

featuring:
Paul Billheimer, author of *Destined for the Throne*

Magazine New Wine

August 1983

MAY THE
SOURCE
BE WITH YOU

LIVING IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

Magazine New Wine

a ministry of Integrity Communications

Magazine Staff:

Editorial Department

Editor: Dick Leggatt

Editorial Assistants: Bob Bruce

Curtis Forman, Stephen Simpson

Production Department

Production Manager: Bob Robinson

Art Director: Mark Pie'

Production Assistants: Catherine Girod,
Kay Richey

Circulation Department

Director of Circulation: George P. Gundlach

Consultants

Chief Editorial Consultant: Don Basham

Board of Directors of Integrity Communications

Charles V. Simpson, Chairman; Don Basham,
Derek Prince, Bob Mumford, Ern Baxter,
John Duke, Joseph Garlington, Terry Parker,
Bruce Longstreth.

Other Publications and Ministries Associated With New Wine Magazine:

New Wine Tape of the Month, *Fathergram*,
Integrity Publications, *Plumblin*, Bob Mum-
ford's Recommended Tapes, Derek Prince
Ministries, Intercessors for America, *Busi-
nessGram*, *Vino Nuevo* Magazine (Spanish
edition of *New Wine*), *Restore* Magazine
(available in Australia and New Zealand only)

©1983 by Integrity Communications. All rights
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.

Member of Christian Booksellers Association,
& Evangelical Press Association.

New Wine Magazine, published monthly by
Integrity Communications, seeks to pro-
mote the maturity of the Church and the
individual Christian by publishing scrip-
turally sound content which is personal,
action-oriented, and timely. We implement
this purpose by including a wide diversity
of Christian authors to communicate the
message of the kingdom of God to all men.



Editorial

You probably recognize the phrase on our cover as a slightly ad-justed version of the now-famous line from the Star Wars movies—"May the force be with you." When we say "the Source" instead of "the force," however, it is because in this issue we want to talk about the marvelous truth of our relationship with the God of the universe. The purpose of the cover is to make a point that we feel is very significant.

The phenomenal success of *Return of the Jedi* and the other Star Wars movies is something we as Christians need to examine. Regardless of how we feel about the content of the movies, we have to recognize that they are touching something in people in a very successful manner. What are they touching? Speculations have been offered in thousands of articles and reviews.

But I believe that the fundamental human desire touched by these movies is a hope that first, there is a force of good operating in the world, second, that somehow we can interact with that force, and third, that ultimately, linked to that force, we can triumph over the powers of evil that confront us.

But how does all this apply to us and the August issue of *New Wine*? Simple. What we know as the Source is far more marvelous than "the force" depicted in the movies—that impersonal, intangible "something" which operates at man's command. The Source is not a *something* at all. He is a *Someone*—a very *powerful* Someone who directs us by His command. And yet, we can *know* Him, and He us. We can have a two-way relationship with the Source of all life—the Lord God who rules the universe.

That is the glorious, mysterious link that most of mankind finds itself groping for intuitively. That desire for a relationship with the Source, the Creator of all, is fundamental to every human being. And that is the desire which the producers of these movies, without realizing it, have tapped into.

We can know Him. We can know the Source. The God of Creation is with us, and we can walk with Him. That is the wonderful truth we explore in this issue.

New Wine this month deals with the reality of our relationship with God. First, in "Getting to Know the Source," Jim Hamann makes the point that Christianity is not a mechanical, religious ritual—it is a relationship. Our first priority in life is to know God and to be known by Him. Bob Mumford provides a specific perspective, informing us that each of us is to function as a "priest," serving and loving God.

In a brief but potent interview, Paul Billheimer, author of *Destined for the Throne*, cites the role of prayer as a training ground for victorious living. Next, George Kouri encourages us to discover more and more of "The Mystery of God."

Don Basham inspires us with his account of the miraculous intervention of God in a very down-to-earth dilemma. Howard Carter lets his children tell how they first discovered the reality of God's presence through the help of their parents. The issue ends with a final insight from Don Basham on our individual calling by God.

What a tremendous privilege—to have a living relationship with the God who created us! What a dynamic realization that we know the Source, and *He is with us*. □

Dick Leggatt
Editor

THIS MONTH

May the Source Be With You

Cover Illustration:
Spacescapes/Don Dixon,
Tustin, CA



Magazine New Wine®

a ministry of Integrity Communications

**4.
Getting to Know the
Source**

by Jim Hamann

The most important thing in life is a real relationship with God.

**8.
Every Man a Priest**
by Bob Mumford

God desires honest words from a sincere people.



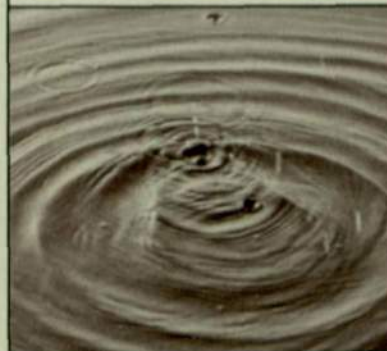
**14.
Prayer: the Training
Ground for Our
Future**

*an interview with
Paul Billheimer*



**18.
The Mystery of God**
by George Kouri

How much can we discover about our Creator?



**24.
The Lord Will
Provide—Even Spare
Parts**

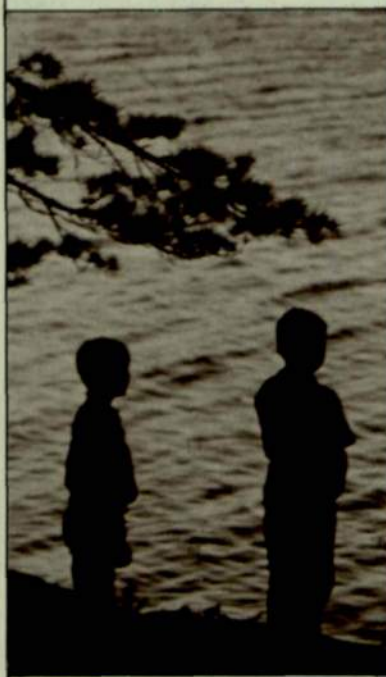
by Don Basham

"Lord, if there was ever a time we could use a little help, it's now!"

**28.
Teaching Our
Children to Lean on
God**

by Howard Carter

Do our kids have their own relationship with God?



regular features

Editorial	2
Homespun	13
Did You Know?	17
Tips for Fathers	21
The Word	22
The Lighter Side	26
Dear New Wine	33
To the Point	35

The most important thing in life is a real relationship with God.

In order for us to really lay hold of God's best for us and to be alive and growing, each of us needs an overmastering purpose in our lives. We need a purpose which so grips us and consumes us that everything that touches our lives will be seen and filtered through that purpose. The overmastering purpose that I am speaking about is simply this realization: We were made for God—*just* for Him. At the foundation of that ultimate purpose must be our desire to please God, to know God, and to spend time in His presence. If we need anything today, it is an understanding that we were *made for God*.

No Other Gods

In Exodus, chapter 20, we see God speaking to Moses to give him the ten commandments. God's first words are, "Now, Moses, remember that I am the Lord your God that brought you out of slavery in Egypt. What I did for you gives me the right to speak to you. On that basis I want to communicate My first commandment to you: You shall have no other gods before Me." What God is saying is this: "The most important thing is for you to make *Me* first in every area of your life."

Jesus Christ, who came as the incarnate Son of God, affirmed this commandment in response to a Pharisee's question in Matthew 22:35. One of these men, an expert in the law, tested Him with this question, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?" And Jesus replied, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment."

*Illustration:
Spaceapes/Don
Dixon, Tustin,
CA.*

GETTING TO KNOW

SOUR

JIM

"Love the Lord..." This doesn't just speak of feelings; it's an act of the will—a choice. It is saying, "God is first, God is my Lover, God is the supreme One in life."

From His Heart to Mine

I have asked myself some questions about my own prayer life: How often do I come into God's presence just to spend time with Him? Not to ask Him anything; not to talk about my prob-

lems or my family, or the church I serve, or people that need prayer. How often do I come into His presence just to love Him, and to be loved by Him—just to get to know Him? It occurs to me that God would like an opportunity to share with me not just words of adjustment or correction, but specific words of encouragement that come just from His heart to mine.

Do we realize that God would like to say to us that He appre-



THE CE HAMANN

ciates and loves us? He would like to thank us for our availability, for our being an instrument, for the fact that we have turned over our rights to Him. Do we ever spend time like that, just in the presence of the Lord?

Today we consider anyone with that kind of relationship to God some kind of "spiritual mystic." But it is not as mystical or extraordinary as we might think. It should be normal.

Our relationship with God must

consist of more than running into His presence and saying, "God, protect my kids. God, help me out of this jam. God, you know the problem at work. God, you know my financial situation." Prayer should be much more. God wants to expand the borders of our understanding of prayer so that we see it as a normal part of our relationship with Him. He wants to show us the Christian life as a relationship with Him as a person.

We run the risk of making Christianity a lifeless matter—so cut and dried; so very mechanical. We see this in the traditional approach to salvation.

Salvation is more than a mechanical process of reading Romans 3:23, 6:23, and 10:9-10 and making a mental assent by mouthing certain words. Christianity is not just a contractual agreement—it is an encounter with the personality of God. It is coming into harmony with the Lord Himself in a restored relationship to the Father. That's the essence of becoming a Christian.

Being a Christian is not simply getting facts into our heads, or even making certain behavioral changes; being a Christian is being in love. It's discovering more and more a personality named God, who wills, who thinks, who acts, who loves, who has feelings. It's *knowing* Him and loving Him.

What Is Our Purpose?

What is our overmastering purpose for life? Is it more than just keeping body and soul together and enjoying good health? Is it merely to have harmonious relationships in our homes? Or, is God our goal? I have recognized in my own life the danger of *substituting working for God for knowing the God of the work*. We face the danger of being involved in spiritual busyness and seeing our own lives deteriorate.

In Luke 10:38, Jesus is talking

about a woman who chose the most important thing. To Martha's question, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do all the work?" the Lord answered, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and upset about many things, but *only one thing is needed*—Mary has chosen what is better and it will not be taken away from her." What had Mary chosen? Just to be with the Lord, to be in His presence.

I remember hearing DeVerne Fromke, a noted author and Bible teacher, tell a story about arriving home after a time of out-of-town ministry. After his wife and four-year-old son had greeted him, his son immediately ran out to do something. Hearing noises coming from the garage, DeVerne went out and asked, "Son, what are you doing? I want to spend some time with you; I just came home."

The boy's response was, "Daddy, I'm busy right now."

The next day DeVerne took his son with him on their daily trip into the city to get the mail. As they came out of the post office, he noticed the right side of their car covered with childish decorations. His son had been busy. He had taped pieces of cardboard and colored paper to the side of the car with his dad's electrical tape. DeVerne looked both ways up and down the street, hoping that no one saw the mess, and then turned his gaze to his son. Seeing the look on his face, his son said, "Daddy, don't you like it? I did it for you."

As DeVerne related it, God spoke these words to him: "Don't reprimand your son. How many times have I wanted your presence, but you went out to do your projects. You were running here and there, doing jobs I never sent you to do. You thought you were serving Me and pleasing Me. But I want *you* more than I want your service." That's what God wants—*us*.

"What is the Christian life? It's a relationship with a Person."

