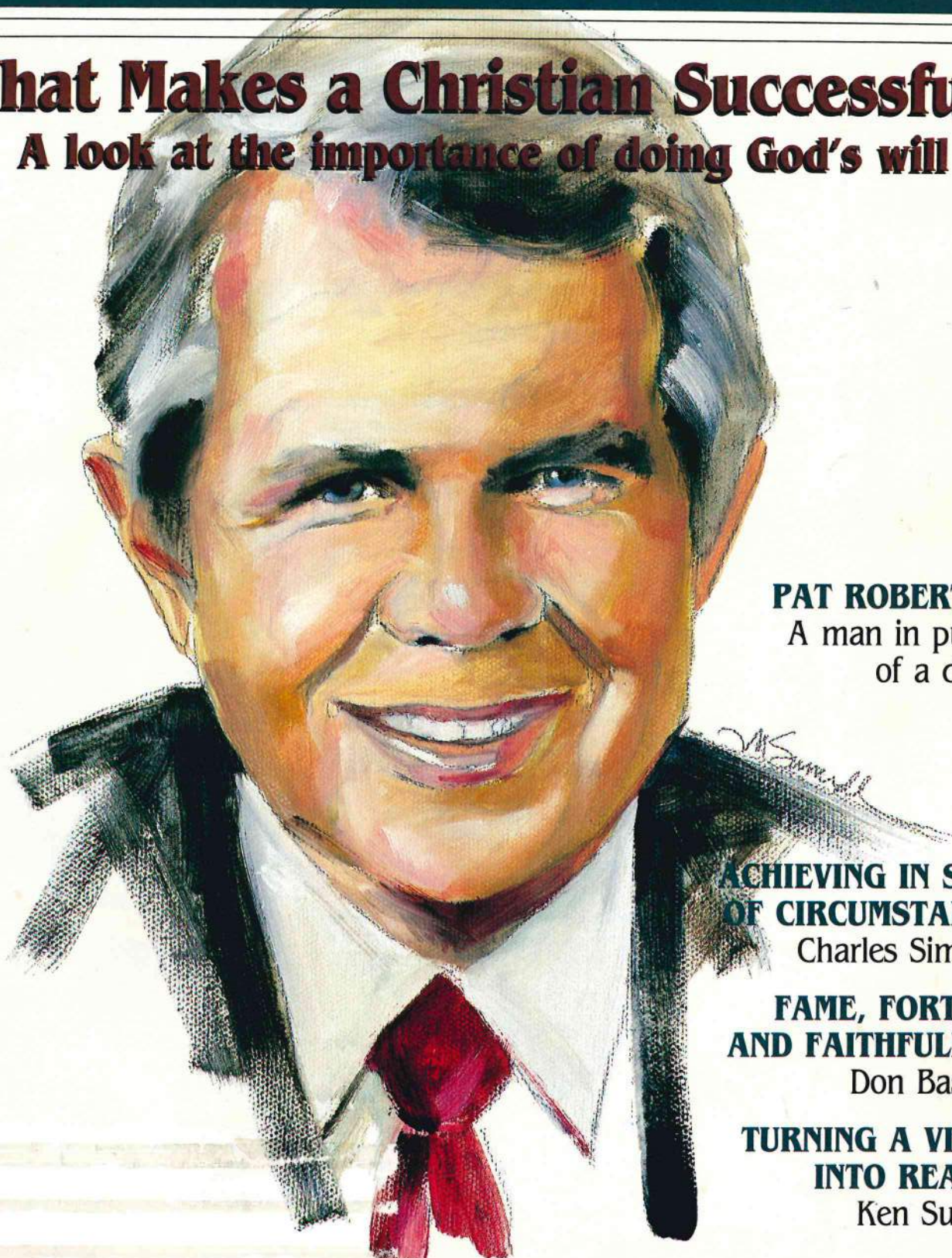


# Magazine **New Wine**

February 1986 \$1.95

## **What Makes a Christian Successful?**

**A look at the importance of doing God's will**



**PAT ROBERTSON**

A man in pursuit  
of a dream

**ACHIEVING IN SPITE  
OF CIRCUMSTANCES**

Charles Simpson

**FAME, FORTUNE,  
AND FAITHFULNESS**

Don Basham

**TURNING A VISION  
INTO REALITY**

Ken Sumrall



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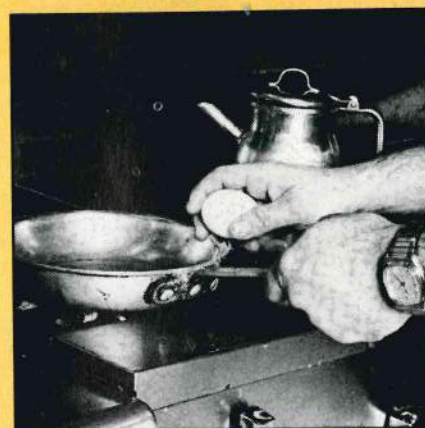
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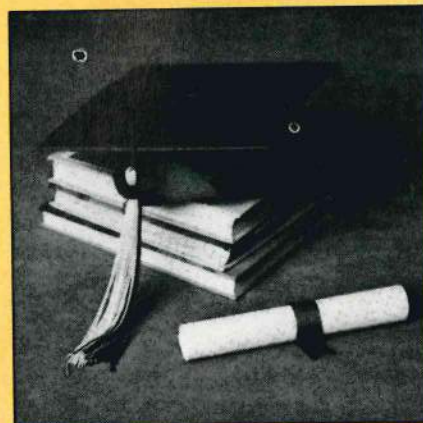
Vol. 18, No. 2, February 1986



6. Charles Simpson tells us that we can be overcomers by doing the will of God.



12. True success is measured by our daily faithfulness to the task at hand.



32. Ken Sumrall shares his vision of a Bible college and how it became reality.

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# Pat Robertson and the National Religious Broadcasters Successful Communicators

by Charles Simpson

**T**he National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) Convention and Exposition held in Washington, D.C. is one of the highlights each year for Christian leaders. Broadcasters, publishers, and exhibit personnel from more than three hundred organizations meet together for a time of inspiration and instruction as they focus on more effective ways of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ. More than six thousand people are expected to attend this year's conference, which will feature Pat Robertson, Sandi Patti, James Dobson, Lloyd Ogilvie, and Steve Green.

This year's NRB convention is special to us at *New Wine* because it coincides with our emphasis on Christian achievement: *Success is doing the will of God*. NRB people are cause-oriented and goal-oriented achievers. Their lives revolve around a cause beyond themselves—proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This year's NRB convention is also special because it features Pat Robertson, whose journey is chronicled in this issue of *New Wine*. Recently, Pat Robertson was chosen by the 150,000 readers of *Charisma* magazine as the most influential leader in the charismatic renewal. A pioneer in Christian television, he is without a doubt the foremost Christian broadcaster today. Pat Robertson is being featured as a keynote speaker at the NRB convention at a time when he is considering running for president of the United States.

Whatever decisions are made about Pat Robertson's future, it can be said that his efforts have contributed to making the Christian media a serious factor in America's future. The people who are part of the NRB have also helped to make it so.

In this month's *New Wine*, we highlight Pat Robertson and other achievers, as well as what the Bible has to say about achievement. In my feature article, I emphasize the fact that we can be victors over our circumstance instead of victims, in our quest for fulfilling our goals. Then, Don Basham gives us practical guidelines for measuring true success.

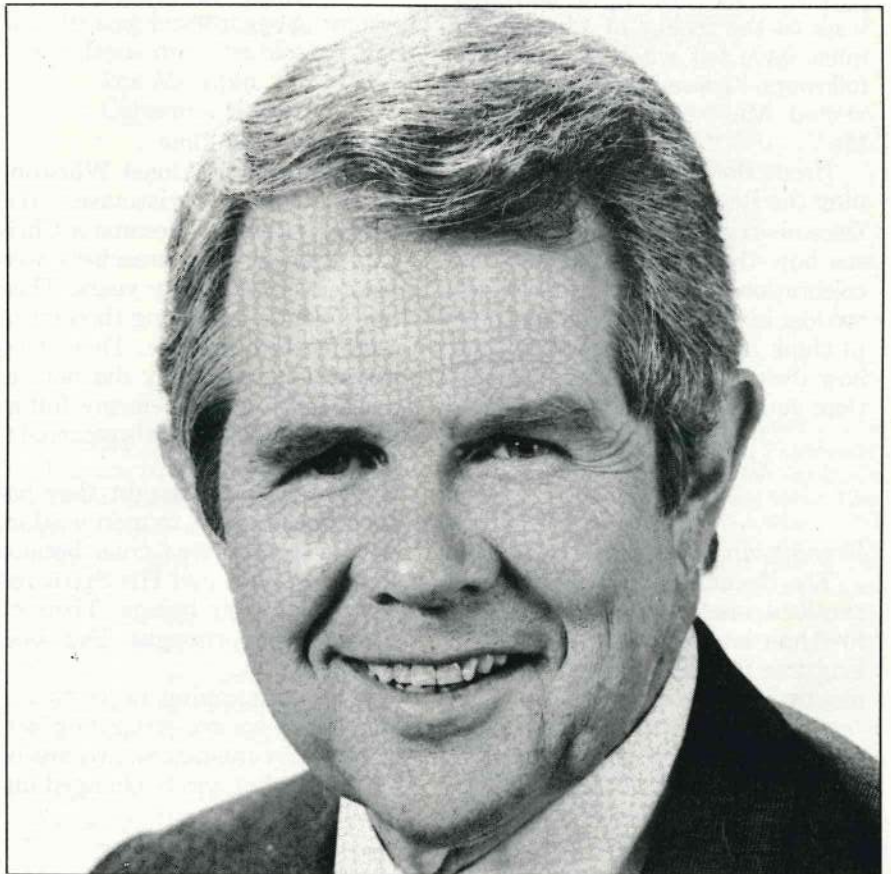
Ken Sumrall is a pastor and founder of several Christian endeavors. His most recent goal is a four-year liberal-arts Christian college. He shares that vision with us. And finally, Michael Ellison, one of the most effective consultants in Christian media, shares his thoughts on Christian communications.

Recently, I was asked to join a consultation of Christian leaders who are seeking to close this millennium with a decade of evangelism that would encompass all of Christendom. As I reflected on the proposal, it became clear that the time had come for all of us, to go beyond personal success, to the corporate success of the Church in carrying out its mission. Our success is tied up in the Church's success.

God bless the National Religious Broadcasters, and God bless all of those who proclaim the lordship of Jesus Christ. □

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*Charles Simpson is chairman of the board of Integrity Communications.*





## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### "Dear New Wine,"



#### "I Was in Prison..."

In our day, when "violent crime," "criminals' rights," "victims' rights," and "overcrowding in prisons" have all become watchwords in the law-and-order debate on the nightly news or in the newspapers, it was stirring to be called back to the reality of what Jesus must have felt when He told His followers, "I was in prison and you visited Me," or "...did not visit Me."

Brent Bolds's article ("Unwrapping the Real Spirit of Christmas," December) arrived in time for me to see how the Lord feels about the celebration of His birth before I got too lost in how I feel about it. Come to think of it, you did not tell me how Jesus felt about the celebration; you showed me.

John Stemper  
Houston, TX

#### Strengthening the Network

The December *New Wine* is an excellent one! I heartily subscribe to Anna and Simeon's life-style—longtime faithfulness, intercession, resting in our great God.

Also, I give thanks for indications that the Lord is drawing His people together ("A Network for Unity"). As we minister in oneness and for true oneness, there shall truly be oneness in love in the

whole Body, giving John 17:21 evidence!

Many thanks also for your words in regard to serious Christian music ("Soli Deo Gloria"), the classics that endure because of their sublime inspiration and orientation!

Marie Stone  
Avon, CT

#### Tempered With Time

I appreciated Lionel Whiston's article "Ninety Christmases" (December). Before I became a Christian I knew that preachers were different after eighty years. There was a gentle, charming thoughtfulness in their manner. They never stayed long and they did not say much but I gave them my full attention, and their words recurred to me for days.

