

Magazine New Wine[®]

January 1985

MOVING ON IN GOD

How to cope with change

FOR
SALE

TRUTH

CALLING

Trust

OBEDIENCE

Featuring: **The Times of Our Lives**

An interview with Charles Simpson, Bob Mumford, Don Basham,
and Ern Baxter

DIVINE
MOVERS

M.P.P.T.84

The year ahead brings

Changes and Challenges

BY CHARLES SIMPSON



The year that was subject to more speculation than most years has come and gone. Whether 1984 was what prognosticators feared remains to be seen. But already we know that it was a significant year in many respects.

For our country, 1984 was particularly important. We made decisions that will affect us for a long time to come.

For Christianity, it was a big year as well. Signs of renewed cooperation among believers are astounding, and the possibilities of positive, redemptive change in our nation are more evident now than at any time I can remember.

Here at Integrity Communications and *New Wine Magazine*, 1984 also left its mark. The entire year was given to seeking God for clarification of our mission. The board of directors and

employees alike sought to know God's will more clearly and to move into a position where we can fulfill it more effectively.

In this process of seeking the Lord, our editor, Dick Leggatt, articulated what I have sensed for a number of years—that he has a calling to preach and teach the Word of God. After lengthy discussion, times of prayer, and waiting on God, Dick has accepted a call to Michigan to join the pastoral staff of a church in East Lansing. We know this is God's will and stand with him—but we miss him already. He and his wife, Cindi, and their children are loved and respected here.

Dick joined *New Wine's* editorial staff in 1974, and since 1981 has served as editor. He has made a great contribution to *New Wine's* ministry, and will remain a member of the editorial staff and continue to write for us.

Since Dick's decision to leave, the board has sought the Lord for the editor of His choosing. Such an editor would need to have shared both our spiritual heritage and our faith in Christ. He would need a good understanding of the Word of God and would have to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's direction. He would need the creative skills necessary for conveying truth in an inspiring manner.

In Bruce Longstreth, we believe that we have found such an editor. Bruce has worked with us in ministry for twelve years and has proven creative and inspira-

tional talent. He knows our history and shares our vision. Bruce is trained in the Word of God; he graduated from Simpson College in San Francisco, attended Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, and has pastored Christian Missionary Alliance churches. An accomplished musician, speaker, and writer, Bruce and his wife, Janet, have two daughters, Cara and Abigail.

For three years, he has served as editor of *Fathergram*, an Integrity Communications newsletter that today reaches about ten thousand families. In addition, Bruce has written regular columns for *New Wine*—"Tips for Fathers" and "The Word."

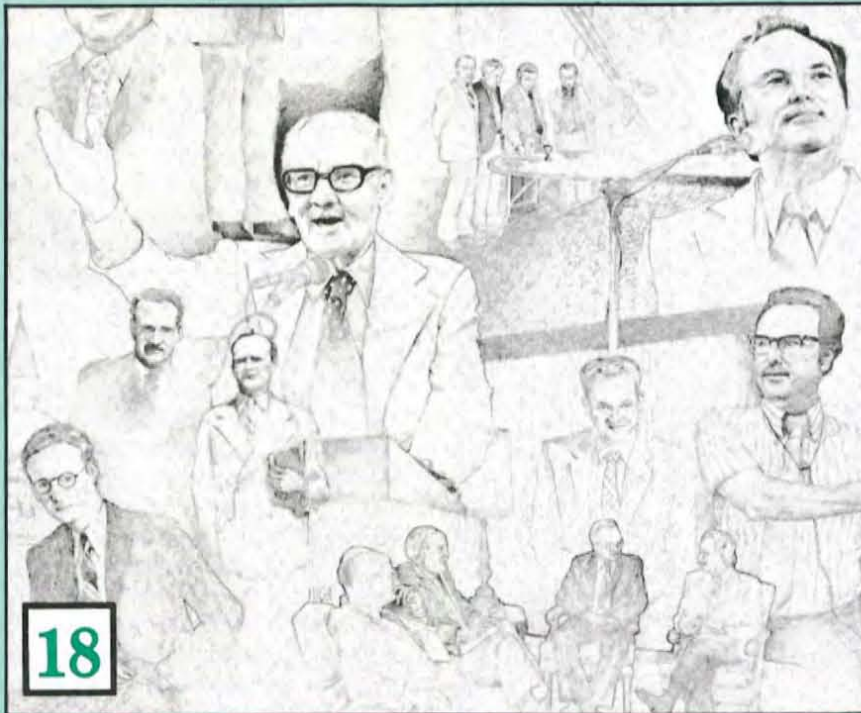
Bruce joins us in our goal to make every issue of *New Wine* instructive and informative, inspirational and prophetic. He believes that spiritual truth does not have to be dull, that the gospel is exciting, and that we have a significant opportunity to reach multitudes. In particular, we see a number of doors opening for overseas distribution of *New Wine*, and in the months ahead, we will be making every effort to get the teaching of *New Wine* to our brothers and sisters abroad.

Over the years, we have tried to make *New Wine* an effective teaching magazine for the whole body of Christ. During the past year, God has reconfirmed that our mission is to teach spiritual truth in spiritual power. We believe we are called to share truths that will help others find a more victorious life in Christ.

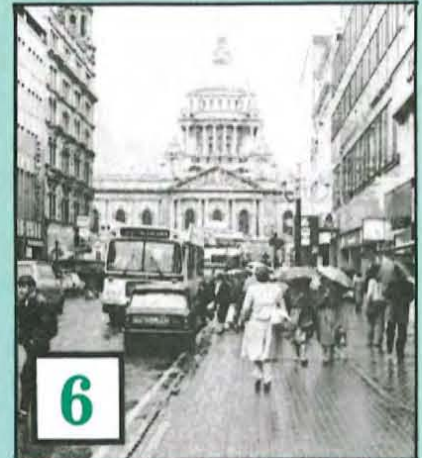
That is a challenging task, and Bruce Longstreth has eagerly accepted it. We commend him to you—and you to him. Pray with us for God's favor upon Bruce and upon *New Wine* in 1985 and the years to come. □

Charles Simpson is chairman of the Integrity Communications Board of Directors.

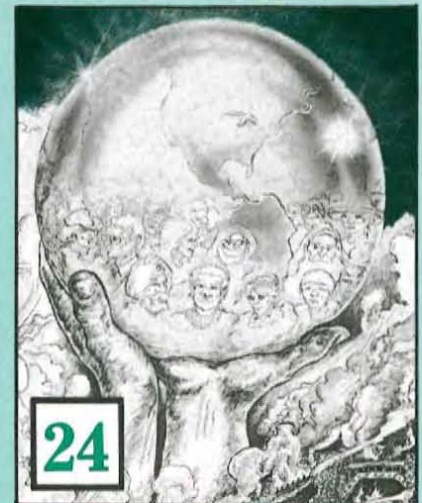
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Cover Illustration: Mark Pie' and Paul Turnbaugh

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear New Wine

Privilege to Pray

As I was praying recently for the prison ministry I am involved in, the Lord told me that He wanted me to be an intercessor for the prison. A bit later I picked up your November issue and turned to the back page. Don Basham's first line caught my eye: "To be an intercessor is one of the unique privileges we have as Christians." How much I enjoyed and soaked up that article! Thank you for being a confirmation!

Lois Elkin
Portage, WI

Rejecting Rejection

"From Rejection to Acceptance" (November) set me free from a spirit of rejection that had held me since my mother carried me in her womb. My parents divorced when I was a newborn, and the court sent my siblings to

an orphanage and me to a children's hospital. The only time I would show any happiness and stop crying, the nuns told my father, was when he would visit and hold me in his arms.

As a result of this early trauma and later difficulties in a foster home, I had many scars on my heart. But now, I can truly leave the past behind. I said aloud the prayer at the end of the article, and God powerfully removed the lifelong hurt and filled me with peace and great joy. I am truly the apple of His eye, just as He said! I'm free to follow Jesus with the absolute confidence that He will always be with me, even if everyone else turns and walks away.

Thank you, *New Wine*, for reprinting that article.

Debbie Gresbach
Watertown, WI

A Timely Reprint

Thank you for reprinting the article by Derek Prince on moving from rejection to acceptance. The profusion of broken homes in our country makes it a needed message, because the name "Father God" doesn't always imply to us what the Lord intended.

My father left when I was 7, and my stepfather committed slow suicide through alcohol and drugs. Later in life I assumed that God had these "fatherly" attributes, and I feared being rejected and deserted by Him. Knowing that these feelings were wrong, because of the testimony of the Word, I prayed that God would let me know in my heart as well as my mind that I was acceptable to Him. One day as I was praying and meditating on the Bible, Psalm 27:10 leapt out at me and spoke to my heart what I needed to hear: "Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me" (NIV).

Your article has brought that joyful assurance back into focus again, and oh, is it ever so sweet! There is nothing or no one that can heal a damaged spirit except our Lord and Savior Himself. And the more we dwell in the light of His truth and bask in its healing warmth, the sooner we become the whole people He intended us to be. Thank you for drawing back the curtains once again and letting the light in.

Susan Stefan
Columbia, MO

Schuller Appreciated

As I read the interview with Dr. Robert Schuller (November), I realized that I had a closed mind about this man and had been unnecessarily critical of his ministry.

What a thrill to read about John Wayne coming to the Lord

before his death, and how God used Dr. Schuller's television program and his sensitivity to the Holy Spirit to do it.

Jean Martin
Titusville, FL

Vietnam Revisited

Thank you for your article on Vietnam veterans (November). As a rebellious high school student during that era, I was similar to the girl who greeted Ron Milton. After reading the article, I reflected on my attitude then and now, and saw quite a difference. Your article has put a desire in me to seek out my old friends who were in the war and let them know I'm still a friend. Maybe God will open the door for me to say how much I appreciate them for what they did and how proud I am to be able to call them my friends. Then maybe that will lead to sharing Christ with them.

Herb Williams
Thomasville, GA

Homespun Hits Home

The October "Homespun," "A Music Lesson," touched home. For weeks the Lord had been convicting me to stop collecting certain things. He assured me that He would fill the gap and that blessings would follow my obedience.

Praise the Lord, they did. First of all, my faith has increased as I have seen that when God speaks, He is gracious; He waits to see if we will respond. Second, I don't need to wonder if my God shall supply all my needs. I've seen Him do it. Finally, He is able to do exceedingly beyond that which we ask or think. Praise God!

Julia Hopkins
Queens Village, NY

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About New Wine

New Wine Magazine, published monthly by Integrity Communications, seeks to promote the maturity of the Church and the individual Christian by publishing scripturally sound content that 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.

As a reflection of our desire to be open to all that God is saying and doing, we at *New Wine* regularly feature material from Christian leaders and groups of diverse points of view. Their appearance in *New Wine* does not mean they totally agree with us on every issue, nor we with them. It does mean we recognize them as Christians who are saying something that we all need to hear. We recognize that virtually every ministry has its controversial aspects. We deliberately choose, however, not to highlight those areas of controversy but rather, in the interest of Christian unity, to present their views in the context of a more primary issue: the lordship of Jesus Christ. Our desire is to emphasize the common commitment to Him we share with the Christians featured in *New Wine*, and their contribution to the purposes of God.