Sacrifice and Service

There are two aspects of the Christian life—there is service for God, but first, there's ministry to God. The Romans had a coin that was minted with an ox on both sides. On one side there was an ox with an altar and the inscription, "For sacrifice." The other side of the coin showed an ox in a yoke pulling a plow. It said, "For service." The Roman citizens realized they had to face both aspects: sacrifice and service. So often we're oriented toward service, toward working for God, rather than simply loving God as our Father.

In Ezekiel 44, we have a most interesting principle. God speaks to Ezekiel, saying, "I don't want any of the Levites to come into the Holy place in the temple and serve me except the sons of Zadok. I want the rest of the Levites to help the people with

their burnt offerings, and to do all the work in the outer court. But I want the sons of Zadok to come in beyond the curtain and *minister to Me.*" There were priests that served the people and there were priests that not only served the people but also ministered to the Lord. Are we priests that just serve the house, or do we serve the Lord?

There is certainly an emphasis in the Church today on relationships, community, and meeting people's needs. These are all exciting. We should be serving each other; we should be caring. But, as the Church, we should be more than humanitarian agents, or a welfare organization; we must know what it is to be captured and enraptured by God.

The story of every great man of God in the Scriptures is the story of a man who, despite human frailty and failure, had one intention. Each of them had a heart filled with the desire to please God in every area of their lives. It was an overmastering purpose, and it was what made them great. When they failed and stumbled, they got up and pressed on because they wanted to please God. God is not looking for perfect men, but for men with a single intention of heart—to love and honor Him.

The Heavenly Prize

What is the Christian life? It's a relationship with a person. It's sharing our hearts with God and letting Him share His heart with us. That is when it becomes thrilling. Anything else will wear thin around the edges and leave us searching for something that truly fulfills us. The overmastering purpose that must capture and consume us is to live to please God, spending time with Him and coming to know Him.

Listen to how Paul expressed that consuming passion even while he was chained to a Roman soldier: "My *determined purpose*

is that I may know Him, that I may progressively become more deeply and intimately acquainted with Him, perceiving and recognizing and understanding the wonders of His person more clearly" (Phil. 3:10, Amp.). Later in verses 13 and 14 of the same chapter, we find the same intensity of desire: "But this *one thing* I do. It is my *one aspiration*: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the supreme and heavenly prize to which God in Christ Jesus is calling us upward."

The whole epistle of Philipians reveals Paul's consuming passion to know God, to please God, to honor Him. We see it from the very first chapter when he says: "...so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body; whether it be by life or death, it doesn't concern me. The only thing that concerns me is that in this flesh, in this body, God is exalted" (v. 20 Amp.).

We see Paul's desire for this overmastering purpose echoed in the prayer of the late Dr. A. W. Tozer from his book, *The Pursuit of God*: "O God, I have tasted Thy goodness, and it has both satisfied me and made me thirsty for more. I am painfully conscious of my need for further grace. I am ashamed of my lack of desire. O God, the Triune God, I want to want Thee; I long to be filled with longing; I thirst to be made more thirsty still. Show me Thy glory, I pray Thee, so that I may know Thee indeed. Begin in mercy a new work of love within me. Say to my soul, 'Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.' Then give me grace to rise and follow Thee up from this misty lowland where I have wandered so long. In Jesus' name, Amen."¹ May each of us be captured and consumed by the overmastering purpose of the God for whom we have been created. □

¹Dr. A. W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God* (Old Tappan, New Jersey: Fleming Revell Co., 1982).

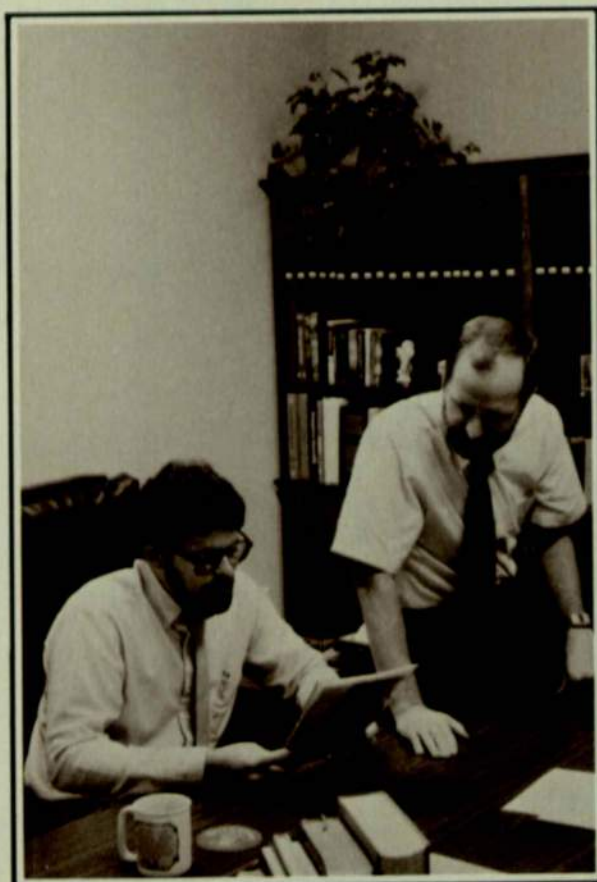


Jim Hamann graduated from the Northwest College of the Assemblies of God in Kirkland, Washington. He is the Senior Pastor of Christ Church of Northgate in Seattle, where he resides with his wife, Phyllis, and their three children.

SPECIAL OUTREACH MONTHS

July-August-September 1983

WE'RE GOING TO OUR FRIENDS FIRST



As a *New Wine* reader, you can help extend God's grace to someone's life by joining with us in "Special Outreach Months."

Not only will you be helping extend our Lord's kingdom, but through your faithfulness you will provide a steady stream of inspiration, strength, and encouragement to that family member, business associate, friend, or neighbor God puts on your heart.

It's those whose paths you cross daily that will benefit from *New Wine* just as you have.

Don't miss this opportunity to allow God to meet those in need of His presence. Participate with us in "Special Outreach Months."

A special card is provided in this issue for your use. Your financial support with each new name would be greatly appreciated.



Every Man a Priest

by Bob Mumford

"The sacrifices God has been looking for all these years are honest words from a sincere people."

Throughout the Scriptures, God declares His intention to get for Himself a "nation of priests." In Exodus 19:6 He says to Israel, "You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation." The apostle Peter writes that the Church is to be "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation" (1 Pet. 2:9). And in Revelation 5:9-10 John says that God has purchased men

from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation to make them "a kingdom and priests to our God."

When God talks about our being a priesthood and a holy nation, what does He mean?

One of the five basic doctrines of the Reformation was the priesthood of the believer. The Reformers rejected the belief that only the men who stood at the front of the church were priests,

*Illustrations:
Ken Raney,
Ellsworth, KS.*



and the rest of the believers were "laymen." They believed what the Scripture teaches about every one of us functioning as priests.

We must understand that God set out to get for Himself a whole *nation* of priests, not just one tribe of priests. Though the men of the tribe of Levi were priests, the Levitical priesthood was to minister specifically to the people of Israel, while the whole nation was supposed to be priests to the world. Many of us don't understand that; we tend to recognize some men as special priests. But what God had in His heart was that the *whole* nation of Israel would be priests and would minister to all of the other nations.

Christ had both a *priestly* ministry and a *kingly* ministry. We too need to find a proper balance between these two roles. If we only talk about authority and the kingdom, we miss the priestly calling which is ours, for every one of us has been designed to function as priests unto our God.

What a Priest Does

What does a priest do? In the Old Testament the priests offered thousands of bulls, lambs, and doves as sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem. But there was a change in the priesthood after Jesus came. I believe that if we can understand what that change was, it will transform our lives.

The first change was in the nature of God's house. A priest always serves in the house of God. In Old Testament times, that house was the physical tem-

ple. But now God's house is His people—it is a spiritual house where the Holy Spirit dwells. Because a priest wants to be in the house of God, he loves to get with other priests and worship, because that is when he functions best. We can function alone, but whenever we can get together our priestly function is more complete.

Once I was getting ready to go hunting with some Christian friends, and my wife said: "I know what you're doing. You're not going out there to hunt. You just get out there in the woods and worship." It's really the truth. As a priest, I love nothing more than to get with some other priests and worship. It's a time when I can let my spirit go free.

The second change has to do with the presence of God. With the coming of Jesus the presence of God was no longer confined to the Holy of Holies. A priest loves the presence of God. Just like Moses, he isn't content simply to have an angel to lead him. Moses said to God, "If You don't go with us, don't send me any further. Don't let an angel lead me; I want to be led by the presence of God" (Ex. 33:15). If we lose the presence of God, we've lost everything.

A priest knows when he is in the Presence, and when he is not. He is aware that if God is there, everything will be all right; if God is not there, something is wrong. So when we see ourselves as priests, we start to seek the presence of God.

The Sacrifice of Our Lips

The third change that took place when Jesus came was the nature of the sacrifices which priests are to offer. In the book of Hosea, we read about the new sacrifices God desires:

Take words with you and return to the Lord. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity,

and receive us graciously, that we may present the fruit of our lips."

The sacrifices of the Old Testament were slaughtered animals. But the sacrifices of the New Testament, prophesied here by Hosea, are words. The prophet says to take *words* with you when you go into God's presence, and those words—properly offered to God—are like the sacrifice of a bull, a burnt offering.

The sacrifices God has been looking for all these years are honest words from a sincere people who know how to function as priests, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus, we can step into the Father's presence, and we're welcome there. Jesus suffered much to welcome us into His presence as priests.

The writer of Hebrews confirms what Hosea said. We find in Heb. 13:15:

Through Him [Jesus] then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

I don't believe that a sacrifice of praise is saying, "Hallelujah!" when you don't feel like it. A sacrifice is a decision of the will, accomplished with understanding, filled with meaning and content. As priests we should know how to offer these sacrifices in God's presence.



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.





Morning and Evening Sacrifices

I am always encouraged by the many opportunities that I have to see groups of people worshipping. I'm always encouraged to see people worshipping, but what I want to know is what they are doing *at home*. I want to know if their priesthood is functioning in their own families with what I call a "morning and evening sacrifice." I want to know if they are aware of the holy calling they have outside of the corporate worship service.

The "morning sacrifice" comes when we get out of bed in the morning. We step into God's presence and say, "Good morning, Lord—glory to God! It's good to be with You this morning." That's the morning sacrifice of praise. We don't have any goats to offer—we have words instead. When we offer the fruit of our lips this way every morning, our priesthood is functioning well.

There's another sacrifice that I would refer to as the evening sacrifice. What is that? That is when we give God the credit for what He has done in us.

When somebody gives us a compliment, what we usually reply is, "Oh, well, that's nothing. It's the Lord—I'm just God's humble servant." But we shouldn't do that. That's how we lose our "evening sacrifice." Instead we need to receive those compliments and gather them throughout the day.

For example, suppose someone comes up to me and says,

"Brother Bob, years ago you prayed for me and I was healed."

What I do is collect that victory, gather it with the others of the day, and take them with me in prayer that night to present to God as my evening sacrifice.

Perhaps my boss comes to me and says, "Bob, you're the best man in the department. If I ever had a man that was good, you're the man." So I say, "I'll take that—thank you very much!"

When it's time for the evening sacrifice, I say, "Lord, you've been so good to me. You've worked your kingdom in my life, and today someone told me he was healed when I prayed for him. My boss came to me and said I was the best guy in the department. Now Lord, I want to offer these to you as my evening sacrifice. Thank You." But if I don't *receive* the compliments, I don't have anything to offer for the evening sacrifice.