Back then, I thought they had lived long enough to gain wisdom. In a way that was true, because God is wisdom and His Spirit had permeated their beings. Their every act and thought had been changed by it.

It is encouraging to know that even while we are struggling with present circumstances, we are being slowly but surely changed into His likeness.

Louise Wilcox  
Houston, TX

#### From Discipline to Delight

Thank you so much for printing "The Hour of Power" by Larry Lea (October and November). The series was a welcome answer to prayer.

Last January I received a calling to intercessory prayer. Although my heart had the calling and the desire, my flesh had no discipline to be consistent in my prayer time. Often when I began to pray, my mind would wander and I had no way to organize my burdens in prayer. My heart ached at the fact that I was wasting God's time and my own with ineffective prayers. Again and again I asked God to show me how to pray for others, my ultimate goal being, "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" (Jas. 5:16 NAS).

When I read "The Hour of Power," I knew my prayer time would never be the same and my answer had come. Through these articles the Lord has given me a guideline to cover all my prayer concerns. I made a brief outline of both articles and use it when I am in prayer. These articles have been the catalyst I needed to bring the discipline in prayer I never had before. Already a new delight wells within my spirit each time I am with my Father in prayer.

Ginny De Loach  
Dover, NJ

#### What a Joy!

This month's *New Wine* (November) has been a joy to read. "The Lost and Found Department" threw so much light on joy—Jesus' joy and the same joy that He gave to us. Jesus is more wonderful than there are words to describe, and I am so thankful to Him for inspiring you to write this article, and thankful to you for writing the article.

Mary Walton  
Cisco, TX

#### Thanks for Your Concern

The challenge of giving *New Wine* a more professional look com-



municates the personal concern for believers that has always been at the heart of Integrity Communications. November's "Did You Know?" covers this challenge. God's answers to your prayers for the needs of your readers testify, in a way that is touching, to your genuine concern for the individuals you reach.

This concern is also, I believe, the heart of the Father. He labors to this day to meet the needs of His children. God bless you for laboring with Him.

Philip Weingart  
Mobile, AL

#### Reader's Suggestion

Perhaps you would consider publishing a prolife issue of *New Wine*. Our local chapter of Birthright has dwindled down to four members, and our Right to Life chapter has about ten members, with only four to five showing up at monthly meetings. It is very discouraging and I wonder where all the Christians are, although I know many are praying for us.

Ann Morrison  
Knob Noster, MO

*Editor's note: The abortion issue is one that we are vitally concerned about. Look for articles in the March New Wine on this issue, along with a special tear-out petition for you to sign and circulate.*

#### Powerful Evangelism Tool

About four years ago Joe McGraw, one of your longtime subscribers, gave me a gift subscription to *New Wine*. He had been witnessing to me about Jesus and was making slow progress.

I have to admit that for a long time I didn't read the magazines before throwing them away. But for about a year Joe kept witnessing, and *New Wine* kept coming. Joe seemed to have every issue you ever put out, and every time I asked him a heavy-duty question, he would find a back issue that had the answer.

Since then I have become a Spirit-filled believer with a real hunger for God. My life has truly been changed! Before I became a Christian, I never could understand how you could have a "personal" relationship with someone you couldn't see. Now, I just want to grab people and say, "Jesus is real! He changed my life and He can change yours!"

I am indebted to Joe McGraw and to *New Wine* for the parts you both have played in my life. Joe now lives in Manhattan, Kansas, and has probably given *New Wine* to some poor unsuspecting sinner for Christmas.

Mike Bowen  
Arlington, TX

#### Come as a Child

Our eleven-year-old son, Kelly, who has Down syndrome, is delighted with his first tape from Hosanna! Music. He sings along and raises his hands in worship. He is such a blessing to us. Thank you for blessing him with your music. I know Jesus must be blessed also.

Iris McAlpin  
Columbia Heights, MN

"Dear New Wine" is your platform to express your point of view about a *New Wine* article, to pose a question, or to disagree with a point we've made.

If you'd like to respond to a specific article, to question a writer, or to share how God spoke to you or challenged you, this is your opportunity to do it. Send your letters to "Dear New Wine," P.O. Box Z, Mobile, Alabama 36616.

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*New Wine* Magazine seeks to promote the unity and maturity of the Church and individual Christians by presenting sound biblical teachings and testimonies from a variety of Christian authors.

*New Wine* will carefully consider all unsolicited manuscripts, although we cannot return them unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (Please note we do not publish poetry.)



## TIPS FOR FATHERS

Teaching biblical truths about wealth and poverty

# Robin Hood Economics

by Stephen Simpson

**H**e stole from the rich and gave to the poor." That's what most of us remember about the character Robin Hood. The story itself is harmless, but that kind of philosophy carried over into our thinking about economics is dangerous. Talking to our children about how God views wealth and poverty may never cross a dad's mind, but it is an important truth to teach.

A lot of people, including Christians, claim that it is unfair for anyone to have wealth when so many are desperately poor. But that's socialism—the philosophy that says only a certain amount of wealth and resources is available, and if one person has a larger "piece of the pie" than someone else, he is robbing others of their fair share.

Contrast this limited-wealth philosophy with what the Scriptures teach us. Paul says, "My God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19 NAS). In other words, no matter how great our need, God has the wealth and resources available to provide for us (see Psalm 50:10-12).

If having wealth were a sin, then God would be the greatest sinner there ever was, for He is indeed wealthy. "That's okay for Him," some might argue, "but He wants us to be poor." They would go on to point out how Jesus told the rich young ruler in Mark 10:21, "Go and sell all you possess, and give it to the poor" (NAS). Yet when Esau sold his inheritance, God was displeased (see Genesis chapters 25, 27).

Jesus told the rich young ruler to give up his possessions because He knew that wealth was this man's stumbling block; he gained security from being wealthy in-

stead of from faith in Jesus. Some people are secure in being poor, thinking it makes them righteous. But the righteousness of Christ is our only claim to the Father.

We are in dangerous territory when we denounce the blessings of God as a curse. He does not want us to reject His gifts, or criticize others who are blessed, because He wants us to use our riches for His glory.

When we explain to our children that God wants us to have financial blessings, we must also show them that the key to receiving those blessings is not in striving for wealth, but in walking in the ways of the Lord. Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Seek ye first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you" (Mt. 6:33 NAS). Our faith is not in our wallet or in our property, but in the grace and provision of God. When we prosper, we know it is because of His grace and our obedience to Him, not because of our own genius or strength (see Psalm 1:1-3).

Also, we must help our children see the resources that God has made available to them so that they will be able to use them for the sake of the Kingdom. Many nations are poor today because they have not learned how to properly make use of their natural resources or how to handle their economy. What a tragedy it would be if our children had wealth stored up for them that they never used because they didn't know about it.

We cannot simply hoard the wealth that God gives us; He wants us to produce something with it. If we are productive, He will bless us with more (see Matthew 25:14-30). Part of being productive for His kingdom is blessing others with food, clothing, shelter,



encouragement, and ultimately, the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (see Matthew 25:31-46). Sometimes this means being generous even in the midst of our own financial difficulty, but we must seek to do the will of God first.

We should not be slaves to money—whether it's trusting in wealth or poverty. Instead, we should sow into righteous, eternal causes that the Lord shows us. As fathers, let us raise up a new generation of people who understand their inheritance in God and are able to put it to work so that they might glorify the Lord. □



*Stephen Simpson is editor of The Charles Simpson Ministry Report. He is a communications graduate of Spring Hill College in Mobile, Alabama, where he lives with his wife, Susanne.*

"Tips for Fathers" is provided by *Fathergram*, a monthly newsletter that offers insights, tips, and testimonials from fathers who care about their families. To subscribe, send \$9.95 (special price) to *Fathergram*, P.O. Box Z, Mobile, AL 36616.



## HOMESPUN

Traveling safely up life's steep climbs

# Riding Double

by Kay King

**G**ingerly I fastened the bulky strap on the helmet, adjusted my glasses, and nodded to my son Kyle that I was ready. It was my first ride on his motorcycle, and before I had a chance to change my mind, we were off for Tater Hill.

Past the church and bank, he skillfully guided the powerful machine along the smooth pavement and then onto the narrow dirt trails that wound down to the lake. Blazing red and gold leaves stood out against the dark blue backdrop, and on the lake, sailboats peacefully soaked up the November sun oblivious to the steady roar of the engine. Suddenly, the tranquil scene disappeared and the steep rugged incline that led to the top of Tater Hill loomed ahead of us.

*Surely we're not going to climb that!* I reasoned, thinking Kyle would choose an easier path. He must have known what I was thinking because he shouted above the noise, "Keep holding on, Mom! My bike was *made* for this!"

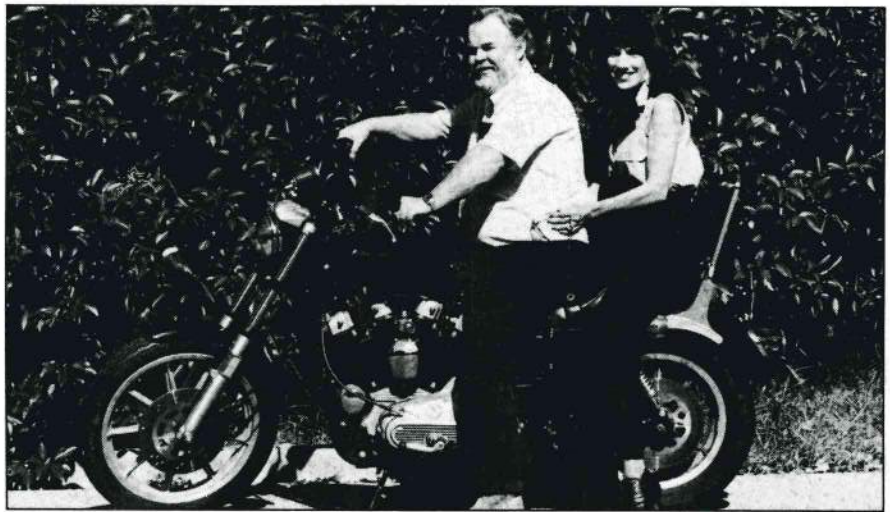
I had no other choice and did exactly what he told me to do. The next thing I knew we were on the top of that high grassy hill, overlooking the park and lake.

"Looks different from up here, doesn't it?" he asked.

He waited barely long enough for me to catch my breath, and then we were off in a new direction.

The ride up Tater Hill wasn't the only uphill climb I faced that year. We were struggling to conquer another mountain—our eighteen-year-old son, Dee, had brain cancer. It too seemed an impossible path to travel. My husband, Ben, explained the struggle to our Bible study group one evening:

"When my wife and I were told that Dee had cancer, we thought we couldn't face it. To see him go



*Ben and Kay King*

through that was the hardest thing we have ever done. In addition to the physical trauma, we encountered other pains. Dan, our youngest boy, spent entire nights in prayer but went into severe depression when kids at school asked cruel questions he couldn't handle on his own.

"Trust, treatments, fear, faith, and tears filled our lives for the next months. Many times when we couldn't eat we discovered what it was like to live by the grace and peace that came to us through the prayers of friends. We learned the truth of the scripture that says, 'When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear your name, O Lord God Almighty' (Jer. 15:16 NIV).

"In the kind of trial no one ever thinks could happen to him, there was a spring of joy and praise inside that quietly comforted the broken pieces of our hearts. And it was a spring that didn't stop.

"It was a fight for life, like being pulled in a wagon up a steep mountain trail, holding on to the back of

Jesus all the way. Every day we learned what it meant to cleave and hold on to the only source of help that made the difference between life and death. We refused to look at or listen to anything else, and we tightly held on to His back as He carried us up the steep climb."