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible unless otherwise noted.

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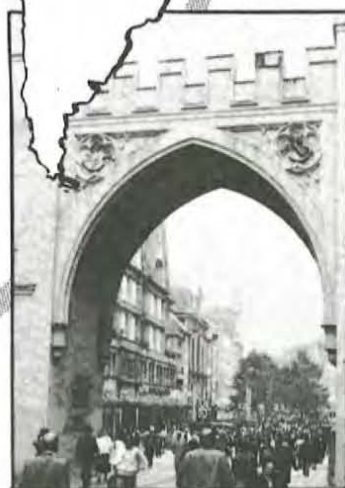
BIGGER Than



Northern Ireland



England



West Germany

God is on the move in Europe and the Middle East.

BY STEPHEN SIMPSON

When I was first assigned to interview church and political leaders in Europe and the Middle East, the thought of being interrogated by a Scotland Yard detective never crossed my mind. Yet the trip was barely under way, and here I was, detained at London's Heathrow Airport, undergoing tough

questioning.

The detective, anxious about my wanting to go to Belfast, Northern Ireland, was determined to find out what business I had there. Just a few days before my arrival, an American supporter of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) had been in Belfast and caused a riot.

After serious questioning in which neither of us was getting anywhere, I said, "Sir, let me tell you the real reason I'm going into Belfast. We've heard of all the bad things happening there, but I'm aware that some good things are happening too. I'd like to report on them." His eyes lit up at my explanation.

Our Backyard



Israel



This was indeed the purpose of my trip to Belfast as well as the other cities I visited. Having sensed the Lord's commission to reach other countries, we at *New Wine* wanted to hear from our overseas brothers and sisters what the Lord was saying to them, and find ways to pass on to them the teaching and encourage-

ment available in *New Wine* Magazine and the other ministries of Integrity Communications.

A Religious War?

My first task in Belfast was to get church leaders' perspectives on the strife in that region. Too often I had heard of the bloody conflict raging in Northern Ireland—a conflict portrayed by the news media as Catholic versus Protestant. But as I met with Christians there, I learned that the nature of the war is grossly distorted by the media.

In 1969, when protests against British rule in Northern Ireland exploded, the IRA began bomb-

ing, killing, and maiming government officials and citizens who supported the British, and has continued to do so to this day.

The IRA claims to carry the banner of the Irish cause, and many of its members come from Catholic backgrounds, but it is not in any way a voice of the Catholic Church in Northern Ireland. In fact, the IRA consists of a handful of dedicated Marxist terrorists who seem to hold a grip on Belfast through extortion and murder.

The IRA has exploited its Irish-Catholic image to reap millions of dollars of support from Irish-Americans who are

naive to its true aims.

Many of the IRA's pro-British targets are Protestant. And in reaction to the IRA violence, some Protestants have formed counter-terrorist organizations that use the same grievous tactics of the IRA. This further enhances the "religious war" image, which actually aids the IRA by masking its true aim—a Marxist state in Northern Ireland.

Unfortunately, the established churches there have for the most part been powerless to stop the violence.

But when I talked with Christian leaders, I learned that the "trouble," as residents call it, is not the only thing happening in Belfast. God, they say, is on the move and many want to go with Him. Although many positive things are beginning to occur, the devil has managed to capture the media's attention—for the time being.

God Is Moving

One surprising way in which God is moving is in the building of strong relationships between Catholic and Protestant believers. I met two men, a Catholic lay minister and a Protestant pastor, who have worked together to form Belfast Christian Family, a church fellowship of three hundred Catholics and Protestants—in Belfast!

God is also moving in the deliverance ministry in Northern Ireland. Jim Quinn, an area pastor, said deliverance from demonic bondage is essential to the healing of Northern Ireland. "There isn't anyone here who hasn't had a relative or friend blown up," he said. Only God can remove the pain and bitterness nearly everyone is experiencing. But all indications are that He wants to.

My most lasting impression of Belfast came from my host, Hugh Jervis, who had served with the housing authority at the

height of the trouble. He drove me to the areas of Belfast that I had previously known only from the news—The Falls, Shankill Road, Andersonstown, and Ballymurphy. Here, unemployment stands at sixty percent. The police stations are fortresses. High walls divide neighborhoods. Burned down shops testify to IRA extortion. Each outsider is scrutinized suspiciously. It is a situation where the only hope is for God to intervene.

But Hugh articulated what many Christians in Northern Ireland believe: "God has allowed the situation to become so bad so that world attention is now focused on this little country. And then when God moves here, the whole world will know it."

A "Freak" of Nature

From Northern Ireland, I returned to England, which seems to be a religiously jaded country. Many huge cathedrals stand virtually empty on Sundays—monuments to the toll of liberal theology and the abandonment of spiritual life. I began my time in England in the ancient city of York, near the strife-torn coal-mining districts.

York, dominated by its majestic twelfth-century minster, one of the largest Gothic cathedrals in the world, was still buzzing over the events that had taken place at the minster late last summer. Dr. David Jenkins, well-known in England for denying the virgin birth of Christ, was ordained bishop of Durham, the fourth highest position in the Church of England. Three days later, the wing of the minster where he had been ordained was destroyed by what officials described as "a freak bolt of lightning." Interestingly enough, there were no storms in the area the night of the fire.

When I interviewed William Deeds, editor of the highly respected London *Daily Telegraph*

(circulation 1.3 million) and a member of Parliament for 25 years, he offered an astute layman's observation about the new bishop of Durham, and liberal theologians everywhere: "I simply cannot understand why a man of the cloth would deny the very basis of his own faith."

But despite the secularism and humanism that are so widespread in England, in some areas the Holy Spirit is moving in a powerful way. Hundreds of nondenominational church fellowships have sprung up as people, hungry for solid, biblical teaching, have been drawn together.

Near Oxford I visited the towns of Witney and Aston, where pastors Barney Coombs and Steven Thomas spoke of the growing sense of unity and purpose among Christian leaders in Oxfordshire and all across Great Britain.

The birthplace of so many revivals in the past, England seems to be poised to receive another great outpouring.

Preparing for Revival

From England I flew to West Germany, where I found the spiritual life gripped tightly by several strongholds, including the spirit of humanistic theology. West Germany has long been a fountainhead of secularism, and many Christian leaders believe this demonic stronghold is too powerful to be dislodged by anything less than God's direct intervention.

As in England, many huge churches are now used for other purposes, and most of those that do conduct services often have more people on staff than in the attending congregation.

Dr. Friedrich-Wilhelm Kuneth, pastor of one of the largest and fastest-growing Lutheran churches in West Germany, offered insight into the Church's problems there.

"In the early 1900's, at the same time the Spirit was moving

in the United States at places such as the Azusa Street revival, a tremendous spiritual awakening occurred in Germany. People were baptized in the Spirit; they prophesied, spoke in tongues, and were healed," he said.

"This movement of the Spirit spread rapidly throughout the Lutheran Church. But many church leaders, already steeped in secularist thought, resisted it and finally issued an official edict, saying that this great spiritual outpouring was of the devil and would not be tolerated." Tragically for both Germany and the world, this blasphemous edict was accepted, the movement was halted, spiritual death set in, and Germany marched toward self-destruction.

The problem, according to Kunneth, was that the Church had not been—and still is not—prepared for revival. He and other Christians are attempting to rectify this problem by leading the Church toward repentance from past sins and failures, thus making it ready for the Spirit to move once again. "It is impossible," Kunneth said, "to separate sound biblical doctrine from an experience with the Holy Spirit."

Another ray of hope was pointed out to me by Harald Eckert, editor of a West German Christian magazine, *Wieder Herstellung*. Eckert said that although a conservative political trend exists in West Germany, the conservative leaders don't know why they believe what they believe. This puts these leaders on shaky ground, but Eckert sees it as an opportunity for West German Christians to speak clearly to their government.

Another break in the satanic cloud over West Germany is the resurgence of faith among many of the believers there. Doubt and unbelief are giving way to a confidence that God has not forgotten West Germany and is ready

to pour out His Spirit on those who are prepared to receive Him.

Christians in Israel

Leaving West Germany, I traveled to Israel, where I visited Yohanan Ramati, who was managing editor of the *Israel Economist* and a member of the Jerusalem city council. As we drove along the pre-1967 border between Israel and Jordan that divided the city of Jerusalem and the surrounding plains, he pointed out former Arab machine gun nests. I could almost feel the pain that all Israelis must feel whenever it is suggested that their land should be given back to hostile forces.

But as Christians in the United States and around the world become increasingly vocal in support of Israel, many Jewish Israelis fear that the Christians are only interested in converting them. As a result, Christians in Israel are strongly resented and resisted. Some of the resistance is verbal; some takes the form of discrimination; and some—perpetrated by a small, extreme group of radicals—is violent.

Although a few Christians have gone to Israel merely to proselytize the Jews without showing the love of Christ, many other groups, such as the Christian Embassy, are attempting to be true friends of the Jews by demonstrating their love in practical ways—through the annual Feast of Tabernacles celebration, for example.

How Can We Help?

I returned to the United States deeply moved by all I had seen and heard. As I witnessed how God is moving in places such as Northern Ireland, England, West Germany, and Israel, I saw doors to these countries and others opening wide to *New Wine Magazine* and other ministries of Integrity Communica-

tions. We have sensed for many months that God is calling us as a ministry to become even more involved with the global situation, and now, by His grace, we find ourselves in a position to move forward through these opening doors. We sincerely believe we can make an impact on the whole earth.

Christians and other leaders in the countries I visited expressed to me their appreciation for and reliance upon *New Wine Magazine*. Many assured me that the message carried in *New Wine* and other ministries of Integrity Communications would play a key role in the future of these nations if our material could be more widely distributed. This is both a great responsibility and a great opportunity, and we are currently seeking the Lord to know how we can best get large quantities of our teaching resources into these areas. We believe *New Wine Magazine*, by God's grace, can help bring peace to Belfast. We believe the ministries of Integrity Communications can promote unity among believers in England. We believe our involvement can help bring new hope into West Germany. We believe our support for Israel is vital to its future welfare.

During this year, *New Wine* wants to present to you more of what God is doing around the world among His people. We want you to catch the vision we have seen. We want you to feel a part of something bigger than your backyard. The earth is the Lord's! As His Church, once we fully grasp this truth and begin to act on it, we can drive the enemy from the land that belongs to the people of God. □

Stephen Simpson is an editorial assistant for New Wine. He received his bachelor of arts degree in communications from Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama.



Moving On in God

Transitions are never easy,
but it is important how we handle them.

BY CHARLES SIMPSON

Our oldest son, Stephen, is getting married soon. His mother gets teary eyed at the thought, but I think it is wonderful. Our grocery bill, phone bill, and auto insurance premium will be reduced dramatically.

