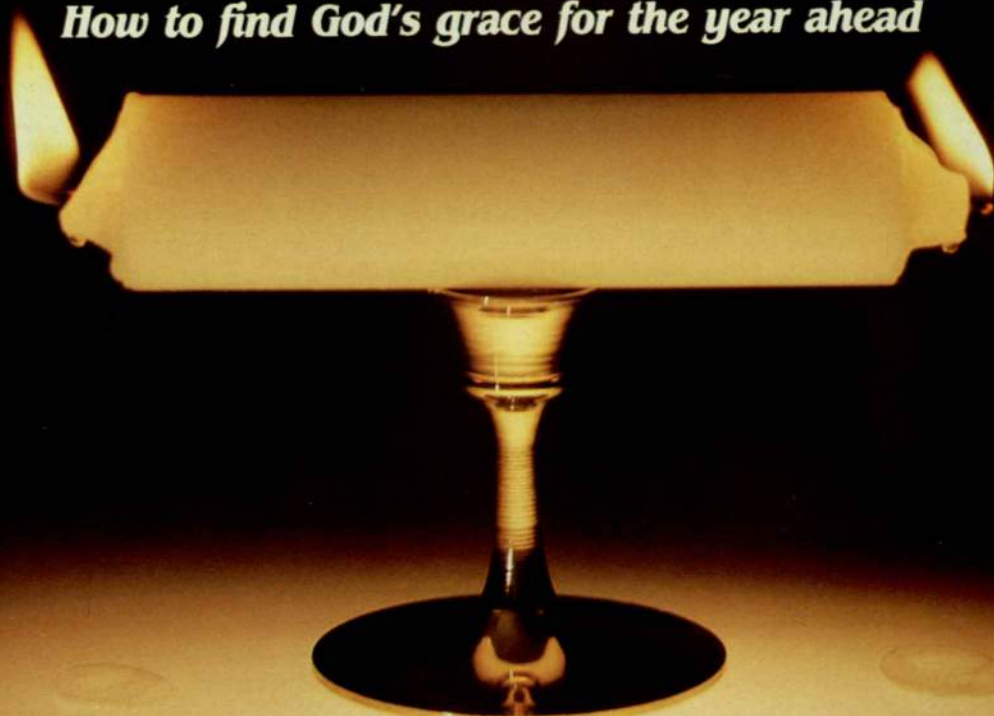
# Magazine **New Wine**®

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January 1983

## ***Knowing Our Limits***

*How to find God's grace for the year ahead*



*Also featuring:*  
***Are You Too Busy?***  
***Vision***  
***Running Out of Grace***





## In the Beginning, God

# Editorial

**T**he scene is all too familiar: With the new year approaching, we start coming up with those notorious New Year's resolutions. Intent upon overcoming all the failures of the past year, we make one resolution after another, setting goals and planning the coming year to the hilt in order to "do better." Unfortunately, this practice of making New Year's resolutions, however good our intentions may be, often neglects one crucial element which makes all the difference: the grace of God.

Without God's grace, our unilateral plans can become our own worst enemy. Such plans, having been initiated by us rather than God, must also be *sustained* by us rather than Him. The result is a pattern of noble but futile efforts that is as old as Cain's unacceptable offering and Martha's frantic preparations for Jesus. However "spiritual" the busyness might seem, it is not what God has in mind for us.

What exactly does God have in mind? I believe that He would have us look to the opening words of the Bible to discover an important foundational principle: "In the beginning, God." The right plans, not only for the approaching year but also for our entire lives and our eternities,

reside in the mind of the One who created them before the foundations of the earth were established. God holds the right plans for our lives, and if we want to know what they are, we must first get in touch with Him.

But God not only has the plans for our lives; He also has the provision of grace and strength we need to accomplish them. The good news for us is that if we inquire of the Lord—and having inquired, stay within the bounds of His answer to us—He will supply not only the plans but the grace to carry them out. If we can approach the coming year with this realization uppermost in our minds, the plans we make, rather than being sources of frustration and exhaustion, will become instead the means by which we do *exactly* what God wants us to do—no more and no less.

With this issue of *New Wine*—and with every issue, for that matter—we want to help put you in touch with the Lord in a way that will confirm His plans for your life. At the same time, we want to help you find the Lord's supernatural grace and empowering by affirming the truth that our God is One who demonstrates His awesome power among us in miraculous ways. In this way, the first issue of 1983 will serve as a founda-

tion for the rest of the year.

The articles this month approach the new year from a number of perspectives. John Beckett's article encourages us to seek God's viewpoint first so that we can look ahead with a vision of His purposes. Charles Simpson's interview and Bob Mumford's message look at some of the difficulties we encounter when we try to do more than God calls us to do, and they provide some practical suggestions for learning to work within the sphere God has assigned us. The problem of busyness is examined from a housewife's perspective by Gigi Tchividjian, and George Gundlach tells how in the midst of a hectic schedule his family discovered their need for a weekly day of rest. Finally, Bruce Longstreth presents a refreshing view of the Church calendar, offering a hopeful strategy for planning the year around our celebrations of God's goodness.

The new year *is*, in fact, a time for resolutions—for wiping the slate clean and starting again with fresh plans and hopes. But at the foundation, it must be a time for renewing and refreshing our relationship with the Lord, for rekindling our expectancy of His supernatural power. Before you begin reading this issue of *New Wine*, why not make that renewal your beginning point for the new year? Why not take some time to refresh (or begin) your relationship with the Lord, asking Him to fill you anew with the power of His Holy Spirit? If we make this a time to recommit ourselves to His purposes and His power, then throughout the coming year we will accomplish, not what *we* have planned for ourselves out of human ingenuity or expediency, but rather what *He* has ordained for us from before the foundations of the earth.

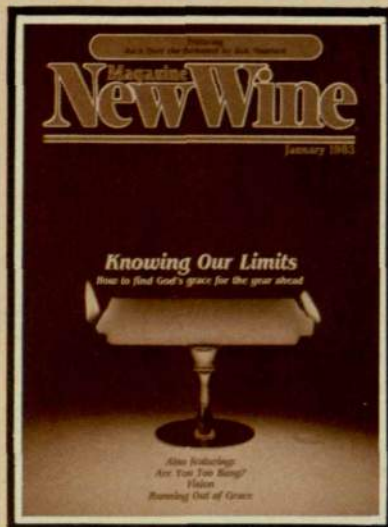
Dick Leggatt  
Editor



# This Month

KNOWING OUR LIMITS

Vol. 15, No. 1, January 1983



Cover: Mark Pie'

**New Wine Magazine**  
a ministry of Integrity Communications

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reserved. New Wine [ISSN 0194-438X] [USPS  
382-520] is published monthly by Integrity  
Communications, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, Ala-  
bama 36616. Second-class postage paid at Mo-  
bile, AL, and additional mailing offices.

NEW WINE

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God wants to push us back within  
the bounds of the work He has called  
us to do.

### 8. **Running Out of Grace** *an interview with Charles Simpson* How to avoid becoming overextended.

### 14. **A Year of Celebration** *by Bruce Longstreth* Planning your year using God's Word as a pattern.

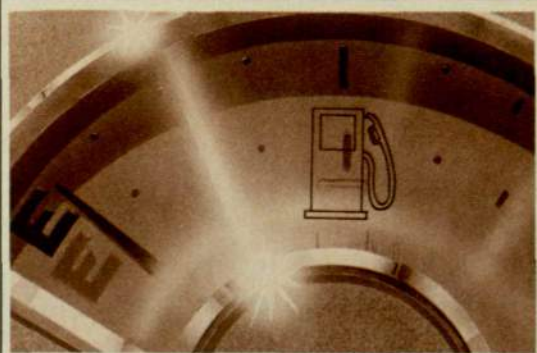
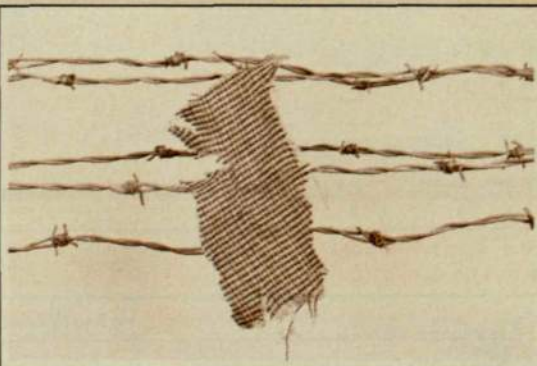
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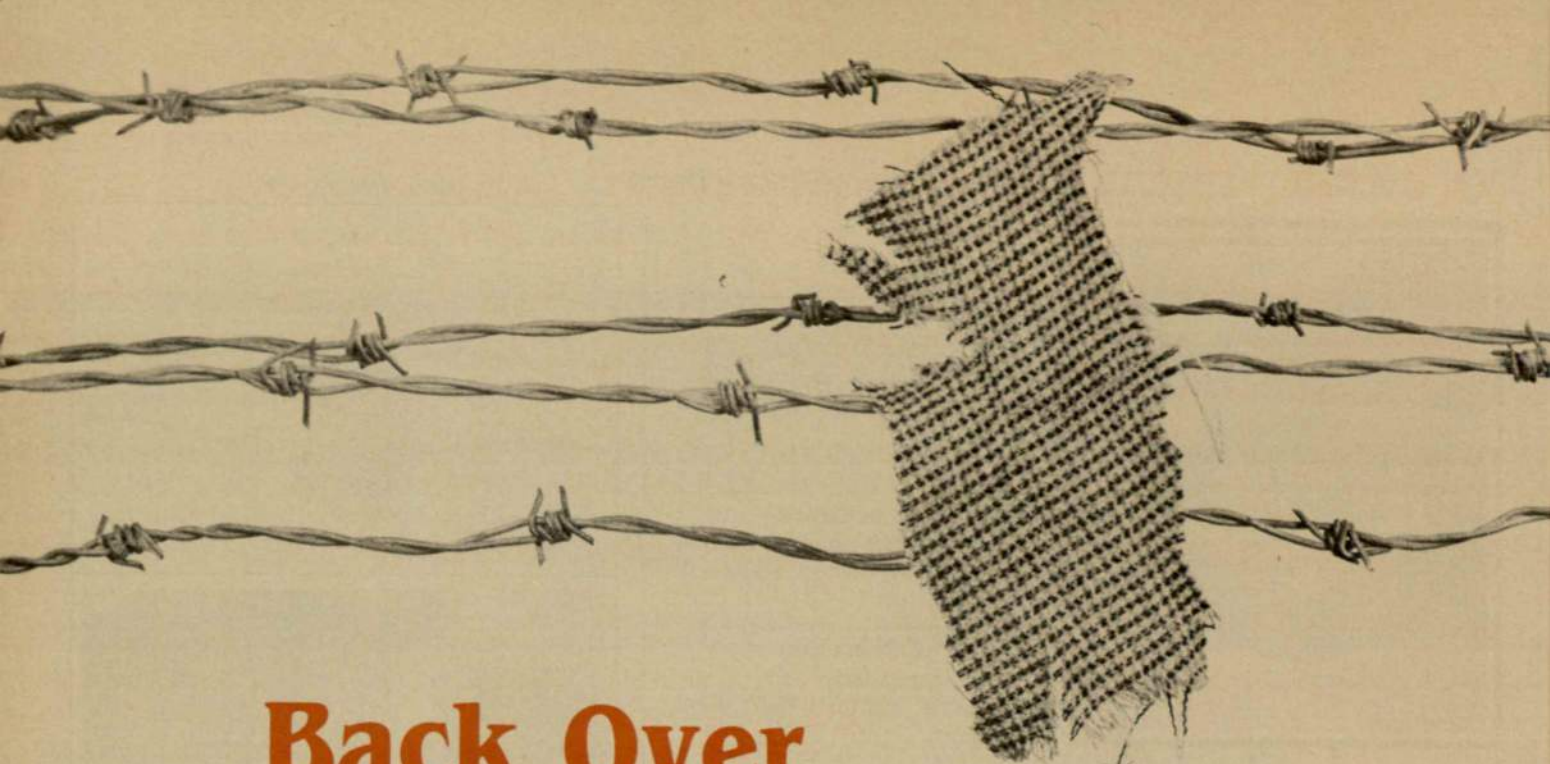
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# Back Over the Barbwire!

by Bob Mumford

A parable I once read about a school for animals goes like this: A duck, a rabbit, a squirrel and an eagle who were in this school were all forced to take the same curriculum of running, swimming, climbing and flying.

The duck, an excellent natural swimmer, injured his feet while trying to learn to run, which caused him to become only average in the other subjects—even his specialty, swimming.

The rabbit started out as a great runner, but all his make-up work in swimming wore him out, so he developed a twitch in his leg muscles that slowed him down to only average speed in running.

The squirrel, the best climber, was frustrated in flying class. He, too, suffered from overexertion, and eventually earned only mediocre grades in all his other subjects, including climbing.

The eagle was able to beat all the others in climbing class in

getting to the top of the tree by using his own unique method. But when he was forced to use his wings to climb like the rest of the animals, some of his feathers were torn out, severely hampering his ability to fly.

Eventually, the demands of the same curriculum diminished each of the animal's special abilities, forcing them to do what they weren't supposed to do, and reducing them to the same level of mediocrity. No one excelled at anything.<sup>1</sup>

Like these animals in the parable, we in the Church have suffered the same frustration, fatigue and mediocrity—and for the same reason: We haven't recognized the truth that each person not only has special gifts, but also specific limitations which should be observed. No matter how often we quote Paul's words about Christ's body having many members with varying functions, it seems we only mouth the metaphor without

learning the lesson. Not only do we keep failing to recognize the unique abilities God gives to each person He calls; we also fail to see that along with those unique gifts each of us also has a unique set of limitations that we must recognize in ourselves and each other.

## Recognizing Our Limits

Many Christians aren't used to the idea of recognizing that we have certain limitations and weaknesses. We might even feel it is sinful, or at best less than spiritual, to admit to them. So it might come as a surprise to us when we read what the apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians: "On my own behalf I will not boast, *except in regard to my weaknesses*" (2 Cor. 12:5 NAS). Most of us certainly wouldn't want to admit our weaknesses, let alone boast about them. Instead, we want to keep them all hidden and out of sight!

Exactly what kind of weaknesses is Paul talking about here? Since Paul is speaking of weakness here in the context of the "thorn in the flesh" he had been given, I don't think Paul is referring to our *sins*. I think he's talking about our *limitations*. Put simply, Paul wants us to face up to one fact:



*There are some things we cannot do.*

Perhaps your response to this would be, "But Philippians 4:13 says I can do *all* things through Christ. To admit I'm limited would be a sin!" Wrongly applied this belief can simply be an echo of the prevalent humanistic attitude which says, "I have no limits! I do whatever I set my mind to do!" Rightly applied, however, I believe what Paul intended to convey through this verse is this: "I can do all things *that the Father demands of me* through Christ who strengthens me." If the Father demands something of me, I can do it, and He will *help* me to do it. But if He *doesn't* demand it of me, then I am going beyond what I can or should do.