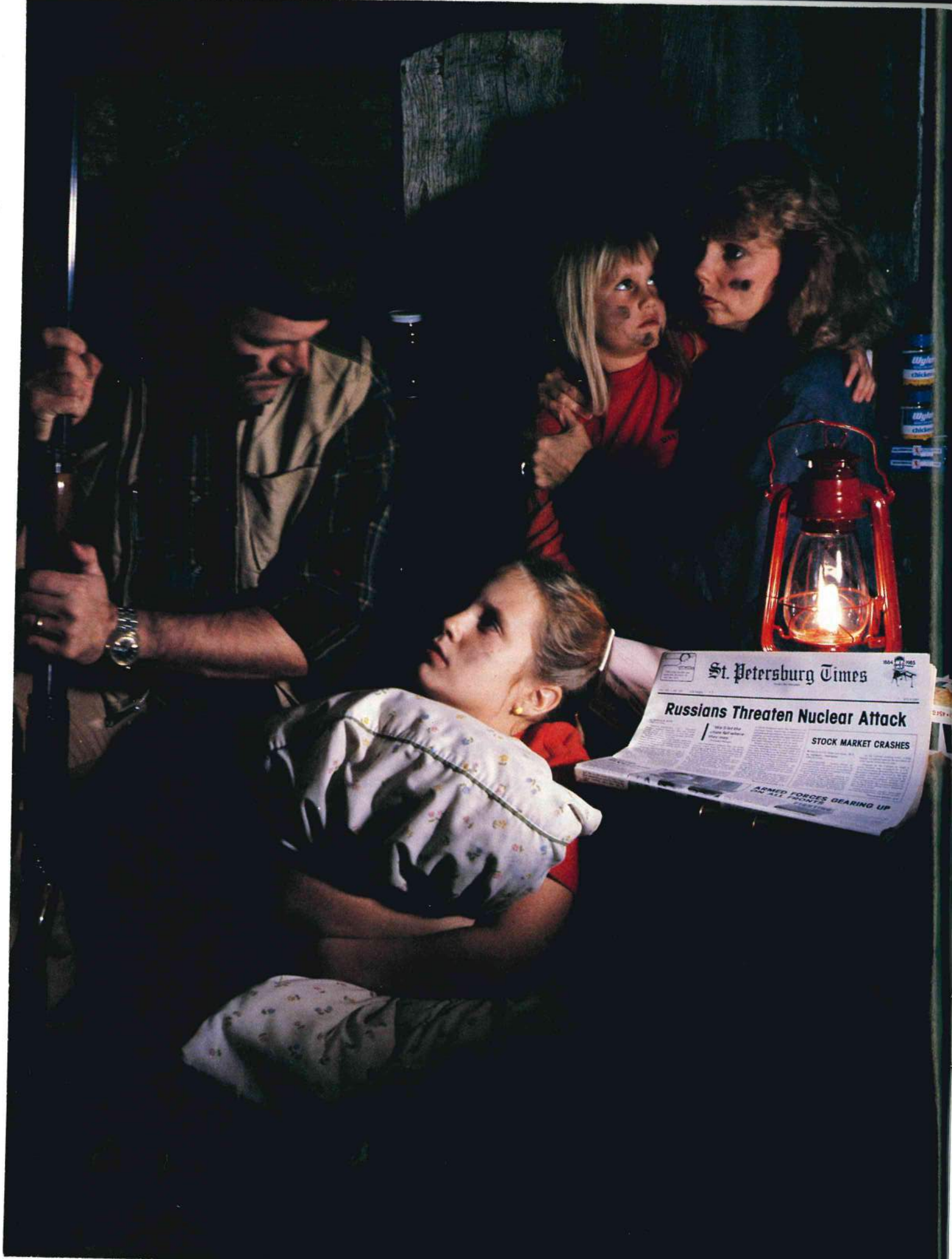
When I heard Ben's words that evening, I knew that holding on to Jesus' back would take us safely through the steepest climbs of life—just like holding on to Kyle's back was the only way to travel up Tater Hill. We suffered with Dee through surgery and radiation treatments. His doctors gave him an extremely bleak prognosis, but the Lord answered me—he would be healed. And he was. Today, five years later, Dee is in excellent health.

We made it to the top of the mountain. I can now say that Kyle was absolutely right that afternoon on Tater Hill. The most beautiful views are from the tops of the steepest mountains. □

---

*Kay King is a New Wine reader who lives in Waco, Texas.*





St. Petersburg Times

## Russians Threaten Nuclear Attack

STOCK MARKET CRASHES

ARMED FORCES GEARING UP



# Victims or VICTORS?

Do you let your circumstances keep you from achieving?  
by Charles Simpson

**T**wentieth century economics, psychology, sociology, and even theology have made people *victims* rather than *victors*. Naturalists have told us that we are victims of evolutionary forces. The predominant schools of psychology have told us that we are victims of our ancestors and environment. Even religionists have joined the chorus by telling us that we are victims of our own depravity and guilt.

Besides all that, we are victims of other forces: diminishing oil, clean water, and clean air, and our only certainty is a nuclear holocaust. No wonder we have such epidemics of drug abuse, alcoholism, and suicide. "Victimitis" has robbed us of the belief that we can rise above obstacles and achieve great goals. But that is changing.

There is currently a strong backlash to victimitis. It is reflected in the return of the "good guy" in movies, entrepreneurs in economics, practicality in education, and the "super church" in religion. It's the return of the achiever.

As our society is moving toward achievement, education, industry, and religion are all focusing more on productivity and less on introspection and subjectivity. This change is taking place because people need reasons to live that are beyond themselves. They have found that the self-indulgent values of the secular humanist society are baseless and will not produce utopias of equalitarian justice. What they have produced are epidemics of promiscuity, shattered families, convenience abortion, rampant por-

nography, millions and millions of chemically dependent people, and terrorism.

Although achievement is healthy for one's existence, the value of achievement depends upon what and how. True success is achieving God-ordained goals by God-given means. Success is not self-serving; it serves the Lord, society, and posterity. Success is measured by how our efforts benefit others.

The greatest models of achievement are found in the Word of God. Many biblical characters attained a high degree of God's purpose and benefited their generation and those who followed. The Old Testament prophet Daniel is one such character.

## In Difficult Circumstances

Achievement is where one arrives. Circumstances, good or bad, are merely the scenery along the road. Daniel is a classic example of achievement in difficult circumstances.

His last memories of his home in Jerusalem were of murdered parents, a plundered and humiliated city, and a conquest by a pagan society over those he had believed to be God's chosen people. He and a few of his young friends were preserved by the Babylonians because they came from nobility, exhibited intelligence, and were good-looking.

In addition to the traumas of his social uprooting, Daniel was made a eunuch, ending all possibilities of normal family life. He was placed in a school for future counselors to Babylonian kings and taught the

eastern arts of soothsaying, magic, and astrology, which were all abhorrent to Jewish religion.

In addition, he and his friends faced an immediate test of the Jewish law on diet. They were exposed to the Babylonian delicacies, none of which were kosher. Still they stood by their values and training, deciding to eat only vegetables and drink water, rather than partaking of the exotic, "unclean" Babylonian foods. They fared so well that their tutor gave them permission to continue on their own diet.

But the real crisis was ahead. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon and the civilized world, had a dream. Because he could not remember the dream, he became extremely agitated and demanded that his counselors come before him.

"Tell me what I dreamed and what it means."

"You tell us, O King, what you dreamed, and *we* will tell you what it means."

"I don't know what I dreamed. That is what I am asking you to tell me!"

The counselors were hard pressed. "No one can do what you are asking."

"Well, if you don't, you are not really diviners. You are frauds, and I will have the whole bunch of you killed."

Daniel and his friends, although only trainees, were faced with the same threat of death as the others. Daniel's supervisor brought them word of their impending doom.

"Give us a chance to seek our God," Daniel requested.





**"Victimitis" has robbed us of the belief that we can rise above obstacles and achieve great goals. But that is changing.**

"It is no use. No god can reveal the dream," his supervisor said.

"Ours can," Daniel persisted. And so he and his friends held a desperate prayer meeting through the night.

The Scriptures tell us what happened:

Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven; Daniel answered and said, "Let the name of God be blessed forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to Him. And it is He who changes the times and the epochs; He removes kings and establishes kings; He gives wisdom to wise men, and knowledge to men of understanding. It is He who reveals the profound and hidden things; He knows what is in the darkness, and the light dwells with Him. To Thee, O God of my fathers, I give thanks and praise, for Thou hast given me wisdom and power; even now Thou hast made known to me what we requested of Thee, for Thou hast made known to us the king's matter" (Dan. 2:19-23 NAS).

"Daniel blessed the God of heaven." He had not only seen a vision; he had seen a whole new perspective on why he was in Babylon, and on what God was doing and would do for generations to come.

He saw in a vision the great image that Nebuchadnezzar had seen in his dream. The great image had a head of gold, chest and arms of silver, thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with clay. He then saw a huge stone, hewn without hands, roll down from a mountain, hit the image in the feet, and grind it into powder. Then, the wind blew the remains away. The stone then became a mountain that filled all the earth.

The interpretation was that the image represented successive Gentile kingdoms. Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold. Each successive kingdom would deteriorate in its glory. Finally, in their last state they would deteriorate until they were not kingdoms at all. The iron represented dictatorships; and the clay, equalitarian "people's govern-

ments." But in the end, these nations would not hold together. The image would be disintegrating just prior to the appearance of the stone.

The image itself is an image of man. It represents human glory apart from God. The deterioration of quality represents the fading glory of man's order. The stone represents the Messiah's conquest of secular humanism and the growth of His kingdom until it encompasses the whole world.

No wonder Daniel and his friends praised God. They were not only spared death, but they began to understand the events of their capture and God's sovereign work in the Gentile world. Armed with this insight, Daniel went to Nebuchadnezzar. He revealed Nebuchadnezzar's mystery, saved all the other counselors, was made ruler over the province, and became head of all the king's counselors.

It is an exciting and unusual story. But let's apply it to ourselves. We may never become mayor of a great city or an outstanding interpreter of mysteries, but we can achieve great things if we do what Daniel did.

#### **A Proper Response**

Many people are defeated before they begin to achieve because they are hung up on some injustice they have endured. Anger, bitterness, fear, or some other response has paralyzed or sidetracked their efforts. Forgiveness is the only way to deal with the past—and the only way to face the future.

Daniel made the best of his Babylonian opportunities rather than sulk over the brutality and polytheism. He took it for what it was and did the best he could. If you plan to succeed in this world, you will need to emulate Daniel and realize that the world is not Christian. If we expect to reveal the glory of God, we will have to forgive and move ahead.

#### **A Sense of Responsibility**

Achievement is not a matter of luck. Achievement is a matter of responsible effort. Daniel had many opportunities to become irresponsible or careless and blame it all on circumstance. But he did not. He



remained responsible to his God, his values, and whatever duties were given to him by these Babylonians (even though they were not Spirit-filled Christians).

God has constantly called His people to accountability and responsibility—beginning with Adam. Noah labored more than one hundred years on the ark. Abraham waited thirty years before receiving the promise. Moses waited forty years before becoming the leader of the Israelites and labored forty more to get them to Canaan.

Achievers have their eyes on positive objectives and are glad to learn from any source that will help them to succeed. They seldom criticize others who achieve, because they have come to respect what it takes to be successful. Most grumbling and negative talk comes from people who have little notion of what it takes to achieve. Daniel could have criticized Babylon. Instead, he gave himself to reveal God to it and to succeed.

#### A Sensitivity to Pray

When things got tough, Daniel was in touch with God. In Daniel chapter 6, Daniel's prayer life is described in detail. He was thrown into a lions' den for praying, but he also escaped by praying.

Prayer releases the power of God into the situation. I cannot overemphasize the critical nature of prayer. Before and since Daniel, prayer has been the means of knowing the purpose and power of God. Prayer, rather than reason, would have saved Adam and Eve. Prayer, rather than reason, would have delivered Cain. Prayer, rather than hatred, would have favored Esau.

A more recent example would be England under Queen Elizabeth I in 1588. The Spanish armada relied on power, but the English relied on prayer. When the armada attacked, Elizabeth called the nation to prayer. As a result, a storm arose and destroyed 65 of the armada's 130 ships. The English lost not a single ship. After the history-changing defeat, the English government struck a medal with this inscription: "God blew and they were scattered."

A sensitivity to pray is the con-

stant companion to the person who achieves the goals God has set for him.