My teenage daughter recently got her driver's license. That is when I got teary eyed. Just when I got rid of Stephen's big insurance bill, Charlyn starts driving.

To top it all off, my wife, Carolyn, went out with Jonathan, our younger son, and bought him a sport coat—the same size as mine. Our baby!

Growing children remind us that change is continuous, and the mirror tells us that too. Whether we like it or not, change is a constant reality in this temporal life. Minutes, hours, months, and years are mere measurements of change. Time does not stop.

It's not unusual to visit the town where we grew up and become depressed just thinking of everything that has changed. In fact, our happiness is determined partly by how we handle the changes that life brings.

But no matter what those changes might be, a son's wed-

ding or a hometown that we barely recognize, we must understand the dynamics of change. Then, wherever God takes us, however uncertain our future may seem, we can experience the joy that comes in trusting Him.

A Lifetime of Change

God has given me plenty of opportunities to experience and learn from change. One year of great change was 1951: I met the Lord that year. Another year of significant change was 1964: I was baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Then in 1970 another monumental change occurred. In the fall of that year, I attended a meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where Don Basham spoke on "The Life of Faith." God had been speaking to me about giving up my pastoral salary and trusting Him financially. I don't recommend that unless one is sure God has spoken. But that night I made a commitment to give up my salary and live by trusting Him. God met me in that decision and began a dramatic change in the direction of my ministry.

If the past is any indication, 1985 will bring its own set of changes for each of us. How will

we handle them?

When we are confronted by the Lord with change, our first response is often a negative "Why, Lord?" We think of many reasons *not* to change. Sometimes we stubbornly resist and cling to the security of present circumstances rather than the security of our faith in Christ.

It may not be too serious if a husband and wife view their son's marriage differently. But if God and a person look at a significant change differently, that can be serious. Getting God's perspective on a move or decision can greatly affect the course of our lives and those around us, because a wrong reaction to change can hinder spiritual maturity.

How to Look at Change

I have found four principles involved in the dynamics of change. It's in understanding these that we gain God's perspective on the changes in our lives.

First, we must acknowledge that truth is eternal and it does not change. Accepting that fact means we can find peace in all circumstances, because the foundation of our life is eternal.

Second, we must accept that

God's continual revelation of Himself will cause us to change. Let's face it—God is not going to change. He is already perfect and eternal. But each new revelation of Himself and His truth forces us to grow into His likeness. This is what Paul is talking about in 2 Corinthians chapter 3:

But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit (v. 18 NAS).

Third, if we are going to be changed into His likeness, we must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in times of change. An understanding of change doesn't come by simply gazing at changing circumstances, but instead by looking to the One who controls our circumstances.

Fourth, change causes us to move from confidence in our own ability to evaluate circumstances to trusting the Lord to give us proper understanding.

We will never correctly interpret the purpose of change if we're looking at it only from our own point of view; we need to see change from God's perspective.

One of my seminary professors used to tell of going to "quilting bees" when he was a child. The mothers would sit around the large frame that held the unfinished quilt. Playing on the floor underneath the frame, he could see only a confusing mass of threads hanging down. But from above, the ladies could see the pattern that slowly was emerging. In the same way, change may seem full of confusion if we look at it from our own perspective; but from God's vantage point, the emerging pattern is clear and beautiful.

When Jesus was with His disciples in the upper room, He said



that one of them was going to betray Him. One by one they asked, "Is it I?"—all except John, who instead leaned on Jesus and asked Him the identity of the betrayer. We have the same choice: We can either guess what is going on, or we can lean on the Lord to tell us.

Missing the Clues

In Scripture, Peter is an exam-



ple of someone who misinterpreted his circumstances because he didn't see things from God's perspective.

Mark chapter 9 tells the story

of Jesus' transfiguration, which in Greek is the root word for "metamorphosis." Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him to the mountaintop. He knew there were great changes ahead of Him: crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension. He also knew it would be a time of trauma and confusion for the disciples. Peter would deny Him, Judas would betray Him and take his own life, and the others would all scatter except John. Jesus had tried to tell them of the changes about to take place, but they could not comprehend His words.

And there, on top of the mountain, Jesus began to pray. Jesus was extremely intent on hearing from the Father, so it was a long and fervent prayer time—too long, in fact, for the disciples, who fell asleep.

During their slumber, an interesting event occurred: Moses and Elijah appeared, and the glory of God so permeated Jesus that His body and garments glistened. He was transfigured.

Now imagine this: Moses, the lawgiver whom every Jew admired, and Elijah, the epitome of

prophetic power, both appeared. Surrounded by the glory of God, they ministered to Jesus concerning the greatest single event of history—His crucifixion and

resurrection. Meanwhile, just a few feet away, three privileged but dull disciples were still sound asleep!

Peter's Answer

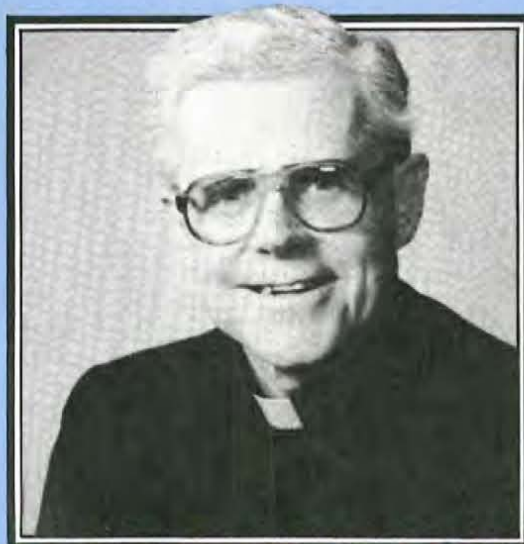
Scripture tells us that Peter woke up and "answered" (v. 5 NAS). Why he answered we don't know, because no one asked him anything. The Greek word for his response means "to give an evaluation." It was as if someone who had been asleep during a ball game suddenly woke up and announced the wrong score. Peter obviously did not know the score. He woke up, saw the vision, and was terrified. All he could say was, "Let us make three tabernacles, one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah" (v. 5 NAS). When he said this, Peter had made some bad assumptions: First, he had assumed that he had a proper perspective; he did not. Second, he had assumed that Moses and Elijah were on a level with Jesus; they were not.

This is the same man who a few days earlier had said to Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt. 16:16 NAS). He had a great revelation of God but his revelation was beyond his maturation.

When Peter proposed the tabernacles, God's presence moved in, and the Father Himself rebuked Peter: "This is My beloved Son, listen to Him!" (Mk. 9:7 NAS).

This was not the first time Peter had been rebuked because he did not listen. Earlier, when Jesus had tried to tell the disciples that He would be crucified and would rise again, Peter tried to rebuke Jesus (see Mark 8:31-33). But Jesus turned to Peter and rebuked him. The Greek word used for *rebuke* in that instance means "an ineffective rebuke"—or one that fails to cause a person to see his sin.

Peter was rebuked for not lis-



Father Michael Scanlan on spiritual victory

NEXT MONTH IN NEW WINE

More than conquerors is what Jesus makes us, says Father Michael Scanlan, president of the University of Steubenville, a Catholic liberal arts school in Ohio. In an encouraging interview, he explains that times of testing can become times of new conquests for Christ.

Has your first love faded? If the daily grind has extinguished the flames that once burned for the Lord, you'll want to read Don Basham's practical pointers on how to rekindle your enthusiasm.

Giving God credit for the light in our lives and blaming the darkness on the devil may be a neatly tied package of theology, but it doesn't work, says John Duke, who reminds us that God has a purpose even in those dark times.

Also featuring: A dramatic testimony of a woman cured of anorexia nervosa

All in the February **New Wine**

tening by both the Son and the Father—yet neither rebuke succeeded. He failed to listen, and therefore he remained unprepared for the dramatic changes that were ahead! Lest we be too hard on Peter, only the Lord knows how often each of us may have been warned by the Holy Spirit of some impending change, only to be caught dull of hearing, resisting, and unaware of His purpose.

Responding to Change

Because Peter didn't see the change he was faced with from God's perspective, he had the wrong reaction to it: He resisted it. The same is true with us when we lean on our own understanding. But there is another way to respond to change, and that is to see it as part of God's plan for us and to accept it. Here are three practical steps that can help us cope with even the most monumental changes in our lives.

First, we must believe Romans 8:28, which says, "God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (NAS). Let's declare now: "I love You, Lord, and I want Your purpose in my life. I believe the change I face will work good in me."

Second, we must realize that functional or circumstantial change does not necessarily mean relational change. For example, as a child becomes a young adult, his parents' functions change. They are required to give less direction and discipline. When parents fail to recognize the normal changes that occur as their child moves toward maturity, pressures build that can destroy the parent-child relationship. Yet parents always remain parents, and can maintain good, although different, relationships with their child no matter how old he is. It is all a matter of properly responding to

changing situations.

Third, changing circumstances present us with a fresh opportunity to resubmit ourselves to God and His will for our lives. They also give an occasion for God to reconfirm His purpose or reveal new direction.

I used to get very upset when someone left our church, and sometimes I still do. But I realize that God really owns the people; they are His. Right or wrong, I cannot hold on to anyone apart from His purpose. Jesus died for His people—I didn't. His blood redeems—not mine. He is the owner. He puts people in the positions that please Him. He has that right. When change starts to occur, it is a good time to examine our submission to God's purpose.

Trust God in Change

Change is part of life. In fact, one thing that never changes is that things keep on changing. But some changes are painful. So when significant change becomes evident, look to the unchanging God. Do not trust your own perspective; cast yourself and your responsibilities on Him.

One day the bewildered disciples watched from afar as Jesus cried out from the cross, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit" (Lk. 23:46 NAS). There is no better place to be in the midst of life's deaths and resurrections than in the faithful hands of the

One who controls all change.

The day after Jesus said that, the disciples, confused and bewildered, were in the upper room lamenting the loss of their Lord. However, only 50 days later, in that very same room they were heralding the dawn of a new era. Jesus had said, "I must go away so that the Comforter will come" (see John chapter 14). They had not wanted that change and had dreaded it. But it was only when the change took place that they became full of joy and power. They were changed, and their ministry in turn changed the world.

If you are afraid God is taking something away from you, or taking you away to a new and unknown place, accept the change in faith, trusting the Comforter to come and help you begin a new life. Determine not to go into the future looking back to the past. If we face the future looking upward, 1985 may bring a new visitation of spiritual power. It may be the beginning of a whole new life in God. □

Charles Simpson, senior pastor of Gulf Coast Covenant Church in Mobile, Alabama, ministers extensively in the United States and abroad. He also serves as the chairman of the Integrity Communications Board of Directors. Charles resides in Mobile with his wife, Carolyn, and their three children.

REMEMBER:
FRIDAY, JANUARY 4, IS A
NATIONAL DAY OF PRAYER AND
FASTING.