### **Sphere, Limitation, Measure**

We may be tempted to ask, "Couldn't the apostle Paul do everything? Wasn't he a powerful man of God with all the ministries functioning in his life?" But let's take a look at what Paul told the Corinthians about the extent of his ministry:

But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the *measure of the sphere which God has apportioned to us* as a measure...not boasting beyond our measure, that is, in other men's labors...so as...not to boast in what has been accomplished in the sphere of another (2 Cor. 10:13-16 NAS).

Paul said he was assigned a *sphere*—that is, a *limited area*—of ministry. How many of us want to believe that? My tendency is to want to be an apostle and a prophet and a pastor and a teacher and an evangelist and everything else. I want to go to Australia and New Zealand and Africa; *and* I want to take the world for Jesus; *and* I also want to take care of my family; *and* I really would like to do some other things on the side—drama and art and television *and*...on and on and on. But God has assigned me a *limited sphere* of ministry just as He did Paul. In fact, the Lord said to me, "I'm not only going to assign you a sphere; I'm going to surround it with a barbwire fence!"

Think of it this way: If we all had farms next to one another, my primary responsibility would be to plow *my* farm. But what if I looked over at another man's field beyond my fence and decided to take my tractor over there and begin plowing his field instead of mine? I would end up trespassing outside of the sphere in which God has called me to work. Doing God's will, then, means that we labor in the field (sphere) that *He* has allotted to us.

### **Limited Grace and Faith**

There are other limits we need to know about. In Ephesians 4:7 Paul says, "But to each of us grace was given, according to the *measure* of Christ's gift." Not only our ministries, it seems, but even the *grace* to function in

them has been limited—measured out—by God. When I work in the field God has given me, His grace is available for the labor—things will grow on my soil. But when I get outside my fence, I run out of grace, and the strangest thing happens: My joy dissipates. Then the Lord has to tell me, "Get back over that barbwire fence!" and when I do, all of a sudden my joy returns. I've had to learn that the Lord never called anyone to go nine directions at once.

To stay within our assigned spheres, within our measure of grace, will take some adjustment in how we view ourselves. Paul realized that as well when he told the Romans: "For through the grace given to me I say to every man among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a *measure of faith*" (12:3 NAS). The Lord has measured out, not only our ministries and grace, but even our faith! And if we get out beyond the measure of our faith, we get into presumption. Though every man's way is right in his own eyes, it is the Lord Himself who establishes the barbwire, and to go beyond



**Bob Mumford** completed his studies for the Bachelor of Divinity degree at the Reformed Episcopal Seminary in Philadelphia. He has served as dean of Elim Bible Institute and as a pastor, evangelist and seminar teacher. Bob has also written many books on various aspects of the Christian life. He is a member of the Integrity Communications Board of Directors and resides in Mobile, Alabama, with his wife, Judy, and their family.



His boundary can be injurious.

If we can recognize that even our Lord Jesus experienced limitations which the Father placed on Him (see, for example, Jn. 4:6 and Mt. 24:36), we will understand that *limitation is not sin, but rather God's allotment to us*. The Lord puts boundaries on our sphere of ability and responsibility so that we will examine ourselves (2 Cor. 13:5) and realize our own inadequacy and our dependence upon Him. Recognizing our limits will also cause us to discover our need for the rest of the body of Christ.

### Symptoms of the Problem

Throughout the Church today we see evidence of our failure to recognize our limits and work within the spheres God has assigned to us. Time and time again, we see Christians who, like the animals in the parable, are worn out from being involved in spheres God hasn't called them to or equipped them for. Trying to be involved in every area, they end up doing only a mediocre job in the main area to which God has called them.

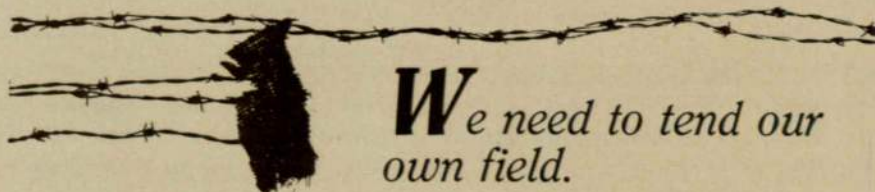
Is there any way for us to avoid this problem? Here is a list of symptoms that can let us know when we may be exceeding our limits and failing to work within our God-given sphere of responsibility.

1. *Competition*. We all know from Proverbs 27:17 that "iron sharpens iron," and that some kinds of competition are healthy. But the kind that I am talking about is the competition Paul warns against in 2 Corinthians 10:12: "We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves."

This kind of carnal comparison causes some churches to try to use "Madison Avenue" techniques to grow at all costs. All too often biblical standards are sacrificed for an imaginary goal of growth or ministry, and church leaders find

themselves involved in spheres beyond what has been allotted them by God.

2. *A growing sense of inadequacy*. As we overextend ourselves, our tasks increase and the needs multiply until we find ourselves—maybe for the first time ever in our lives—experiencing a deep and



**We** need to tend our own field.

persistent sense of inadequacy. This may well be an indication that we have gone beyond our limits, and we need to jump back over the fence to tend our own field.

3. *Defensiveness*. When we remain within our own sphere, doing what we know to be the will of God, we are amazingly secure. But when we overextend ourselves, for whatever reason, we fall victim to a "turf mentality." Overly protective about our reputation, we become defensive and extremely concerned that nothing happens to disturb the domains we are seeking to preserve for ourselves.

4. *Despair*. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 1:8: "Burdened excessively, beyond our strength . . . we despaired even of life." The key here is the phrase "beyond our strength." When we go beyond our limits, we are subject to despair. Often confusing ceaseless activity with spirituality, we become so enmeshed in those activities that we become overextended. Eventually we are engulfed with the desperate feeling that we are attempting to bail out the ocean with a teacup!

5. *Breakdown*. One of the most serious and critical symptoms of being out of our sphere is moral, mental, spiritual or marital breakdown. Even taking into consideration the intensity of spiritual war-

fare today and the immoral spirit of the age, my own conviction is that in most cases of breakdown we can see men and women who moved out beyond their allotted sphere and made themselves vulnerable to exhaustion and spiritual attack. If we're not burning the oil of God's anointing, we start burning up the wick—ourselves.

All of these symptoms should be warning signals to us. They are God's way of letting us know that we have climbed over the "barb-wire fence" of our limitations, and that we need instead to jump back over the fence and work in our own fields.

### Embracing the Boundaries

If we learn to embrace the boundaries of our allotted sphere, we will find a freedom to live productively and an abundance of grace to do God's will. Recognizing our own gifts and limits, and honoring those of others around us, produces a number of qualities in us that can strengthen and unite the Church. Here are just a few of the benefits of walking in our own sphere:

1. *Deliverance from the "franchise mentality"*. A franchise is an exclusive right to market a company's products or services in a particular area. If I purchase a franchise from McDonald's Corporation, for example, the company guarantees that no one else will be allowed to open a McDonald's restaurant near me.

Unfortunately, we often act as if we have a "franchise" on our area of ministry, reacting suspiciously or defensively toward anyone else whom God has called to the same area of ministry. We see this franchise mentality in Joshua



in Numbers 11:26-30 when he asked Moses to restrain two men who were prophesying but were not members of their "prayer meeting." Rather than stopping them, Moses showed instead a security in his own sphere and calling when he responded to Joshua, "Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all of God's people were prophets!"

If we accept the sphere God has given us, we don't feel the compulsion to stake out an area and insist that every other ministry go elsewhere. Recognizing the legitimate ministries He has given others delivers us from a "franchise mentality."

2. *Freedom from the "messianic complex."* It is always healthy to remember that we *have* a Savior, and that we ourselves are not the savior! I am not the sole "plowman" for the whole world—my field has a fence around it. Knowing our limitations keeps us from claiming the "gift of omniscience"—that is, thinking we know everything and must be involved in every part of the universe. A secure person can say without intimidation or embarrassment, "I don't know," and he can also say without being irresponsible, "That's not something I am called to do."

3. *Practicing the principle of referral.* Recently my dentist said simply and without embarrassment, "I don't do that kind of work. You should go see Dr. Brown. He does root canals; in fact, he's a specialist." I thought, how I wish the Church would understand that principle. There are some things I simply *cannot* do; I have certain limitations. But God has placed in the Church *other* men, women and ministries who *can* do what I can't. For that reason I should refer problems, complications and situations to other "specialists" when necessary. Only when we learn to find and flow with the rest of the body of Christ will the Church be

able to move out of its mediocrity into excellence.

Only a secure person, walking and working within his own appointed sphere, can freely and joyfully practice referral. But to do this effectively we must find out who is "plowing the field" next to ours, and be able to know and recognize the areas where they are gifted.

4. *Confidence.* The present emphasis of the Holy Spirit on maturity in relationships can lead us into a whole new realm of confidence in God's people. Being properly related to others will give us the degree of confidence we need to explore our own spheres while honoring the spheres of others. This kind of confidence in relationships with other Christians is the only way I can see to relieve the unbearable pressure of everyone trying to be an expert in every field. It is also the only way to achieve visible unity in the Church.

My experience with the four men to whom I have been most closely related these past ten years bears out this truth. I cannot adequately express our gratitude to the Lord for His sovereign grace in showing us how to learn confidence in our relationships. That confidence has freed each of us to work within our sphere in the areas in which we are most gifted.

5. *Fulfillment.* Paul speaks of the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13). Like many others, I long to see the Church attain to that measure in our day. But for the Church to fill up the measure of Christ's stature in this way, God will have to teach us how to put our individual measures together to attain His measure.

### The Full Stature of Christ

If we recognize and accept the principle of sphere, limitation and measure, it will allow us to be placed and sustained in the spe-

cific realm allotted each of us by the Lord of the Harvest. It's not a sin for us to recognize our limitations. As a matter of fact, remaining within our own spheres is what will enable us to fulfill our particular function in the body of Christ with a minimum of strain and a maximum of grace for our labor.

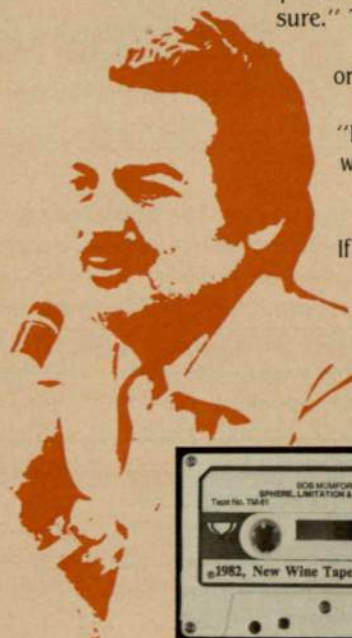
It is time for us to learn the lesson of the parable of the animals. We must recognize the special abilities as well as the specific limitations God has given each person. We must stop expecting ducks to run, squirrels to fly and eagles to climb. If each of us can recognize when God is at work in our lives to chase us "back over the barbwire," we will see the Church rise above mediocrity to the unity and excellence of the full stature of Christ. ▼

<sup>1</sup> *Inside the Ark Learning Center* and "What's Going On Here," Springfield, Oregon, Public Schools Newsletter, Vol. 1, No. 8, Feb. 8, 1975.

Originally appeared in the Sept./Oct. 1982 issue of Plumline.

## BACK OVER THE BARBWIRE...

was originally presented by Bob Mumford to a live audience and recorded for our Tape of the Month listeners. The message was initially called "Sphere, Limitation and Measure." There were pages of transcript from the original tape that had to be omitted from "Back Over the Barbwire" due to the limited space in *New Wine Magazine*. If you were moved by "Back Over the Barbwire," you'll be glad you ordered "Sphere, Limitation and Measure," the message in its entirety.



To order "Sphere, Limitation and Measure," see the response form on page 32.





# RUNNING OUT OF GRACE

## an interview with Charles Simpson

*Charles Simpson is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Integrity Communications*

**New Wine:** *On occasion, you have referred to the condition of being overextended and overtaxed as having "run out of grace." Can you tell us what you mean by that phrase?*

**Charles Simpson:** First of all I need to emphasize that when I talk about "running out of grace," I am not speaking of God's supply of grace, but *ours*. God's grace is *always* sufficient if we can draw upon Him.

At times, however, I find myself irritable, frustrated, or suffering from "that tired, run-down feeling." I know I am functioning at a level below God's intention for me. That is when I would say that I've "run out of grace."

*Charis* is the Greek word most often translated "grace" in the New Testament. Sometimes it is also

translated "favor" or "thankfulness." Paul often begins his letters with the greeting "grace [*charis*] and peace to you." Grace is the extension of God's favor to us—His kindness or blessing. Because of His sovereignty, grace from God brings peace, joy and prosperity.

To "run out of grace" is to get into such a condition that we are not able to extend the favor of God to others or to the situation at hand.

**NW:** *Why do you think we have the tendency to push ourselves beyond our physical and spiritual resources?*

**CS:** The list of reasons is long and complicated. Some people have very little grace to begin with. Perhaps they haven't fully realized that God's favor and mercy



are extended toward them, so they have little ability to extend grace to others.

On the other hand, many people are normally gracious and kind, but they become overextended and so “run out” of grace. I believe the main reason for this is a lack of pastoral leadership that helps us to know our limits. Often external pressures take over our lives and schedules. These pressures affect us like a swift river current, sweeping us into unrestricted activity and responsibility.

For others, the problem may be unbridled ambition which causes us to crave more power, money or responsibility than we are capable of properly managing. The parable of the talents indicated that the Lord gives responsibility according to our ability, but if we are not willing to wait for the Lord to give, then we find ourselves pulling down great loads on our heads which crush us. We don't have enough grace to bear the results of unbridled ambition.

Many people “run out of grace” by being overconscientious or feeling guilty because they aren't “doing enough.” As a result, they can't say no. Such people are not really serving God in all that they are doing, but instead are laboring under a false compulsion which says, “Burn out for Jesus.” The truth, however, is that whatever God truly *calls* us to do, He *enables* us to do—and to do graciously.

**NW: Have you personally found yourself at times “running out of grace”?**

**CS:** Yes, I have—in fact, I have always had a tendency to get over-involved. I enjoy people and activity; I am well indoctrinated in the Protestant work ethic. In addition, I hate to miss out on anything that may be happening; and worst of all, I can't say no.

**NW: What insights have you gained as a result of recognizing those tendencies in yourself?**

**CS:** I've learned some things about myself from the times when I've been overtaxed. I must admit that when I become overextended some of my least desirable traits manifest themselves in the same way a lake drained of its water reveals old cans, bottles, tires and other debris on the bottom. Such a time is a good occasion to discover what we are like without God's grace and to repent, clear out the “debris” from our spirit and pray for a fresh infilling of the water of life. Having done that, we can “be still and know God.”

**NW: Would you say that there is an important relationship between grace and rest?**

**CS:** Yes—they are very closely connected. Sabbath—that is, rest—has been a God-ordained principle of normal living from the very beginning. At the

heart of the principle of Sabbath is our need for rest, reflection and re-creation (as opposed to our idea of recreation). Reflection on our Creator, His person and purpose, renews us in His Spirit and grace. Such renewal allows us to continue our work with grace.