#### A Sovereign Perspective

God revealed the situation to Daniel the way He saw it. What an experience. One moment Daniel saw captivity and death, the next he saw freedom and life. Nothing had changed except his perspective and that changed everything. The insight was most profound. He saw the fall of the Gentile system and the emerging kingdom of God in Jesus Christ.

What I am talking about here is not just a better look at your situation. What I am talking about is seeing history from the view of God's sovereign power over the affairs of men. Once you see that, then you will see your situation better.

Personal achievement must not be separated from the historical purpose of God. As different as your gifts or calling might be, your efforts must flow into the ultimate rise of God's kingdom. Self-fulfillment and self-adulation were part of Nebuchadnezzar's image that ultimately came apart and was blown away.

#### A Supernatural Power

Daniel's praise included this phrase: "You have given me wisdom and power." He not only enjoyed a sovereign perspective or wisdom—he had the power of God upon him. He stood with boldness before the king and became ruler over the most glorious city ever built by man. Babylon was a wonder with its wide boulevards and avenues, walls and towers, temples and palaces, farms and produce. But all of it became subject to the administration of this youth who ruled Babylon by the wisdom and power of God.

Achievement must include the power of God. Anyone who succeeds, but fails to acknowledge God is not only blind but is also facing trouble. King Nebuchadnezzar failed to give glory to God for his great achievements. By his own testimony, he was struck with seven years of insanity and lost everything until he could acknowledge the place of the power of God. But

he learned.

Today, there are thousands of churches that ignore the power of God. One could excuse pagan Nebuchadnezzar, but the Church has left its heritage and fallen into centuries of insanity—exchanging the wisdom and power of God for so-called rationalism, which has left us confused and impotent. But even as Nebuchadnezzar regained his sanity and ability to acknowledge God's power, so is the Church regaining its spiritual sanity through praise and worship of God—and the power is returning!

I welcome this new age of achievement. The Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13 NAS). So can we.

Paul also said, "I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" (2 Tim. 4:7 NAS). So can we.

To do it, we must

1. Get beyond the past through forgiveness.
2. Be responsible. Look for a way and not just a way out.
3. Be sensitive to pray—without ceasing.
4. Get a sovereign perspective from God, who reigns in the affairs of men.
5. Receive and release the supernatural power of God into our community.

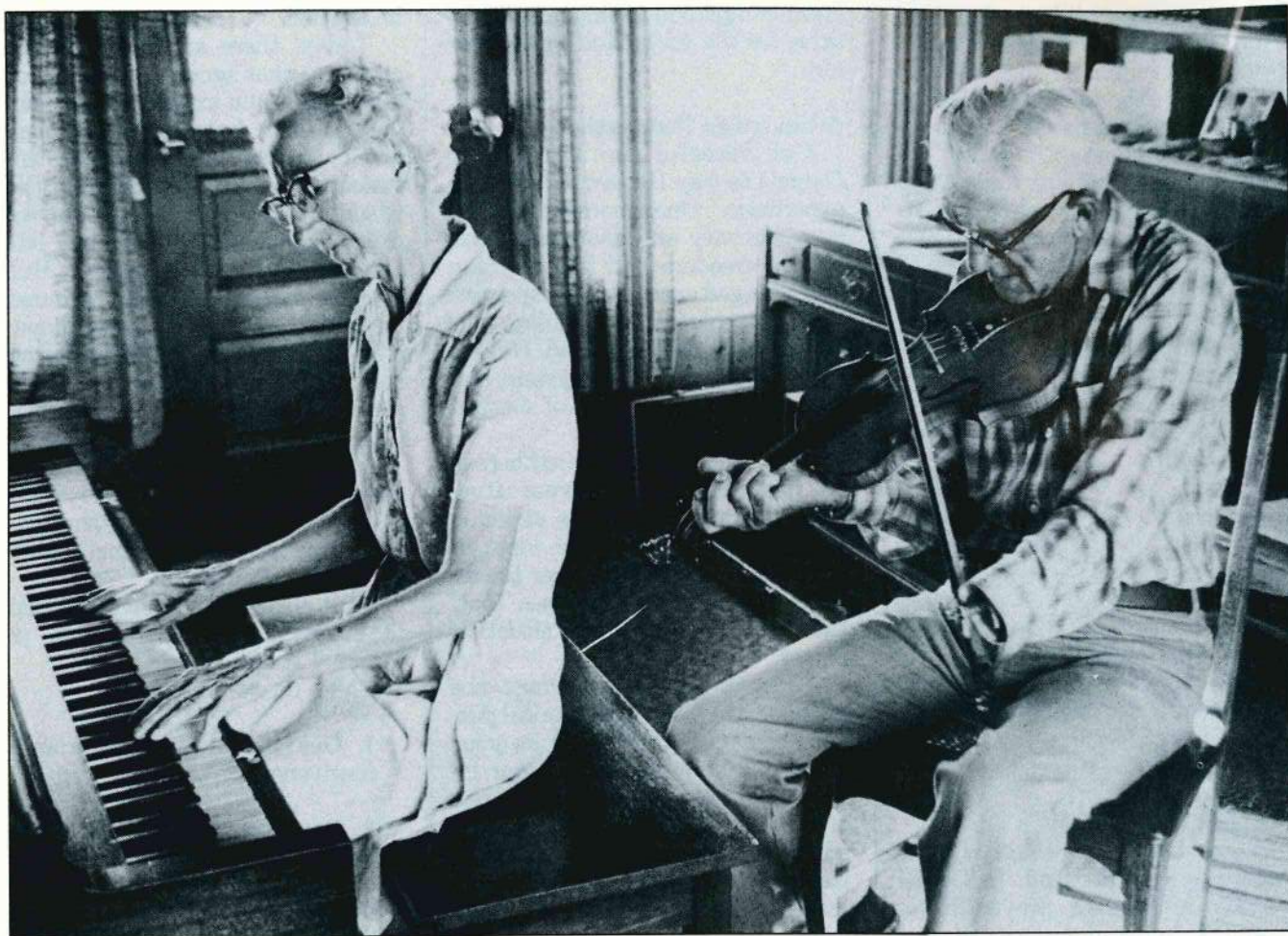
By these means we can succeed in the things that He has called us to do and have a place with our predecessors. □



Board of Directors. Charles resides in Mobile with his wife, Carolyn, and their children.

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





# THE FIDDLER

How a man overcame a serious handicap to fulfil his heart's desire  
by George Cartwright

**D**uring the years I served on the faculty of Culver-Stockton College in Canton, Missouri, I preached in a rural church in Emerson, about thirty-five miles away. One of my friends in that congregation was Irwin "Ted" Welch.

Ted was a farmer who had worked hard all his life. As he neared retirement age in January 1972, he decided to quit farming and lease his fields. He suffered from stomach ulcers and wanted to spend his final years doing the things he really enjoyed.

Ted had a number of hobbies.

He loved to hunt and fish, and was an excellent furniture refinisher, specializing in player pianos and reed organs. He also loved to play the fiddle. He met at least one evening a week with a group of musicians to play bluegrass and country music. As I grew up, I heard many fiddlers, both amateur and professional, but I never heard one who played better than Ted Welch.

## Hunting Coyotes

After he retired from farming, Ted and his friends spent a lot of time hunting together. For a number of years, coyotes had been

migrating eastward, multiplying at an alarming rate. Because they were a serious threat to the livestock, some counties paid a bounty on them. Hunters spent many days during the winter in search of those coyotes.

One cold winter morning, Ted and some of his friends were tracking coyotes near the Missouri-Illinois state line. The sky was clear and snow covered the ground; it was a good day for hunting.

As the men and their dogs hunted along the riverbanks, they suddenly cornered a coyote in a huge snowdrift. Ted leaned his gun



against a log as he and a few others tried to dislodge the coyote from his lair. But all their efforts were in vain. The animal refused to come out.

Ted, figuring the coyote was there to stay, grabbed one of his dogs and said to him, "Let's go jump another coyote." He reached for his gun with his left hand, grasping it at the end of the barrel, unaware that the safety was off and that a stick had caught in the trigger housing. As he swung the gun to his shoulder, the stick caused it to fire, and the explosion blew his left hand to bits.

The first two statements Ted made were, "I shot my hand off," and, "There goes my fiddling."

The shock of the blast was tremendous. All that was ever found of the watch Ted had been wearing was the crystal.

One of the men made a tourniquet out of an old undershirt and as Ted held on to it tightly, they made their way to the car and headed for the nearest hospital.

The doctors agreed there was no way his hand could be saved. Surgery could only remove the shattered fragments of bone and the torn flesh.

That morning Ted had left his home with two good hands, and that night he went to bed with just one. He believed his fiddling days were over.

### A New Challenge

But as he lay on his hospital bed, instead of feeling sorry for himself or lamenting his loss, Ted seemed to bypass the grief process altogether. "I remember thinking when I was lying in the hospital," he recalls, "that when I was released I was going to do whatever I could. It was a new challenge to me."

When he came home from the hospital, one of the first things he did was restring a fiddle for right-handed fingering. He fashioned a metal sleeve for the stub of his injured left arm, pinned the bow to his left sleeve, and began the long, painful process of learning to play again.

I recall hearing him play a tune once before I left Missouri. I recognized the selection, but as I nodded to Ted, I tried to hide the disap-

## That morning Ted left his home with two good hands, and that night he went to bed with just one. He believed his fiddling days were over.

pointment I felt. His playing just wasn't the same. How could he possibly regain his former skill against such overwhelming odds: his age and only one hand?

In 1974 I moved from Missouri to North Carolina, and didn't see Ted for several years. Then one day I received a letter from him, thanking me for the encouragement I had given him at the time of his accident. He added that he was meeting regularly with a group of musicians who told him he could play the fiddle as well as ever. As I read that statement, I thought his friends were just being kind to him. After all, how could a man who was past seventy years old and who had only one hand be able to play as well as ever?

Ted concluded his letter by inviting me to visit him and listen to him play. It was a year before I was able to take him up on his invitation and drive out to Missouri.

### Hearing Ted Play

When I arrived, Ted first showed me a dozen or so beautifully refinished player pianos and reed organs. He had not only refinished them, but also had them in good working order.

He had invited over many of my friends from his church for an evening of music. Ted's group consisted of four fiddlers, two pianists, two guitar players, and one banjo player. They began to play, and as the evening wore on and one fiddler became tired, another would take

his place. I was eager to hear Ted play and told him so. He urged me to be patient and said that his turn would come soon.

Finally, Ted took his beautiful left-handed fiddle out of its case, tuned it, pinned the bow to his left sleeve, and sat down to play. I am not sure what I expected, but I never dreamed I would hear the quality of music he played. He was not only as good a fiddler as he had once been, he was better!

I was entranced. I saw it, I heard it, but I had difficulty believing my eyes and my ears. He played flawlessly, not only the four songs I requested, but also many, many more before he gave way to another fiddler. Of the four fiddlers playing that night, Ted was, without question, the best.

### An Inspiration to Others

Ted's group did a considerable amount of charitable work by playing for people in nursing and retirement homes. I'm sure his music touched many who had lost hands, eyes, and hearing as they saw how one man, with God's help, even at an advanced age could overcome such a handicap.

Ted's achievements were painfully slow in coming. Any violin or fiddle player can probably imagine more clearly what he went through. His faith and persistence are an example and an encouragement to others who may have suffered a similar loss to help them accept the new challenge they face.

Ted Welch passed away last year but he enjoyed life as much as any man in his seventies that I ever knew. Instead of lamenting the loss of a hand, he praised the Lord that he was given two hands at birth and that he was able to continue to glorify his creator in his work and his play with the one hand he had left. □



*George Cartwright was an Army chaplain during World War II, and has pastored churches in Missouri, Indiana, Illinois, Arkansas, and Pennsylvania. He lives in Tryon, North Carolina, with his wife, Patricia.*



# Fame, Fortune, and Faithfulness

What is the true measure of success?

by Don Basham

**E**very one of us longs to live a successful Christian life. Our problem in achieving that goal, then, isn't desire; it's definition.

How do we define *success*, and whose definition applies? A man, for example, may be highly successful from the world's standpoint, yet be a miserable failure in the eyes of God. Jesus tells the parable of the rich fool who considered himself a success:

"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' " (Lk. 12:20 NIV).