Prepared for CHANGE

**"God uses every season of
my life for His unique
purpose."**

**BY
SUSAN FONTAINE**

a well-known ski resort.

Far more important than the material luxury I enjoyed were the support and strength I drew from both my natural and spiritual families. My parents lived an hour away by plane and we saw each other several times a year. I had a growing sense of love and appreciation for them. Even though I am unmarried, I experienced a genuine sense of family with the brothers and sisters in my church, who made a place in their hearts and homes for me.

I felt I was making a contribution to the Body, using my music talents in our church orchestra,

eventually found that it was all part of His perfect plan.

Frankly, I had no desire and felt no need for such a change. I was enjoying the good life. I lived in a spacious home in Mission Viejo, an upper-middle-class community in southern California, with a recreation center, swimming pool, tennis courts, and jacuzzi only steps from my door. I was just twenty minutes from miles of beautiful sandy beaches, another five minutes from the best shopping malls on the West Coast, thirty minutes from Disneyland, and sixty minutes from

I thought I was satisfied with life in southern California. After all, I'd been there 19 years, and everything was running smoothly—my job, my home, my church life. Then one day God changed it all around. He moved me 2,100 miles away from all the security I had known. A drastic uprooting such as that could have been traumatic, but I

and taking an active part in pro-life activities in Orange County.

My job as production manager of a successful publishing company was very rewarding as well. Because I had grown with the company, which had doubled in size in three years, I looked forward to a rosy future.

God had provided abundantly for all my physical and spiritual needs. I lived literally in the lap of luxury and convenience, and was very comfortable with both.

Paying the Price

But my success hadn't come without struggle. The first two years at my job had been some of the most trying and difficult years of my life. I began in a position for which I was both unsuited and untrained. Frequently I found myself drowning under a wave of pressure, because my work involved scheduling, procedures, organization, and discipline, all of which my artistic temperament shunned. To add insult to injury, the woman who was my assistant was promoted to a position on my level, and then to senior production manager—my supervisor. My pride was crushed.

My boss, a shrewd businessman with high goals for his company, seemed to take particular delight in making life hard for me. His frequent critical remarks made me feel I'd never measure up. For two years I labored with the tormenting thought that any day on the job might be my last.

I longed to quit, and was tempted to pursue the vision I once had to apply my skills in the Christian media. But I couldn't quit. I knew God wanted me to stay, although I had no idea what earthly good the trials and tribulations I was enduring could possibly accomplish. Only God's daily grace got me through the ordeal.

Finally, the third year, I began



to experience a measure of peace. I actually mastered my job and began to enjoy it. I also came to realize that the woman God had promoted as my supervisor was not only well qualified for her position, but was a gift from God to me as well. We became very good friends on both a professional and personal level. God redeemed my failure and made me quite successful.

A Surprise Offer

Filled with a sense of satisfaction about my work, I shelved my dream for a job in the Christian media. A few years back I had explored the possibility of a job with a Christian ministry in San Francisco that was spearheading exciting efforts in drama, television, radio, and publications. Although I really wanted the job, I knew it wasn't right and turned it down. But then God spoke to me: "I am preparing you for a place in the communications ministry."

Three years had gone by and I had almost forgotten the promise of that still, small voice. Then one Sunday after church my pastor told me he knew of an opening at *New Wine Magazine*, and asked if I would be interested in pursuing it. I was completely surprised by the suggestion.

Such a move would mean leaving my home and the people I had grown to love. It would mean

moving to a part of the country where I knew absolutely no one. Yet something inside me whispered with quiet confidence, "Yes!" In spite of the uncertainties, in my spirit I knew I was hearing the Lord's voice.

As I shared the job possibility with my Christian friends, everyone seemed excited and happy for me. Their response helped confirm what I believed God was saying, and eased the pain of leaving precious friends behind.

During a week-long visit to Mobile, Alabama, where *New Wine* has its offices, God confirmed the calling I felt to the magazine. In the Sunday worship service in Mobile, I recalled a vivid dream I'd had six years before of being in that very building.

As my would-be supervisor at *New Wine* pointed out the abilities that he felt qualified me for the job, I was humbled by the realization that they were the very qualities God had forged in me during those first, most difficult years at the publishing house in Mission Viejo. I realized that God uses every experience and every different season of my life for His unique purpose. What a shame it would have been if I had not yielded to that training and discipline!

Bittersweet Days

When I returned to California after my visit to *New Wine*, I gave my notice at work and made plans to move within the month. The days were filled with the bittersweet quality that change brings—a mixture of excitement about what was ahead and sadness about leaving my church and the people I loved. Most meaningful to me at this time was my publisher's attitude toward me. A few days before I left he took me to lunch.

"Susan," he said, "your success with the company has been

most remarkable. Frankly, after you were hired, I began to think you wouldn't make the grade. Now I value you as an employee and I hate to see you leave."

On the day of my departure, when I left one season and began a new one, my plane took off and flew along the Pacific Coast for a few moments and out over the ocean. I gazed at the landscape far below and picked out places familiar to me—Laguna Beach, Dana Point, and others—and the reality of ending nineteen years in California washed over me.

I thought of the people of faith whom God had called. Rebecca left her home and family to follow a servant of Abraham, and became Isaac's wife. And Ruth left her homeland and relatives to follow a widow named Naomi with little hope of a bright future.

Abraham left the comfort and luxury of Ur and his father's house to venture forth into a new land. I certainly did not face a desert wilderness, nor the hunger and poverty of Naomi, nor the uncertainty of a new husband in a strange land, but *New Wine* and Mobile did represent a new land for me, and I was leaving behind all the security I had ever known!

I could identify with each of those Bible characters, knowing that God richly blessed them as they followed Him with faith based on His word, responding to His bidding to enter new and unfamiliar territory.

When I arrived, I knew I was in the right place. In fact, my very first Sunday in Mobile, Charles Simpson shared a message on "You Get What You Pay For."

He reminded us that anything of true value has a cost to it; and that the cost is in proportion to the benefit. I gave up what I had for the gospel's sake and now I knew I would receive a hundred times as much in the present age.

God had called me to change, to move into a new season and a new land, to sever the bonds of nineteen years. But as the Master Planner, He had fully prepared and equipped me for the new life I was about to begin. □

Susan Fontaine is production manager of New Wine. She has written for newspapers in California, and served as editor of a publishing company and managing editor of a magazine. She most recently was production manager of Macro Comm Corporation, Mission Viejo, California.



1968

1974

1977

1972

1977

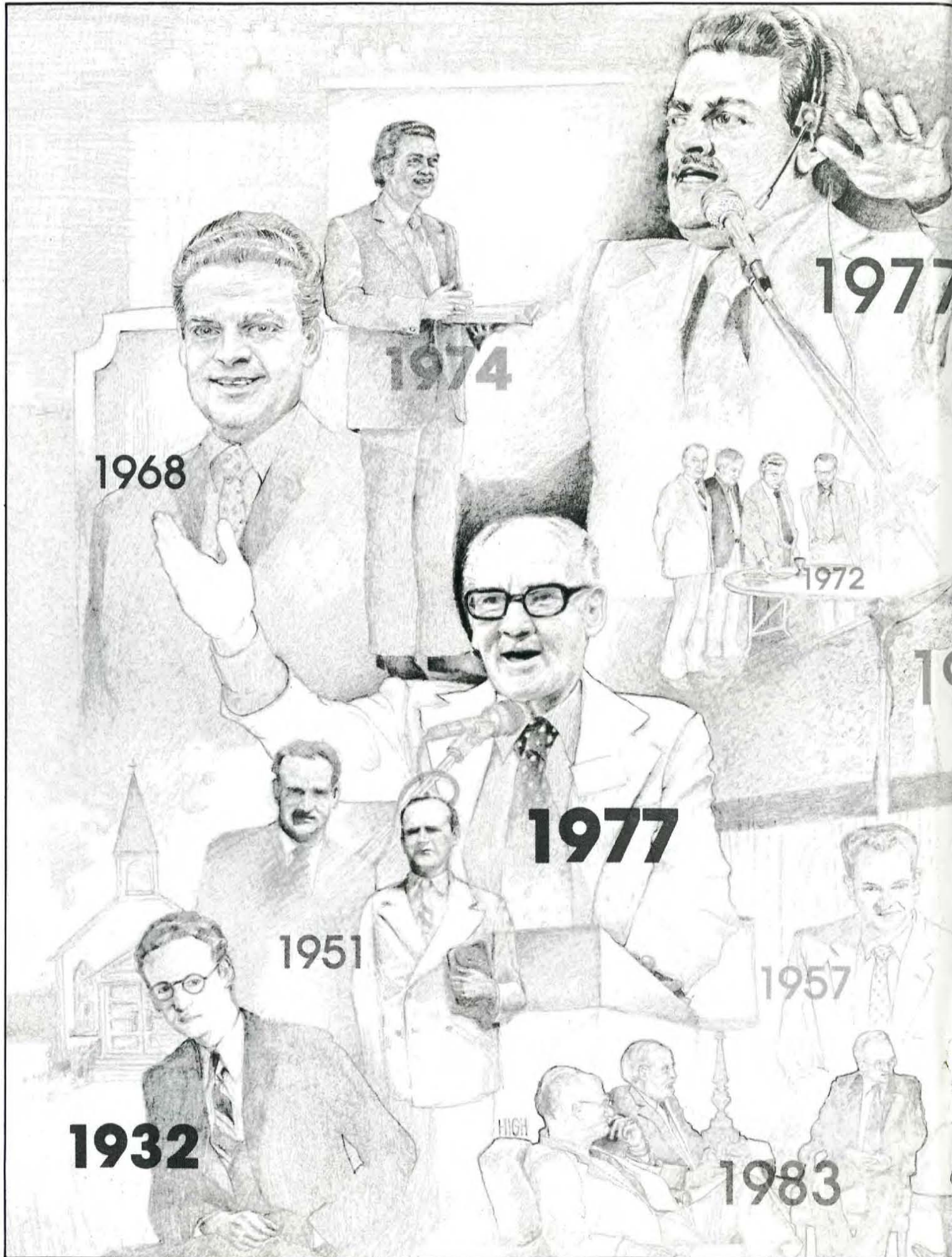
1951

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HIGH





The Times of Our Lives

An interview with Charles Simpson, Bob Mumford, Don Basham, and Ern Baxter

Many changes occur when you've been ministering for 139 years—that's the combined length of time that New Wine teachers Don Basham, Ern Baxter, Bob Mumford, and Charles Simpson have been in ministry. During those years, they've experienced significant changes, learning how to handle them, and sometimes how not to.

One thing they know for sure is that change is constant. For two of the men, that has recently meant moving to California—Ern to San Diego and Bob to Santa Rosa—as new focuses in their ministries.

We talked with each of the

four teachers about changes past and present, asking them to share insights that will help us all when God calls us to change.

New Wine: How have you and your family handled some of the dramatic changes you have experienced in your ministry?