In addition to one Sabbath day of rest each week, the Lord instituted numerous other special days in the Jewish calendar to celebrate their history and to be renewed in God's saving grace. There were Sabbath and Jubilee years as well for the same purpose. Our modern practice has been to turn these kinds of special days into holidays and seasons of frenetic activity which actually *prevent* us from rest and reflection.

One fundamental reason for Israel's fall and captivity was its neglect of the Sabbath. The failure to rest and reflect led them outside the boundaries of God's grace. In fact, the seventy years Judah spent in captivity is biblically described as Sabbath collecting. That is, when God forced the Jews into exile, leaving the land untended, He was allowing the land to have all the Sabbath-rests it should have had through the years when the people neglected the Sabbath God had commanded (Lev. 25:4; 2 Chr. 35: 20-21). Many of our own periods of frustration today might also be a matter of Sabbath collecting. For example, if we fail to take Sabbath-rests until we are so exhausted that we become sick, then the days we spend in bed recovering are Sabbaths which we have collected because we have neglected them. One way or the other, we will be required to rest. No true spiritual principle can be broken; it is we who are broken when we neglect the principle.

**NW: Looking ahead to the new year, what suggestions do you have to help us avoid going beyond the grace God has measured to us?**

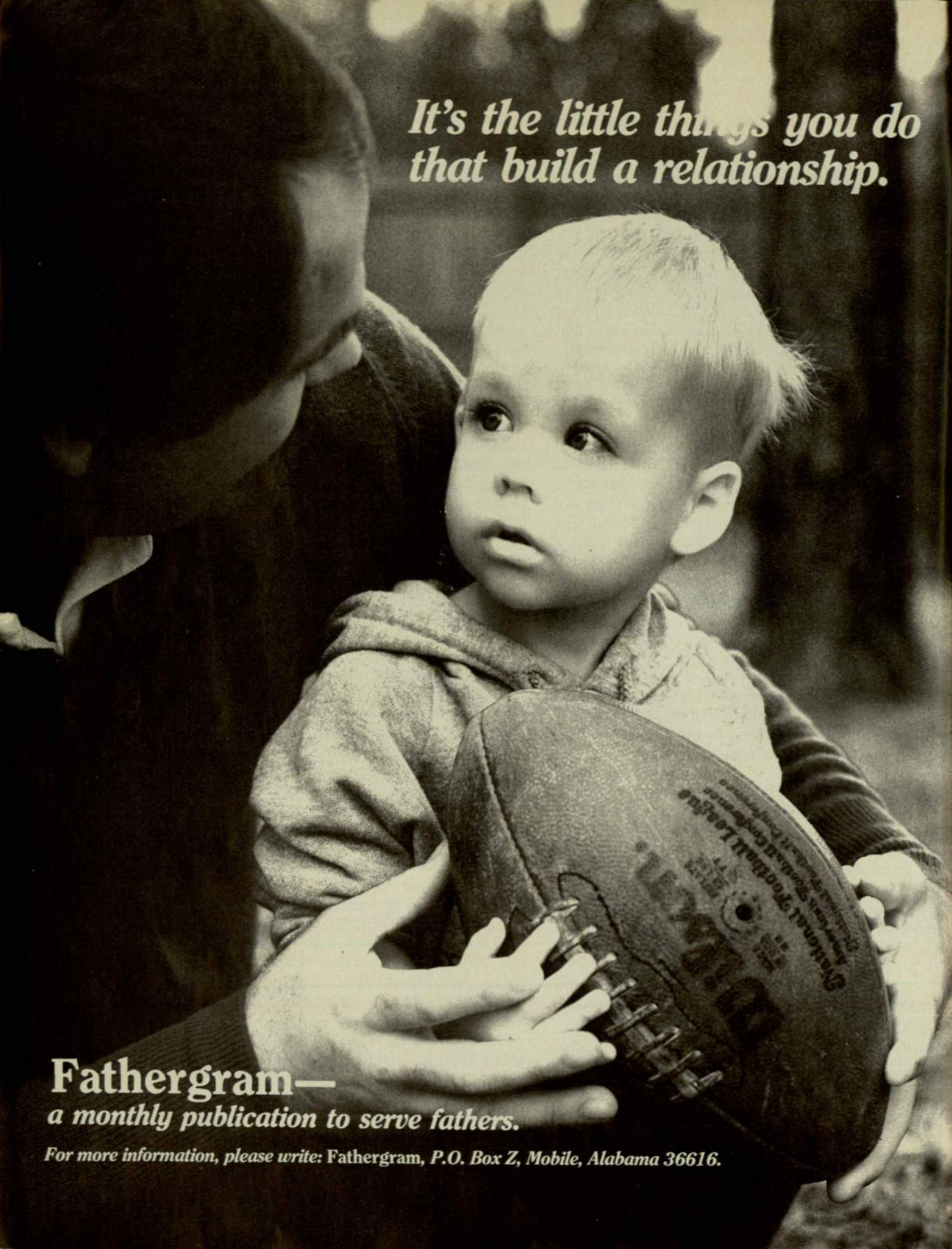
**CS:** First, I would suggest that you get out your 1983 calendar and write in Sabbaths and rest days. Sanctify those times “as unto the Lord.” Use those times to reflect on God's goodness and past victories, and truly *rest*. Do things that you really enjoy.

Second, learn to work with real confidence, so that your time of labor is characterized by the peace of God and the knowledge that you have done your best. Remember that six days of labor are as essential as one day of rest. When laboring, do so in faith with diligence. When resting, don't let anxiety or work interfere.

Third, only take on God-ordained work. Consult with trusted leadership or Christian friends about new responsibilities. Don't let expediency or pressure rule your life in either labor or rest.

These simple suggestions will help to keep us within the bounds of grace and enable us to extend God's grace to those around us as well. ▼





*It's the little things you do  
that build a relationship.*

**Fathergram—**  
*a monthly publication to serve fathers.*

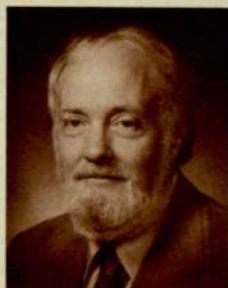
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# FORUM FORUM FORUM FORUM FORUM



Derek Prince



Don Basham



Ern Baxter

*This month, we asked three members of the Board of Directors of Integrity Communications to share with us their insights on the upcoming years. Each have responded to the same three questions and their answers give us a broad perspective for planning and preparation.*

*What do you see ahead for our world—both events and trends—especially in the social, economic and political realms?*

**Derek Prince:** I see increasing confusion, pressures and conflicts. The main anti-Christian forces that will continue to be at work are atheistic communism; Islam; witchcraft (a spirit which is opposing and undermining true masculinity and fatherhood); secular humanism (often in the guise of false humanitarianism, such as the legal tendency to show more concern for the criminal than the victim); ruthlessness and violence. All these forces were recently at work through, or on behalf of, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in West Beirut.

I see Israel and the Middle East continuing as the focus of the international media and world attention. I believe there will be increased pressure on Israel to relinquish control of the West Bank and East Jerusalem, as well as increased financial pressures on the Western democracies by the Moslem oil-producing nations. (I have dealt with this situation more thoroughly in my newly published book, *The Last Word on the Middle East*.)

**Don Basham:** Obviously our world is in a time of revolution—politically, socially and economically. In the last year or two I've focused my personal study on the realm of economics, so I'd rather comment more on that topic than the others.

A number of people who are knowledgeable in the field of economics agree that the world is heading toward a deepening of the present economic crisis. Many economists believe that we are approaching worldwide depression and economic collapse, and I believe there is an abundance of evidence to indicate that their prognosis may be correct. From a Christian standpoint, that doesn't mean we need to be fearful; it just means we need to be prepared and dependent upon God in this time of world economic



crisis, viewing it simply as the backdrop for the advancement of the kingdom of God.

**Ern Baxter:** That's quite an ambitious question, and it requires, I think, a rather broad answer. The basic world problem is not directly social, economic, or political, but rather theological. A simple definition of "the world" in the biblical sense is "mankind organizing itself apart from God." Personal and corporate obedience to God and His Word would bring solutions to all human problems.

The Bible puts this divine-human tension in the language of warfare, declaring that "Christ must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. 15:25). The outcome of the warfare is predetermined, although the time of the victory is unrevealed. In the meantime, man will go through all the inevitable experiences deriving from his rebellion. These experiences will take any number of forms, but all will leave mankind unfulfilled and frustrated. The exception to this, of course, is the person or community of persons committed to the will of God.

*What opportunities and challenges does the Church face in light of what you foresee?*

**Derek Prince:** I see ahead of us the situation predicted in Isaiah 60:1-3: ever-deepening darkness on the nations of the world, and simultaneously ever-increasing light being made available to God's people. I believe the Church must learn to interpret crises and conflicts in the world as God-given opportunities for evangelism and for demonstrating a working alternative to the world's materialistic systems.

I see God at work simultaneously in the two ways predicted in Romans 11:25-27: On the one hand, He is bringing in the "full number of the Gentiles" in the last great gospel harvest; while on the other hand, He is preparing the way in Israel for "the Deliverer from Zion." These should be two high priorities for the Church.

**Don Basham:** Despite the gloominess of the world's economic outlook, I think Christians ought to be hopeful in their perspective, simply because the Bible predicts all these things. The Bible predicts the failure of man's efforts to save himself or even to provide for himself. It says that in order to succeed we must have His grace and His divine wisdom. To the extent that men have failed to follow moral and spiritual principles—which I believe were woven right into the order of things in creation—they have to pay the price for their disobedience. The crisis ahead is basically

the result of greed, selfishness and a general decline in morality. In the last fifty years we have largely abandoned the values of thrift, self-sacrifice and delayed gratification, embracing instead a hedonistic attitude that says, "Whatever we want, we'll enjoy now, and we don't care who pays for it."

Christians need not despair, however, because our economic crisis is simply affirming the truth that without divine wisdom and order, man is going to fail. The Church needs to see that events are happening right on schedule as far as the kingdom of God is concerned. As man's attempts to save himself and to build a utopian society increasingly fail, we will have a greater opportunity for the preaching of the principles of the kingdom of God. Historically the Church has experienced periods of revival and expansion in times of economic and political crisis. The greater the crisis, the more unprecedented will be the opportunities for the proclamation of the gospel, because as men become disillusioned with trusting in material things, they become more open to spiritual truths.

In addition, times of difficulty, whether economic or otherwise, are setting the stage for Christians to become more responsibly related to one another. Many are reexamining and changing the old pattern of church life in which church membership consisted of coming to church on Sunday, listening to a sermon and going home. Many Christians are becoming more involved with one another in more aspects of their lives and increasingly interdependent on a practical level. As the economic crisis deepens, those people who have learned how to love and trust one another and work together will be in a much better position to prosper in crisis times than families or individuals who try to go it alone. Those who can pull together will have shared material resources and the spiritual and emotional strength of a community context.

**Ern Baxter:** Ideally, "the people of God" are just that—God's people living among people who are not God's people. They are God's representatives in the world.

Given the current crises in almost all areas of life, the opportunities and challenges for Christians are unprecedented. One of the possible responses for the Church—the ideal response—is to address all of the human need with all of the divine supply. Unfortunately, however, many times the Christian has a simplistic "get saved and go to heaven" response that is simply not a fair or biblically proper answer.

While being personally "right with God" is the number one requisite, there is no aspect of life that is not addressed in the Bible. The redeemed community needs to present all the scriptural alternatives to humanism's sterile theories and experiments. I be-



lieve that the Holy Spirit who is here to convict the world through the Christian community will give us guidance on how to address our world, if His direction in the Scriptures and by direct personal ministry is sought.

*How can Christians best prepare for the time to come so that they can fulfill God's purposes?*

**Derek Prince:** I suggest the following ways in which Christians need to prepare: First, we must learn to see the world in the perspective of Scripture, not as interpreted by the media. Second, we need to make a fresh, whole-hearted dedication of ourselves to God's purposes as revealed in Scripture (Ps. 110:3). And finally, we must take all possible steps to restoring the unity of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:3). In many different ways, this will require us to lay down our lives for our fellow believers (1 Jn. 3:16).

**Don Basham:** I think that all of us, and especially young Christian families who have grown up in relatively prosperous times, need a sober realization that times may well get tough, economically as well as politically and spiritually. We need to begin to buck the trend toward more and more borrowing and credit, and a higher and higher standard of living. We must return to our nation's heritage of sound economic principles: hard work, thrift, honesty and a willingness to work with a view toward the future instead of immediate rewards.

Families need to bite the bullet and start working their way out of debt, because whether or not we experience some sort of economic collapse, it is poor stewardship to live on borrowed money. I recommend that families should live by the old "80-10-10" formula, which means that you pay God 10% (a tithe), you pay yourself 10% (savings) and you live on the remaining 80%. We may need to decrease our standard of living—drive a cheaper car, live in a cheaper house, eat simpler foods, take less expensive vacations—so we can live within our incomes, tithe, save a little and have something to share with others without going into debt.

Secondly, I think we need to pray for wisdom to know what to do with whatever resources we have. Families need to determine whether they have resources to invest, and then pray and seek godly counsel about how to invest wisely.

Finally, we need to learn how to pray with faith, believing in God's ability to help us meet our need once we have practiced an honest stewardship on our part. If we're moving in His purpose and obeying His principles, then even if things get hard we can expect

God to move supernaturally on our behalf.

God has promised to meet our needs. You can't look at all the promises in scripture about what prayer can do, and all the accounts of the miraculous provision of God's transcendent economy, without being tremendously encouraged about what is available to us as believers. Such miraculous economic provision will not only meet our needs; it will glorify the Lord's name as well, and prompt people to abandon their trust in the world system and to trust, instead, in God.

**Ern Baxter:** Our Lord's prayer in John 17:21 is probably to the point here. If Christians expect the world to listen to them, they are going to have to find one another in the unity for which Christ prayed. The distressing lack of unity and unanimity among professed disciples of Christ virtually cripples their influence and witness, and provides a woefully weak and inadequate vehicle for God's purposes.

Pockets of spiritual vitality here and there are no substitute for the kind of united spiritual dynamic that Jesus has made available to His followers with which to make disciples of all nations. "The gates of hell" are no match for Christ's congregation when in unity of spirit and faith it marches under the leadership of its incomparable Captain. ▼

What do you do when your growth stops and your joy begins to wither ?



### ***The Prison of Resentment***

by Bob Mumford is available again for the many who have requested it.

To order see page 32.



# A Year of Celebration

by Bruce Longstreth

**H**ow come?" Those two little words can drive parents, particularly mothers of young children, right up the wall. One morning when I had stayed home from work later than usual to have breakfast with my family, I noticed how often these words were repeated by my children.

"Cara!" I addressed my young daughter sternly. "I don't want you to say 'How come?' to everything your mother tells you to do. I want you to do what she says and not always ask her why you have to. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Now you're *sure* you understand that when your mother tells you to do something, you don't have to know *why*, you only have to obey?"