On the other hand, a man may finish this life a total failure in the eyes of the world, yet with the Lord's precious words "well done, good and faithful servant" echoing in his ears.

It is no secret that the world measures success by such sought-after goals as money, possessions, reputation, and fame. Although not one of those is evil in itself, once attained each usually proves empty and hollow. Almost every day we hear the sad lament of people who have achieved all those goals only to discover that happiness is still as far beyond their reach as ever. They invariably vow that if they could live their lives over again, they would reorder their priorities and approach their lives from a different perspective.

Of course, Christians should al-

ready have a different perspective on life. Our faith declares to us that God has a different definition of what constitutes success. To put it even more bluntly, God has not called us to be successful; He has called us to be faithful.

Our faith testifies to us that God has a plan and purpose for our lives quite at odds with the world and our own selfish ambitions. It reminds us that while men may seek after many kinds of success, the happiest people on earth are those who discover what God put them here to do and spend their lives doing it.

Unfortunately, the measure of our success in day-by-day Christian living can be accurately assessed only over a long period of time—years or even decades. As Scripture reminds us, it is not only important that we begin the race, but that we also finish it (see 1 Corinthians 9:24). Scripture also ruthlessly records the lives of many men called and empowered by God who were faithful in the beginning, achieving a measure of greatness, only to fall short in the final period of their lives. There were men such as Samson, Eli, Samuel, Saul, Solomon, and even Moses, who at the end of his life failed to make it into the promised land. We can refer to them neither to belittle their achievements nor to magnify their shortcomings, but simply to emphasize that a successful life in God's sight includes more than momentary obedience or casual commitment. It consists of year-by-

year, decade-by-decade faithfulness.

## A Success Story

When we look for the kind of faithfulness needed to produce a successful life, it is difficult to find a better scriptural example than Joseph, whose dramatic story is found in Genesis chapters 37-50. Here's a brief summary of the significant events that marked the years of Joseph's trials:

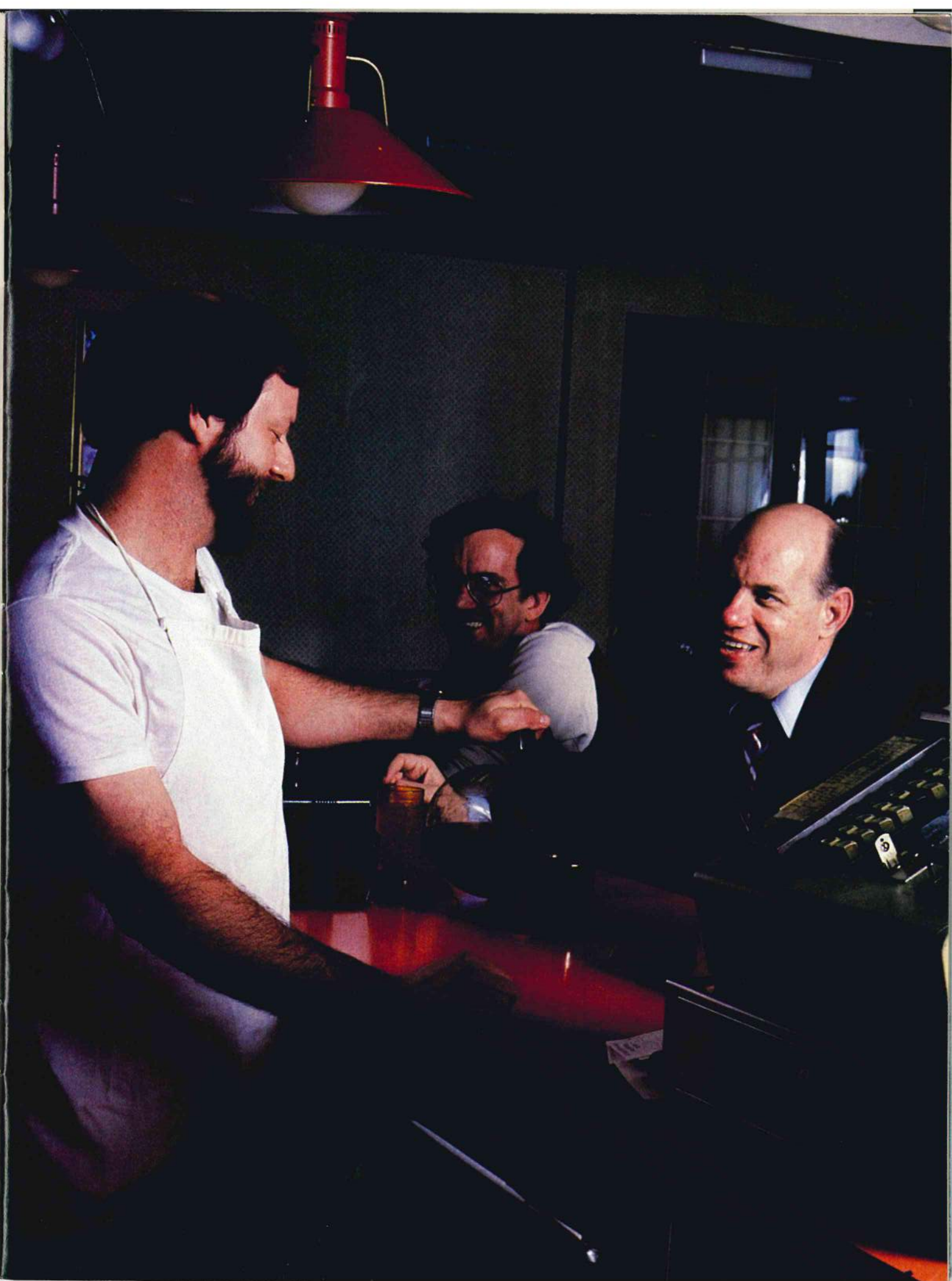
When Joseph was seventeen years old—already the favored son of his father, Jacob—God gave him a pair of dreams that indicated he was destined to rule over his brothers. The dreams made his brothers hate him all the more, so they plotted his death, but ended up selling him into slavery.

Joseph was bought by Potiphar, Pharaoh's captain of the guard, who entrusted him with everything he owned because he recognized God's favor on him. But when Joseph spurned the affections of Potiphar's young wife, she falsely accused him of attempted rape and Potiphar threw him into prison.

Soon, however, Joseph found favor with the jailer, who put him in charge of everything that went on in the prison. While he was there, Pharaoh's baker and cupbearer—both also out of favor and in prison—had prophetic dreams, which Joseph correctly interpreted. Joseph begged the cupbearer to plead his cause once he returned to Pharaoh's court, but he forgot all about him.

Then, Pharaoh had troubled  
*continued on page 15*





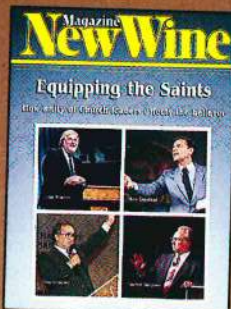


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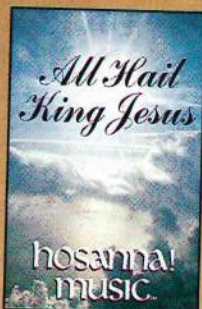
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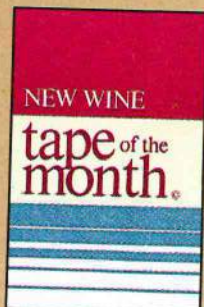


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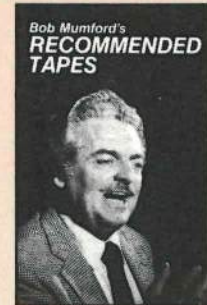
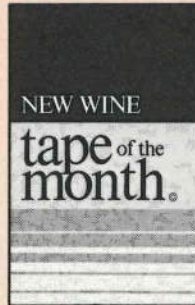
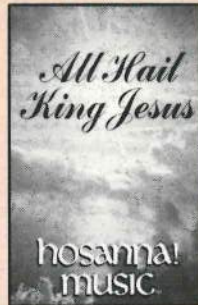
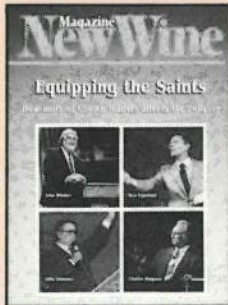
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## Faithfulness

*continued from page 12*

dreams of seven gaunt cattle devouring seven fat cattle, and seven withered heads of grain swallowing up seven healthy heads of grain. His cupbearer remembered Joseph and told Pharaoh about him. He summoned Joseph, who correctly interpreted Pharaoh's dreams as a warning that Egypt was going to experience seven years of abundance followed by seven years of famine. Joseph outlined a simple economic plan that could save the nation from famine. Recognizing the Spirit of God in Joseph, Pharaoh appointed him ruler over all of Egypt.

Four specific principles operated in Joseph's life during those years of adversity, elements that not only sustained him but contributed greatly to his ultimate success: First, he had a vision of his destiny and calling; second, he found the blessing of God in the midst of adversity; third, he maintained his personal integrity; and fourth, he trusted God to fulfil His word.

Our lives may never be as colorful or as dramatic as Joseph's; nevertheless these same principles can have equally great significance for us. Here's how we can apply them to our own lives.

### A Sense of Destiny

First, to succeed in life every believer needs to know that God has called him. Scripture tells us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Pr. 29:18). At times, nothing helps to keep us going more than realizing that God has called us to do what we are doing. Even insignificant tasks take on grandeur because they are seen as part of an overall divine purpose.

A story is told about Sir Christopher Wren, the great English architect who designed some of England's grandest cathedrals. One day while visiting a construction site he found three men toiling in an excavation area.

"What are you men doing?" he asked.

"I'm just shoveling dirt," one replied sourly.

"I'm just digging a ditch," the second man complained.

But the third man responded with pride. "I'm helping Sir Christopher



Wren build a great cathedral!"

One of the saddest facts of life is that so many Christians downgrade the significance of their calling and the value of their contribution to the kingdom of God. Simply because they are not preachers or evangelists or missionaries, they don't believe their lives or careers are important in God's sight. They have fallen prey to the devil's lie that work must be religious to be sacred. But in God's sight, any task becomes sacred if it is performed well and to His glory. It is a precious and beautiful thing to watch a man work at what he knows God has called him to do, no matter if others consider it spiritually insignificant.

Some years ago my wife and I were driving home from a Bible seminar. At lunchtime we drove off the interstate to a small town where we parked in front of a modest little diner. As we entered we were greeted with a warm and cheery "You folks come right on in!"

Our host was so positioned behind the stove that he could benevolently survey all the patrons in the restaurant. We sat in a booth by the window and for an amazing thirty minutes watched a wiry little bald-headed servant of God fry and serve hamburgers to His glory. If ever I saw a man performing in the center of God's will, it was that man. Grace followed every motion. At exactly the right moment he

lifted his spatula to flip and flatten each beef patty browning on the grill. He sliced the buns and applied the mustard and ketchup with the confident flourish of a great symphony director, and with fingers as nimble and talented as those of a concert pianist, he arranged the lettuce, pickle, and onion slices on each one. All this took place under the canopy of a beaming smile and was accompanied by happy banter with the customers while his two attractive teenage daughters served the orders with cheerful efficiency.

Everyone in the diner could tell that the happy little cook not only loved frying hamburgers, but also loved making people feel good as they watched him fry the hamburgers and feel even better as they ate them. I knew I was observing more than an ordinary chef; I was watching a man who had embraced his calling in life with radiant joy. Without uttering a single religious word, he was spreading a gospel of love and service that settled like a benediction on everyone blessed enough to enter that little diner.

That day we ate hamburgers fashioned for the glory of God, and we left the restaurant nourished in our spirits as well as our bodies, wishing fervently that the joyful grace that motivated that humble hamburger chef could become the portion of every gloomy Christian stumbling his way through life,



feeling inferior because he "has no ministry." It was such a rare and precious experience that I sometimes wonder if it really happened—if the diner would still be there if we went back.