Don Basham: One of the most profound changes in my life and ministry occurred in 1967 when God told me to leave my denominational pastorate and step into a faith ministry. That was an exciting yet fearful time. It was difficult with five young children to give up the security of the pas-

torate, including my reputation in the denomination, congregation, car allowance, paid vacation, and pension plan.

Faith has been described as living in the midst of a miracle on the edge of disaster. That's really what happens when you're involved in a change—you step out in faith and trust God.

In the faith ministry, we often lived on that edge of disaster. Some days there was no food and we literally prayed for our daily bread—but God always provided for us, although often at the last minute. It was the most traumatic change ever experienced by our family. But if we hadn't obeyed, we would not have seen God move the way He has in our lives. Everything else that has happened to us since then stems from being open to God at that time.

Bob Mumford: Being in ministry and having a family, I often tried to force down roots and find permanence. But that's like a gardener trying to pound seeds into concrete. I had within me such a cry for permanence, and yet I was always aware that the Lord's purpose for me was to move on. But in the midst of that moving, one concern my wife and I always had was for our children, although we took comfort in a study that said children who attended more than five schools were more healthy, more adjusted, and did better academi-

cally than those who never moved. Through the years of ministry, the Lord has been good to my children. Today they are all committed to the Lord, walking in spiritual victory. Although the changes have been demanding, we have been greatly rewarded.

Charles Simpson: The primary issues in change are sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, confirmation by those affected, and circumstantial confirmation that comes when God is ready for change to take place. Change that is premature or irresponsible can be destructive and cause us to lose spiritual credibility. Change that is resisted beyond God's point of patience can cause spiritual deterioration, spiritual frustration, and ultimately spiritual failure.

In 1971, the Lord called me and my family to leave Mobile, Alabama, and move to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. But we didn't want to go, and He started dealing with me. A prowler tried to break into our house; there were tensions among local leaders, prophecies from people outside of my situation, counsel from friends, and pointed Bible verses. These told me what I knew in my heart, and eventually we moved.

Each time I've made a geographic change or ministry change, I've faced these issues. And I expect to face them again, because change is a sure sign of life.

NW: Ern, you have been through significant seasons in your fifty years of ministry. Has transition from one season to another been difficult?

Ern Baxter: In a sense it has been easy, because I've been carried along by the inspiration of the ascending revelation. On the other hand, it has been very difficult, because as we attempt to move on in God, we always leave something behind.

NW: Bob, does your recent move to Santa Rosa affect your relationship to your ministries, *Plumbline* and *Recommended Tapes*?

Bob Mumford: Geographically, but not relationally. Billy Graham, who has had a very great influence upon my life, lives in Charlotte, North Carolina, but his ministry is headquartered in Minneapolis. The ministry that we have set up in Mobile—that is, Integrity Communications—is so efficient that *Plumbline* and *Recommended Tapes* can continue to function well there.

NW: Ern, how has your ministry changed since your move to San Diego?

Ern Baxter: I've been more involved pastorally in San Diego with South Coast Christian Fellowship. I find myself adapting my ministry to its needs. But I have also been preaching and teaching with great joy in denominational churches, and I have been well received. I have had involvement with classical Pentecostalism on a scale that I haven't had for many years.

NW: Don, we've experienced a number of changes here at *New Wine* recently, including a change of editors. As chief editorial consultant, how will you continue to be involved in *New Wine*?

More on Bob Mumford's Move

In this interview, Bob Mumford announces his move to Santa Rosa in northern California. The move is something he has sensed the Lord calling him to for some time. Many of Bob's pastoral responsibilities are in the Northwest. In fact, he and his family lived in Cupertino, California, for a number of years. Returning to California will help him spiritually strengthen the people he is responsible for.

The move will not affect Bob's relationship to Integrity Communications or his fellow teachers. "My desire and intention," Bob stated in a letter announcing his move, "is to maintain every joint commitment and covenant in clear, functional order."

Please join us in praying for God's richest blessings upon the Mumford family in this transition. □

Don Basham: In recent years I haven't been as involved as I once was, with the exception, of course, of my column and occasional articles. But now with Dick Leggatt's move and with new staff coming in, I find myself more involved again in the editing of the magazine—which I enjoy.

NW: What do you see down the road for *New Wine*?

Don Basham: We're looking at adding some lighter, shorter articles to balance the teaching material we usually feature. We'll still aim for meaningful content, but present it in smaller portions. We believe that God is calling us to a larger audience than ever before—and that necessitates change. We've wrestled with this for several years, but have waited for the right season. Now we believe it's here, that we're in the "fullness of time." God is leading us to improve and expand the magazine, to make some critical but very beautiful changes in the appearance and content.

NW: Charles, in recent months you have increasingly focused your attention on Integrity Communications and on Gulf Coast Covenant Church in Mobile. Do you expect any changes in that focus in 1985?

Charles Simpson: As far as I can see now, Integrity Communications and the people whom I pastor will be my main ministry priorities. My 1984 goals were to strengthen the local church and Integrity Communications and to be a better family leader and pastor. In addition, I continued to work toward reconciliation in the larger body of Christ. I saw progress in all these areas, but in the year ahead I see three important emphases: reaffirmation of faith in what God has already



Bob Mumford

spoken, reconciliation with brothers and sisters who have been estranged, and reaching out in evangelism to those who need Jesus Christ.

NW: What impact do geographical changes have in your relationships? Do they affect the level of commitment?

Charles Simpson: Geographical changes are not destructive to personal relationships when God is the author of these changes. We see in the experiences of New Testament leaders that maintaining overall relationships while changing geographical focus is biblical. Derek Prince's current status because of his geographical focus, for example, is that of a brother in Christ who is not structurally related to us, but is quite spiritually related. Many brothers and fellow leaders are in that category and they are important to us. I believe we will continue to broaden our relationships to other servants of God, and the moves can facilitate this.

Don Basham: Ever since the four of us—Charles, Derek, Bob, and I—joined together in 1970, there has been a lot of speculation anytime one of us has moved. I even remember a time that Bob, Derek,

and I were at a conference in California. People said, "Charles isn't here. That must mean he has broken off." Commitment isn't based on geography. Commitments are personal. We made a covenant, and it still remains.

Ern Baxter: I see all of the changes coming out of relationship, not *threatening* relationship. My move, for example, was not an arbitrary decision on my part; it was done with considerable counsel from the men I'm in covenant with, as was Bob's. Given the nature of our callings, I don't see my relationship to the brothers requiring geographical closeness.

NW: Do you think it's a human tendency to resist change?

Don Basham: Change is always painful, because something in our carnal human nature makes us want to settle down, build security around us, and eliminate risk. That's not altogether bad, but at times it can thwart the purposes of God. Hebrews 13:14 says, "We have no continuing city." Christians are pilgrims, and if we keep that in mind, we'll be better off.

Even though we would like to build things permanently for the Kingdom's sake, we still need to be open to the Lord so that if He wants us someplace else, what we're doing won't prevent us from going. In Acts chapter 8, Philip was in the midst of a great revival in Samaria, but God snatched him away and put him in a desert situation so that he could minister to just one man—the Ethiopian eunuch.

Ern Baxter: Unless we have a strong confidence in God, change will always threaten us, because we won't be sure where we're going. When God said to Abraham, "I want you to leave your kin-

dred and your country and go to a land that I will show you," He didn't tell him where the land was. He said, "You start out and go, and I'll tell you about the land later." That kind of change is always a bit threatening.

We also tend to resist change because it is inconvenient. Many times I've packed up for yet another move and thought, *I hope this is the last time I have to do this*. Change is hard to handle. We don't like to be disturbed or moved. The little eaglet, if I may return to one of my favorite themes, doesn't like the idea of being thrown out of the nest, even though that's how it will learn to fly. I can't remember a change that didn't cause me some inconvenience or even pain. But usually, knowing that God was in it and anticipating what was coming along compensated for the inconvenience.

Charles Simpson: The more familiar our current setting is, the more secure we are. Change has a habit of throwing us into unfamiliar circumstances, so naturally we resist. But failure to change when God asks us is like taking the same grade in school over and over: Without change and challenge, we don't grow. We must see God's will as our ultimate goal, stay sensitive to His voice, and realize that our lives are His, not our own.

Bob Mumford: In Matthew chapter 13, Jesus said that many didn't want to hear Him because if they did, they would be converted. The Greek means, "They would be caused to change." They didn't want to be personally inconvenienced—the same problem Ern spoke of. Similarly, we resist change; our hearts grow fat and our ears grow deaf. It's true that a man who makes himself available to God without reservation will be personally in-

convenienced. But it's also true that there are two categories of people: Some people are afraid God will inconvenience them, and others are afraid He won't. That's the watershed.

The prophet Hosea said, "Ephraim is joined to idols; leave him alone." Now that's personal convenience—he was joined to something and he didn't want to budge. Consequently he was left alone by the purposes of God—to his own demise and destruction. My basic philosophy is that it costs something to say yes to God, but it costs much more to say no.

NW: What are some of the early indicators that let us know God wants us to change? Is there something like an early warning



Don Basham

system that goes off when we're resisting?

Don Basham: Part of that is our conscience. And the other part is the still, small voice that reminds us when we're not doing something required of us. But it's not always easy to know whether it's the devil's accusation or the Holy Spirit's conviction. The difference is that God doesn't condemn; the Holy Spirit will convict and urge us, but always with a positive goal in mind.

The devil, on the other hand, will tell us that all is lost, we've failed, and we'll never make it. Also, the devil's always in a

hurry: "Do it right now before it's too late!" We lose our peace and get restless. But the Holy Spirit is patient, and when He is speaking to us, the pressure of conviction will stay, and we'll get miserable resisting.

God has an eternity to work in, and sometimes He won't let up. I've noticed in my own life that He puts up with certain problem areas for a while, but then He'll turn the light on and show me something that I'm not doing or something I should be doing. When that pressure is on, we might as well give up. Sooner or later, God is going to have His way, and we'll be miserable until we give in.

NW: Are there ways for us to prepare for change? How can we keep ourselves open to change so that when it comes we can be ready for it and immediately see God in it?

Charles Simpson: The best way to be ready for change is to maintain a close relationship with the Lord. When we do, He will sensitize us to upcoming changes. When we sense that we hear His voice, we should ask Him to confirm those changes by signs of one kind or another—it's not wrong to confirm the sense of revelation that we have.

Joshua, for example, saw a vision of the Lord when he was in the wilderness preparing to lead the children of Israel against Jericho. He asked the vision, "Are you for us or against us?"

The Lord answered, "Neither. I am the captain of the Lord's host. Take off your shoes; you are on holy ground." The Lord didn't rebuke Joshua for challenging Him.

We should ask God to confirm what we're sensing spiritually, to confirm it scripturally, and to confirm it through responsible leaders who are going to stand



Ern Baxter

with us through the change. Once we're certain of the changes He's calling us to make, the only way we can see them through is to make them a priority by cutting back on other activity and praying for His grace and power to help us.