There was a long pause, and then, looking me straight in the eye, she said, "Daddy?"

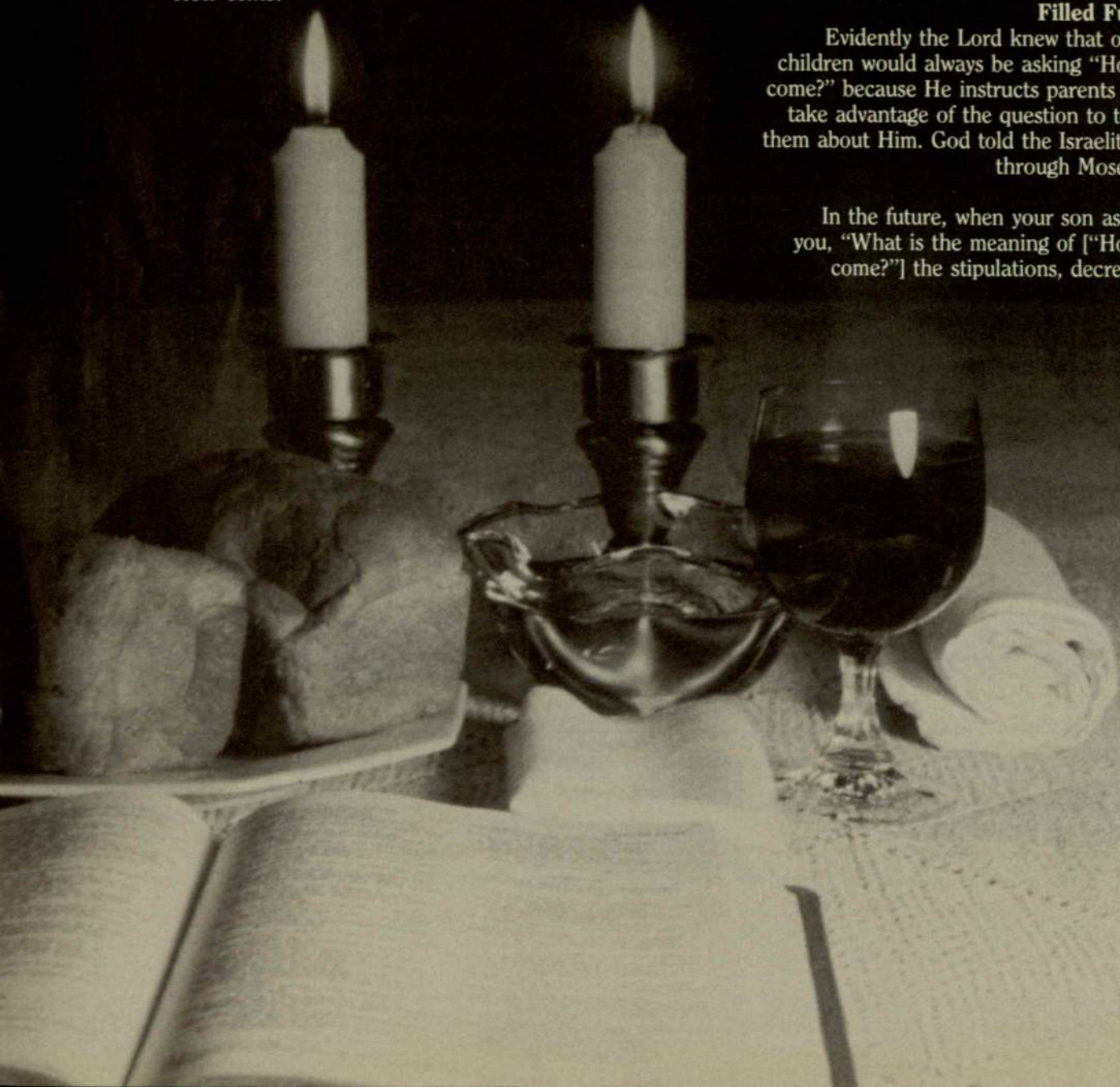
"Yes, Cara."

"How come?"

## Filled Full

Evidently the Lord knew that our children would always be asking "How come?" because He instructs parents to take advantage of the question to tell them about Him. God told the Israelites through Moses:

In the future, when your son asks you, "What is the meaning of ['How come?'] the stipulations, decrees





and laws the Lord our God has commanded you?" tell him: "We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand" (Dt. 6:20-21 NIV).

People were still asking "How come?" in Jesus' day. He told them about the meaning of what had happened before Him in Israel's history, and why He had come, in this way:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them (Mt. 5:17 NIV).

Jesus may have appeared to many in His day as the "new and improved" idea God wanted to share with humanity, but from His own perspective He had actually come to give meaning to all that had come before Him. He came to "fill full" the Law and the Prophets.

"How come?"

Because the law given to Moses was actually a thirteen-hundred-year shadow cast across time by the real image—the person of Christ. The prophecies of God-inspired men and women were like the shell of a creature waiting to be inhabited. Jesus said, "I have come to fill full, to inhabit the shell; to bring to reality what has only been hoped for until now."

"How come?"

Because the Old Testament advertised the content of the New with a guarantee that it would not fail us, and it spoke of One who would do exactly as it advertised and guaranteed in a way that was real and alive. It told about Someone who could open the way back to God and His purpose for creation.

"How come?"

Because God loves all His creation, especially people.

"How come?"

Because that's the way He is.

## The Jewish Feasts

All those who belong to Jesus Christ would readily affirm that He has filled life full with meaning. I want to consider one particular facet of the "fill-fulfilling" that the Law predicted and Jesus accomplished: the Jewish feasts.

The law of the feasts, recorded in Deuteronomy 16:16, advertised something about Jesus. In the keeping of the feasts, the people of Israel announced the anticipated coming of the real thing. Though the feasts were only a shadow of the real, they were the heart of Israel's worship for thirteen hundred years.

Keeping the feasts predicted the coming of an inhabitant for the shell they represented. But just exactly how did Jesus fill full the law of the feasts?

The yearly Passover feast in Israel commemorated the night when God saved Israel from the Egyptians. It was, however, not only a remembrance but also a prediction to be fulfilled. In 1 Corinthians 5:7 Paul states that Christ is our Passover. In Christ there was an even greater deliverance—the redemption from sin and death. What the Jews commemorated and anticipated was filled full in Jesus Christ.

The Feast of Weeks or Pentecost was the yearly celebration of the beginning of harvest. It was a time for the Jews to honor the Lord with the first part of the harvest and to show their faith in God for the success of the total harvest. Acts chapter 2 records that "when the day of Pentecost was fully come," the Lord Jesus from His exalted position at the Father's right hand poured out the Holy Spirit on the disciples. By enabling the disciples to go into the world and preach the gospel, the outpouring of the Spirit brought about the firstfruits of a grand and glorious harvest of believers.

The Feast of Booths or Tabernacles commemorated the sojourn

of the nation Israel as they wandered in the wilderness. It also was the celebration of the great ingathering of the harvest. At this, the grandest feast in Israel, the entire nation moved into makeshift booths and thanked God for His blessing on the harvest gathered in. In the Church, Christ's body, God has been pleased to "tabernacle" among us in our sojourn on the earth. We look forward to the day that all the harvest shall be gathered together in Jesus Christ.

In this way Jesus fully filled the three feasts of the Old Testament: as the Passover lamb of God slain for the world's sin; as the One who poured out the Holy Spirit for our enablement; and as Emmanuel, "God with us," in our sojourn toward a final ingathering of all creation to Him. Jesus was the "How come?" of Israel's ancient celebrations, the primary reason why the Lord had given the feasts.

## The Feasts' Immediate Value

What else did these feasts do for Israel? Besides the fact that they foretold something, what was their immediate value? I believe there are at least seven reasons why the feasts had immediate significance for Israel:

1. *Heritage.* The children were taught the "How come?" of the history and traditions of God's people through celebration of the feasts.
2. *Worship.* Through the feasts the community expressed its gratitude for God's love and care for them.

*Photo reprinted by permission from Celebrate the Feasts by Martha Zimmerman, published and © 1981, Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55438.*



**Bruce Longstreth** graduated from Simpson College in San Francisco and did graduate study at Golden Gate Seminary in Mill Valley, California. He is presently the Managing Editor of *Fathergram*, a ministry to fathers. Bruce also serves as a pastor in Mobile, Alabama, where he lives with his wife, Janet, and their two daughters.



3. *Proclamation.* Israel testified to God's goodness to the nations outside of the covenant by observing the feasts.

4. *Renewal.* The nation renewed its faith each year by celebrating the feasts.

5. *Relationship.* The people strengthened their family and national ties through fellowship at the feasts.

6. *Identity.* The feasts were distinctively Hebrew and helped cultivate a national identity for the people.

7. *Preparation.* The feasts were a time of personal and corporate preparation of hearts to hear the word of the Lord.

Considering all the significant purposes served by the feasts in ancient Israel, I would like to make a suggestion that may at first seem radical: I believe that the Church needs literally to keep the feasts of the Old Testament in their fulfilled sense!

I can hear the reaction even now: "Bondage! Legalism! Judaizing! Salvation by works!" If that's what you're thinking, I can understand your apprehensions. But please finish this article and see if the idea doesn't make practical sense for the Church today.

### Fulfilled Celebration

In the Easter season the Church celebrates the fulfilled Passover. In reality, however, "celebrate" is

that praised God for redemption, salvation and sins forgiven?

Here's how we could do it. Banners could be placed over the front door of each Christian home which would read, "Hallelujah—What a Savior!" Families could get together to share a festive meal. A city-wide gathering of churches could agree to overlook their differences and declare with one voice: "He has bought us with His blood from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. He has made us to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and we will reign with Him on the earth!"

Fifty days later, how about a Pentecost feast to welcome the Holy Spirit? He has brought with Him much more than a doctrinal disturbance: He has given us the power of resurrection life. What would happen if the Holy Spirit could have a day when we "the God-breathed" could celebrate and praise Him for coming to earth to testify to Jesus? Couldn't a banner over each door be a token of an inviting atmosphere in which He could do the work He has desired to do in the Church for the last two thousand years? Wouldn't a feast in His honor encourage the Spirit of Truth to act on behalf of the Church to awaken it to its mission? Would it hurt to take a chance and see?

Five months later, the greatest feast of all for the Church could

brates the "fill fulling" yet to come, looking forward to a great ingathering, full reconciliation, a journey complete.

What would happen if once a year on the same day in autumn, Christians around the world pitched tents in their yards and camped out to demonstrate that they are on a journey as "sojourners and pilgrims on the earth" (1 Pet. 2:11)? Families could sing the songs of Zion, read *Pilgrim's Progress* and tell stories of all the ways the Lord has led us. The celebration could climax in a "great day of the feast" as recorded in John 7:37. On that day the whole congregation of saints in each city could parade to a place of meeting with singing and rejoicing. Children could carry banners with praises to the Lord written on them. It would be a time to celebrate the word of the Lord that has come to pass and yet is still to be fulfilled; a time for the Church to renew its hope in the grand and final victory of our risen Christ.

*"How come?"*

To teach us about our history as a Christian people. To thank God for His mighty acts on our behalf. To declare His goodness to those who do not know His covenant love. To renew again and again our faith in the Lord God. To strengthen our fellowship with God's people and to help us see the people of God as a holy nation. To prepare our hearts to hear from the Lord. To relive our history from Passover to Tabernacles—from Calvary to the completed Church.

*"How come?"*

To remember our salvation, and to tell of the goodness of God to our children, so that they will tell it to their children.

*"How come?"*

Because that's the way God is.

### A Yearly Study

Most of what I am describing is a dream I have in my heart that

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*The law given to Moses was  
a shadow cast across time by  
the real image—the person of Christ.*

---

hardly the appropriate word for what actually takes place. Most Christians simply "attend worship services." But imagine for a moment: What would happen if the Church *really* celebrated—if it went all out each year with a feast

take place. This fulfilled Feast of Tabernacles would be the grandest of them all, in that it would portray a redeemed, empowered Church in its sojourn to a grand finale and reunion with Christ its Head. It would be the one feast that cele-



I hope will someday come to pass. But even now, some groundwork is being laid that may help the Church transform this dream into a reality.

"The Word" feature (see page 33) in *New Wine* each month is based on the fulfilled feasts of Israel. For the sake of a systematic Bible study, I have divided the year into three four-month periods. Each period revolves around one of the feasts—Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles—that have been fulfilled in Christ.

The first four months of the year, for example, have the theme "Christ Our Passover." To demonstrate from Scripture man's need of redemption, we start in January with "In the Beginning God," a study of the nature of God. Who is He? What does He do? How can I know His will?

In February we begin with God's words "Let Us Create Man in Our Image." Who is man that God should regard him? We study all that the Scripture says about man from his good beginnings to his sinful predicament.

In March we study God's promise that "The Seed of the Woman Shall Bruise the Serpent's Head." We read day by day what the Scripture foretold of a redemption to come in the promised Christ.

In April we read "The Things That Jesus Began to Do and Teach." This month's study centers on the life of Christ—His person and work.

This four-month Bible study is thus a tool to prepare us for a tremendous celebration of the redemption of a people for the glory of God. The daily readings prepare our hearts and minds to enter fully into the Feast of Passover fulfilled in Christ when God raised Him from the dead—our Easter celebration.

The second trimester, May through August, is initiated by the Feast of Pentecost. The daily Bible study is about the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the

Trinity, the energizer of both the individual and the whole Church. This study includes biblical pictures of the Holy Spirit; the history of the Spirit's work in godly men and women; the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. It helps us recognize that apart from the Holy Spirit, our faith is an empty form, an uninhabited shell. Once again the groundwork to be laid in our hearts and minds to prepare us is the Scripture, which tells us why Pentecost should be a time of celebration.

The final trimester focuses on the most exciting celebration of all. The Church of Jesus Christ, His body in the earth, is the reason why God sent the redeeming Christ and raised Him from the dead, the reason why He poured out the Holy Spirit. The Church is God's greatest idea for the earth, the vehicle through which the principalities and powers in heaven and on earth are to be made aware of the wisdom of God.

The basis for the daily Scripture study in this last trimester is the phrase from the Nicene Creed which proclaims, "I believe in one, holy, catholic [universal] and apostolic Church." We take one aspect of this credal statement to empha-

size each month: The Church is one. The Church is holy. The Church is universal. The Church is apostolic. As we daily emphasize the importance of Christ's Church and its mission, the Feast of Tabernacles—a celebration of God's presence with the sojourning Church—becomes the highlight of the year.

*"How come?"*

We study the Scripture each day so that we might better understand who the Lord is and what He wants us to be. By living out our faith before a world that wonders who God is and who we are, we show the Lord to them so that they might come to know Him as we do.

*"How come?"*

God decided before our world was created that His glory would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. He wants everyone everywhere to turn from their own ways and come to know Him and His plans for them.

*"How come?"*

Because He made the world and cares for it and is not willing for it to be lost in its own selfishness. He loves the world—you and me and everything in it.