### Adversity and Blessings

Second, to succeed in life every Christian needs to seek and find the blessing of God in adversity.

One of the great paradoxes of the Christian life is that although we may not always recognize it at the time, adversity and the blessings of God often go hand in hand. How strange it is to read that when Joseph was sold into slavery, "the Lord was with him and...gave him success in everything he did" (Gen. 39:3 NIV). And how equally strange to read that after Potiphar's wife slandered Joseph and he was thrown into prison, "the Lord was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favor" (Gen. 39:21 NIV). One might well ask, "If God was with him, why was he a slave and in prison? Who needs that kind of kindness and that kind of success?"

But such questions miss this crucial point: We can have no real, lasting success in the Christian life apart from adversity. Shadowed valleys are as much a part of the topography of life as sunlit mountain peaks, and any believer who assumes that he can experience the mountain peaks and skip the valleys is due for a rude awakening. Of

course, it is true that God loves us and will often perform miracles to deliver us from evil. But it is equally true that hardship, adversity, disappointment, and failure are inevitable companions along the way. All of them are instruments that a loving Father uses to discipline His children in preparation for His further purposes.

At times we can't see the loving hand of God in the adversity and hardship. The devil is always around to whisper insistently that we've missed God and to ask how we can call ourselves "successful Christians" when nothing seems to be going right. When this happens, our ability to trust that we are still in God's will may be momentarily shaken.

Years ago, when I was a pastor in Toronto, Canada, I went through such a period of adversity. No matter how hard I preached and how earnestly I taught, the congregation I served seemed incredibly indifferent to the scriptural truths I presented. Their attitude tended to confirm my own fears of ministerial ineptitude. For months, nothing seemed to go right. I longed to resign as pastor, but every time I raised the question with God, the heavens turned to brass. I knew God did not want me to leave but I didn't see how I could stay. I felt like Moses on the backside of the desert, or Jonah in the belly of the fish.

Finally, I poured out my heartache and frustration in a letter to a trusted Christian friend. His reply was filled with compassion and understanding, but it was a single paragraph that changed my perspective and provided me with the spiritual stamina that I needed to go on.

Remember this, dear Brother Don: God is not as interested in your success in your church as He is in His success in you! Forget about the results you are having or not having and just concentrate on being God's man.

It has been more than twenty years since my friend penned that inspired advice. It is as helpful today as the day he wrote it. All of us need to know that God is more interested in His success in us than in our success in the world. And because sometimes our success can hinder or prevent His success in us, He may shut it down and bring us into a narrow place where certain godly qualities that otherwise might never emerge can mature in us. Apart from such difficult and painful times we would never be conformed to the image of His Son. The writer of Hebrews makes this clear.

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father?...No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it (Heb. 12:5-7, 11 NIV).

### Keeping Our Integrity

Third, to succeed in life every Christian needs to maintain his integrity. Joseph succeeded by keeping his personal integrity through all his trials. When his brothers and his father rebuked him for the dreams God had given him, he kept his integrity. When Potiphar's wife





tried to seduce him, he kept his integrity. And even when he was tossed into prison, he refused to compromise and waited instead for God's vindication.

One of the sad facts of Christian living is that so many people fall short of Paul's admonition, "Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up" (Gal. 6:9 NIV). We do grow weary and we're tempted to give up—or at least compromise.

If only more of us were like Caleb! When the ten spies brought back an evil report to Moses, only Caleb and Joshua maintained their integrity and tried—unsuccessfully—to encourage the Israelites to go in and take the land of Canaan. When they refused, God punished the whole nation with a forty-year trek in the wilderness. Forty-five years later, Caleb came to Joshua to claim his inheritance and to declare his integrity intact.

"Forty years old was I when.... Moses swore on that day, saying, 'Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the Lord my God.'...and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me....Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spake in that day" (Josh. 14:7, 9-12).

Too many of us grow weary or become impatient. As we grow older we are tempted to cut spiritual corners, look the other way, or make excuses for forsaking our ideals and compromising the integrity of our youth. As Emerson once wryly noted, "Middle age takes the lumber with which youth would erect a tower to the moon, and fashions a chicken coop in the back yard."

#### Trusting God

Our fourth principle for succeeding in life is to trust God to fulfil His word.

Through all the years of his adversity Joseph never lost faith that



God would bring to pass what He had promised. After he was reconciled with his brothers, he told them that all he had gone through—beginning with their betrayal—was ordained of God and designed to further His purpose.

"And now, do not be distressed and do not be angry with yourselves for selling me here, because it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you....So then, it was not you who sent me here, but God" (Gen. 45:5, 8 NIV).

Our success in living the Christian life is irrevocably tied to faithfulness, which in turn is based on trust that God will fulfil His promises.

Many years ago, when I was still a student in Bible college and preaching on weekends at a little church in Burkburnett, Texas, a Pentecostal preacher prophesied some strange and wonderful things over me—things that had to do with my future ministry. Through the fifteen difficult, frustrating years of denominational ministry that followed, when it seemed that little or nothing of real spiritual significance was happening, I held on to those promises and others like them that God had spoken to me. Finally, there came a crucial, wonderful day when God asked me to step out in faith to begin a whole new kind of ministry. With fear

and trembling I obeyed, and all through the next fifteen years the promises made long ago began to come true, one after another. Experiencing God's faithfulness in fulfilling His word reminds me of what Paul said about Abraham:

He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform (Rom. 4:20-21).

Joseph provides us with an outstanding example of successful, godly living. We would do well to pattern our own lives after his, embracing those principles that enabled him to endure, accepting for ourselves his unswerving sense of destiny, praying for an ability like his to find the blessing of God in adversity, striving to match with our own his unimpeachable integrity, and finally, sharing his firm conviction that God will keep His promise. □

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# A Reason to Live

"What could a group of teenagers do to save a life that skilled doctors and psychiatrists couldn't?"

by Ann Williams

**B**y the time she was seventeen years old, Peggy had spent a good portion of her life drifting in and out of psychiatric wards and mental institutions. She suffered from severe depression as well as the debilitating and often fatal emotional disorder known as anorexia nervosa. She was slowly starving herself to death, and now she lay in a hospital bed, near death.

"Things don't look good, Ann,"

her mother told me one bleak winter afternoon. She shook her head and diverted her eyes to the floor. "I don't expect Peggy to come home from the hospital this time."

Both she and the doctors had given up hope; Peggy had simply given up the will to live. Only seventeen years old myself, I didn't know much about anorexia or depression or emotional illness, but I knew the Lord and I knew that He could offer hope in any situation.

## A Fellow Student

I had met Peggy a year earlier when we were juniors in high school. Her mother had joined the staff of the private school I attended, and Peggy became a part of our small class of thirty-four students almost unnoticed. She was a shy, frail-looking girl who seemed to prefer solitude over socializing. It was difficult to get to know her for that reason, but also because she was often ill and frequently missed



several weeks of school at a time.

When she did attend classes, my closest circle of friends and I occasionally tried to include her in our activities: going out during lunch to gobble down donuts or hamburgers, attending school dances and parties, cheering at the sporting events or horse shows. Although she sometimes joined us, she always remained distant and detached, as if she were only floating around the periphery of our friendship and not allowing herself to enter in. Her depression persisted, and even worsened by the time our senior year rolled around.

That fall, she was so ill that she rarely appeared in school at all, although she tried to keep up with her lessons from her hospital bed. Her mother never tried to hide the problem, but openly discussed her daughter's illness with the students whenever we inquired about Peggy's health.

Her mother was my English teacher, and had quickly become my favorite. Knowing she was somewhat skeptical about religion, I often tried to slip the message of Jesus Christ into my papers and compositions. But the day she told me that she had lost all hope for Peggy's recovery, I knew I had to put action behind my words. I claimed to know the love of Christ; now I had the opportunity to show it.

"I think Peggy's going to be all right," I said, trying to reassure her. "In fact, I'd like her to be able to graduate with us." I must have sounded like a naive child, because she managed only to nod her head and smile weakly.

### Keeping in Touch

From then on, my friends and I went on an all-out "crusade" to let Peggy know that we cared whether she lived or died. Although our school was a secular one, a group of us who were believers met on Tuesday nights for a Bible study, and often prayed for both Peggy and her mother. We sent her cards, letters, packages of bubble gum, and stuffed animals. Her mother suggested that it would be too great a strain on Peggy if we tried to see her in person, so we kept in

touch by phoning frequently.

One time I collected pictures of a large number of the students, glued them onto a huge piece of poster paper, and wrote in the center: "We want *you* to come back to us soon!" The students and several of her teachers signed it, and her mother delivered it to her at the hospital. Although my closest friends and I started the crusade for Peggy, other students and even teachers pitched in and helped by sending cards and small gifts to her.

Eventually, we began to receive letters and calls from Peggy in return, and soon her voice lost some of its listlessness. She sounded much more chipper, and through the weeks, her health took an upward swing—slowly but steadily—until she gained enough strength to continue working on her lessons.

It was a miraculous day when Peggy appeared in school again. She was frightfully thin, weak, and far behind in her studies—but she was home!

But all too soon another blow came. When graduation drew near, it became apparent that Peggy wouldn't be able to fulfil the assignments needed to graduate. She had simply missed too much school. She never said a word about it, but her mother let me know her disappointment that she wouldn't be able to sit with us on the platform on graduation day.

When I told my friends, we came to a conclusion: Peggy was part of our class and we wanted her to sit with us even though she couldn't receive a diploma at that time.

Two of my friends and I marched into the headmaster's office and told him of our wishes for Peggy. He looked at us and smiled. "I think that can be arranged," he said.

### Graduation Day

On June 6, when thirty-four excited young men and women marched through the school's auditorium to the tune of "Pomp and Circumstance," Peggy was among them. Six months earlier, her mother would never have believed Peggy would live to see this day, let alone be sitting proudly on the platform

with her classmates. Peggy would be completing her classes in a few short weeks during summer school, so this was just an early celebration.

College that fall took me a thousand miles away from my hometown, and I eventually lost touch with many of my high school friends, including Peggy and her mother. But I did hear during one of my trips home that Peggy was attending college and planning to get married.

Several years later, I received a Christmas card from her mother with a note at the bottom: "I remember you and your friends with fondness; in fact, I often credit you with saving Peggy's life."

Us? What could a group of teenagers have done to save a life that a number of skilled doctors and psychiatrists couldn't? We simply showed her that someone cared whether she lived or died. And it was not just us, but more importantly, Christ in us who reached out to her and gave her the will to live. He works through His followers to express His love to believers and nonbelievers alike.

I recently dug my old yearbook out of a cardboard box and read again what Peggy wrote to me: "Dear Ann, of all the people I've known, you are the one I try most to be like. You seem to always spread happiness and sympathy wherever you go. God bless you. Love, Peggy."

God did bless me, Peggy, in allowing me to share His love with you, and for teaching me through you that it really does make a difference when we show someone that we care.

I continue to pray that He will bless both you and your mother, that you might recognize Him as the one who saved you, and that, in the end, when He returns for us, you may be like Him. □



*Ann Williams is a New Wine reader who lives in Houston, Texas, with her husband, Van.*



# **Distinguishing the Extraordinary From the Ordinary**

Excellence is the key to reaching our goals.  
by Glen Roachelle



Several years ago as I meditated on the excellence and beauty of creation, I recalled that at the conclusion of each creative day the Lord looked at what He had done and said, "It is good." I was amused at how much of an understatement that was, but I was reminded that my chief concern in life is what I will have to do and how well I will have to do it to evoke His approbation.

The Scripture says that Daniel distinguished himself because he possessed an extraordinary spirit, and that with knowledge and insight he solved difficult problems (see Daniel 5:12). He is an example for all who pursue excellence. God expects His people to distinguish themselves as Daniel did, because we too are to possess an excellent spirit.

The Apostle Paul writes, "If there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things" (Phil. 4:8 NAS). In 1 Peter we read, "Keep your behavior excellent" (1 Pet. 2:12 NAS). An excellent spirit produces excellent thoughts. Excellent thoughts bring forth excellent behavior, and behavior exemplifies character.