I find it helpful to live in readiness and without a fixed mentality. Many of us are oriented toward a particular end or goal rather than the journey itself. As a result, when we arrive at a certain milestone in our Christian experience, we tend to camp there rather than realize we're pilgrims and sojourners. Change is not the exception to the rule; it is the rule. We're constantly being changed, and to change us, God often has to change our circumstances.

Don Basham: If we recognize that God is sovereign, we can accept even tragedy, sickness, or catastrophe as His overall purpose. They're not good in themselves, and I don't mean that some changes are not painful or even tragic, but God will weave them into a tapestry of His purpose for us—which is ultimately good.

It helps when we're being pressured by God to make a change to reaffirm the fact that God is acting for our benefit.

Brother Rufus Moseley, an old friend of mine, used to say, "God doesn't turn on the light to hinder but to help."

When God turns the light on something that needs to be changed or adjusted, He's not doing it to condemn us. He's doing it because He wants to encourage us to change and move on to something better.

NW: We've talked about the negative side of change—the pain, the inconvenience. What about the positive side?

Bob Mumford: One of the most helpful messages I've heard was "Emptied From Vessel to Vessel," given by the great preacher John Wright Follette. He said wine makers let a vessel of wine sit on a shelf until all the sediment settles to the bottom. Then they carefully pour the wine into a new vessel, leaving the sediment behind. The result is a clear, pure liquid. That applies to us as individuals as well. God uses change



Charles Simpson

to purify us.

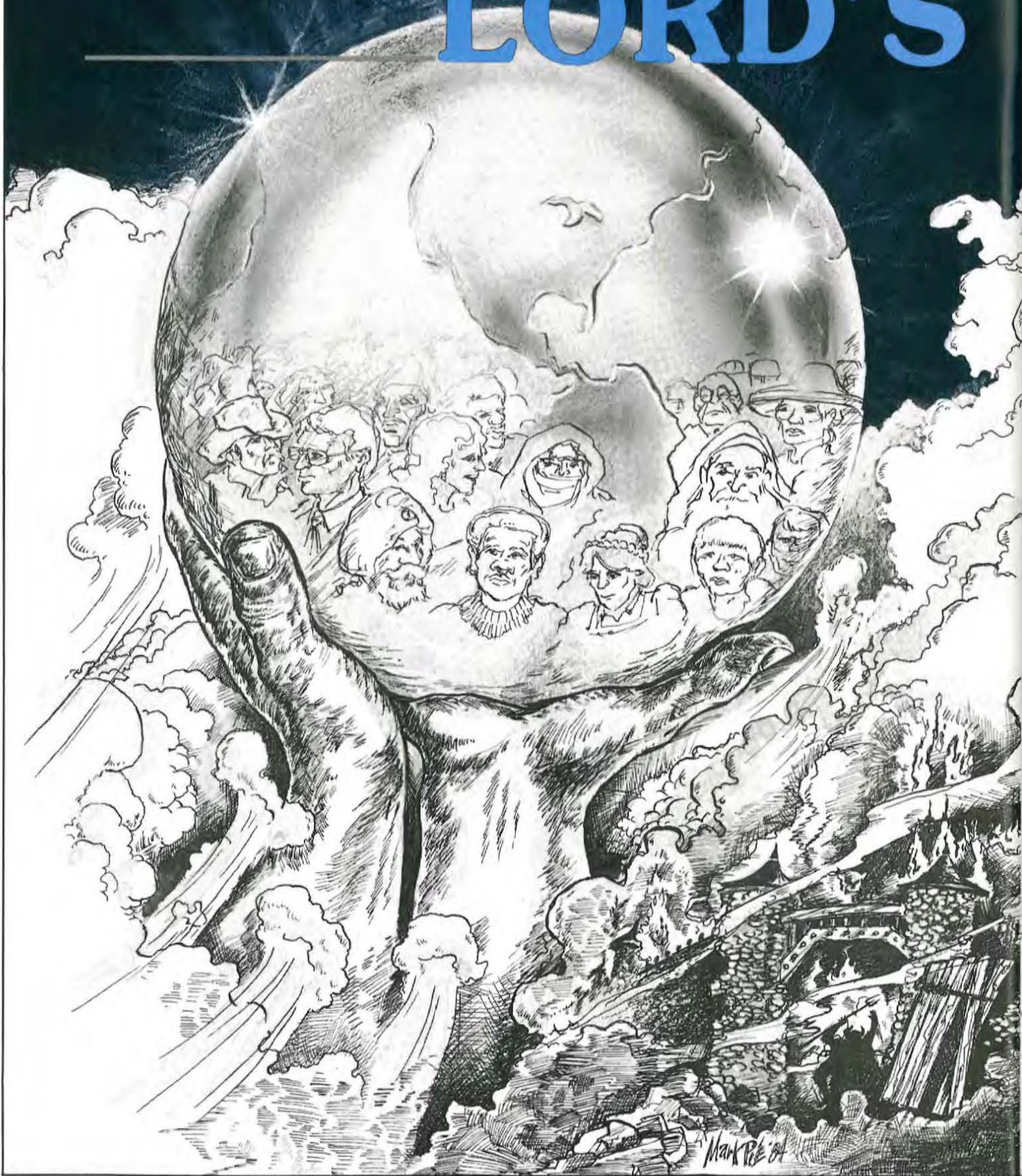
Scientists tell us that every seven years each cell in our body is replaced. And because the Church is a body, not an organization, the dynamics of change apply to it. Thus, if the Church is a living, breathing organism, then change is a necessary fact of life.

Don Basham: Derek Prince once said that in the fullness of time, when the wheat and tares grow to maturity, all of the darkness will be drawn out of the light so that the light will be pure. And all of the light will be drawn out of the darkness so that the darkness will be seen for what it is—total darkness. That separation is already starting to take place—a result of the changes occurring in each of us as we're changed from "glory to glory."

The Church is getting purer and better, and God's people are moving toward more light and maturity and are being purged of the darkness. But all of the light is going to be drawn out of the false church, the church of Babylon. It's going to be seen increasingly as dark. And anything that is light and anyone who is in light is going to be drawn out of there. We're already seeing that great separation. In the end, God's justice will be vindicated.

Another aspect of the positive side of change is that when we yield to the Lord, we are better off. Not to change is to risk stagnation. We either slide back or go forward; in God there is no such thing as standing still. My experience has been that if I'm at a point where I'm standing still, deep down I know I'm starting to backslide. In Philippians chapter 3, Paul says, "Press on toward the goal for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." God calls us to press on, and that always necessitates change. □

THE EARTH IS THE LORD'S



"Then cometh the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father."

BY ERN BAXTER

When I was a young boy, I was a soloist in our school's sixty-voice boys choir. One day, our choir leader taught us a hymn that I've remembered ever since, especially one particular line: "Let God be in my head and in my understanding."

I belong to a generation of people who have talked about God in their hearts. But I've come to see that I need God in my head too. I find myself praying again and again, "God, be in my head and in my understanding. God, use my mind as a repository for ultimate truth."

One important reason why I believe we must stretch our minds and understanding is so that we can comprehend God's ultimate purpose in history, which is often referred to as eschatology.

Eschatology is not, as some would say, a particular theory concerning the outcome of history; rather, it is the study of every phase of the end of the world as it is revealed in the life of Jesus Christ. It begins with the inauguration of the kingdom of God at Jesus' birth and ends with the consummation of the Kingdom at His second coming.

The word *eschatology* stems from the Greek word *eschatos*, which is translated "last." Traditionally defined as "the doctrine of the last things," the word *eschatology* occurs about 50 times in the New Testament. The usual understanding of *eschatology* as the last things or days is that it pertains to the future, but that is not the meaning of *eschatology* as it is used in the Scriptures. In

the Bible, it is descriptive of the total time period between Christ's incarnation and His second coming. It refers to a definite time, either lengthy or limited. Hebrews chapter 1 says, for example, that Christ was manifested and revealed in *eschaton*, or in "these last days" (v. 2). And in 1 Peter 1:20 we read that it was for our benefit that Jesus was re-



Our Lord Himself categorically states that He is the fulfillment of the hope of the people of God, the "amen" to all of God's promises.

vealed in *eschaton*, or in "these last times."

The Bible also tells us that this current age is the one that terminates the ages; all prior ages are fulfilled in this climactic age. Jesus refers to this in the Gospel of John: "Of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (Jn. 6:39). The writer of Hebrews says, "[God] hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:2);

and "Now once in the end of the world hath he [Jesus] appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26).

Our Lord Himself categorically states that He is the fulfillment of the hope of the people of God, the "amen" to all of God's promises. He says in Revelation chapter 1, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (v. 8); "I am . . . the first and the last" (v. 11).

The Meaning of It All

So then, what is God's purpose in history? The answer is victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. We see this as early as the garden of Eden and then in God's promise to Abraham.

Beginning with creation, we find God's victory over sin, for no sooner had man fallen than God made a pronouncement of His intention. In dealing with the serpent's deception, God says to him, "Cursed are you," putting an everlasting curse upon Satan (see Genesis 3:14).

Then in the New Testament that curse is fulfilled. Satan's future was settled once and for all at Calvary, where Jesus Christ destroyed principalities and powers and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in His cross (see Colossians 2:15).

This is further verified in 1 John 3:8, which says, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." This is a truth that we should fix firmly in our hearts as we do battle with Satan's dying efforts. Because of Jesus' victory, Satan is defeated,

continued on page 28

INTRODU

LET US INTRODUCE NEW BY SENDING YOU THE FIRS

It's a special message that every New Wine reader will want to listen to—not just once, but again and again.

Introducing New Wine Tape of the Month

Here's a chance to listen to each of our teachers on a regular basis by joining New Wine Tape of the Month. All of them are featured here—Don Basham, Ern Baxter, Bob Mumford, Derek Prince, and Charles Simpson.

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"I have never received a New Wine Tape of the Month that did not challenge me, interest me, provide new perspective, or change me in some way."

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You know what reading the articles by these men in New Wine Magazine has meant in your life. Wait until you hear them speak on tape. It's a whole new experience—an exciting way to learn God's word. It's almost like being right there with the teachers.

Their messages come alive for you. You discover things you've never known before. You just seem to see things from a more godly perspective.

"God has used you to teach us well and to widen our vision to become more like His."

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It also seems as if each month's topic meets the situation that you're facing right then. We hear this comment from our listeners time after time.

"This month's tape was God's answer to my prayers asking for boldness to take a stand concerning the many issues confronting us today."

—Gloria Schultz, Wausau, WI

What you'll learn from the tapes

Looking over the subjects of recent tapes, here are a few examples of what you would have learned:

1. Waging war against Satan and winning. Do you struggle with depression? With temptation? The problem may be spiritual.

2. Becoming a more godly man or woman. Most Christians want to become more like the person God desires them to be, but they don't know how.

3. Learning how Christian parents should care for their families. In the middle of a culture of broken homes, find answers that are practical and encouraging for both mom and dad.

4. Finding new freedom in praise and worship. Listen to creative and fresh insight on how to express your love of God more deeply.