People are watching us on the job to see how we respond to God and whether or not we're worshipers. Others will know whether or not we're worshipers by the fruit of our lives, and they will recognize it with a raise, a compliment, or some other kind of praise. David said, "Burnt of-

ferings you don't desire. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart" (Ps. 51:16-17). The condition of our hearts and spirits will be evident to those around us, and when we receive their praise for the fruit of our lives, we can give it back to God. We must be careful how we handle the victories, the triumphs, and the compliments that come to us. We need to collect them for our evening sacrifice.

Priests and Prophets

In addition to our personal priesthood, the priestly ministry is an important part of community life, just as the prophetic ministry is. The prophet can really "put it to you." For example, when a man is having trouble with his wife, the prophet says, "What's the matter with you? Why didn't you do your duty?" That kind of ministry is valid, and necessary. God knows we need it at times. But the priest sees the matter in a different light. He wants to bring the man with problems into the Holy of Holies. He wants to teach him, to feed him the showbread—that is, he wants to lead him to Christ and feed him the good things of God. The priest wants to teach him how to burn incense—how to worship.

The priestly ministry doesn't point a finger as the prophetic does. Instead the priest picks up a man, puts him on his shoulders, and bears him along through intercession. He "lights the candle" and begins to minister to him the whole priestly life.

A Functioning Priesthood

What happens when we function as spiritual priests? The first result is that it can get us out of ourselves into God. Our tendency is to look inward and become preoccupied with our feelings and shortcomings. But if we start functioning as priests, it pulls us out of that unhealthy kind of introspection and into God instead,



because the priest turns toward God in worship. When I drive alone, for example, I could spend that time thinking about myself; but instead I take that time to worship. If we don't turn toward God in such times alone, it's amazing how caught up we can get with those three "demons" me, myself, and I.

The second result of functioning as spiritual priests is that it purifies our worship. How many of us have trouble with wandering minds during worship? Everyone else in a meeting may be worshipping, and we're thinking, "I need to have the tires rotated" or "I left the clothes in the dryer." But when we start offering the morning and evening sacrifices at home, we learn how to focus our minds in worship through practice. Then, when we come together with the people of God, it's one more place to continue the worship we've been offering up every day on our own.

The third result of functioning as spiritual priests is that it provokes God's response. That's the most important result of all. When we offer to God a proper

sacrifice, the "fire falls" on our sacrifice.

Once I was stopped at a traffic light, worshipping the Lord, but I had a strange sense that someone was watching me. I looked out the window and sure enough there was a state trooper sitting beside me, watching me worship and enjoy the Lord. I waved to let him know I wasn't insane or drunk, but he followed me for about three blocks to find out if I was competent to drive. Though perhaps I should have used a little more wisdom, I can only say that the fire had fallen, and the Lord had filled that car with His presence. That's the reward of a person who learns to function in the priesthood.

The Reason for Our Priesthood

Paul writes in Romans 15:16:

Grace was given to me from God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, ministering as a priest the gospel of God, that my offering of the Gentiles might become acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in Christ

Jesus I have found reason for boasting in things pertaining to God.

How did Paul view evangelism? He understood himself as a priest functioning to win the Gentiles to God. He offered them to God as a sacrifice. And notice that he didn't mind boasting about his labors, because he collected the results, in order to offer them to God in his evening sacrifice.

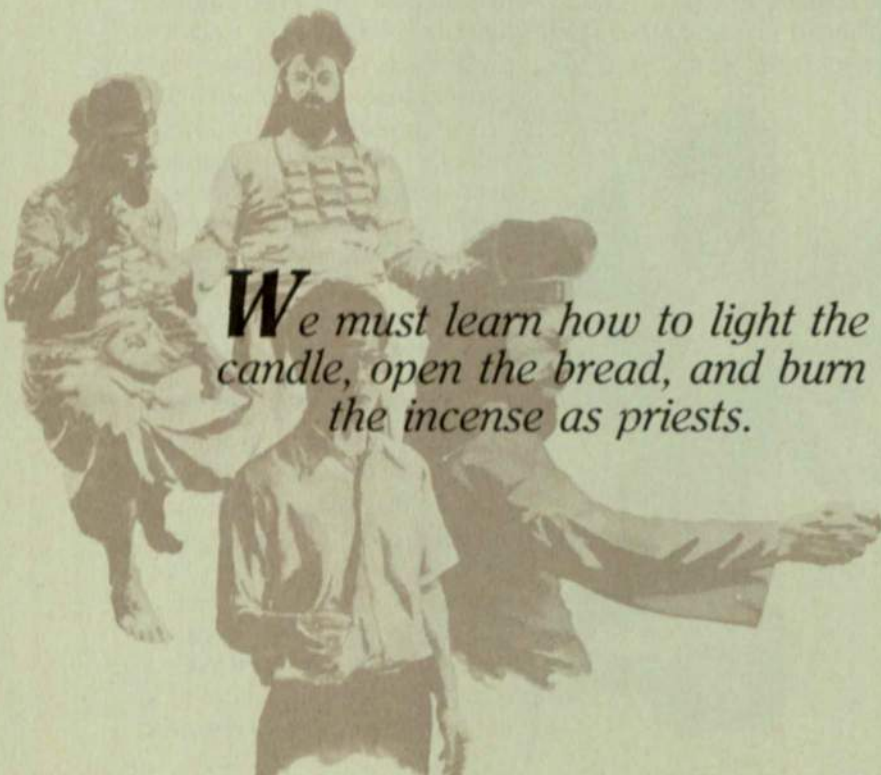
This passage has been an important part of my life for many years. I've not understood it fully, but I *do* understand something of what God wants. Wherever I teach, God wants me to say, "Lord God, as I minister today, I pray that it shall be a sacrifice to you—that through this message you would reach out to others and lay hold of them, so that they could be offered to you, made acceptable by the Holy Spirit."

Bold Priests

I pray that this word about our priesthood will work in all of us. I pray that a confidence will come upon all who are timid, that a boldness will come upon each of us, so that we can enter into the Lord's presence with boldness, being made acceptable through Jesus Christ our Lord.

As we enter His presence boldly, we must ask God to teach us how to offer up the morning sacrifices, and how to collect throughout the day the evening sacrifices, so that we might offer them to Him. Out of those sacrifices I pray that the Lord will show us how to reign in this present life, how to use the gifts of the Spirit as priests, and how to find a way for God's purposes to be made real to us as a people.

We must learn how to light the candle, to open the bread, and to burn the incense as priests. And as we do, I believe God will teach us what it means to be a holy nation, to be a spiritual house, and to function as spiritual priests. □



We must learn how to light the candle, open the bread, and burn the incense as priests.

Home Spun

A Miracle—Right Before My Eyes!

by Jean Louise Adams

I believe in God's supernatural power, but I have always longed to see a miracle, right before my eyes! I mean, something really spectacular, like a paralytic rising up and walking, or a blind person instantly receiving his sight. Not that I don't believe that God does these things regularly; it's just that I had never been in the right place at the right time to see it for myself.

This past spring our daughter, Patti, and son-in-law, Paul, invited me to be present at the birth of their second child. I must admit, I wasn't sure that I could bear to watch my daughter go through all the pain and discomfort I knew was involved in the birth of her baby. (After all, I'd had five of my own.) But I agreed to be with them, figuring that I could always leave the room if it got to be too much for me.

They had attended Lamaze classes to prepare them when their first baby had been born, and had taken a refresher course for this one. *They* were ready for what was about to happen; but I wasn't. So when the time came for me to be with them, I found myself hovering at the head of the bed, mainly trying to stay out of the way of the nurses who were preparing the birthing room for the delivery.

Through the hours of early labor, Patti and Paul became one in a team effort. Now in the last stages, they were intent on the job at hand and oblivious to

anything else: he, timing contractions and giving encouragement; she, puffing and panting, resting a few seconds, only to begin the process again with each contraction. Observing the whole scene, I thought all that activity ought to be enough to wear a person out long before the delivery. But they kept at it, in unbroken concentration.

When the doctor came in, he quickly took stock of the situation, his eyes twinkling as though this was his first experience in delivering a baby. From across the room he said to me, "You can't see anything from there, now, can you?" And he positioned me right behind him at his shoulder.

In a moment, I saw our grandson make his entrance into this world. The emotion that flooded over me was like nothing I'd ever experienced before. As I watched him take his first breath, open his eyes, look around, and begin to suck his fist, the Lord said to me, "See? A miracle, right before your eyes!"

God knows our desires and is certainly able to satisfy them, but the amazing thing is, sometimes He doesn't meet them in the way we expect. As I welled up with gratitude to God and to Patti and Paul for unselfishly allowing me to share in such an intimate experience, I knew that, even if I never see a blind man healed, my desire to see a miracle "right before my eyes" has been fulfilled. □

Jean Louise Adams is a New Wine reader who resides in Mobile, Alabama with her husband, Michael, a pastor in Gulf Coast Covenant Church.



Prayer: the Training Ground for Our Future

an interview with noted author,
Paul Billheimer

*There are some perspectives that come only with long life and experience. **Paul E. Billheimer** has ministered for Christ for more than sixty years. His writings, including the bestseller, *Destined for the Throne*, have provided the Church with a unique vision of its purpose. In this interview he speaks of our priestly ministry and its bearing upon the unity of the body of Christ.*

New Wine: *What do you believe is our most important responsibility as Christians?*

Paul Billheimer: I consider that praying is the most important thing anybody can do for God.

Since He has called Christians to be a "royal priesthood," prayer is our highest function. The priest is the highest ranking individual in the hierarchy of the universe except God, because the priest represents the human race to God, and the way that he does this is through prayer.

I see prayer as God's way of giving the Church "on-the-job training," in overcoming, and in preparation for worship in the ages to come. I consider prayer as an apprenticeship for eternal sovereignty.

NW: *In exercising our priestly ministry through*

*Photos: Faith
Blatchford.*

prayer, what areas of concern should we give the highest priority?

PB: I take the position that the one thing that is preventing the Lord's return is the brokenness of His body, the Church. Unity in the body of Christ is one area of intercession and prayer where I would counsel Christians to focus their energy. The reason for this is that the divided nature of the Body is the result of satanic operation and demonic spiritual power. The only thing that overrides it is the prayer of God's people. Ezekiel 22 tells us that God is looking for "a man to stand in the gap" (v. 30), not an angel, for angels have never been given this authority.

NW: *What happens when God's people fail to make praying for unity a priority?*

PB: From my perspective, to fail to recognize, understand, appreciate, and preserve the unity of the body of Christ on earth is the equivalent of re-opening the wounds of the Savior on the cross. When I first realized this personally, it broke me.

In 1 Corinthians 11, Paul says that anyone who shares in the Lord's Supper without recognizing or discerning the Lord's body, drinks judgment upon himself. I believe that Paul is not talking about the

Lord's own personal body, but the *corporate* Body. He is saying to the Corinthian church that they have failed to recognize that unity is absolutely essential to the corporate body of Christ. Just as the wounding of Christ's fleshly body on the cross brought Him pain, so does the wounding of His corporate body. Eating the bread and drinking the wine while perpetuating broken fellowship and not seeking first to bring healing and to restore unity in the Body will bring judgment upon the worshiper. This can result in sickness and sometimes even death, according to Paul.

NW: *What are some practical steps we can take toward bringing healing to Christ's body?*

PB: The first might be the recognition and acknowledgement of the enormity and heinousness of our sin of disunity. The next step is sincere repentance:

If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land (2 Chr. 7:14 NIV).