Our society has defined excellence in a number of ways. Noah Webster, in his original dictionary published in 1828, defines a thing as being excellent when it is distinguished for what it is; when it is valuable or laudable. Excellence is found in what is consummate or complete, in that which possesses great virtue or worth.<sup>1</sup> In business, excellence has been defined as the result of believing that all jobs and projects should be performed in a superior way.<sup>2</sup>

### The Curse of Mediocrity

In striking contrast to these definitions of excellence are the dullness and mediocrity that have resulted from the modern emphasis on pleasure and self-fulfillment. Thomas Carlyle writes, "It is a calumny upon men to say that they are aroused to heroic action by ease, hope of pleasure, sugar plums of any kind, in this world or the next."<sup>3</sup> Instead of arousing to heroic action, the sugarplums of this generation have enticed people

toward the path of least resistance. Charles Simpson once said, "The path of least resistance makes men and rivers crooked."

But in recent years a dramatic shift has taken place. People are awakening to the fact that those who are successful in a lasting sense refuse to make peace with mediocrity. They have given themselves in an undaunted way to strive for the very best regardless of the cost. Tom Peters and Nancy Austin in their book *A Passion for Excellence* write:

---

A passion for excellence means

---

**Noble efforts  
and noble  
motives inspire  
others to follow  
the example.  
What better  
contagion could  
we have in our  
society?**

---

thinking big and starting small: excellence happens when high purpose and intense pragmatism meet. This is almost, but not quite the whole truth. We believe a passion for excellence also carries a price, and we state it simply: the adventure of excellence is not for the faint of heart.<sup>4</sup>

Whether the false vision of the Socialists, or the rich leather smell in cars that don't run well, the days of superficial excellence are fast passing away. The public is beginning to say, "Enough is enough. Give us something sterling. Give us something with character. Let it have depth. Let it be excellent."

We have discovered that technology and study commissions are

not enough to produce the pride of craftsmanship. This realization is foundational to the success of the best-run companies. Peters and Robert J. Waterman, Jr., write, "Tools didn't substitute for thinking. Intellect didn't overpower wisdom. Analysis didn't impede action."<sup>5</sup>

Computers cannot do creative thinking for us; education will not bring God-given wisdom; and study commissions do not produce action. The Scripture says that those who know their God will display strength and take action (see Daniel 11:32). This requires God-given wisdom and creativity.

A prominent Democratic governor was recently asked what he felt was President Reagan's most significant contribution. The reply was quick and clear: The President had finally put power back in the White House. The fact is, the free world has come to admire and respect Ronald Reagan because of his character and ability to take action.

### The Need for Examples

Society is impacted by the character and industry that its citizenry produces. John W. Gardner, in his book *Excellence*, writes:

Many more can achieve (excellence) than now do. Many, many more can try to achieve it than now do. And the society is bettered not only by those who achieve it, but by those who are trying.<sup>6</sup>

What is encouraging to me is that I may not always achieve the excellence I strive for, but the fact that I am trying does add a positive element to the atmosphere around me. When someone else strives to do well or to achieve, it inspires me. Noble efforts and noble motives inspire others to follow the example. What better contagion could we have in our society than that?

Many cultures became great because of the example of courageous leaders who turned their visions into reality. That is what has made America great. She was birthed by men and women who wanted the freedom to embrace certain values and practices.

Even in the business world the



# Those who produce excellence become leaders. Their talents are in demand and people pay attention to their way of life.

principle is the same. Peters and Waterman write:

The excellent companies seem to have developed cultures that have incorporated the values and practices of the great leaders and thus those shared values can be seen to survive for decades after the passing of the original guru....It appears that the great role of the chief executive is to manage the values of the organization.<sup>7</sup>

Those who produce excellence will become the leaders. Their talents will be in demand, and people will pay attention to their way of life. As the future unfolds, the conduct of those who lead is going to become increasingly important. A pre-Christian sage once wrote, "A man's dress tells you what he does, and a man's walk tells you what he is."<sup>8</sup>

Those who gain mastery in their vocation make a place for themselves by virtue of their expertise. James B. Conant puts it this way, "Each honest calling, each walk of life, has its own elite, its own aristocracy based upon excellence of performance."<sup>9</sup> It is essentially true that success will bring us to positions of authority and leadership.

When Daniel distinguished himself, the king made him chief of all the magicians, conjurers, Chaldeans, and diviners (see Daniel 5:11). When we do well, we will be promoted. When we pay the price, we will experience the reward.

Peters and Austin write:

When you have a true passion for excellence and when you act on it you will stand straighter.

You will look people in the eye. You will see things happen. You will see heroes created, watch ideas unfold and take shape. You will walk with a spring in your step. You'll have something to fight for, to care about, to share, scary as it is, with other people. There will be times when you swing from dedicated to obsessed. We don't pretend that it is easy. It takes real courage to step out and stake your claim, but we think the renewed sense of purpose, of making a difference, of recovered self-respect, is well worth the price of admission.<sup>10</sup> □

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Noah Webster, *American Dictionary of the English Language* (San Francisco: The Foundation for American Christian Education, 1967), p. 79.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Levering, Milton Moskowitz, and Michael Kate, *The One Hundred Best Companies to Work for in America* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1984), p. 157.

<sup>3</sup> John W. Gardner, *Excellence* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1961), p. 177.

<sup>4</sup> Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence* (New York: Random House, Inc., 1985), p. 414.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas J. Peters and Robert J. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Gardner, op. cit. p. 159.

<sup>7</sup> Peters and Waterman, op. cit. p. 26.

<sup>8</sup> Ecclesiasticus 19:30.

<sup>9</sup> Gardner, op. cit. p. 157.

<sup>10</sup> Peters and Austin, op. cit. p. 419.



Glen Roachelle is senior pastor of Metroplex Covenant Church in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, and has an extensive regional and national pastoral ministry. Glen lives with his wife, Roberta, and their four children in Colleyville, Texas.

# DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Integrity Communications is launching a radio program this month?

After much prayer, we have felt the Lord directing us to step out in faith in new areas of ministry to reach more people with the Word of God. As a result, Charles Simpson, chairman of the board of Integrity Communications, will launch a radio program featuring the theme "challenge," specifically the challenge facing God's people to be all they can be in Him.

The program will go on the air February 3 with regular broadcasts five days a week for fifteen minutes a day. It will be broadcast in five to ten cities at first, and we're expecting to add more cities in the coming months.

This new ministry has the potential to become a nationwide broadcast. If it is successful, by our best estimates, in five years we could reach five times as many people as we now reach.

Launching a radio program is a step of faith, but one we are taking because of God's direction to us. The start-up budget alone is \$120,000. Please pray for Brother Charles and the staff that the Lord would guide and direct us, and that He would provide the necessary funding to have a successful and strong launch. We value your support and look upon all our supporters as partners in ministry with us. This newest venture is no exception, and we thought you'd like to know. □



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## "It's no longer I who live but Christ lives in me" The Incarnation Principle

**O**ne of the important keys to understanding God's Word is the incarnation principle. *Incarnation* means "becoming flesh." The word itself does not appear in the Bible, but its essence is stated by John in his Gospel: "...the Word was God.... And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:1, 14 NAS). We usually think of incarnation in terms of the physical appearance and earthly ministry of Jesus. But it has special significance both before His birth and after His ascension.

God revealed Himself in the Old Testament by incarnating certain aspects of His nature in a continuing parade of men, women, and children. He then caused their stories to be recorded in Scripture for our example and encouragement. When we examine many of the Old Testament characters, we often can find no natural explanation for their behavior, and must conclude that the presence of God was incarnated in them—God's own nature was revealed in their lives.

Abraham's story, for instance, offers no clues to the mystery of his faith. We must conclude that his faith had a supernatural origin. Hosea likewise falls into this category; God put him in terrible circumstances, allowing his heart to be broken over and over by the unfaithfulness of his wife, Gomer. But Hosea received supernatural grace to endure and to become an example of the long-suffering love of God for His people.

Finally, God incarnated His entire nature in His Son, Jesus. Paul says in Colossians 2:9, "For in Him (Jesus) all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form" (NAS). After Jesus' ascension, God sent the Holy Spirit to incarnate Jesus' nature (fruits of

the Spirit) and ministry (gifts of the Spirit) in the members of His body, the Church.

God never intended that His work be carried out on earth by our own human gifts and abilities. His work is to be done in our flesh by the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul emphasized this in his letter to the Galatians: "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20 NAS).

### FIRST ASSIGNMENT:

Read Genesis chapters 12-22, 37, 39-45. As you read these scriptures, watch for the incarnation principle (God's nature in people) at work in the various characters and note when they responded naturally or supernaturally to the situations they encountered.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. In Genesis chapter 22, how does the relationship between Abraham and Isaac reflect the relationship between God the Father and God the Son? How does this particular scripture foretell the Son's mission on the earth?

2. How do the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Joseph illustrate certain aspects of Christ's character and ministry?

### SECOND ASSIGNMENT:

Read Exodus chapters 3-4, 13-14; Judges chapters 6-7; and 1 Kings chapter 3. Notice how God commissioned Moses, Gideon, and Solomon, and then used them to reveal His character.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. What means did God use to reveal Himself to Moses, Gideon, and Solomon?

2. What aspect of His nature was revealed by each man?

3. What has God called you to do, and how is His nature revealed in your calling?

### THIRD ASSIGNMENT:

Read Isaiah 61:1-3; Luke 4:16-21; John 14:12-21; Galatians 2:20; and Philippians 1:21; 2:5-13. Notice the ways Christ's nature is to be manifested through us individually and through the body of Christ corporately.

Questions for study and discussion:

1. What are some of the practical evidences of the Spirit's presence in our lives?

2. What is the difference between trying to imitate Christ and having Christ incarnate in us?

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

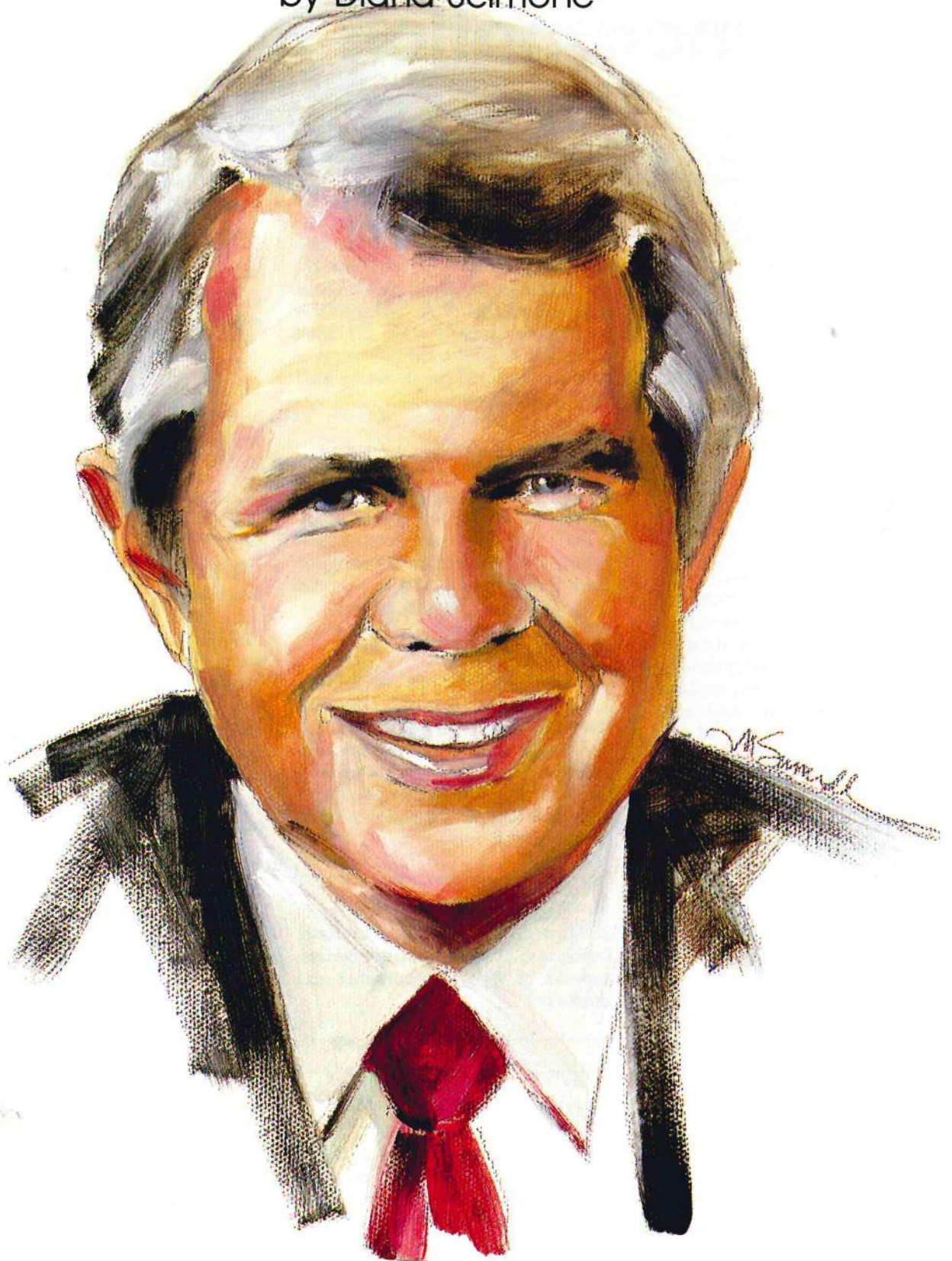
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# PAT ROBERTSON

A man in pursuit of a dream  
by Diana Scimone





**I**n 1959, the Reverend Marion Gordon Robertson took a final look at New York City, and then left with his wife and three children. The young minister, known as "Pat" to his friends, had seventy dollars in his pocket and a dream in his heart: to own and operate a Christian television station.