5. Praying with greater joy and purpose. Do you have trouble knowing how to pray? Like any form of communication, prayer is developed with time. Hear some straightforward suggestions and ideas on how to improve your prayer life.

6. Establishing Christ's reign in your life. Do you believe that one day the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdom of our God?

CING...

WINE TAPE OF THE MONTH T TAPE ABSOLUTELY FREE!

Learn practical ways to establish Christ's reign in your life, in your family, and in your nation.

As you can see, New Wine Tape of the Month regularly features topics that are vital to your Christian growth. And future tapes will continue to meet your needs with the same solid, practical teaching.

"I appreciate the in-depth teaching each month. It helps bring me to maturity as I apply the lessons to my life. Thank you."

—Evelyn Ziuchosch, Reno, NV

An invitation to try New Wine Tape of the Month

We would like you to hear just one representative cassette from the New Wine Tape of the Month program. The tape is by Charles Simpson on the very important subject of prayer.

It's called "Our Place in Prayer," and many consider it a classic. Charles delivered this message in Washington, D.C., to over one thousand people at an Intercessors for America conference.

To get this FREE tape, all you have to do is check the box on the special New Wine Tape of the Month card in this issue, or on the Response Form on page 34. Mail it in the postpaid envelope, and we'll enroll you in the New Wine Tape of the Month program. Remember, send no money.

Each month you can expect to receive a new, specially selected tape by one of our teachers—for just \$5. If at any time you decide to cancel, we will understand. In any case, you may still keep the Charles Simpson classic tape on prayer.

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The Earth

continued from page 25

and we are the army that is running him to hell. The gates of hell shall not prevail against us. God has made us His instruments to effect Satan's defeat in history and establish Jesus as the true ruler of history.

As we move on from God's redemptive pronouncement in the garden, we come to that significant period in history when He starts a new dimension of His purpose in the man called Abram, who was eventually called "the father of the faithful." Speaking to Abram, or Abraham, in Genesis 12:1-3, God says that through him and his seed all the families of the earth will be blessed. That fulfillment is referred to in Romans 4:13:

For the promise, that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

The promise made to Abraham and his descendants was that they should possess the earth. It remains God's intention that the seed of Abraham should possess the earth. Jesus confirmed that promise when He said that the meek shall inherit the earth (see Matthew 5:5). Hebrews 11:10 says Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." That's the city that has been coming down from heaven for 2,000 years—the new Jerusalem.

It will not stop coming until it has engulfed the entire earth, until the earth becomes the scene of the government of God, and our often-repeated prayer "Thy kingdom come" has been fully answered.

The Foundation of Victory

But the foundation of this his-

toric victory is not to be found in something in the future; rather, it is rooted in something in the past, that is, Christ's person and work, what He accomplished in His *first* coming.

Many Christians know more about the second coming than the first, but without the first coming, there would be no second. The second is the consummation of the first. We are to preach the first and refer to the second, not



If we are caught in a "second coming syndrome," we need to change our ways. Nowhere does the Bible say the preaching of the second coming is the power of God unto salvation.

preach the second and refer to the first.

If we are caught in a "second coming syndrome," we need to change our ways. Nowhere does the Bible say the preaching of the second coming is the power of God unto salvation. It says the *gospel* is the power of God unto salvation (see Romans 1:16). And the gospel is the historical fact that

"Christ died for our sins ac-

cording to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

This is the gospel, Paul says, "by which also ye are saved" (1 Cor. 15:2). We should let the first coming, that is, when God became incarnate, grip our hearts. That in itself is a mind-boggling revelation—that the God who made the universe, and who upholds all things by the word of His power, that very God nestled in the virgin womb of a little peasant girl was born a human being and became one of us. The second coming pales in majesty beside the incarnation. The incarnation is the magnificent invasion of God into history through Jesus Christ!

The Person of Jesus

For 33 years this human yet divine being walked across the stage of history. With His impeccable life, His majestic poise and bearing, the wisdom of His words, the delightful balance of His personality, His submission and obedience to the Father, He came striding into history superior to every other human being. He came not by evolution, but as the incarnation of God in the flesh. The Apostle John says, "We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn. 1:14).

In Jesus Christ, God Almighty condescended to appear in human form and present Himself before men as the divine ideal for ultimate manhood. During all His earthly years, Jesus was subjected to the scrutiny of His Father. Three times from heaven the Father did for Jesus what He had done for no other man in all history—He opened heaven and said, "This is My Son and I like what I see." The Father found no flaw in His Son.

John, Jesus' cousin, standing in the muddy waters of the Jordan, pointed to Him and said, "Look, everyone. There goes the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" (see John 1:29).

Now this is the thing to remember: If Jesus Christ—the Logos, the Son, the second person of the trinity—had become incarnate and had moved among men in perfection only to go back to heaven and leave us with the picture of what man could aspire to be but never become, then man would have lived out his days in despair. But He didn't come just to show us what God is like, He came, as the Nicene Creed so majestically states, "for us men and for our salvation."

When Jesus was transfigured and stood with Moses and Elijah, Peter was overwhelmed by what he saw. He had seen Jesus do many miracles but he'd never seen Jesus like this. To Peter, this was it! He wanted to remain on the mountain and build monuments to Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. If He had listened to Peter, Jesus would have been kept there forever. We could have come and worshiped Him, then died and gone to hell. We could have come and taken away souvenirs from the mountain and then died and gone to hell. But Jesus left that mountain of majesty for a mountain of humiliation, where He was nailed to a cross. Then, having died for our sins, He took with Him a great host of sons and daughters into the presence of the Father and said, "Here I am, Father, and the children Thou hast given Me" (see Hebrews 2:13).

The Work of Christ

The Christ of the transfiguration is majestic, but only the Christ of Calvary is redemptive. What did He do for us? Look at the list:

1. He tasted death for every man. Christ died for our sins.
2. He defeated Satan. The prince of this world is judged and he remains judged.
3. He judged the world. This world system, trying to function apart from God, is a cursed city. It's a doomed metropolis waiting for its end. But emerging out of it is another city that is eternal in nature.
4. He became Lord of all: the



The gospel is destined to be victorious in time, space, and history. Jesus Christ will remain in heaven until all things spoken of by the prophets have come to pass.

Church, the Communist nations, the capitalist nations, the Third World nations. He is Lord of the nations and has commissioned us as His representatives to go and to bring under His rule the nations over which He became Lord as a result of His *first* coming—not His second.

5. He created a new race, a new species. We are not just reformed human beings, not just some old patched-up species. We are a brand-new race. For when Jesus

Christ stepped out of Joseph's tomb on that first Easter morning, He did so as the firstborn from among the dead, the beginning of a whole new kind of being, consisting of that which is both human and divine.

6. He established a victorious reign. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:25, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet."

I'm saying that the *first* coming is the important coming, the meaningful coming. The *first* coming is the coming that we must preach. What do we know about the second coming apart from the fact that He's coming again?

All Authority on Earth

Jesus' victorious reign means that all authority opposed to Him must be subjugated to Him before the end comes. We read in 1 Corinthians 15:22-24:

For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

When Jesus arose from the dead, He said to His disciples, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Mt. 28:18 NAS). That means in the United States of America, Jesus Christ has all authority. In the Soviet Union, Jesus Christ has all authority. In China, Jesus Christ has all authority. It means there isn't a better gospel coming. There isn't a better Jesus yet to be revealed. There isn't a greater redemption waiting to be unveiled. It's done. It's finished. When Jesus cried on the cross,

"It is finished," He said it all.

I am declaring that the gospel is destined to be victorious in time, space, and history; and that Jesus Christ will remain in heaven until all things spoken of by the prophets have come to pass. That means that the redeemed community is destined in history to become the visible representation of Jesus Christ's authority on earth, and that all nations will one day walk in the light of His authority.

Continuing in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 26 says, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

We must remember that the demise of the last enemy, death, has been reserved for a certain clearly defined event of God. Death will be destroyed in the act called the Parousia, or the second coming of Christ. At that point in history, when all things have been subdued by Christ, the last enemy will be defeated.

We are redeemed, but not yet glorified. And we will not be glorified until that point described in history as the last trump, the coming of the Lord, and the resurrection from the dead. Only then will our mortality give way to immortality and our corruptibility to incorruptibility.

What God Is Doing

Putting all this of what God is doing on the earth in a more practical context, let me quote from a book by C. Peter Wagner, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary.

We are in the springtime of Christian missions. The last couple of decades of the twentieth century hold forth more promise for the dynamic spread of the Christian faith around the globe than any other period of time since Jesus turned the water into wine.... Yes, the ice of the

wintertime is thawing and the grass is turning green. The decade of the seventies saw some of the most significant advances in world missions yet recorded.... each day welcomes a net increase of at least 78,000 Christians on this planet.... In many parts of Latin America the Protestant churches are growing three times the rate of the popula-



The redeemed community is destined in history to become the visible representation of Jesus Christ's authority on earth, and all nations will one day walk in the light of His authority.

tion. Back in 1900, only 50,000 Protestants were to be found in Latin America. The number passed 1 million in the 1930s, 2 million in the 1940s, 5 million in the 1950s, 10 million in the 1960s, and by 1980 the figure was over 20 million. Some predict that by the end of the century there will be 100 million Protestants in Latin America.... In East Africa, a little group of 10 that split

from the Catholic church in 1962 has grown to 150,000.... One hundred years ago there were no churches in Korea. Now in the city of Seoul alone there are 6,000.... Unquestionably, the greatest surprise in world Christianity in recent years was the discovery of church growth in China. When the missionaries were expelled in 1949-50 and the bamboo curtain fell, hopes were not high. At the time there was a total of about 1 million Chinese believers.... now even conservative estimates range between 30 and 50 million.¹

We see in the Scriptures God's purpose in history and we see it being manifested on earth even now. Jesus Christ is on the march. The King of kings is taking over. The world has run out of options, but the eternal light is shining ever brighter. The kingdom of God is on its way. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. □

Footnote

¹On the Crest of the Wave by C. Peter Wagner. Copyright 1984 by C. Peter Wagner. Published by Regal Books, Ventura, CA. Used by permission.

Ern Baxter, a longtime leader in the charismatic renewal, pastored one of the largest evangelical churches in Canada for twenty years. Since that time, he has traveled extensively in ministry throughout the United States and abroad. Ern is a member of the Integrity Communications Board of Directors. He and his wife, Ruth, recently moved to San Diego, California, where he is involved with South Coast Christian Fellowship. His time is divided between working with the fellowship and continuing his traveling ministry.

A family travels north in December

"Daddy, Will It Snow?"

BY GEORGE GUNDLACH

HOMESPUN

I've never met a child who didn't light up at the prospect of frolicking in fresh white snow. Several years ago, when we were living in a part of the country where it never snows, our family was planning a trip to the mountains of North Carolina to attend my brother-in-law's wedding. As soon as my sons Jonathan and Caleb, then ages five and two, learned that the wedding would take place in late December, their first question was, "Daddy, will it snow?"