As I see it, the "wicked ways" from which God's people must repent do not consist primarily of impurity, vice, crime, or physical violence. Rather, they are our unloving attitudes toward one another, revealed by our critical judgment and broken fellowship. Those are the "wicked ways" which require repentance. More than anything else, this disunity is preventing real revival and the Lord's return.



The priestly function to which each of us is called involves both representing the Father's heart by *interceding* for Christ's corporate body, and *mediating*—doing all that we can, beginning with repentance, to bring about healing and reconciliation.

NW: *So, as we function in the priestly ministry of prayer, are we also being trained by God to rule with Him?*

PB: Yes, we are. I sense that God ordained the plan of prayer entirely for man's sake. As soon as a man is born again he enters apprenticeship for rulership in the ages to come.

In the past, many have thought that prayer influences God. I feel this is a mistake. Man does not influence God. God alone is sovereign. He initiates all prayer that is according to His will because prayer is "on-the-job training" for us to be future rulers.

According to His divine wisdom, God decides on a course of action in the world, which He has created and governs, and then seeks for a man upon whose heart He can lay a burden. If that doesn't sum up the priestly function—carrying God's burden—then I don't know what does.

God never answers a prayer which He has inspired until He finds a man to verbalize it, at least in his spirit. This is what I call exercising priesthood. Our words, our strong desires, our anxieties, and tears have no influence, no intrinsic power over Satan. But because our prayer is "on-the-job training," our words release God's Spirit into action—galvanizing heaven into operation. This is why God does nothing except by prayer. It is my view, therefore, that each one of us as priests needs to make prayer his primary business. □

Did You Know?

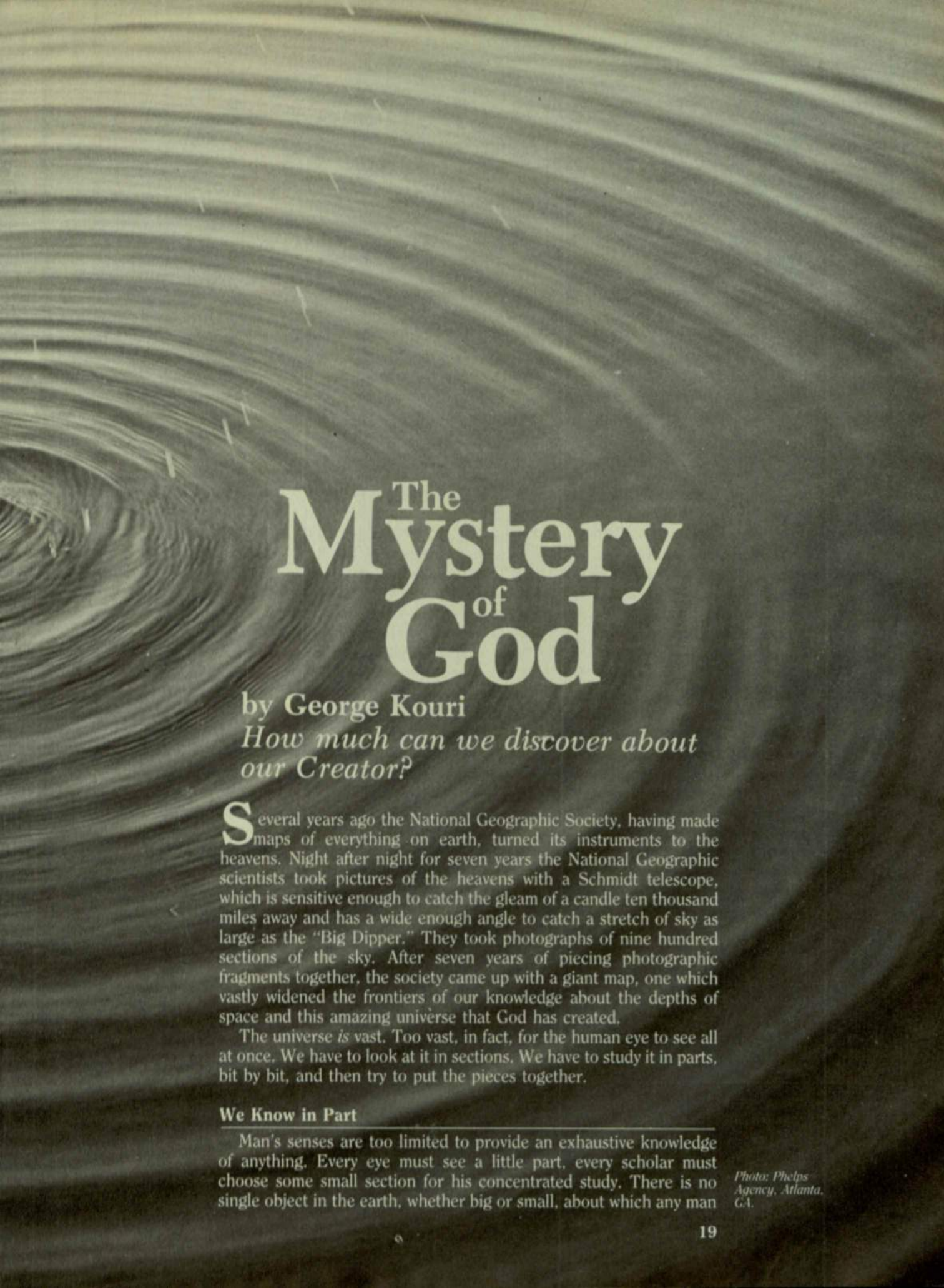
Did you know New Wine is looking for stories for "Homespun?" For the past year, one of our most popular features has been "Homespun," which presents everyday experiences that are both entertaining and inspirational (see page 13 of this issue).

Thus far, many of the articles for "Homespun" have been provided by regular writers of **New Wine**. These writers have shared accounts of everyday events made special by the presence of God. The insights contained in their stories have been very real, down-to-earth, and sometimes even humorous.

But God speaks to all of us through incidents at home, on the job, with our children, or wherever we may find ourselves. We believe you have probably had many experiences like the ones featured in "Homespun," and we would enjoy your sharing them with us.

If you would like to send us the story of an incident from your life for "Homespun," we'd like to see it. We can't guarantee its publication, but it's quite possible that what you have to share is just what we're looking for. Please limit your manuscript to one to two double-spaced typewritten pages, and send it to: "Homespun," P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616. We're waiting to hear from you, and we thought you'd like to know.





The Mystery of God

by George Kouri

*How much can we discover about
our Creator?*

Several years ago the National Geographic Society, having made maps of everything on earth, turned its instruments to the heavens. Night after night for seven years the National Geographic scientists took pictures of the heavens with a Schmidt telescope, which is sensitive enough to catch the gleam of a candle ten thousand miles away and has a wide enough angle to catch a stretch of sky as large as the "Big Dipper." They took photographs of nine hundred sections of the sky. After seven years of piecing photographic fragments together, the society came up with a giant map, one which vastly widened the frontiers of our knowledge about the depths of space and this amazing universe that God has created.

The universe *is* vast. Too vast, in fact, for the human eye to see all at once. We have to look at it in sections. We have to study it in parts, bit by bit, and then try to put the pieces together.

We Know in Part

Man's senses are too limited to provide an exhaustive knowledge of anything. Every eye must see a little part, every scholar must choose some small section for his concentrated study. There is no single object in the earth, whether big or small, about which any man

*Photo: Phelps
Agency, Atlanta,
Ga.*

can claim complete knowledge—either of its nature or of its relationship to the rest of nature. “We know in part. We prophesy in part. We see through a glass darkly” (1 Cor. 13:9, 12). *And if this is true of us with creation, how much more is it true of us with the Creator?*

In Exodus chapter 33 Moses asked to see God’s glory. Apparently he wanted to see God in all of his majesty and completeness. He wanted some visible manifestation of what had up to then only come to him as a voice. The answer came to Moses as it always must come when earth asks for heaven, or when man wants to know more than any man can know: “I will make all my goodness to pass before you, but you cannot see my face. For man cannot see me and live. I will put you in the cleft of the rock, I will cover you with my hand. I will make my glory to pass before you and you will see my back” (v. 19-23).

Majesty of the Mystery

That passage of scripture speaks to us of the mystery of God. First and foremost, we need to see the majesty of the mystery. Surely it should not surprise anyone to be told, as Moses was told, that no man could see God in all of His completeness. How can we know all of God when we don’t know all of anything else? How can we, with our limited, finite minds, hope to fully comprehend the infinite God? Because He is God and we are only men, we can never know all of God this side of glory.

H.G. Wells, in his book *The*

REMEMBER: FRIDAY, AUGUST 5, IS A NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND FASTING.

Soul of a Bishop, describes a conversation between a bishop and an angel, in which the bishop, hoping for exclusive revelation, assures the angel “You can tell me the truth!” The angel replies by cupping his hand over the bishop’s bald head, and holding it firmly, saying: “But could this hold it? Not this little box of brains. You haven’t things to hold it with inside *this*.”¹ Our little box of brains is not able to completely hold the truth of God.

Don’t you think God must smile at the glibness of little men who seem to think that the human mind is ultimate—that only what we can understand is real? Because men can’t understand His movement and activity in history, they think that God is not real. Because men can’t understand or explain the incarnation, or the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, or the resurrection of Christ, or the outpouring of His Spirit, they don’t think these things are real.

It’s like the little man, standing with a telescope in his hands, saying, “I have scanned the heavens and I find no God there.” A god who could be found in a piece of glass could not be God. Why bother with a god who’s no bigger than our grasp?

We Hear But a Whisper

What we know of God is only a whisper; “We know in part.” Many men speak glibly of the glories of human knowledge, but wise men know that what we hear is but a whisper. Isaac Newton, a brilliant scientist famous for discovering many of the laws of nature, including gravity, once said, “I am just a little child pick-

ing up pebbles on the seashore, surrounded by a vast sea of the unknown.” Even what science can reveal is but a whisper.

We’re living in a day in which mankind worships at the shrine of scientific technology. But it’s a great mistake to think that science has all the answers. In fact the opposite is true; the more we know, the farther back we push the frontiers of the unknown. Every blade of grass is an unsolved mystery of God. Every atom is an ocean into which, if you take three steps, you are lost.

For every question the scientist has answered, he has raised a dozen more. As he probes into space farther than mankind has ever gone before, to the far, dim edge of creation, he walks in the borderland between the seen and the unseen. Out there, where light grows old on its journey from star to star, he is finding a strange footprint on the shores of the unknown. He encounters the One who inhabits eternity; he discovers the majesty of the mystery of God.

The Mercy of the Mystery

As we discover more of the mystery of God, we also need to see the mercy of that mystery. God said to Moses, “For man shall not see Me and live.” The cleft of the rock reminds us that we are frail creatures living on a small, out of the way planet, enveloped in a delicate atmosphere. We can’t stand too much heat, or too much cold—if the body temperature goes up or down ten degrees, the light of life is snuffed out. Our frail senses must be protected.

continued on page 23.

¹H.G. Wells, *The Soul of a Bishop* (New York: Macmillan, 1917).



George Kouri received his education from Oklahoma Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the presiding pastor of South Coast Christian Fellowship in San Diego, California, where he resides with his wife, Sandra, and their five children.



Tips for Fathers

"Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of Heaven belongs to such as these" (Mt. 19:14 NIV).

Our children have a personal invitation to fellowship with God! Therefore, teaching them the importance of prayer is one of our chief responsibilities as fathers. Here are some suggestions to encourage the prayer life of our children:

1. *Revere the nature of God.* In our posture and praise we prepare our hearts to receive what the Father would say to us. We should take note of our children's posture in prayer. Does it show reverence and love for the Lord, or a lack of concentration on what they are doing?
2. *Rehearse the promises of God with confidence.* Our Bibles are the unchanging Word of God to us. We should teach our children early to pray, "Lord, it says in your Word. . . ."
3. *Remember the deeds of God with thanksgiving.* When we pray, we can recount the ways the Lord has blessed us as a family. God loves to bless a thankful people.