*"How come?"*

Because that's the way God is. ♣

## Tips for Fathers

**O**ne way to get 1983 off to a constructive start would be to call your family together to pray about and discuss planning the new year. In your discussion, give everybody a chance to share. After a time of seeking God together for His new year plans, you may want to consider these questions:

1. What are God's goals for our family?
2. How do our family members' personal goals fit into God's priorities?
3. How do we expect to achieve these goals?
4. How will we cooperate as a family to achieve these goals?
5. What role should prayer and Bible study play in our personal development?
6. Where does our family hope to be ten years from now?

Prayer and discussion about these issues will help fathers to know where each family member is and where each family member can be in the year to come.

"Tips for Fathers" are provided by *Fathergram*. If you would like to be added to their mailing list, write: *Fathergram*, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616.



# Are You Too Busy?

by Gigi Tchividjian



**T**he alarm rings about 6:30. I allow myself a few moments to adjust to the idea that it is already morning, ask the Lord

to bless my day and pull myself out of bed (hoping the timer on the coffeepot was set correctly last night). I arrive in the kitchen,

and immediately my day begins with a crescendo, whether I am ready or not. By the time I have closed the brown lunch bags; cooked the eggs just right (not too soft, not too hard), and tried to plan it so they are hot, even if the teenagers are a bit late for breakfast; tried to force at least three bites of nourishment down the small ones; intervened in a couple of squabbles; reprimanded them for making so much noise they awoke the baby, when I had hoped she would sleep until I had at least one cup of coffee; and ushered them out to the bus, I am bushed. I already feel I have put in a whole day, and it is only 7:30. I have at least fourteen hours of busyness ahead of me.

Then, halfway through the day, someone may have the nerve to ask me, "And just what do you do to keep busy?" I am surprised and intrigued by this inquiry, because with all of my home responsibilities, it doesn't seem possible to do one more thing. I thought I was doing all I could possibly do and still keep my sanity, and yet I began to have guilt feelings every time I was not "busy."

## A Spiritual Battle

There seems to be no end to the demands and expectations placed on women today. We are all plagued by time pressure. I am sure all of us have felt, at one time or another, that everything is coming in on us, that we are never finished, never caught up.

Being too busy has become a compulsion for many and a way of life for most. The effects of busyness are becoming more and more evident; in every area of our lives, the effects of being too busy are beginning to take their toll. How many of us suffer from tension, in one form or another? How many of us are difficult to



live with because we are just plain overworked and overtired? We haven't learned nor are we willing to learn or accept our limits.

I have a hard time believing this kind of busyness is pleasing to the Lord, and yet, it is a battle I have to fight constantly. So often I find myself on the losing side of this battle, and I often become discouraged.

I have come to believe it is a spiritual battle. Someone once said if the devil can't make you bad, he makes you busy. How true this is. But how do we handle this? How do we respond to all the needs? How do we answer all the requests? Are we to say yes each time we are asked to serve in some capacity? Are we to walk through every open door? The needs are so

involve ourselves in that is not directly led by the Holy Spirit is just a bunch of busyness."

Here we are again, right back to the question of priorities. I am in constant battle with my priorities. I think they are all in order, then I find that in a very short time, I have to work on them again. Being too busy is enemy number one to my priority list. I get talked into so many good things that are not among my priorities for this period of my life. One of the most difficult things for me is to say no to something or someone. And yet I have found that when I lay that priority list, whether mental or written, before the Lord, I often have to say no in order to be obedient to Him.

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*There it was, right in front of me.  
With six children, it was obvious that my  
season, for now, was homemaking; there  
I would bring forth my fruit and prosper.*

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great, and there is no end to all we could be involved with: good, important, positive, helpful, spiritual activities we could be involved with. But where do we draw the line? Are we to just grin and bear it and go on until we collapse in a heap on the floor? I know many who equate busyness and activity with spirituality. The busier someone is, the more spiritual he appears, and it boosts his morale and feeds his ego to have someone ask, "How do you do it? How do you find the time and energy?"

### Examining Priorities

But is this really pleasing to the Lord; is this what He really expects from us?

Millie Dienert, a dear friend, once said, "Any activity we in-

In Ephesians 2:10 we read, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (NIV). This means God has a plan for each of us. God has prepared an agenda for our lives. To me, this is so encouraging and thrilling: not only that God has a plan for me and for my life; but to know He cares so much for me that He prepared this plan in advance.

I also believe that if we abide daily in Him and in His Word and seek with all our hearts to do His will, then by faith we can rest assured that we are following His plan for our lives. How sad it would be to get so busy and so involved in our own activities that we completely miss His plan for us.

The rush of other things tends to obscure His will and His values. This is why I have found it so important to examine my priorities—very honestly—before Him. It is not always easy to know what should be on my priority list, or in which order to place my priorities.

Not only do I examine them before Him, but I search His Word for advice and counsel. I also ask advice from my husband and family. Sometimes the counsel comes from a friend or a pastor, and sometimes it is given through the pages of a book that I am reading.

I remember once, when I was reexamining my list, that I was sitting in a doctor's office. I was reading a book on the Psalms, and I read Psalm 1:3: "And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

There it was, right in front of me. With six children, it was obvious that my season, for now, was home, homemaking, mothering; that it was there that I would bring forth my fruit; there is where I would prosper. This verse also says the tree was planted by rivers of water, so I knew that, on top of the list, I had to put residing near the source. If I was to receive strength to bring forth good fruit and be productive in the home and prosper in my efforts, I had to abide in the One who said, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (Jn. 7:37).

I know that since my "season" is homemaking, the care of my family is to top my priority list. Right now, that occupies most of my time, but circumstances change,

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**Gigi Tchividjian** is the author of *Thank You, Lord, For My Home* and *A Woman's Quest for Serenity*. She is the daughter of Billy Graham. Gigi resides in south Florida with her husband, Stephan, and their six children.



children grow up, responsibilities shift. With the children now in school most of the day, I have found I have a little more time for something else. This is where I have to consider carefully, before Him, any new field of interest or activity; I have to expand prudently and be careful not to neglect my present God-given responsibilities.

### Imaginary Priorities

In making a priority list, I have discovered it is quite important to learn to discern between the demands, expectations, and responsibilities that are real and those that are imaginary.

For example, I would go to the home of a neighbor and see her home was clean and everything was in its place, and I would come home and go into a frenzy of cleaning and straightening. I

wouldn't stop to think that she only had two children, both grown or in school, nor would I stop to realize she probably just cleaned, knowing she was expecting guests. That was an imaginary demand.

But as a wife, mother, friend, and Christian, I also have many expectations and demands that are very real and very necessary. It is not always easy to determine which ones are vital and which ones are not. Sometimes they even overlap, and I have not found an easy solution.

Making a priority list involves making conscious decisions about what we want to do, what we should do and are able to do, and what we should leave undone or are unable to do. As a wife and mother, I must see to the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of my family. There are many books and articles written that give us valuable tips and shortcuts, but the fact remains that all of this takes time and energy, and there is just so much time in a day and so much energy in each one of us. Also we must allow for our personal abilities and limitations.

It is just as important to know what our gifts are *not* as to know what they are. Each one is different, and the Lord has given to each one different gifts and different physical and emotional limitations. But He has given all of us the same capability of faithfulness, and that is all He requires of us: faithfulness. Each one of us is to be faithful, and that is why it is so important to take our list of priorities to Him.

When we get too busy, not only the physical suffers, but the spiritual, the eternal. Of one thing we can be assured: It is not the Lord who loads us down until we break, or get an ulcer, or suffer a heart attack, or divide our family, or turn our kids off. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest. . . . For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Mt. 11:28, 30). He also says that "he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust" (Ps. 103:14). I realize there are times when circumstances beyond our control make us terribly overburdened and heavy laden and often too busy. When this happens, we have His promise of help and sustaining power (see Phil. 4:13; 1 Pet. 5:7). We also might have to readjust our priority list and temporarily put ourselves, our health, or our rest near the top. We might have to swallow our pride and admit that we are overburdened or overtired and ask for some help.

### Adjusting and Tuning

My piano often gets out of tune. It gets a lot of abuse, and when it can take it no longer, it begins to sound terrible. After a little readjusting, a little tightening here and loosening there by the master, it sounds lovely again.

So it is with my life. Sometimes it seems to get more abuse than at other times. Many different people are trying to get a different tune out of me. The children are banging on me, someone wants to use me for ministry, someone else needs to practice on me. The weather can affect me, and sometimes I am just ignored or not appreciated. I can only take so much before I begin to get all out of tune and I begin to sound awful.

Sometimes it is my heart that is out of tune, other times it is my attitude; but more often, it is just the small, everyday, mundane pressures and demands and irritations that have gotten me out of whack, and I just need a bit of minor adjusting and minor tuning.

Sometimes it is something as simple as a good night's sleep that is needed. Someone once said the best bridge between despair and hope was a good night's sleep.

When I find myself out of tune, it is usually time to reevaluate my

## Did You Know?

**W**e receive a number of letters asking why our magazine is called *New Wine*. Though it may seem an unusual name, "new wine" is a term which frequently appears in the Bible, most often as an indication of God's blessing and restoration.

A good example is in the book of Joel. There the prophet describes a time of tribulation in Israel: "The grain is destroyed and the *new wine* is dried up, the oil fails" (Joel 1:10). But the next chapter promises that if the people cry out to the Lord and repent, He will restore the land, and "the threshing floors will be filled with grain; the vats will overflow with *new wine* and oil" (2:24) which the people could give as an offering to the Lord (Neh. 10:39, 13:5). Later in Joel the Lord promises that on the day of restoration "the mountains will drip new wine" (3:18).

In the New Testament, new wine is symbolic of the New Covenant of grace (Mt. 9:17) and also appears in connection with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:13). All of these references, both in the New and Old Testaments, give the term "new wine" a number of meanings. Our prayer is that this publication can be a part of the restoration of God's people, an acceptable offering to the Lord and an instrument of His grace through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We thought you'd like to know.



From A Quest  
for Serenity by  
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priority list, time to check through my schedule and weed out all the unnecessary "urgents" and concentrate instead on the important. This might mean leaving the dusting for another time and taking advantage of the beautiful spring day to feed the ducks with my toddler, who will all too soon be grown and gone.

Sometimes the adjusting needs to take place in my own mind. I may need to realize I do not have to be all that the magazines and television insist I have to be in order to be fulfilled, happy, and of use to our society. It might mean obtaining some household help, especially while the children are small.

The adjusting and tuning might include some better organization, better planning. Someone once said, "To plan time is to have more time." I strive for and pray for a well-ordered day, and usually this has to be done day by day.

### Putting Him First

I recently met a woman who gives seminars on time management and priorities. She told me the essence of her seminars is, "In the beginning, God." I have found this to be so important and ever so restful in my own life: putting the Lord and His plans first, giving Him my day when I first wake up.

I have a calendar, a schedule, and certain things I think need to be done each day. I then plan my day or my week accordingly. I begin to carry out my plans. But often my plans are interrupted or must be changed. Since I try to be organized, which with a large household is almost imperative if anything is to ever get done, I panic. Things pile up and I feel the tension of the undone. But, if I have given that day to my heavenly Father and submitted my plans and activities to Him, I relax. I accept by faith that

the interruptions, the sick child, the sudden case of the flu, the eleven telephone calls in one morning, were all allowed by Him.

He knows what I have to do. He knows, a lot better than I do, the difference between the urgent and the really important. He understands the frustration of interruptions, and I accept that if I am faithful, He will allow me to accomplish all He wanted me to accomplish, even if my plans often differ from His. I can then relax and really enjoy my busy, hectic day with Him.

I believe that a well-ordered day can be a real testimony to the peace of God. In a well-planned, well-ordered day, we have to plan time to spend with the Lord. I have found that if I don't plan for it, there is never time. Often I drop in bed at night and suddenly realize that I have spent very little time with my heavenly Father.

We need to plan for fun, for relaxation. I observed recently that we had become so busy we didn't

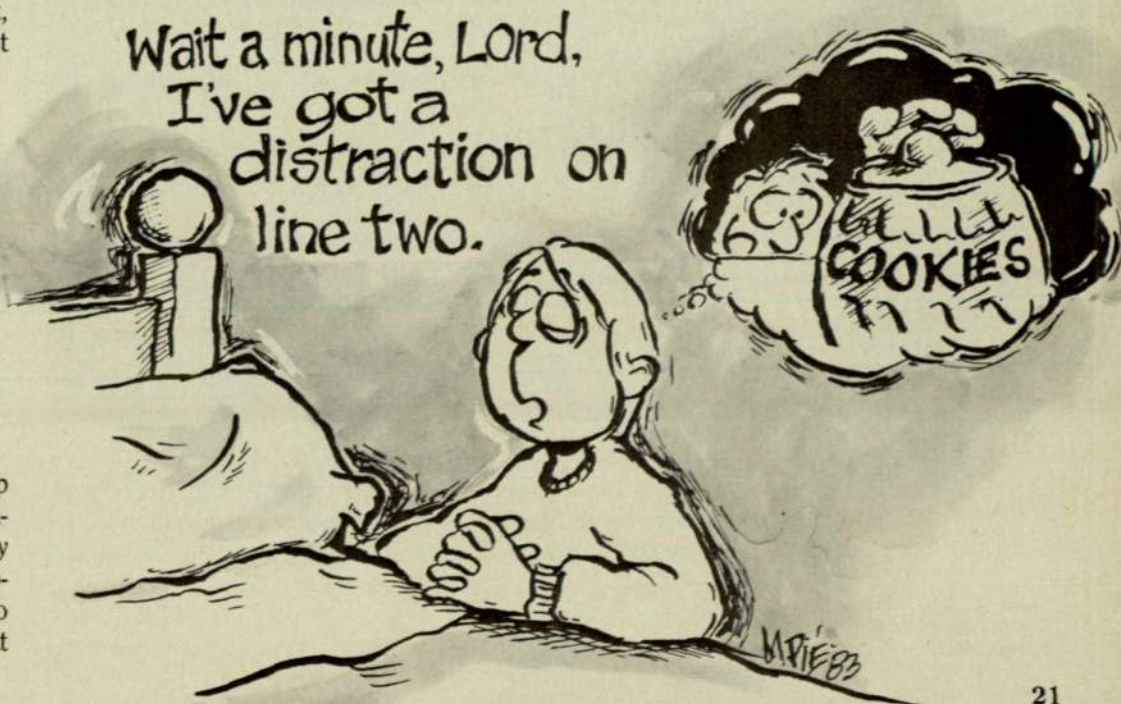
have the time to enjoy one another and have a good laugh. Our spirits, as well as our bodies and our emotions, need space and leisure in order to expand and grow.

Matthew 8:24 says, "And, behold, there arose a great tempest . . ." Then in verse 26 we read, "He arose, and rebuked the winds . . . and there was great calm." We do not have to be overwhelmed by the waves of busyness. Psalm 89:9 says, "Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them."