Not being familiar with North Carolina, and wanting to get myself off the hook, I said to them, "If you want it to snow while we're in North Carolina, you'll just have to ask God to arrange it."

That night when the children were settled in bed, they began their prayers. "Lord Jesus, bless our sleep...keep us safe this night...bless everyone we know...in Jesus' name." Thinking they had finished, I said good night, but they continued.

"And, Lord, let it snow while we're in North Carolina."

Isn't that cute? I thought, not realizing that they fully expected their prayer to be answered. In fact, for months every night their prayers ended, "And, Lord,

let it snow while we're in North Carolina."

As the wedding approached, I became concerned. *What if it doesn't snow?* I thought. *How would I explain to them why God didn't answer their prayer?* After all, this was the first major prayer project they had undertaken, and I didn't want them to be disappointed.

The next time I spoke with my brother-in-law, I asked if he thought it might snow when we would be in North Carolina. But he was not very encouraging. "It never snows here until after New Year's Day."

But every night my sons' prayers were exactly the same: "And, Lord, let it snow while we're in North Carolina."

Finally it was time for us to leave the sunny South and head north for the wedding. Every hour on the hour, the kids asked, "Daddy, will it snow while we're in North Carolina?"

In an effort to prepare them for the inevitable, I decided to level with them. "People who live there say it usually doesn't snow quite this early."

But my gloomy weather report didn't dampen their expectations. Instead they were even more insistent than ever. After

all, they informed me, they had prayed.

When we arrived at our destination, there were no snowflakes on the ground or in the forecast. It was sunny and fifty-five degrees.

The evening of the wedding rehearsal we left the children with a sitter. As we dashed from the car to the church building, I pulled my coat around me, thinking the mountain air seemed suddenly cooler. I was intently listening to the minister, doing my best to memorize my assignment for the next day, when suddenly a late-comer arrived and made an announcement that jolted me out of my concentration. "It's snowing!"

I couldn't believe it—it really was snowing! As much as I enjoyed the evening, it was agony waiting for the rehearsal dinner to end. I knew the kids would be eager to get out in the snow. When the dinner was finally over, we ran back to the hotel, and even though it was nearly midnight, we bundled up the kids in double pants, double shirts, and double socks. Out we went into the winter wonderland, and had a thrilling time throwing snowballs and sliding down hills well into the early morning. Looking back on that special time, I'm not sure if it was the adults or the children who had the most fun.

All too soon the visit to North Carolina was over, but the memory of it will live forever. Even though Jonathan and Caleb's father on earth had his doubts, they never gave up hoping their Father in heaven would answer their prayer, even a simple request like, "And, Lord, let it snow while we're in North Carolina." □

George Gundlach is the former managing editor of Fathergram. His children enjoyed the snow so much that they have recently moved to East Lansing, Michigan, with their parents.

TIPS FOR FATHERS

A trained ear can be the difference between life and death

Of Snakes and Saints

BY BRUCE LONGSTRETH

It was a beautiful summer day, and Dad had taken me for a hike. We were following a covey of quail as they darted in and out of the thick brush along a dry creek when Dad suddenly stopped.

"Hold it!" he said sharply.

Something in his tone prompted me to stop instantly in my tracks. "What's wrong, Dad?"

"I heard something," he whispered, peering intently at the brush in front of us. "Sounded like a rattlesnake." Sure enough, a few steps from where we stood waited a four-foot rattlesnake, coiled and ready to strike.

Then I heard the buzz of the deadly rattlesnake that I'd missed earlier. I jumped behind my father, who proceeded to kill the serpent with a large stone from the creek bed. But the scariest thing of all was knowing that if Dad hadn't warned me and if I hadn't obeyed his warning, I might have stepped right on top of the snake. Dad's trained ear and my quick obedience had made the difference between life and death.

But I later learned that my dad wasn't the first man to make ear training a priority. Isaiah said of the Lord: "He... wakens my ear to listen like one being taught" (Is. 50:4 NIV). The prophet knew the importance of recognizing God's voice and responding accordingly.

When he said that, Isaiah

might well have had fathers in mind. It is important to teach our children to respond quickly to our words. When we say, "Right now!" or "Stop it!" we should not be satisfied with their answer of, "In a minute," or "Just a few steps more." The time might well come when a quick response to our direction could spare them heartache or tragedy.

Such a prompt response from our children requires that our communication be unmistakably clear. We must correct the most common problems in getting the "ear" of our children: lack of authority, unclear direction, and poor follow-up.

1. *Lack of authority.* Most dads are unprepared to deal firmly with the reluctance that often follows their words. "Aw, Dad! Do I have to?" whines the child who is saying to his father, "You don't really mean it, do you?" That's when we should say lovingly but firmly, "Yes, you *have* to! And right now!"

Children must learn early to recognize authority and act accordingly. As they mature and we "have their ear," then we can relax and give them more room. But a father must say what he means, mean what he says, and his children must learn early to respect and obey his word.

2. *Lack of clarity.* Sometimes we strike out in reaction to our children's disobedience when the real problem is that we have not

clearly stated what we want them to do. There is no mistaking the rattlesnake's warning, but dads can sometimes be pretty fuzzy in their directions. The puzzled look a four year old gives when he has been told, "Pick up your room," may mean he envisions a task even a circus strongman could not accomplish.

Give *specific* directions and make certain they are understood. This is especially true in "ear training" younger children. "Johnny, I want you to clean up your room. That means you are to put your clothes in the drawer, put the toys in the toy box, and put your shoes in the closet. Do you understand?" Again, early ear training will enable our children as they grow older to respond quickly to more subtle directions.

3. *Poor follow-up.* Sometimes a child may see no danger in ignoring his father's word. So in training the ears of our children, the worst possible approach would be to give clear directions but have no follow-up. If we say, "I want the lawn mowed and your homework done by eight o'clock," we should also add, "and I will check to see that you did it." If we fail to follow up or if there are no consequences to disobedience, our children will find it easier and easier to disregard our words. Eventually that could have tragic results.

The child who learns to respect his father's authority and obey his directions with promptness will ensure that his "days may be long upon the earth." □

Bruce Longstreth is editor of New Wine and Fathergram, a monthly newsletter that helps fathers build strong families. For a sample copy of Fathergram and subscription information, write to Fathergram, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616.

THE WORD

January 1985

I Believe in God, the Father Almighty...

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

A.	In the beginning God created	Gen. 1:1-31	Jan. 1
B.	The Lord made heaven and earth	Ps. 146:1-10	Jan. 2
C.	The Lord made every living thing	Job 38:1-41; 42:1-6	Jan. 3
D.	The Lord established the earth	Ps. 104:1-35	Jan. 4
E.	The Lord stretched out the heavens	Is. 40:12-31	Jan. 5
F.	The Lord formed Israel with His hand	Is. 42:1-43:7	Jan. 6
G.	The Lord created Jacob	Is. 45:1-13	Jan. 7
H.	The Lord gives power to become His sons	Jn. 1:1-18	Jan. 8
I.	The Lord sustains His servants	Acts 4:23-35	Jan. 9
J.	The Lord can be known through His creation	Rom. 1:18-25	Jan. 10

II. Who Is Faithful to Keep His Covenant

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

III. Who Is Holy and Righteous in All His Ways

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

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

A.	Mercy abounding to God's inheritance	Ex. 34:1-9; Num. 14:1-24	Jan. 27
B.	Mercy received with a thankful heart	Ps. 107:1-43	Jan. 28
C.	Mercy continuing to each generation	Ps. 136:1-26	Jan. 29
D.	Mercy extended to sinners	Rom. 5:1-11	Jan. 30
E.	Mercy unites a scattered people	1 Pet. 2:1-12	Jan. 31

A monthly Bible study by Bruce Longstreth



RESPONSE PAGE



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TAPE OF THE MONTH



YES, please send me my free tape, "Our Place in Prayer," and sign me up for **New Wine Tape of the Month**. I'll pay \$5 for each tape thereafter.

T85ANW

A young preacher discovers

The Perils of a Purple Plymouth

BY DON BASHAM



"Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you" (Rom. 12:3 NIV).

It was February 1957. I had just begun my first full-time pastorate in a small church in Washington, D.C. and was shopping for a new car. During seminary years in Oklahoma, a plain green Studebaker had faithfully carried me and my family more than 137,000 miles between Bible college and weekend ministry at my student church. But any young minister bent on becoming a spiritual leader in the nation's capital needed more appropriate transportation. Although we really did need a new car, it was an over-inflated appraisal of my new

status that prompted my act of folly.

You may be too young to remember that 1957 was the year of the tail fin in U.S. car design. I chose a slick purple Plymouth Belvedere with ivory stripes down its sides and tail fins that soared above the rear bumper. Even parked at the curb it looked as if it were traveling 80 mph. What's more, it had plush carpet and push-button transmission.

With my mind already made up, I prayed fervently to know the will of God. I claimed a dozen different scriptural promises and rebuked the devil's negative thoughts—thoughts like how the payments would strain our frail budget and how the car I had in mind seemed more appropriate for a college playboy than a conservative pastor.

The day I signed the sales contract—a day I later called "the beginning of sorrows"—I ripped a three-inch tear in my best slacks on a sharp corner of the salesman's desk. I suspected God was trying to get my attention, but I bought the car anyway.

I drove my new purple Plymouth into rush hour traffic and stalled right in front of the dealership. They had neglected to put gasoline in the car.

I marched back inside to complain.

I didn't discover the ripped seams in the rear seat upholstery until I got home and was showing the car to my wife.

I took the car back to the

dealer to complain.

On the fifth day, I found a line of distortion running the entire width of the front windshield.

I took the car back to the dealer to complain.

They replaced the windshield; then the car leaked when it rained.

I took the car back to the dealer to complain.

The following week the front seat stopped adjusting properly. It would lock only all the way forward or all the way back, so I had to drive either with the steering wheel bumping my abdomen, or grasping the wheel at arm's length.

I took the car back to the dealer to complain.

I also said if they still had my green Studebaker on the lot, I'd like to trade back. They thought I was joking. I wasn't.

After this fifth trip to the service department, I found myself talking only to mechanics who mostly mumbled and looked at the floor. The service manager never seemed to be available. But I wasn't fooled. Deep down I knew that every time he saw that purple Plymouth with its wild-eyed driver approaching, the coward locked himself in the washroom.

If I said that things finally got better, I'd be lying. They never did. After 15 months, I traded my 1957 purple lemon for a plain vanilla Chevrolet with no carpet, no push-button transmission, and no tail fins. It was dependable transportation appropriate for a young preacher in his first pastorate.

Is there a moral in all this? Yes, there is. God will allow us to have our own foolish way simply because it's sometimes the most effective means of teaching us that His ways are better. At least, that's the way I see it. □

Don Basham is chief editorial consultant for New Wine.



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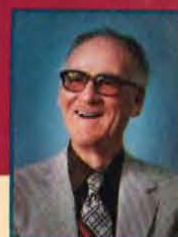
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