As heirs to God's kingdom, our children can learn at an early age the joy and security that is theirs when they share their hearts with the Father in Heaven.

"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.

*Photo: Phelps
Agency, Atlanta,
GA.*

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 the Holy Spirit, the Spirit's work in godly men and women, and the work of the Spirit in the believer's life. We encourage our readers to use this feature daily, both for personal scripture study and family reading.

THE WORD

I believe in the Holy Spirit, whose presence in the life of each believer produces the fruit of righteous behavior.

I. The Fruit of Righteousness: An Overview

- | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------|
| A. Fruit in season..... | Ps. 1..... | Aug. 1 |
| B. The planting of the Lord..... | Is. 61..... | Aug. 2 |
| C. Fleshly works and spiritual fruit..... | Gal. 5:16-26..... | Aug. 3 |
| D. Fruit of the light..... | Eph. 5:1-21..... | Aug. 4 |

II. The Fruit of the Spirit: A Closer Look

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|---------|
| A. Love | | |
| 1. The greatest thing..... | 1 Cor. 13..... | Aug. 5 |
| 2. Evidence of new birth..... | 1 Jn. 3:11-24..... | Aug. 6 |
| 3. Fulfillment of the Law..... | Lk. 10:25-37..... | Aug. 7 |
| B. Joy | | |
| 1. Manifested in the redeemed..... | Is. 35:1-10..... | Aug. 8 |
| 2. Produced by salvation..... | Lk. 15:1-32..... | Aug. 9 |
| 3. Persecuted but unperturbed..... | Mt. 5:10-16..... | Aug. 10 |
| C. Peace | | |
| 1. Provided by God..... | Ps. 85:1-13..... | Aug. 11 |
| 2. Preached by Jesus..... | Eph. 2:11-22..... | Aug. 12 |
| 3. Pursued by the saints..... | Heb. 12:14-29; 13:20-21..... | Aug. 13 |
| D. Patience | | |
| 1. Slow to anger..... | Ps. 103..... | Aug. 14 |
| 2. Quick to forgive..... | Mt. 18:23-35..... | Aug. 15 |
| 3. Persevering under trial..... | Jas. 1:1-20..... | Aug. 16 |
| E. Kindness | | |
| 1. Rewarded by God..... | Mt. 25:31-40..... | Aug. 17 |
| 2. Required for servants..... | 2 Cor. 6:1-13..... | Aug. 18 |
| 3. Jesus the example..... | Ti. 3:1-8..... | Aug. 19 |
| F. Goodness | | |
| 1. Received from God..... | Ps. 27..... | Aug. 20 |
| 2. Repaid to one another..... | Phile. 1-25..... | Aug. 21 |
| 3. Sown and reaped abundantly..... | 2 Cor. 9:1-15..... | Aug. 22 |
| G. Faithfulness | | |
| 1. A faithful Word..... | Is. 25:1-12..... | Aug. 23 |
| 2. A faithful God..... | Lam. 3:19-37..... | Aug. 24 |
| 3. A faithful steward..... | Lk. 16:10-13..... | Aug. 25 |
| H. Gentleness | | |
| 1. Strengthening..... | Ps. 18:25-31..... | Aug. 26 |
| 2. Restoring..... | Gal. 6:1-10..... | Aug. 27 |
| 3. Enlightening..... | Jas. 3:13-18..... | Aug. 28 |
| I. Self-Control | | |
| 1. Required to lead..... | Ti. 1:1-19..... | Aug. 29 |
| 2. Required to run the race..... | 1 Cor. 9:23-27..... | Aug. 30 |
| 3. Required to know God..... | 1 Pet. 1:1-11..... | Aug. 31 |

continued from page 20.

So when people ask, as they often do, "Why doesn't God come with clearer light? Why doesn't He remove the veil of mystery and write His revelation so clearly across the world that no man could possibly disbelieve?" we have to answer their questions with another: Can human beings bear the full light of the living God?

He has mercifully clothed Himself in mystery to protect us from the light of His full glory. So when man's heart yearned for God, and God revealed Himself to men, He laid aside His glory, the Scriptures say. He emptied Himself, Paul said in Philippians, and in the incarnation took on human flesh. He became a man among men that He might speak to the race of Adam and reveal His grace and His glory. In the incarnation we see the glory of God hidden in the mercy of the mystery.

The Magnetism of Mystery

In God's mystery there is also a magnetism which draws men to Him. Moses said to God, "Show me thy glory." Moses was drawn by the mystery of God. The

charm and adventure of life is in its mystery. Dr. Albert Einstein once made the comment that the most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious—the sense of wonder in the presence of something partly known and partly hidden. The man to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer be filled with awe and wonder, might as well be dead. God draws us by His mystery. It's by the magnetism of the mystery of His grace that lost men are drawn to God. The greatest mystery of all is that God can love sinners like us. Who can understand that? Who can explain it? And who can resist its attraction and its lure? We are drawn by the magnetism of the mystery.

Maintaining the Mystery

As Christians, it is vital that we not lose our sense of wonder and appreciation of the mysteries of God. We must be aware, however, that there are two dangerous tendencies that we must avoid. The first is the tendency to become overly familiar with God. Because we experience His presence so freely, and regularly witness demonstrations of the supernatural, or the miraculous

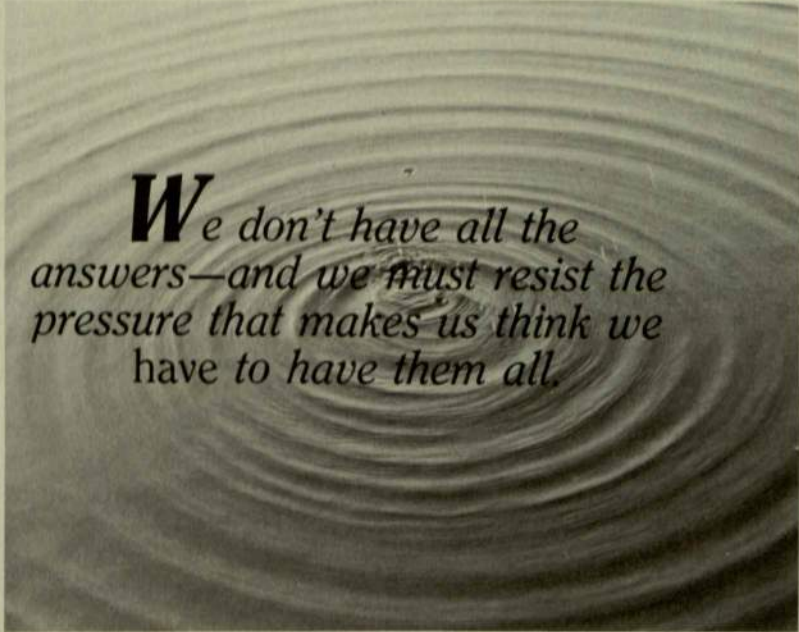
gifts of the Spirit, we tend to take them and Him for granted. Over-familiarity is a great danger, for when we think we know all about Him, we've actually lost Him.

The other problem we face in our day is the tendency toward secularization in our society and our culture. You and I are living in the era that philosophers and historians call the "post-Christian era." Supposedly we have come into the age of reason. We're living in an age when the Scriptures have been "de-mythologized"—when the record of God's miraculous acts throughout history has been rationalized and explained away. The general attitude of the society around us has, through secularization, become biased against the supernatural things of God and anything mysterious or spiritual. This, too, is a very dangerous tendency we must avoid.

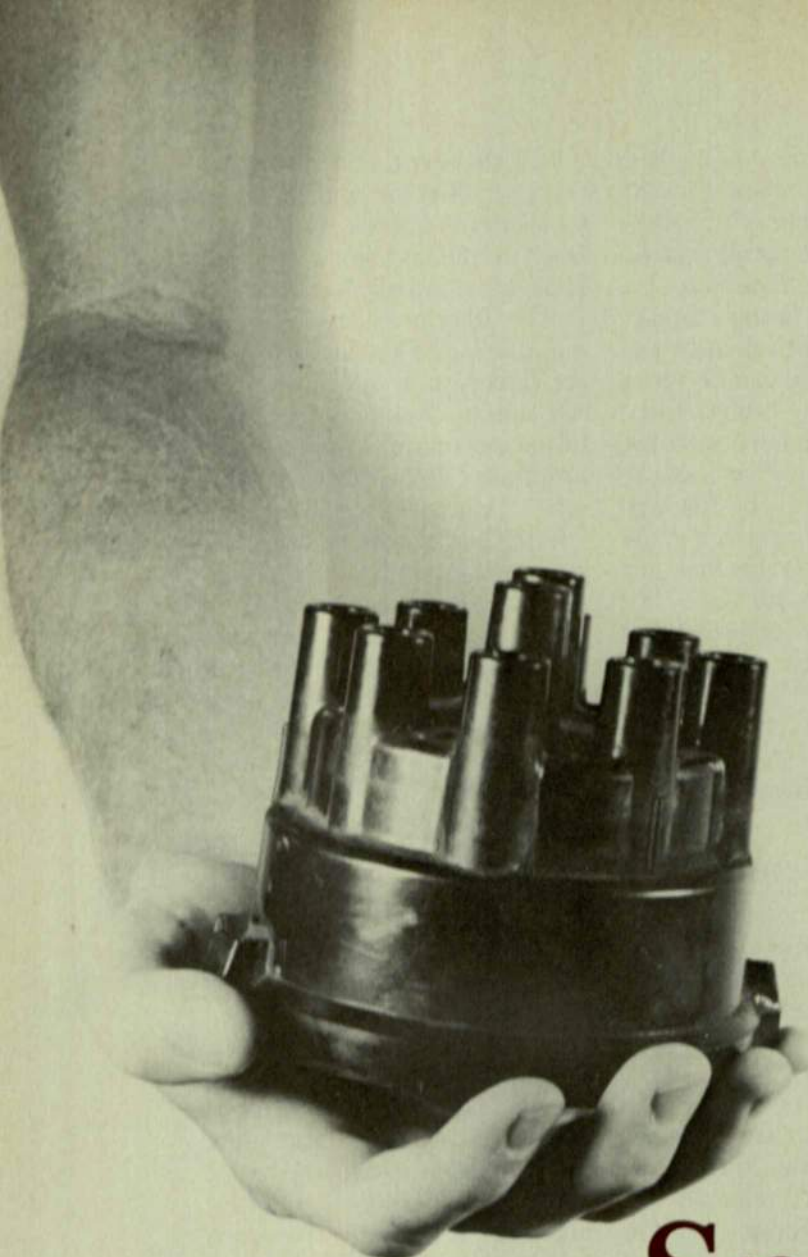
In resisting these tendencies, our resolve must be to never become complacent in our experience and our knowledge of God. We must never become secularized, letting the world press us into its mold. We must also resist the temptation to become overly familiar with God. We cannot reduce God to a formula. He is not a system or a method that we can figure out once and for all.

There are many things about God that we don't know—many things that God yet wants to reveal to us. We don't have all the answers—and we must resist the pressure that makes us think we *have* to have them all. We can't explain it all, because we're dealing with the mystery of God Himself.