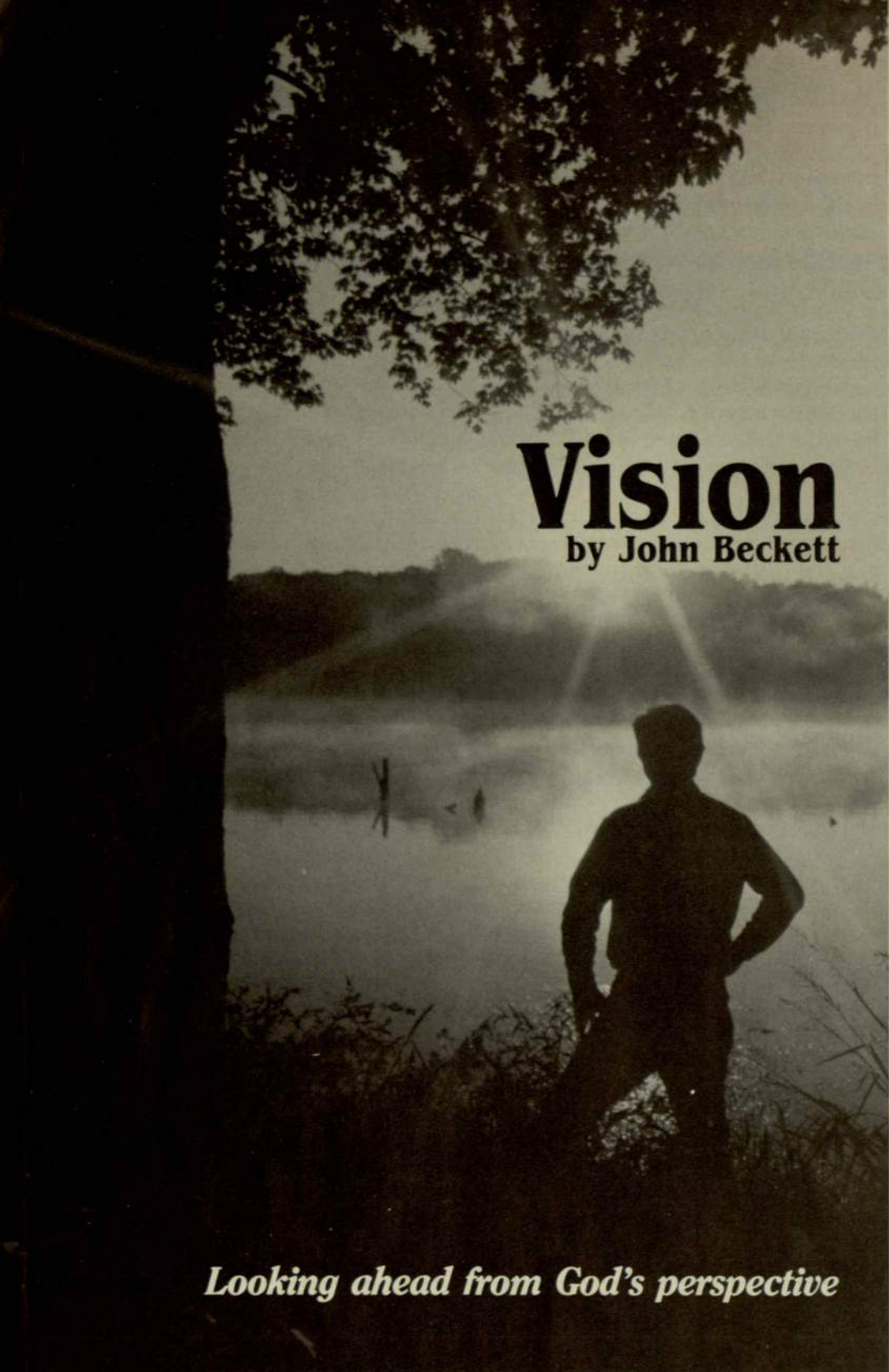
I pray that I will allow Him to rule the raging waves of busyness, that I will be sensitive to His gentle rebukes and His teaching of what is truly important and of eternal value, and allow Him to flood my hectic life with His peace, His calm, His stillness.

What a triumph to go to bed at night with the assurance and satisfaction that I have done all that my heavenly Father wanted me to do—"for so he giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps. 127:2). ▼

the  
lighter  
Side  
by Mark Pie







# Vision

by John Beckett

*Looking ahead from God's perspective*

**W**here there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." Proverbs 29:18

A sobering reality in the

Church today is that God's people are perishing for lack of vision. Another translation of the above verse reads: "Where there is no vision, the people are *unrestrained*." Without vision we are

unrestrained—that is, we go in all directions.

The Lord has emphasized this passage to me over the last several months, not only as a warning, but as a source of hope as well. It has produced in me a desire to understand the nature of vision and its practical applications for the Church, our nation, our communities, our families and our work. By developing God-given vision for areas where we have been given responsibility, we can be more able leaders and more productive stewards. Vision can enable us to inspire others, to persist in the face of adversity, to pray more effectively. It will cause us to be "restrained" or channeled into the center of God's will for our lives.

The need for us to have vision in the 1980's is intensified because of the assault on vision that took place in the 1970's. In that decade the devil worked overtime to create drift, aimlessness and despair. National goals blurred in the post-Vietnam years. Watergate revealed the paucity of our moral standards. The Supreme Court removed legal protection for unborn children. Our stature as a world leader and source of hope to the free world dimmed. Family life eroded, with an explosion of teen pregnancies, broken marriages and runaway youths. Humanism became the dominant philosophy in our schools, restraints against pornography were lowered, and mindless television programs invaded our homes, encouraging rebellion, glorifying violence, and distorting rather than reporting reality. Economically, we brought ourselves to the brink of peril, bequeathing to a future generation the consequences of unrestrained spending.

An eschatology of defeat enveloped the Church as our focus was on "getting out" rather than impacting the society in shambles around us. We ended the 1970's shaken to the core, groping for

*Photo: H. Armstrong Roberts, Philadelphia.*



direction and leadership. A siege mentality had developed in which we were desperately trying to hold on to traditional values, yet not sure how to do it. We were without vision, and perishing.

But the last few years have shown us that there is a deep hunger in our land for stability, purpose and direction. There is renewed hope in many people that by diligence, by perseverance, and most of all by the Lord's grace, we can see our nation, our communities, our families and our personal lives made right with God once again. And yet it is naive to think the task will be easy.

Francis A. Schaeffer, in his significant book *A Christian Manifesto*, says that Christians have failed to see the totality of the problem we face. We have focused on bits and pieces—permissiveness, pornography, family breakdown, abortion—without seeing that these are symptoms of a shift in world view away from the Judeo-Christian basis toward a humanist basis. That world view, now so deeply entrenched in our social structures and in our leadership, is unalterably opposed to our Judeo-Christian heritage and seeks ultimately to destroy it. Schaeffer says that change will not occur without our challenging the institutions—including governments—which defy the absolute law of God and claim an authority which is illegitimate.

We are facing a confrontation with the very forces of hell as we approach a literal fulfillment of the prophetic utterance that "everything which can be shaken will be shaken" (Heb. 12:27). There are ample indications that this shaking and confrontation are well under way in the spiritual, political and economic realms, and that we are moving toward a climax—if not *the* climax—of history.

### What Is Vision?

In this context of shaking and confrontation, we have a critical

need to see things from God's perspective, to see reality from His sovereign viewpoint. In a word, we need *vision*. To those with vision—the ability to see things as God sees them—will come the leadership qualities necessary to triumph in adversity, to "rule in the midst of our enemies" (Ps. 110:2). We will need exceptional discernment to lead our families, pastor our churches, provide for those God has given to us, and exercise leadership in society. But it can be done if we, like the men of Issachar in ancient Israel, are able to "understand the times" and know what we ought to do (1 Chr. 12:32). Having vision will be essential to our salvation—not only spiritually, but also morally, economically and physically.

The men and women who stand out most in the pages of Scripture had God-ordained vision. They could see what those around them could not. They were aware of God's intentions, and they had courage to act on what they could see. We should look for a moment at the "giants of the faith" in this light.

Noah was viewed by his contemporaries as a madman building a boat in the wilderness, but Noah's vision provided salvation for him, his family and the animal kingdom (Gen. 6-7). The vision could have saved others, but they did not want to share in it, so they perished.

Joshua and Caleb were ridiculed by the ten men who joined them in spying out the promised land (Num. 13-14). Those ten could see only giants and walled cities—a land that ate up its inhabitants. Joshua and Caleb, however, had God's perspective and saw "a dwelling place," an exceedingly good land, a land flowing with milk and honey. Ultimately they alone among the leadership lived to inhabit the land some forty years later.

The scattered tribes throughout Israel and Judah saw Jerusalem

as a Jebusite stronghold. But David, named king at Hebron, saw Jerusalem as a holy city, a place where the ark of God—His presence—could dwell securely. The Jebusite taunts to David and his followers that "you shall not come up here" did not deter the men inspired by David's vision, and the Scriptures simply record, "Nevertheless... David took the stronghold" (2 Sam. 5:6-7).

Daniel looked into the lion's den in Babylon, the city of his captors. Other men saw piles of gnawed bones—the ultimate fate of those who defied the king. But Daniel saw the protection and glory of God, and the salvation of His people Israel.

Years after Daniel's time, refugees returning to Jerusalem reported to Nehemiah the wretched condition of their city, telling of burned gates and the rubble of demolished walls. But Nehemiah had the vision to see a city restored as a place of refuge and identity for God's people—a vision that led him personally into the task of the city's reconstruction.

The ultimate triumph of vision in history, of course, was the Lord's victory over the dominion of Satan. Jesus was alone, even among His intimate followers, in knowing what His Father purposed to do. And yet He understood His mission with absolute clarity. He set His face like flint toward Jerusalem and never wavered. He saw reality from the divine perspective and obeyed God with a grace and nobility that completely redirected the destiny of mankind.

God wants to impart to us the same quality of vision that directed all these men. Our ten-



**John Beckett** is a graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Formerly an aerospace engineer, he is now the president of the R.W. Beckett Corporation. John also serves as president of *Intercessors for America*, an organization founded to mobilize Christians to pray for America. He and his wife, Wendy, reside with their six children in Elyria, Ohio.



dency without such vision is to become introverted and to focus on the temporal, the limited and the immediate. But God wants us instead to turn outward and look ahead into His view of reality.

Of this we can be confident: God imparts vision to those who seek Him for it. His nature is to direct and guide, and for that very reason the Holy Spirit is called our "counselor" (Jn. 14:16). Paul's epistle to the Ephesians reassures us that God's desire is to reveal His will:

He has made known to us the *mystery of His will* according to His good pleasure... I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you... (Eph. 1:9, 17-18 NIV).

God reveals mysteries, opens our eyes and gives us His Spirit of wisdom. He wants us to understand His purposes. He wants to equip us to lead, to inspire and to motivate others. His desire is for us to be able to stand confidently, face opposition squarely, and not run like the hireling who leaves the sheep. God wants us to see the redemptive dimension of problems, to have His divine perspective—to have vision.

### How to Have Vision

If we were to choose one word to describe how we come to have vision, that word would be *impartation*. Vision must be imparted to us by God's Holy Spirit, "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation." God's perspective is given to men of character who have subjected their own will and ambitions to His will, who have said with all their hearts, "Lord, show me." However

the Holy Spirit chooses to impart understanding—whether through direct revelation, the Word, another person, or circumstances—we can receive it only if we have a willingness to inquire and an openness to hear, for "the Lord rewards those who diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6).

**Remember:**  
**Friday, January 7, is a national**  
**day of prayer and fasting.**

What practical steps can we take if we want to become people of vision? I would list at least these seven:

1) *We must set our hearts to know God's intentions.* Many of us have the problem James described: "You don't have because you don't ask" (Jas. 4:2). If we truly believe God wants to impart His perspective to us, to help us see reality from His view, we should actively seek His will by asking Him such questions as, "Where are you taking us?" "What is your plan for me, my family, our church, our city?"

2) *We must seek vision from God for those areas in which we have responsibility or influence.* We can begin in our homes. Fathers can ask God for a vision for their families, and then lead their wives and children in discovering it. Our vision can include not only God's intentions for our family relationships, activities and personal growth, but also for His purposes for the generations to follow us.

On a broader scale, God will give us vision for our jobs and businesses, our communities and our nation as well, enabling us to see our destiny as He intends it. From that perspective we can intercede in faith and act with godly zeal in matters that concern us

at work and on a local and national level.

3) *We must set aside time to seek God.* Making time to be alone with God is essential. It is difficult for us to hear Him speaking if we have a crowded life-style in which our spirit is being continually trampled by busyness. A

morning set aside, or even a day—perhaps enhanced by fasting—when our sole purpose is to seek God will provide the fertile ground into which He can deposit His life-giving seed of vision.

4) *We must be sensitive to the many ways God can answer us.* Impartation can come through the Holy Spirit speaking to our spirits directly or through His Word. God can also speak through other people, especially those close to us—perhaps our pastor, spouse or business associate, or one of our children. At other times, what we read in addition to scripture will trigger the process of hearing God speak—an important reason for discerning God's will in our choice of reading material. However God chooses to speak to us, the more we train ourselves to be sensitive, the more clearly we will hear.

5) *We must seek confirmation of the vision we receive.* If our spirit is right with God, He will confirm in a number of ways what He is showing us. In this matter pastoral oversight is essential. I personally believe that God gives special grace to one who is exercising pastoral care for another, enabling him to endorse or adjust a vision for a particular course of action. Many failures of vision, such as half-completed buildings



"for the glory of God," could have been averted had proper pastoral oversight been involved.

6) *We must realize that vision should precede our planning.* The vision that God imparts is different from mere planning, setting goals or managing by objectives. Vision goes *beyond* planning, and should in fact be the very foundation for our plans. For example, the company I manage must thoroughly plan every aspect of its operation with clear goals and objectives in mind. Some time ago, however, we began to seek God for a *vision* for the company, asking Him to tell us *His* priorities and purposes for it.

In response, God greatly expanded our perspective by showing us that our company could become a *community* in which the whole of our employees' lives, including their families, could be enhanced—in education, in physical fitness and in social and spiritual development. Today we are seek-

ing to make our company enhance family values and become an extension rather than a competitor of the family. This vision is already shaping our facilities, policies, programs and corporate attitudes, giving a broader and longer perspective to our plans in light of God's intentions.

7) *We must stay adjustable.* Vision is often progressive, like the channel markers for a ship going out to sea. We may not see all the markers at once, but we must pass through those within our view, trusting that the rest of the channel is marked as well. God in His grace can enable us to see as much as we need to progress, and give us faith that subsequent guidance will follow our obedience to what He has shown us.

Because vision is often progressive, our walk with God must be flexible as we continually hear Him afresh. We cannot live only on "last year's revelation." There is no substitute for daily times

with God, even though we have the clearest of perspectives. He is constantly "fine tuning" our vision by pruning and correcting so that we keep our faith and hope centered on Him.

### The Years Ahead

The years ahead of us will present changes and challenges unparalleled in recent history. Millions will miss the significance of what God is doing for lack of vision. Preoccupied with transient concerns, they will not be able to see beyond the upheaval that surrounds them to the ultimate purposes of God, and their hearts will "fail with fear."