There is much of the mystery we have yet to discover. There is always room for growth. We always can know God better. We must continually struggle to know God experientially. We must press on to enter into His kingdom, seeking to know more and more of the mystery of God. □



We don't have all the answers—and we must resist the pressure that makes us think we have to have them all.



The Lord Will Provide—Even Spare Parts

by Don Basham

“What a fix! Car broken down, miles from the nearest town, and only four dollars between us. . . .”

My first regular student pastorate was in Burkburnett, Texas, which was a *weary* 210 miles from school. Another student preaching in a nearby town rode with me. Leaving for Burkburnett after Friday classes were over, I would drop Charles off at Lawton, Oklahoma, and pick him up on the return trip Sunday night.

Looking back, I marvel at the divine protection extended to the 140 young ministers like ourselves who drove thousands of miles in all kinds of weather at all hours of the

trip Sunday night was something else. After a long weekend, which included pastoral visitation, teaching Sunday School, and preaching both morning and evening services, we would crawl into the car and head back for Enid, bone-tired even before the trip began. Fighting weariness and staving off the treacherous fingers of sleep, which constantly tugged at our eyelids, we would arrive back in Enid in the infant hours of the morning to snatch a few hours' sleep before meeting a 9:00 a.m. class.

Charles and I resorted to all kinds of measures in our battle to stay awake. We would rehash our sermons, sing hymns, stop for coffee and cokes, slap one another on the back, lean out the window and shout at the wind, and then start the whole cycle over again. When nothing worked, we would finally give in, pull off the road and sleep, but this meant arriving in Enid stiff-necked and late for class.

The most treacherous thing about those midnight rides, we discovered, was the danger of going to sleep with your eyes open. Many a time I sat up with a start after dozing open-eyed for several seconds while the car drifted until two wheels were off the pavement. We found ourselves praying there would be oncoming traffic to break the hypnotic effect of miles of straight, empty highway. There were times when we slowed down or swerved to miss obstacles which weren't really there.

Waiting for the Train

One Monday a student came to class claiming he had actually seen three camels crossing the highway the night before. We couldn't resist asking him if they had been carrying the three wise men. Two other young ministers were returning across the empty miles of Oklahoma's western plains late one Sunday night, taking turns at the wheel. All at once

the student asleep in back awoke, realizing the car had stopped. He sat up and looked around only to discover they were miles from anywhere. No town, no traffic, no highway intersection, no stop light, nothing. His partner was sitting behind the wheel staring down the empty highway. The engine was idling.

"Why 'dja stop?" came the sleepy question. Still staring straight ahead, the driver replied slowly, "I'm waiting for the train to pass." Wide-awake and goggle-eyed, the other student heaved himself into the front seat. "Move over and let me drive! You need sleep!"

Friday Afternoon Miracle

Like most student ministers, we lived on next-to-nothing plus a little faith. Each weekend saw Charles and me with just enough cash to get by until we received our pay from our churches on Sunday night. Our combined financial resources on one particular Friday afternoon totaled slightly over four dollars. I remember it well, for there hadn't been many Friday afternoons when I witnessed a miracle.

Charles and I often engaged in vigorous theological discussions while traveling together. A brilliant and dedicated student, Charles tended to view with tolerant skepticism my more simple approach to the Christian faith and my firm belief in the power of prayer and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In spite of our differences, however, we were good friends.

*Reprinted from
Face up With a
Miracle by Don
Basham.
Copyright
©1967 by Voice
Christian
Publications,
Inc.*



day and night to render our Christian service. Guardian angels, whom the Lord must surely have appointed to keep watch over the traveling flock of preachers, worked overtime, for I do not recall a single student minister being involved in a serious automobile accident during my years on campus.

Struggling to Stay Awake

Our Friday afternoon trips to the church were usually pleasant and uneventful, but that return

Don Basham holds B.A. and B.D. degrees from Phillips University and its graduate seminary in Enid, Oklahoma, and is an ordained minister of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Don is Chief Editorial Consultant for *New Wine Magazine* and the author of several books, including *Face Up With A Miracle* and *Deliver Us From Evil*. Don resides in Mobile, Alabama, with his wife, Alice, and their family.

Our route led down U.S. Highway 81—at that time a major traffic artery between Wichita, Kansas, and Dallas, Texas. About two hours out of Enid the old engine of the 1948 Chevrolet I was driving suddenly quit without so much as a gasp. We rolled to the side of the highway and stopped. A brief look under the hood showed something drastically wrong with the distributor; it was cocked at a crazy angle and the cap had been knocked loose. There we stood, two dejected, nearly broke, would-be ministers of the gospel, miles from the nearest town, gloomily reciting to each other various plans of action, any one of which would cost money—lots of money!

I could catch a ride to the nearest town and wire a relative for funds to hire a tow truck to come and pick up the car. But even thinking of the cost of such a maneuver made me wince. Or, we could leave the car and hitchhike to our churches. I could plead my case before the church treasurer and ask for an advance on my salary, then return for the car. But again I shuddered to contemplate the cost, and who

knew what vandalism the car might suffer left untended beside the busy highway.

A Fine Fix

I leaned against the fender and gazed morosely at the steady stream of traffic flowing past. Almost without realizing it, I found myself pouring out our predicament in silent prayer to God. Knowing how Charles felt, I didn't have the nerve to ask him to pray with me. "We're in a fine fix, Lord," I prayed. "If there was ever a time we could use a little help from You, it's now!" I recalled old Jehoshaphat's lament to the Lord, "We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon Thee" (2 Chr. 20:12).

That was us, all right. *Helpless!* As the sun set and it began to grow dark my concern increased. Alice had stayed at the parsonage during the week and would soon be expecting me. I sighed and kicked one of the tires with my toe. "Darned old wreck!" There's nothing more useless than an automobile you know won't run.

A half hour of helpless waiting had passed when a car pulled out of the line of traffic and stopped.

It was a young couple with a baby between them on the front seat. The driver poked his head out of the window.

"Got troubles?"

"Our distributor's haywire," I remarked glumly.

"Mind if I take a look?"

"Don't think it'll do any good. We need a new distributor."

"Let me take a look anyway. You got a flashlight or any tools?"

"No."

"Well, never mind. I got a trunk full of tools and we'll use my flashlight." Then, as I held the light, with a few deft turns of a wrench he removed the distributor. It was easy to see he was an automobile mechanic. Hefting the troublesome part in his hand he confirmed our suspicion.

"You're right. It's shot. Shaft's froze up solid. You'll need another distributor."

I thanked him for his trouble and suggested the best thing might be for us to catch a ride with him to the next town and send back for the car. I hated to admit our precarious financial status.

"Maybe you could swap this

the lighter side

by Mark Pie



distributor for another one and save a little money," he ventured, ignoring my suggestion. With a shrug I then admitted our predicament. "We only have about four dollars between us. That won't buy much of a distributor."

Still toying with the part in his hands he said, "Maybe I can get you another distributor for free."

"For free?" we chorused. A slight shiver tingled up my spine and some inner witness signaled the Holy Spirit was at work. I waited expectantly to see what would happen next.

"Hop in the car," the mechanic said. "We just need to go down the road a ways to get it." Without another word, we crawled in the back seat of his car. I was surprised when he turned the car around and headed down the highway in the opposite direction. After a few miles we turned onto a dirt road and soon pulled up next to a farm house.

"Didn't Change 'Em a Bit!"

"My in-laws live here," our benefactor explained, and turning to his wife he said, "Honey, take the baby on into the house and send your brother out here to help me." As his wife entered the house he swung the car around. The headlights probed through the farmyard past various pieces of worn-out machinery to reveal the rusting remains of an old 1942 Chevrolet, minus wheels and one door. We followed him over to the metal ruin and watched as he shone the flashlight on the remains of the engine. With a grunt of satisfaction he bent over and quickly removed the distributor, then holding it up to the light, compared it with the one taken from our car.

"I thought so. They didn't change 'em a bit. This old '42's the same as your '48." He handed the distributor to his young brother-in-law. "Here, Jimmy, put a little gasoline in a bucket and wash this thing off."

Minutes later we were back in his car returning to the highway. "Sorry to put you to all this trouble," I began to apologize.

"S'all right," he replied. "You see, I work in a garage over in Oklahoma City and the wife and me, we were just on the way to her folks' house for the weekend. I saw you standing by your car and wanted to stop, but my wife, she says, 'Oh, let's don't! You don't know what kind of men they are.' She thought you might be crooks or something. So we drove on. But somehow it kept nagging at me that we shoulda stopped. Finally, as we turned off to go to her pa's place, I said, 'Honey, I think we shoulda helped those men.' Well, you coulda knocked me over with a feather when she says, 'All right. If you feel that way about it, *then turn around and go back.*' So I did."

We arrived back at our car and in a few minutes he installed the distributor, adjusted the timing, and gave me the nod. "Try her now." I stepped on the starter and the old car roared into life. Resisting our efforts to give him our last four dollars, he said, "Nossir! Can't take money for helping out folks who need it. If things'd been reversed you'da done the same for me." Then he was gone.

Long Arm of Coincidence?

I sat gratefully behind the

wheel for a moment until Charles spoke impatiently. "Let's get going. What are you waiting for?"

"I was just thanking God for getting us out of that mess."

Charles laughed. "Oh, come on now, how can you be sure it was God? Me, I'm just thankful the world has a few good men left in it, like that one."

"You mean you don't think it was the Lord's doing?"

Charles remained dubious, so I recounted the amazing list of things that had happened. Of the hundreds of cars which passed us on the highway, only one stopped, and that one carried a mechanic who not only had the knowledge, but the flashlight, the tools, the willingness to help, plus a father-in-law with a farmyard only a few miles away where the rusty carcass of a twelve-year-old car contained the very part we needed.

"It could have been just the long arm of coincidence," Charles insisted doubtfully. The list had shaken him a bit.

"Maybe so," I said. "But tell me this one last thing. After they had already passed us by and had traveled three miles down the road, *Who* made the wife change her mind and tell her husband to turn around and come back to help us?"

Charles grinned sheepishly and said nothing. But he knew well enough *Who*.

And so did I. □

Just Around the Corner How to Keep in Touch With God

What do you say to a God who knows everything?
What do we do when we find ourselves grumbling against God?

And what does He do when He hears it?

"How did the New Wine Events go?"—a special report.

All Next Month in the September *New Wine*.



Teaching Our Children to Lean on God

by Howard Carter

Do our kids have their own relationship with God?

As a boy of eight I woke one Christmas morning to find I had been given a fine wooden boat to sail. My cousin, whose family was sharing our family's holiday, was given a miniature yacht similar to mine. It was Sunday, and with the family preparing to attend church services, there was little time to sail the boats even though the beach was only a hundred yards away.

"All right, but just for twenty minutes," our parents responded to our pleas. The two of us were off, dressed and ready for church, to sail our boats at the water's edge.

How it happened—we couldn't explain. All we knew was that suddenly the boats had drifted out of reach as they bobbed up and down on the waves. Because we were dressed for church, we were reluctant to go in the water after them. The longer we stood in indecision, the further the

boats drifted into deep water, and soon the very depth of the water where they had drifted finalized the decision for us.

We sat, brokenhearted, through the morning services. When we arrived home my mother said, "If you have lost your boats, why don't you pray and ask Jesus to bring them back to you." In simplicity, we did so. I don't know whether Mother realized what she had committed the Lord to do, but we prayed as she had suggested.

Halfway through lunch that noon, there was a knock on the door. A man in a swimsuit stood at the door holding two boats in his hands—a little wooden launch and a small yacht.

This man had been recovering for some weeks from a major operation, and that morning had stood at his beachfront window contemplating a brief swim. He caught sight of two boats and felt a strong prompting to swim out to them. He had spent the rest of

the morning looking for a house with disappointed children, and here we were, and here were our two boats!

The impact on an eight-year-old boy was never lost: *God really does answer prayer!*

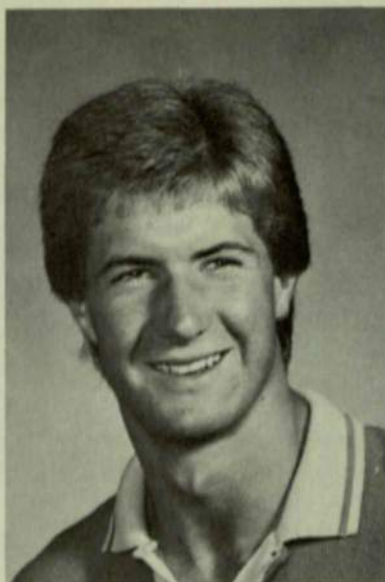
It has long been my desire for my family to walk in the same understanding of the reality of God. A regular Bible time with the family doesn't guarantee an understanding of the relevancy of God. God is real when He's involved in everyday life and when His Word becomes the guide for us.

I asked my children to describe how God has been real to them in the context of our home. Here are some of their testimonies:

Photo: H. Armstrong Roberts, Philadelphia, PA.



Howard Carter graduated from the Bible College of New Zealand, the New Zealand Baptist Theological College, and the Melbourne College of Divinity. He is the Director of the Logos Foundation and the Editor of *Restore Magazine*. He resides in Vancouver, Canada, with his wife, Jean, and their family.



Morrison, 21: My first memory of the reality of God is of a Family Camp when I was five years old. My parents had spoken to me of my need to give my life to Christ and I recall being left on my own, sitting on my bed, and looking out a rain-splattered window. I had been told that if I prayed, "it" would happen. I prayed and "it" did!

I grew up in an atmosphere that constantly involved God. I remember telling the teacher at school after arriving in Australia from New Zealand that the reason we came to Australia was that God told us to. I wondered, at the time, why she didn't seem to understand.

As I grew older, my parents began to steer me from my natural independent tendencies toward a dependence on God. They taught me to rely on God as a constant source of guidance who "checked" decisions; an absolute to whom I could always turn, not having to rely on those around me and thus often be in a state of indecision.

I remember one particular decision—a choice between remaining in elementary school another year (I was a year ahead in my studies) or going on to high school, where everyone in my grade would be a year older than

me and somewhat bigger. Dad and Mum turned me towards God, assuring me that it was time for me to start learning how to make decisions. There I was, eleven years old, making a decision that would affect the course of my life.

The "pros" and "cons" seemed infinite. But as I sought God, I found what I felt was a scripture from Him and, after talking to Dad and Mum, went on to high school. Although I experienced some of the expected disadvantages, the negative effects were nullified in the long run. And the scripture God gave me became the key to this happening. In fact, the good results, which we could hardly have imagined, are even now still being discovered.

Looking back, that seemingly huge decision, one which would have been relatively minor for my parents to make, settled something in me. God used the pressure of the decision, not only to direct me in the best way, but also to provide a valuable experience for me. As a result of this key time, I have since seen God's guidance and experienced the peace that comes from being in God's will in decisions ranging from choosing part-time jobs, university courses, and personal relationships to the proper use of my finances.

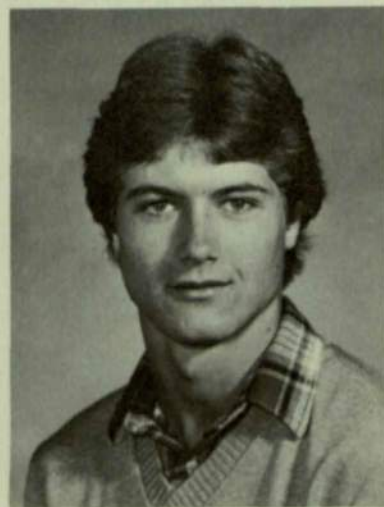
There is much for me to learn yet about finding God's will, but an early start and early experiences have given me a base to determine the ever-growing decisions that face me as I grow older. As I look back at what seemed a huge decision at age eleven—tiny compared with decisions facing me now, ten years later—I wonder what it would be like for me if I hadn't learned to turn to God.

Amanda, 16: The earliest memory I have of God answering my prayer was when I was about three-and-a-half years old. I had been playing with my mother's

expensive bracelet on the porch outside, and somehow I lost it. I can remember Mum and I searching for it. Then Mum told me to ask Jesus where it was. So, I listened to God, and He told me it had fallen between the slats of the porch. I said to Mum, "I know where it is!" and raced to look under the porch. Sure enough, there it was!

More recently, when I was thirteen, I had an operation on my face called a "cross-face nerve transplant." I had never had surgery of any kind before, so naturally I was scared. After I was admitted to the hospital, Mum went to get something from the store, and I started reading my Bible. The Lord gave me the scripture, "Perfect love casts out fear" (1 Jn. 4:18). From that time on, I wasn't even nervous about the surgery. Since then I have had two more operations which related to the first one, and each time God has given me the same scripture to rely upon. I have found that His Word works.

Vicki, 14: In 1975 our family traveled to New Zealand. We stayed in Christchurch and were going to go to the Southern Alps. But Dad and Mum had just come back from a ministry trip in the States and were very tired. We kids had been looking forward very much to going and seeing the snow in the Alps, but we knew Mum and



Photos: Above,
Morrison Carter;
Right, Craig
Carter.



Dad were exhausted so we said, "Let's just stay here." The next morning we woke up, and outside all over the ground, there was snow. God knew how much we wanted to see the snow and He knew how tired Dad and Mum were. So He brought the snow to us!

We've been living in Canada now for two and a half years. I've seen God change a lot of things. All the time I've been in Canada I've been telling myself that it's just temporary and that soon we would go back to Australia. But one Saturday Dad talked to the family about being willing to stay in Canada, which meant to give up wanting to go back to Australia. I found this very hard, but by being willing to give up what I wanted, God is making me happy to do what He wants.

Craig, 19: God became real to me when I was about five. I had some money—only a few cents—but it was all I had, and for some reason I felt I should put it in the offering at church. So I did, not knowing why, and soon after, a visitor came to our house and left two new housecoats as a gift for me—just "out of the blue." As my parents reminded this five-year-old that "him that honoureth Me, will I honour," I knew God was real.

I've had a continual testing in an area I really enjoy—Rugby-football. At times Dad had spo-

ken to me about keeping Sunday for God, yet several times through my life I have had opportunities to play on a number of teams. But because the tryouts or practices are on Sundays I have passed them over each time because I knew it wasn't right for me. At the time, it seemed hard to pass up these opportunities. And yet, I know God has blessed me in it by blessing me in the regular football which I play now.

Another experience of the reality of God occurred when I was about fourteen. My Boy Scout troop had planned a Sunday trip to the local Airforce base and I wasn't sure whether I should go or not. I went home and asked Mum and Dad. They said they wouldn't tell me what to do, but that I should find out what God wanted me to do. They did, however, give me the money to pay for the trip if I decided to go. So I prayed briefly about it and went to Scouts the next day. As the fellows were paying their money, I knew I shouldn't go. So I didn't, and on the way home that night I felt really happy and totally at rest about the whole thing because I had obeyed the Spirit. Mum and Dad were helping me to find guidance myself from the Spirit, instead of always relying on them.

Now, in our devotional times together as a family, which are relaxed and informal, God has

spoken to me from scriptures that have been applicable to situations I've been facing. My Dad and Mum have provided a secure place in which to grow and to learn to discover God and His goodness, and I have seen and appreciated their ability to hear God in situations they face.



A Lasting Way of Life

Moses exhorted the children of Israel to teach their sons diligently about the God whom they served, and to talk with them about Him "...when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up" (Dt. 6:7).

He saw, not just a single generation, but many generations serving and declaring the reality of the living God. Consequently, the Israelites have transmitted a culture that has lasted for more than two thousand years without, until recently, an external government.

Our ministry in the home today should involve us in teaching our way of life to our children with a view toward enabling them to do the same for their children. What I first learned at the hands of my parents, I need to pass on to my children. If we are faithful to transmit the reality of God to our children, and they to their children, we will produce a way of life that will last. □

Photos: Above left, Vicki and Amada Carter; Right, The Carter Family

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).

Items With ★ Below Are Featured This Month

Instructions: Fill out the form below and insert in the enclosed envelope, along with full payment—including postage and handling. All orders must include your account number as listed in the top right corner of your mailing label. No billing. No C.O.D. Make checks payable to *New Wine Magazine*. Any amount over your order will be accepted as a contribution.

NAME _____ (please print)

This offer expires September 30, 1983.

Account No. (see top right of your mailing label)

Bob Mumford's New Tape Series From Australia

QTY.	CAT. NO.	TITLE	N 308 NW	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
	M491	Alive and Free		\$ 4.95	
	M492	Promised Land . . .		\$ 4.95	
	M493	How Inheritance Affects . . .		\$ 4.95	
	M494	Things That Determine . . .		\$ 4.95	
	M495	Relational Maturity . . .		\$ 4.95	
	M496	Our Father's Inheritance		\$ 4.95	
	M497	Biblical Examples of . . .		\$ 4.95	
	M49P	Above 7 Tapes on Inheritance		\$29.95	
	WS72	The Unavoidable God		\$ 4.95	
	IBDNW82	1982 Issues With Binder		\$14.95	
★	WB105	I ALMOST DIED BY ERN BAXTER		\$ 5.95	
	CT48	Hope and Endurance		\$ 4.95	
	IFA101	Abortion Booklet		\$ 6.00/10	

Subtotal

Ala. residents: 4% sales tax

Postage & handling: 8% of total order (\$1.25 minimum charge)

Total for order

Total enclosed

Payments from our foreign readers must be by an International Money Order or a check drawn on a U.S. bank.

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Account #	Check #
	Amount
	Code
	Shipping
	Items

"I ALMOST DIED!"