But it need not be so for us. If we will search until we can see what God is doing, and respond with courage and faith to what He shows us, then we will emerge victoriously in the years to come—even helping to lead others into the purposes of God—because we are a people of vision. ♥

## THE PROBLEM MAY NOT BE AS COMPLICATED AS YOU THINK!



Sometimes standing back and taking a good look is all that's needed to untangle those situations that seem to have no solutions. The problem may be foundational. *Christian Life Seminar* has given many Christians the perspective they've needed to detect the foundational flaw that has hindered them from the lasting victory they have desired.

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**Stand back and take another look.** The problem may not be as complicated as you think. Order *Christian Life Seminar* today. Price of \$49.50 includes 10 cassette tape messages and a 48-page study guide. To order see response form on page 32.



# I flunked!

by George Gundlach

*How failing a stress test revealed a need for a day of rest.*

One night as I dragged myself to bed, my wife, Shari, turned from the magazine she was reading and said, "Honey, there's a test in this magazine that will tell you whether you've been under a lot of stress lately. Do you want to take it?" I agreed reluctantly, and she began reading me the questions, some forty in all.

After several seemingly innocuous questions, the test became more specific. "Okay," she said,

"the next question is, 'Have you made a major geographical move in the last five years?'"

"Yes."

"Have you recently taken on a significantly greater level of responsibility in your job?" Again, I had to say yes.

"Oh, here's a good one," she said with a certain animation in her voice. "Have you been short with your children lately?"

"Gee, honey—thanks a bunch. Yes," I admitted. By this time, feeling worse by the minute, I was about to add my own question to the test: "Have you taken any stress tests lately?"

All of a sudden my thought was interrupted by Shari saying,

"Well, do you want to answer that question yes or no?"

"What question?" I asked. She began to laugh. "Why are you laughing?" I demanded.

"Well," she replied, regaining her composure, "the question was, 'Have you found it difficult to concentrate lately?'"

I couldn't believe it. I felt trapped and exposed—as if whoever had written this quiz had been spying on me. After several more questions, the test ended and Shari said, "Give me a minute and I'll add up your score." As she counted, I was thinking that the quiz would reveal that I was probably under an average amount of stress.



"Okay, honey." She raised her eyes from the score sheet. "I have your score."

"What is it?"

"You scored 89 out of 100."

"Is that good?"

"Not really." Then she hesitated. "It says here that you are in the highest stress level group and that you should seek..." She started to laugh again.

"I should seek what? Seek what?!"

She continued with a grin, "You should seek professional help." We both erupted in laughter that lasted for several minutes.

In the next few days I jokingly told a number of people about the stress test and the recommendation that I seek professional help. They would laugh, and I would laugh, but even in the midst of my humor I had a gnawing feeling that perhaps I should give the whole idea of stress some serious thought.

What followed over the next several months was a personal discovery of how much of my stress resulted from an absence of rest in my life. I not only lacked an understanding of its importance; I seemed unable to enter into it. That is what needed to change.

It just so happened that in our local church a number of families had begun to recognize Sunday as a "Sabbath"—a day for resting, relaxing and enjoying the family. This seemed like a good idea to me, so my first conclusion about my stress problem was that I should rest more. With great confidence I proclaimed the next Sunday a "Sabbath" for me and my family.

The next Saturday, at about 6:30 in the evening, I gathered Shari and my two sons, Jonathan and Caleb, around the kitchen table. Jonathan volunteered to read the Ten Commandments. After he did, I pointed out how God proclaimed to Moses that the Sabbath is to be a holy day, and that

we as a family were going to take a day of rest. Jonathan lit a candle to remind us of our decision, and our first Sabbath began.

Sunday turned out to be a really enjoyable and refreshing day. I could tell that we were on the right track, because each one of us enjoyed the warmth and togetherness that Sabbath brought. I was pleased.

### Down the Drain

The next week as it started to get dark on Saturday night, Jonathan said to me, "Daddy, when are we going to light the candle and start our Sabbath?"

"Jonathan," I replied, "Mommy and Daddy are awfully tired. We'll play some games in the morning or something, okay?" But I could see from the disappointed look in his eyes that it wasn't okay.

Unfortunately, this pattern went on for several weeks, and I began to see that our plans to have a "Sabbath" were going down the drain. In desperation, I tried to find out how to get back on track. I began searching for scriptures on the Sabbath, and as I read passages from Exodus I was encouraged to discover how many times Moses had to emphasize, reemphasize, and re-reemphasize the importance of the Sabbath to the children of Israel. As a matter of fact, in Exodus 35:2 he pronounced the punishment of death for anyone not taking the seventh day as a day of rest. I realized then just how prone humans are to neglect rest.

I resolved then and there that *every* Sunday (with a few exceptions) was to be a day of rest. Saturday night came, we gathered around the kitchen table, and I proclaimed that *every* Sunday was going to be a Sabbath in our home. Everybody, especially the kids, seemed happy with my decision.

The next Saturday rolled around, and as it started to get dark

Jonathan said, "Daddy, when are we going to start our Sabbath?"

"Jonathan," I answered, "Daddy has an awful lot to do this weekend, and we're not going to be able to take the time to have a Sabbath this time."

"Oh," he replied, and walked away, barely maintaining his composure.

As the next few Saturday nights came, Daddy still had a lot to do. From then on, at best once a month, we had a "modified" day of rest, but it usually would end up being frustrating, because I had so much work hanging over me unfinished. Why couldn't I rest?

Before long God began to answer that question for me by revealing the first of three keys to a true Sabbath rest. I decided to read again in Genesis about how God rested after His creation. I discovered then a specific reason He rested on the seventh day: He had "finished the work He was doing" (2:2-3). It was a simple realization, but an essential one. I began to see that I hadn't "finished the work I was doing," and because of that, I couldn't rest.

From that time on I set out first to be more diligent in making realistic plans for what I could accomplish in a week, and then to see that I met my goals. I also took a new interest in Shari's schedule and helped her to do the same. And because flexibility was essential for both of us, we adjusted our goals during the week when we met with the unexpected. We found that six days of hard work followed by a day of rest was one of the missing keys that had prevented us from establishing the Sabbath in our family.



**George Gundlach** received his degree in Broadcast Journalism from the University of Florida. Since joining New Wine in 1976, he has served Integrity Communications in a number of capacities and is presently in charge of public relations and circulation. George and his wife, Shari, have two sons and live in Mobile, Alabama.



## Chicken Pox

The second key involved something called "pride." I had always thought everybody had this problem except me. But I was dead wrong, and as Bob Mumford often says, "God fixed a fix for me."

It was about two and a half weeks before the first New Wine Event. All of us on the staff were feeling a high level of stress over

had chicken pox when I was young. But I was relieved after the doctor informed us that only one in a million adults ever catches chicken pox.

That was the good news. The bad news was that I just happened to be that one adult in a million chosen to catch them.

For the next week and a half I was a basket case. I felt worse and looked worse than I had in

It was at this moment of agitation that God spoke to me as clearly as I have ever heard Him. He said, "George, the New Wine Event can go on without you. You're not indispensable."

His words hit hard. How many times I had thought I was indispensable! How many times I had thought my opinion was crucial. How many times I had taken up ground that belonged to others because I had more confidence in my plan than in theirs.

The outcome of the "fix" was that I released the Event into God's hands—not by choice, but because of my circumstances. And sure enough, everything went fine. In fact, the last evidence of my chicken pox disappeared thirty minutes before the conference began, making it possible for me to participate after all.

It was a hard lesson, but a crucial one. I realized it was my pride that caused me to take on more than I should, or to think I was indispensable to God's plans.

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*It was my pride that caused me to take on more than I should, or to think I was indispensable to God's plans.*

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the Event, but mine was especially intense because it was my responsibility to see that the meetings were a success.

Then came my "fix." A few weeks before the conference, both of our boys came down with chicken pox. This made me nervous because, you see, I had never

my entire life. I began to panic: *How could this happen now, I thought, just two weeks before the New Wine Event? There's still a lot of work to be done on this thing.* How could I get up in front of 3,000 people with a face that looked like broiled lobster and welcome them to the conference?

## Getting a *Jump* on the Week by Dick Leggatt

For a number of months, we had been successful in setting aside Sunday as a "real live" day of rest, and what an improvement it had brought to our family life! Starting each Saturday evening at supertime, we would stop our week's work and gather for supper. In very simple fashion we would pray together as a family and set aside the rest of the evening and all of Sunday to the Lord for rest, worship and family time. That time was like a breath of fresh air each week, providing relaxation and refreshment as well as a definite *break*—so that our weeks no longer seemed to run together in hectic activity or unbroken tedium. The Sabbath had begun to "take hold" in our family with very positive effects.

But something was still lacking. Mondays still seemed to be catching us unprepared for the week, so that before we knew it, we were flooded by unanticipated demands, sometimes even before breakfast on Monday morning.

"What's the problem?" I kept wondering. "How can taking a day of rest derail us for the rest of the week?"

As I talked with my wife, Cindi, about the problem, we suddenly realized that just as Sabbath had begun at supper on Saturday evening, it needed to end at supper on Sunday. Then the rest of Sunday evening after our four children were in bed could be a time of planning and preparation for us.

Just that one simple adjustment revolutionized our weekly schedule. Sunday night became our *planning* night.

Planning—whether long-range, short-range, or any range—had never been one of my strong points. Nevertheless, we began working at it, and in the process we hit upon simple ideas that we try to include in our Sunday night sessions:

### 1. Begin with prayer.

Simply committing the planning time to the Lord beforehand can eliminate frustration and open the way for God to set or adjust our priorities.

### 2. Take a look at the upcoming week.

We look at each day of the coming week in our calendars or schedule books, taking



That pride had been keeping me from rest. But now I knew beyond any doubt that I had to begin resting more in God's ability and not my own.

### Rest and Unbelief

The third key that enabled me to learn to rest was an understanding of the problem of unbelief. I discovered the significance of this one day when I read what Hebrews says about the Israelites in the wilderness:

And to whom did God swear that they would never enter His rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter, because of their unbelief. . . . There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests *from his own work*, just as God did from His (Heb. 3:18-19; 4:9-10 NIV).

It was becoming clear to me

that if I was to enter God's rest and to rest from my work (and the stress associated with it), then I needed to enter by faith, not unbelief. I had never considered faith in these terms. Unbelief was something I thought I had settled over ten years ago when I had become a Christian. Sure, I had

lished, I began exercising faith to enter a true Sabbath rest.

Today my family and I are enjoying rest in a way we never have before. What started out as an innocent stress test has snowballed into a major adjustment in my life and in my understanding of the importance of rest.

## JUST AROUND THE CORNER PRAYER

### NEXT MONTH IN *NEW WINE*

struggled and had seen others struggle with a lack of faith for healing, deliverance or some other need, but not until now did I see that unbelief was keeping me from rest. For that reason I determined, as it says in Hebrews, to "hold firmly to the end the confidence we had at the first" (Heb. 3:14). With this foundation estab-

Though I had laughed at the prospect of "seeking professional help," I had to admit that I *did* need help in my struggle to rest. In the end, I found that my Father in heaven provided excellent "professional" care. By following His prescription for Sabbath rest, all of our family is healthier and happier—especially Jonathan. ♥

note of routine schedule items: church meetings, school functions, piano lessons, dinner engagements, free evenings, etc. Then we plan out the details involved in accomplishing them.

Besides scheduled events, we talk about projects, tasks and any other items, no matter how minor, which need to be taken care of during a normal week. (One of our first Sunday evenings was a session just to figure out what was a "normal" week for us as a basis for our weekly planning. We have to adjust this regularly to changes in our schedule.)

#### 3. Take a look back.

Sometimes it's helpful to review the past week or two to get an idea of interruptions or hindrances that caused our plans to fall through. Adjustments can then be made to eliminate those problems.

#### 4. Take a look farther ahead.

It helps to look ahead beyond the immediate to anticipate special events in the remainder of the present month and in the

month to come: holidays, birthdays, anniversaries, business travel, conferences. This enables us to plan ahead for these events, setting aside the time and finances to start preparing for them.

Some families look further up the road for a brief overview of progress toward long-range goals: eventual home improvements, vacations, college education for the kids, and other family matters beyond the immediate. Though we do this on occasion, we usually feel we are doing well just to plan for the weeks and months ahead.

Usually, these Sunday sessions also become opportunities for us to talk about any matters on our "agendas"—a time to simply "catch up." Often the benefit of just touching base like this far outweighs the planning aspects.

Just this simple practice of planning on Sunday night, followed by a little work and preparation for the coming week, has helped make the difference between getting a jump on the week and the week jumping on us before we're ready for it. ♥



## Intercessors Report by John Stanko

**F**or the first time in its nine-year history, Intercessors for America (IFA) held a national prayer conference October 29-31, 1982. The Capital Hyatt Regency in Washington, D.C., was the site of the three-day event. Twelve hundred people from almost every state as well as twenty foreign countries participated in the worship, teaching workshops and times of small group prayer that took place at the conference. Speakers included Lance Lambert from Israel, Dr. Charles Stanley of Atlanta, Ed McAteer of the Religious Roundtable, and Charles Simpson and Ern Baxter of Mobile, Alabama.

Washington, D.C., provided the perfect backdrop for the conference sponsored by IFA, an organization whose stated goal is "to encourage Christians to pray for our nation and those in positions of authority." John Beckett, President of IFA, welcomed the participants on Friday with an exhortation to fellowship, listen, learn and pray during their time together. Lance Lambert delivered the opening address, "A Call to Intercession."

On Saturday morning, Dr. Charles Stanley spoke on "The Priority of Prayer," and he clearly outlined the priority and results of prayer as seen in the book of Acts. He summarized by saying: "God's goal is to get *us* into what *He* is into, and not for us to convince *Him* to get into what *we* are in."

Charles Simpson, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Integrity Communications, addressed the gathering on Saturday evening concerning "Our Place in Prayer." Charles warned those present that

knowing and loving God does not ensure that we have His perspective in a matter. Prayer, he pointed out, is the means to getting the mind of God.

Finally, Ern Baxter concluded the conference with the message "Praying in the Divine Presence." Ern stressed that prayer is to be God-serving, not self-serving. The Holy Spirit, he explained, is the agent responsible for revealing God's will to the believer. Consequently, a believer praying a "will-of-God" prayer must receive an answer.

The IFA Conference was an important and timely event. Christians from many different backgrounds came together not only to learn more about prayer, but also to pray. A spirit of unity pervaded the general and small group prayer sessions as those present were challenged and directed in their intercessory prayer ministry. All who attended came away with new insight into the critical nature of prayer in the life of the believer.

### Goals for the days ahead

*The following is an interview with Gary Bergel, a researcher for IFA.*

**New Wine:** *Why did the IFA leadership decide to have a prayer conference at this time?*

**Gary Bergel:** We felt it was the word of the Lord. As we met in our planning sessions, the Lord indicated it was time for a national conference. We have not had one in the nine years of the existence of the IFA ministry. I believe that it was necessary because we need also a greater sense of cohesion, unity and family. Basically the conference seems to have accomplished that.