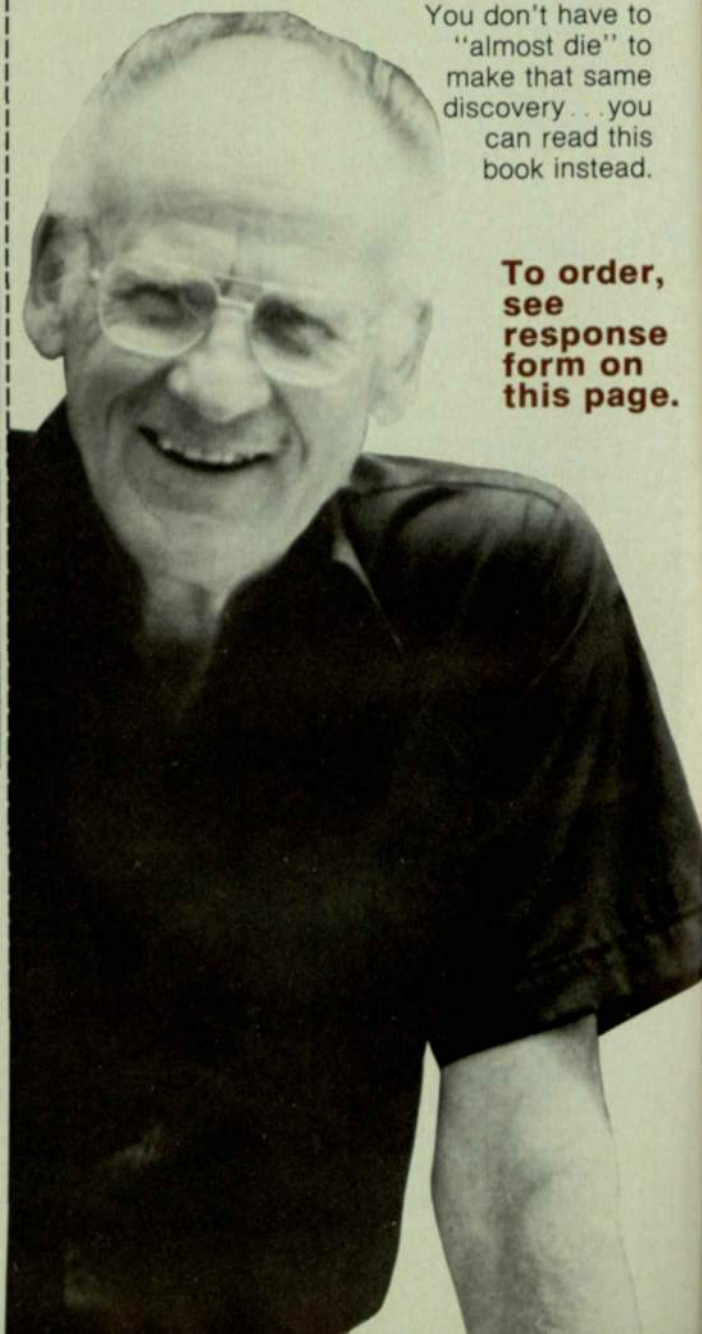
by **ERN BAXTER**

Very few people get a second chance at life. Ern Baxter is one who did. "I ALMOST DIED!" is the gripping account of his journey from tragedy to triumph.

Years of physical neglect had led Ern to a premature confrontation with death. But this book is more than the story of Ern's brush with death. It's a story of triumph—his discovery of the beauty of life in a healthy body.

You don't have to "almost die" to make that same discovery . . . you can read this book instead.

To order, see response form on this page.



Cut along this dotted line

New
FROM INTEGRITY HOUSE

DEAR NEW WINE

Hitting home

Because of a good friend, I have had the pleasure of becoming acquainted with your fine magazine.

From our very first issue, dealing with the use and priority of time (January '83), to the latest, regarding truth and integrity, the themes seem always to "hit home" with me. Your magazine obviously helps its readers to mature as Christians; more than that, it either answers questions or helps us recall answers to those questions that are of utmost importance in our lives (i.e., "Is Prayer a Burden?"). Thanks to your writers for such a quality not often found.

Irene Ross
Casper, WY

Silence

One thing that I have appreciated about the *New Wine* Magazine is that it is both practical and thoroughly based upon the Scriptures at the same time. Mr. Thigpen's article, "When God is Silent," was a particular blessing to me and those I was able to pass it on to. I translated the main points into Japanese and gave it as a message in one of our gatherings. The response was tremendous. Several came and told me that it opened up a new dimension in their walk with the Lord.

John Caldwell
Japan

Timing

I am amazed by the timing of *New Wine*. The issues the magazine deals with each month are always in tune with the issues I am tackling in my personal walk with the Lord. This month was a truly amazing example. God has been dealing with my own personal integrity as a minister of the Gospel; the need for a frank and open honesty before Him has become my focus. The article on a cure for self-deception helped immensely (even though it did a bit of convicting!). The next article I read, "Reconciled," also spoke to a need in my life, that of reconciling totally the relationship between my father and me. The final frosting on the cake came when I read "To the Point."

Thank you for your clarity, frankness, and honesty. It is so refreshing to see a magazine feeding its readers with the Word, not just in a dogmatic manner, but practically. I'm very thankful for the lessons I've learned and put into practice in my life. Today's Christian reader desires the "meaty" reading, the articles which will help them grow and deepen their relationship with the Lord.

Neil Ruda
Western Michigan Teen
Challenge
Muskegon, MI

"I had to get a grip. . ."

My husband and I have been receiving *New Wine* for about three years now. Before that time I had no idea that there was a magazine presenting such key, in-depth teaching as yours. You began to unfold mysteries, questions, and ideas as I began reading through the material month after month. And it never ceases to amaze me that each month holds the answers to problems I'm facing at the moment.

We also keep all the past issues for reference sake. Boy am I

glad! In January I was really going through a rough time with my emotions. The thought of suicide came up daily. I knew I had to get a grip on myself. I came across an article in the issue for May 1980, "Diagnosing Sin in Its Early Stages," and it really ministered to me. It helped me get back on my feet again, and I found the desire to carry on. Then came the March issue on Hope! Right then I needed a second push in the right direction.

I have to say thanks and sorry it took so long for me to write.

Name withheld

Reading and doing

The Lord has used *New Wine* in my life to help me come into a deeper experience of the power of the Holy Spirit. It has been an encourager when I felt tired and defeated and sitting on the sidelines. Thank you for having articles that not only let me be a reader of the Word but also a doer of the Word.

Theresa Wade
Mobile, AL

God is in control

"The Keys to Life and Death" by Ern Baxter in your April issue touched me.

I lost my father about a year ago when he was only 51. I felt the loss for myself and my family, but especially for my daughter. I know God wants grandparents to have a definite input in their grandchildren's lives and I greatly anticipated my father's role in her life. Mr. Baxter's article helped me to put my trust in God's sovereignty over each of us.

God used this article to put His peace in my heart again. Now I am able to bow to His lordship and have a heart, with no bitterness, but of thankfulness to Jesus for *always* being in control.

Linda Lastella
Ledyard, CT

Staying in tune

I really look forward to your magazine each month and feel you are really in tune with what God is saying to the Body today. It is as if you have your hand on the pulse beat of the body of Christ today and are able to determine the ills as well as the strengths.

My husband and I especially enjoyed the issue on rest and knowing our priorities. We've always felt children need their parents' time more than church activities do but have often felt alone in our viewpoint. Thanks for confirming that we are hearing from God.

I believe one reason *New Wine's* vision and teaching are so good is because the leadership of the *New Wine* ministry are mutually submitted one to another. Hearing God through one another as well as hearing that still small voice that speaks to our spirits helps to keep us balanced, and I believe that has helped *New Wine* avoid missing God.

Dee Clark
White Rock, NM

Don't let yours run out!

For years *New Wine* has had high regard in our home and been the most stimulating publication, in our opinion, for spiritual growth. How we ever let the subscription lapse is still a question that I ponder.

My husband and I want to encourage the staff to take the steps and direction that the Lord assigns. Too many organizations crumble under financial and social pressures, and compromise standards, and in the Christian case, faith, and commitment to obedience ultimately give way to ear-tingling, flesh-pleasing doctrines.

We pray that *New Wine* endures in faith, being acceptable to the Father.

Terry & Diana Knowles
Carnation, WA

Feasting

Every month I have had a feast, thanks to you, and every month I really intend to write and tell you I appreciate you.

Well, your May issue was so fitting, I just have to tell you a *special* thank you!

As much as everything, perhaps more, the Lord uses *New Wine* to confirm what He has already shown me and it really blesses me to see in print what has been worked in the Spirit.

I appreciate your subscription policy and your good stewardship. And, the "Did You Know?" portion is just the right personal touch—like a note from a good friend.

Melissa Birk
Iowa Park, TX

Integrity

This is just to let you know how much your May issue of *New Wine* encouraged me. I first heard of *New Wine* through the church I was going to. My parents always received it each month and now my husband and I do.

Integrity is something which is definitely lacking in many people's lives—Christians and non-Christians. Your magazine was very timely for me and I feel the Lord really speaking to me about integrity in all I do, think, and say.

I am really glad such a good quality Christian magazine is available to me and my family.

Joyce M. Kraemer
Audubon, NJ

New Wine Events

We were at the New Wine Event in Lansing and thought the weekend was great. The music and acting was excellent and kept the people in their seats. The teaching by Bob Mumford was direct and spoke to the issues that are causing the decline of our society.

Ray Miller
Mesopotamia, OH

Opening doors

I would like to share one way *New Wine* has blessed us. My husband gave a gift of *New Wine* to my uncle and it has opened a lot of good fellowship.

We thank you for giving yourself so we can have *New Wine*. We pray for you.

M.E.
Louisville, KY

God and snowflakes

The article "Unity Is Hard Work" and "The Sacrifice of Unity" especially caught my attention in the June issue of *New Wine*.

For some reason, the mind-set of many Americans has demanded a "standardized" religion: a uniformity of thought, action, dress, ritual, and jargon. The only problem with this is, as Terry Fullam says, "We're dealing with a God who can't even make two snowflakes alike!"

Jo Ellen Terrell
San Diego, CA

It is encouraging

I was talking with some friends last evening about the significance of *New Wine* in my life and growth in the Lord. I thought it might be helpful and encouraging for you to know that your efforts *are* bearing fruit. Thanks so much for the sensitivity you exercise for the content of each magazine. It shows!

Phil Holland
Wheaton, IL

Thank you for your letters. We always appreciate your comments and suggestions, and we are glad to hear what God is doing in your lives.

A Kingdom of Priests

To the Point

by Don Basham



When God established the nation of Israel the whole tribe of Levi was set apart for priestly service. Aaron and his sons were ordained as priests and the rest of the tribe appointed to assist them in performing the myriad of responsibilities connected with "doing the work of the sanctuary" (see Num. 3:1-11).

But as unique and significant as these specific religious duties of the tribe of Levi were, they were only indications of God's purpose for all of His chosen people. In Exodus 19 we find God reminding the whole nation of Israel that they were His by covenant choice, and that they were to be for Him "*a kingdom of priests and a holy nation*" (Ex. 19:6 NIV). Not just the tribe of Levi, then, but the whole nation of Israel had a priestly destiny.

Hundreds of years later Peter challenged all Christians with a strong reminder that we have the same priestly destiny.

You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house *to be a holy priesthood*, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 2:5).

But you are a chosen people, *a royal priesthood*, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His won-

derful light (1 Pet. 2:9).

A kingdom of priests? The Church a holy priesthood with every man a priest before God?

Yes, that's the high and holy destiny promised us by God and made possible for us through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. But I suspect the average lay Christian (who does not serve as a professional pastor or priest) seldom considers his or her Christian life as having priestly significance. People rightly assume that a priest is someone special by virtue of his calling by God to live a holy life and to perform holy functions. That calling makes him unique or special. Special—not because he is better than other men—but special because he is chosen.

A major function of the priesthood in the Old Testament was to offer sacrifices on the altar in an act of worship. Significantly, there are numerous accounts in Scripture where men outside the Levitical priesthood performed that function and for good reason. They were men chosen and vested by God and commissioned to some special task. The combination of divine revelation and responsibility led to a personal response of priestly action in men like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Each, after his encounter with God, built an altar and knelt in priestly humility to offer sacrifices and worship Him.

So should it be with each of us. Apprehended by the Lord Jesus Christ and called to be His witnesses to the world, we don the invisible spiritual garments of a royal priesthood, presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.

In the same way that God called each Israelite to be part of a kingdom of priests and a holy nation, He has also called us as His very own, to serve Him faithfully, and to offer ourselves unreservedly to Him. We belong to Him. □

Don Basham is the Chief Editorial Consultant for New Wine Magazine.

TAPE OF THE MONTH

IT'S LIKE BEING THERE



a ministry of Integrity Communications

To begin receiving Tape of the Month, see the response form on page 32.