**NW:** *Having had the conference, what objectives have you set for the days ahead?*

**GB:** Our goals are very simple: Our general goal is to cultivate prayer in the body of Christ. Our specific goal is to encourage and deepen intercession, and especially to promote corporate intercession.

**NW:** *What has been the fruit of the contact among intercessory leaders from various nations?*

**GB:** Our times together are always occasions for

sharing and hearing reports from the different nations of the burdens and prayers that God has put on their hearts, as well as the issues the Church and the governments in those nations are facing. It is always a time of deepening relationships and strengthening bonds as we learn to receive and build with one another.

**NW:** *What recent national developments would you say have been affected by intercessory prayer?*

**GB:** Probably the most positive development which is a direct answer to ongoing intercession has to do with abortion. There is a new initiative mounting in the White House, not only to see abortion overcome, but to promote the restoration of all of the ministries of mercy and especially to build a new network of care facilities and ministries for unwed mothers and adoption. The President is specifically encouraging this, and to see the leader of the land stand up and say, "I will lead in this matter," is a tremendous answer to intercession for God's people.

*To receive the IFA Newsletter write: Intercessors for America, P.O. Box D, Elyria, OH 44036.*





# Oil or Wick?

## To the Point

by Bob Mumford

**W**hen Moses saw the burning bush on Mount Horeb, he turned aside for a closer look because of one strange fact about what he saw: Though the bush was on fire, it was not consumed.

I believe that the burning bush is a good picture of the human personality burning with the life of the Lord. God wants us to be on fire, burning brightly so that our light will “shine before men” as we do the work He has called us to do. But at the same time it is not His will for us to be consumed or “burnt-out” by the flame.

How can we burn without being consumed? If we use the example of an oil lamp, we can see that the wick is not consumed because it is the *oil* that burns rather than the wick itself. In the same way, I believe that if we can learn to burn the “oil” of God’s *anointing* in our lives, we can avoid burning up the “wick”—ourselves.

The Holy Spirit has been given to enable us to do the will of the Father. When the Father requires something of me, the Spirit rises in me to fulfill that requirement. But when I attempt to do something that is not clearly the will of the Father—something He hasn’t required of me—then the grace and power of the Holy Spirit are minimal or not available at all for the task. When I try to do work

that is not really God’s will, I have to summon up my *own* limited resources to do it, and I end up burning up the “wick”—myself. Something of my human nature is consumed.

Being so busy that we burn out is often the result of our mistaking busyness for spirituality. When we discover that our “bush” is being consumed, that our “wick” is burning up, then our busyness is not from the Lord. A burned wick should be a sign to us that we are not walking in the center of God’s will for us, and we are probably outside of the sphere of activity He has assigned to us.

How can we know what God has called us to do *before* we are consumed? I believe that avoiding burnout is a matter of *vision*. A vision of our calling focuses us on the priorities God has established for us. In a sense, a vision from God *entraps* us in His purposes.

Once Moses turned aside to see the burning bush, he was trapped. For the rest of his life he could not forget what he had seen or get away from what God had commanded. Many times when he was discouraged—such as when the Israelites rebelled in the desert—Moses probably wished he had never stopped to look at that bush. But he *did* stop, and ever afterward he was *compelled* to walk according to the vision. It gave his life cohesion and purpose and kept him from being distracted

by things that were outside of God’s will for him.

Consequently, the scripture tells us that when Moses died at the age of a hundred and twenty “his eye was not dim, nor his vigor abated” (Dt. 34:7 NAS). He had not worn himself out with concerns that were not given to him by the Lord; instead he had been constrained by the vision to fulfill with a single-mindedness the purposes revealed for his life.

In the final analysis, the problem of how to burn without burning up has its roots in the foundations of our thinking. If we take a humanist approach to our work, we will believe that mankind “evolved” and is still evolving, so that we really have no limits. We will be convinced that the human potential is unbounded, and that the human race will rise in glory to fulfill its destiny. Living according to this philosophy, we will burn the wick, recognizing no end to our own strength. But eventually, we will discover that we are limited after all, and we will have consumed ourselves.

On the other hand, if we take the biblical “creationist” approach to our work, we will realize that our Creator made us with limitations, and that limitation is not sin. It then will become our responsibility to discern our personal strengths and weaknesses. By doing so we will be able to learn what, by God’s design, we ought to be doing, and what we ought to leave undone because it is outside of our assigned sphere. At the same time, discovering our limits will force us to become rightly dependent upon the other members of Christ’s body, whose strengths will complement our own.

Oil or wick? It is ultimately an issue of *origin*. Our vision, our planning, our efforts to resist busyness and to stay within our spheres in the bounds of grace—all must originate in our starting place: the Creator who is our reason for living. ♥



# RESPONSE FORM

My contribution to *New Wine Magazine* this month is \$\_\_\_\_\_.

- ☐ **Please send me Tape of the Month.** I understand that I will receive one tape each month and that I am responsible to pay for all tapes (\$3.50). I can cancel at any time.
- ☐ Check here if you would like to receive regularly the **Integrity Publications newsletter** which announces our most current teaching material, (free).

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## Derek Prince talks about "Motivation for Living"



A recent Tape of the Month by Derek Prince received such a positive response, we decided to offer it to our *New Wine* readers as well. One Tape of the Month listener wrote us to say: " 'Motivation for Living' renewed my very purpose for living." We trust it will do the same for you. To order this tape or to begin receiving Tape of the Month, see response form on this page.



"God has called us to be a demonstrator of His word in the earth." What does this mean to us? Find out in a dynamic new cassette message given by Charles Simpson called *Power of the Prophetic Word*. This message has dramatically affected the lives of those who heard it in person. Order your copy today —see response form on this page.



*Instruction in the fundamentals of the faith is an important part of our Christian heritage. "The Word" feature over the course of the year will provide a systematic, seasonal study of basic teachings about the creation and fall of man, the person and work of Christ and the nature and destiny of the Church. In this trimester we are studying the nature of God, man's need for redemption and our salvation in Jesus. We encourage our readers to use this feature daily, both for personal scripture study and family reading.*

# THE WORD

## *I Believe in God, the Father Almighty. . .*

### **I. Who Created the World, All Living Things and a People for His Name**

- |  |                |         |
|--|----------------|---------|
| A. In the beginning God created. . . . .               | Gen. 1:1-31    | Jan. 1  |
| B. The Lord made heaven and earth. . . . .             | Ps. 146:1-10   | Jan. 2  |
| C. The Lord made every living thing. . . . .           | Job 38; 42:1-6 | Jan. 3  |
| D. The Lord established the earth. . . . .             | Ps. 104:1-35   | Jan. 4  |
| E. The Lord stretched out the heavens. . . . .         | Is. 40:12-31   | Jan. 5  |
| F. The Lord formed Israel with His hand. . . . .       | Is. 42:1—43:7  | Jan. 6  |
| G. The Lord created Jacob. . . . .                     | Is. 45:1-13    | Jan. 7  |
| H. The Lord gives power to become His sons. . . . .    | Jn. 1:1-18     | Jan. 8  |
| I. The Lord sustains His servants. . . . .             | Acts 4:23-35   | Jan. 9  |
| J. The Lord can be known through His creation. . . . . | Rom. 1:18-25   | Jan. 10 |

### **II. Who Is Faithful to Keep His Covenant**

- |  |                               |         |
|--|-------------------------------|---------|
| A. Faithful to those He loves. . . . .             | Dt. 4:32-40                   | Jan. 11 |
| B. Faithful to His word to Abraham. . . . .        | Dt. 7:6-11                    | Jan. 12 |
| C. Faithful to His promise to David. . . . .       | Ps. 89:1-29                   | Jan. 13 |
| D. Faithful to His eternal plan. . . . .           | Is. 25                        | Jan. 14 |
| E. Faithful to His unfaithful bride. . . . .       | Hos. 2:14-23                  | Jan. 15 |
| F. Faithful to the prophets' word. . . . .         | Lk. 1:67-79                   | Jan. 16 |
| G. Faithful to the New Covenant in Christ. . . . . | Mt. 26:20-30; 1 Cor. 11:17-34 | Jan. 17 |
| H. Faithful to Himself. . . . .                    | Heb. 6:13-20                  | Jan. 18 |

### **III. Who Is Holy and Righteous in All His Ways**

- |  |                           |         |
|--|---------------------------|---------|
| A. A holy ground: direction for leadership. . . . .        | Ex. 3:1-12; Josh. 5:13-15 | Jan. 19 |
| B. A holy Deliverer: help for the needy. . . . .           | 1 Sam. 2:1-11             | Jan. 20 |
| C. A holy temple: refuge for those who are saved. . . . .  | Ps. 11:1-7                | Jan. 21 |
| D. A holy nature: judgment for the nations. . . . .        | Ps. 99:1-9                | Jan. 22 |
| E. A holy King: cleansing for His servants. . . . .        | Is. 6:1-13                | Jan. 23 |
| F. Holy vessels: sanctification for the community. . . . . | Zech. 14                  | Jan. 24 |
| G. Holy seed: redeemed for sincere love. . . . .           | 1 Pet. 1:13-25            | Jan. 25 |
| H. A holy throne room: a pattern for worship. . . . .      | Rev. 4                    | Jan. 26 |

### **IV. Who Is Slow to Anger and of Great Mercy**

- |  |                          |         |
|--|--------------------------|---------|
| A. Mercy abounding to God's inheritance. . . . . | Ex. 34:1-9; Num. 14:1-21 | Jan. 27 |
| B. Mercy received with a thankful heart. . . . . | Ps. 107:1-43             | Jan. 28 |
| C. Mercy continuing to each generation. . . . .  | Ps. 136:1-26             | Jan. 29 |
| D. Mercy extended to sinners. . . . .            | Rom. 5:1-11              | Jan. 30 |
| E. Mercy unites a scattered people. . . . .      | 1 Pet. 2:1-12            | Jan. 31 |

A monthly Bible study by Bruce Longstreth.



# Dear New Wine



## Needs more

I appreciate your effort. But let me take this opportunity to request that you do more to provide useful information. Every issue I desperately look for new information. Your contributions provide nothing more than commentary and personal interpretation which I know already or that can be deduced by common sense.

Also, since you are a multi-denominational activity, I suggest and request that you take the initiative to address denominational issues in order to clarify differences and to promote unity. I feel that avoiding these issues is one thing that is seriously inhibiting the growth of the Church in the world today.

Joe Oleksa  
El Cajon, CA

## Your input counts

When times are hard we sometimes don't read the magazines for a while, but we really appreciate receiving them. We just got the August issue and I would like to say that it is true that congressmen don't get much input. I wrote to J.J. Pickle about the Siberian Pentecostals in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and got back a nice let-

ter assuring me that he would look into supporting the bill to give them citizenship now that a constituent had written him! The people have been in the embassy for four years. Austin, Texas, has many Christians, I'm sure, and the first person who wrote him was me, the lapsed absentee voter. I think that we shouldn't assume that our representatives are really getting input on the issues.

Frank Roberts  
Campinas, Brazil

## Holy is the Lord!

My family and I were driving to Bangor, Maine, today from our home in Caribou, some 200 miles north of here. The day was extra warm for this time of year, the color of the trees was vibrant, the sky cloudless, and I began to read *New Wine* and got through two articles and a deep sense of wanting to cry shook my entire body. I prayed silently, "Lord, please don't allow it" (my husband to date is still a non-believer). Everything in me wanted to cry, "Holy is the Lord!"

I thank you for teaching me for five years. I thank you for your faithfulness in proclaiming the *rema* word.

Name withheld

## The right word

We are praising God for the August Tape of the Month by Charles Simpson, "Why Spiritual Vision Is Necessary." This is the kind of truth that must go forth in this day. We hope that there will be more teachings of this kind. We have passed this tape around and it is blessing many.

Harry & Sandra Medley  
Littleton, CO

## Tape of the Month

I just wanted to write and let you know how much we have enjoyed receiving *New Wine* Maga-

zine and Tape of the Month. We have had the benefit of the magazine since 1979 and the tapes since 1981; both have been an immeasurable source of guidance, information, and growth.

I especially wish to thank Derek Prince for the message in the September Tape of the Month. Never again will I be surprised about what God has to tell His people... this message was timely and much appreciated.

Mrs. Sherri Brower  
Eureka, CA

## Don't throw 'em away

I have been subscribing to *New Wine* for ten years now, and attribute a large percentage of my Christian growth to a good diet *New Wine* has always given me.

Last month I was sorting out all the magazines I have, neatly bundled up in successive years, and making note of the ones that were missing—those choice ones that someone had borrowed and didn't return. But mainly I was realizing that I had a wealth of teaching that needed to be reread. I just finished October and November of 1972 which spoke to me the loving word to where I am right now. ("For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.") And that was how an article by Bob Mumford—"The Antidote to Rebellion"—ministered to me ten years later.

Beverly Lewis  
Aloha, OR

## Overseas ministry

My wife and I would like to thank you for continuing to send *New Wine* to us during the past months. We are both



engaged in busy ministry in the local church and in a wider ministry to the churches in southeast England, and have found the magazine most helpful to us. God has increasingly given to us both a ministry in writing and we have been preparing teaching material for leaders and wives. We have been encouraged to see how God has been using these books in the churches in England. We owe a great debt, under God, to many of God's people—certainly *New Wine* has been one of the means helping us to understand truth and to grow in the work of the Kingdom.

Richard Haydon-Knowell  
London, England

### Communion

I just wanted to commend you and thank Don Basham and Dick Leggatt for attending the World Communion Service in Fort Worth. I was not present but have heard many good things about it. Covering it in *New Wine* shows me you are not afraid to flow with the body of Christ when another ministry is involved. Especially at a time when there is much opposition

against some of these other ministries which in my view are God-appointed.

I am glad to see you flowing in unity with them and not criticizing the communion service. I will now be much more open to receive you, your teachings and your ministry.

David Sherwood  
Olathe, KS

### Worth repeating

The October issue on Worship is just great. It inspires, motivates and seems to confirm my humble thinking and experience. The last sentence in Ern Baxter's interview is especially meaningful at this time. May I quote it: "I see in worship an encounter with God that is absolutely essential to finding His purposes for us and for experiencing the restoration that God intends for His people."

Mrs. Arlene Bockoven  
West Union, IA

### Heritage

Regarding heritage, something struck me as I read Hebrews 7:9-10: "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth

tithes, payed tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him."

Levi was in Abraham's loins—the man's loins, not just the woman's womb—centuries before he was born. Are the rest of us just as much planned ahead by God? I never realized abortion from the perspective of it being the nth degree of cutting off one's heritage.

Synovia Olson  
Kalispell, MT

### Memories

Thank you for the November *New Wine*. Since I am a father of three grown sons, the article by Charles Swindoll, "Building Memories," filled a need in my life. What a lift to recall our life together when they were boys. Charles Swindoll is always a blessing. So glad you included his article for all of us to enjoy.

W. Grant  
Warrentown, MO

*If for any reason you stop receiving New Wine without prior notification or without requesting that it stop, please get in touch with us.*

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