Robertson had a number of credentials to his name, but nothing that would qualify him to buy, much less run, a television station. An ordained Southern Baptist clergyman, he was once a Golden Gloves boxer and saw combat duty as a lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps in Korea. He had also earned several academic degrees: an undergraduate degree from Washington and Lee University, a law degree from Yale University, and a master of divinity degree from New York Theological Seminary. But a television station?

Two years later, he made a down payment on his dream. He purchased an abandoned UHF television station in Portsmouth, Virginia, and on October 1, 1961, it went on the air. The signal was so weak that it barely reached across a three-mile river to Norfolk, Virginia, but it was the beginning of the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN).

In 1962, CBN added a radio station, WXRI. Out of a strong burden for prayer, Robertson and program director Warren Brenning started a program called *Revival Prayer*. At noon each Monday through Saturday, listeners prayed for revival in the Tidewater area of Virginia, and throughout the world. They also began a radio program called *Power-time*, during which the host read prayer requests, shared Scripture, and prayed for the needs of the audience. When the host took another job, Robertson filled in for him.

Following the example of George Muller, Robertson tried to live on faith and not ask anyone but God for money. As the financial burden increased, he sought God and came up with a plan to meet the monthly budget of seven thousand dollars. The idea was to televise a telethon and to seek seven hundred people who would each trust God for ten dollars. Robertson's friend Jack White coined the name *The 700 Club* for the telethon, and it stuck.

Unfortunately, they received only half the number of pledges they were hoping for. Robertson knew that CBN's location—an area known as the psychic capital of the world, where a number of occultists are headquartered—had a lot to do with the opposition and spiritual oppression they faced. But they persevered in spite of the difficult times.

Late in 1964, the station increased its power, and more people listened and prayed for the show. God answered their prayers and sent the revival they had been praying for, and many were saved and healed. For the first time the telethon reached its goal, now up to ten thousand dollars a month.

### A Flood of Sickness

It was about this time when the wife of the television production manager came to Robertson with a revelation from the Lord that they were going to be flooded with sickness and disease. The staff assumed that some plague was to be inflicted upon it. But instead the "flood of sickness" was from the audience who called in hundreds of prayer requests. As the staff prayed for people, miracles happened.

The telethon the following year was even more successful, and the Lord told the staff in a prophetic word that it would see "greater things than the previous year." No one thought it was possible.

When the telethon was over, two staff members, Jim Bakker and Bill Garthwaite, talked to Robertson about making the telethon into a daily broadcast using a similar prayer-and-ministry format. Although he knew the telethon was successful beyond anything they had envisioned, he was nonetheless hesitant about "programming" the Holy Spirit. But finally he agreed to allocate the last portion of the broadcast day for the program. If the Holy Spirit was at work, he reasoned, they could stay on for hours if necessary. But if nothing was happening, they could sign off quickly. He called the program *The 700 Club*. Those who understood the name would quickly tune in, and non-Christians would think it was a secular club, and would watch out of curiosity.

After a few trials and errors (including trying to gear the program as a low-budget Christian *Tonight Show*, complete with gray backdrop and artificial palms), Robertson realized that God had given His blessing when they ministered as a team, and he insisted that they return to that format. He joined the program as host, and sat with his co-host at a desk. Behind them were a team of prayer counselors.

The program went on the air at 10:15 each night, and usually continued until midnight. Sometimes it ran as late as 3:00 a.m. By contemporary standards the program would not be considered a success, but at that time what happened was nothing short of incredible. Hundreds found Jesus as Savior, and there were many dramatic answers to prayer.

Robertson knew that he had found the formula for a successful program—prayer and ministry with telephone response. CBN added radio stations in upstate New York and in Bogota, Colombia, that followed the same format, and then expanded to Atlanta and Charlotte, North Carolina, where CBN added its first commercial affiliate, WRET-TV.

As CBN continued to grow, Robertson began to dream of a cable network providing family programming without compromising traditional Judeo-Christian values. On April 29, 1977, CBN transmitted its first satellite broadcast, and CBN Cable was born.

### Around the World

Today CBN is the benchmark for Christian broadcasting. A recent Nielsen survey, commissioned by CBN, determined that *The 700 Club* is the most popular religious television program in the United States. The survey found that 19.1 percent of television households (or 16.25 million people) watched a portion of the program at least once during the four-week test period last year.

In addition to the more than two hundred affiliate stations across the United States and Canada that carry the program, it is also seen in sixty-five foreign countries—many of which have never had Christian television in their history—including



ing Panama, Uganda, and India. It is also shown throughout the Middle East on CBN's Lebanon-based Middle East Television station, and over the American Forces Radio and TV Service.

There have been hundreds of dramatic conversions all over the world as a result of the program. In the Dominican Republic, for example, the former vice-president and his wife both accepted Christ as they watched *The 700 Club* in their country. In the United States, *700 Club* counseling centers receive more than three million calls for help a year. Telephone counselors pray with callers and, when necessary, put them in touch with local churches. CBN also sponsors more than sixty-five international coun-

seling centers from Taipei to San Salvador to Nicosia.

CBN Cable Network has grown to a twenty-four-hour family entertainment programming service, and is carried by 6,228 cable companies. CBN News covers international stories, and has news bureaus in Washington, D.C., Beirut, and Jerusalem.

#### State of the Art

The 685-acre CBN complex in Virginia Beach, Virginia, is not far from Cape Henry Landing, where in 1607 settlers commissioned by England's King James I planted a simple wooden cross. Their mission was commerce and propagation of the Christian faith in the new world. Today CBN continues that

mission. Nestled among CBN's white-columned, red-bricked Georgian buildings are the signs of a state-of-the-art communications facility. Visitors are often surprised to see satellite dishes and a satellite earth station that is the control center for the CBN satellite network. From here program signals are beamed to an RCA Satcom 1 satellite and a Western Union Westar satellite.

In addition to *The 700 Club*, CBN also sponsors

**Operation Blessing:** a humanitarian outreach providing food and assistance to needy people all over the world.

**The Book:** a CBN-Tyndale House

## Pat on Politics

**C**hristians across the country have begun to realize the necessity of getting involved in public affairs. Pat Robertson is no exception. Here is where he stands on current issues.

**Q Mr. Robertson, where do you stand politically?**

**A** I was a member of the Democratic Party for 55 years. We're born Democrats in the South. My father served in Congress for 34 years and was a lifetime Democrat. I supported Adlai Stevenson in 1952 and 1956.

But I have seen the Democratic Party be captured by certain extreme fringe groups in society that do not mirror what I believe to be the mainstream of the American public. I am now a registered Republican.

**Q There's been a lot of talk about your running for President. Is it true?**

**A** Well, I'm crystallizing a decision through talking to a number of people, both religious and secular,

whose opinions I respect. I'm obviously praying about it. I'm reading the mail that comes to me and trying to observe what's happening in the world in order to formulate an intelligent decision.

I must say there have been many people who have come to me urging me to run. I think those Americans who cherish traditional values are looking for a candidate to represent their point of view and to stand strong and stand tall on these matters. I also believe there are some fiscal and social conservatives in the Republican Party who feel the same way.

**Q What's wrong with the Republicans who are considered almost certain to run—Vice President George Bush, for instance?**

**A** George is a wonderful person. We traveled together to the Sudan this spring. Bob Dole is a marvelous majority leader of the Senate. Howard Baker was an equally skillful majority leader. And Representative Jack Kemp is a personal friend of mine.

Yet I think the major problem

we face is the moral state of the people. I'm talking about the need for a spirit of reliance on God, a spirit of patriotism, a spirit of giving, a spirit, if you will, of self-sacrifice for noble goals. Unless we reinstate that spirit in our people, we will continue to look to Washington for increasingly large handouts, bailouts and solutions. I believe, from a moral and spiritual standpoint, I would be better able to address that particular point of view and also, perhaps, to build a national consensus to support that point of view than maybe the other candidates.

**Q Another clergyman, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, tried something like that for the Democrats in 1984 and didn't get very far—**

**A** The difference between me and Jesse, I think, is clear-cut. Jesse Jackson went to Havana and said: "Long live the revolution; long live Che Guevara." I went to Honduras and tried to give aid to some of the refugees who were the victims of Communist oppression. Jesse was an extremely articulate spokes-



special edition of *The Living Bible*, which set publishing records when it sold more than one million copies in a few months.

**"Don't Ask Me, Ask God":** a one-hour prime-time CBN television special watched by an estimated audience of twenty-eight million people. It was based on a CBN-commissioned Gallup Poll to determine what one question viewers would most like to ask God.

**CBN University:** Pat Robertson serves as chancellor of the school, which opened in 1978, and has schools of communication, business, biblical studies, and public policy, and an In-

stitute of Journalism. In 1984 it dedicated—debt free—a \$13.2 million graduate library. And just last year, CBN added a law school when Oral Roberts University donated its O.W. Coburn School of Law to CBN, providing a legal library valued at \$10 million dollars. CBN has already begun constructing classroom facilities, and expects the school to open this fall.

**CBN Continental Broadcasting:** a commercial broadcasting subsidiary that owns and operates three commercial television stations (in Boston, Dallas, and Norfolk-Portsmouth) and one FM radio station, also in the Norfolk-Portsmouth area.

**The Freedom Council:** founded in 1981 to defend and restore religious liberties.

When God gives a vision, one reaction is to scoff at it; another is to insist that it become a reality instantly. Pat Robertson did neither. When he heard God speak this dream to him, he didn't have the first notion of how to run a television station. Yet he knew it would happen because he had God's word that it would. And that enabled him to persevere during the years it took before his dream became the reality that it is today. □

*Diana Scimone is an editorial assistant for New Wine.*

man, but I don't think he spoke for mainstream America. The point of view I espouse, both in relation to traditional moral values and in relation to economic conservatism, pretty much speaks to the mainstream. It's not very much different from that of Ronald Reagan.

**Q What about your television career if you ran for President?**

**A** The law is that if a station airs a broadcast featuring a declared candidate, all other candidates similarly situated must be offered equal time. In my case, if I ever become a candidate—which would not possibly be for a couple of years—I would have to get off the air. But up to that time, I'm a Christian businessman and broadcaster.

**Q How active will you be in the 1986 campaigns?**

**A** We're starting a political-action committee called the Committee for Freedom. We would use those funds—I would like to see us raise maybe 2 million dollars—to support candidates who espouse traditional, conservative principles. There are quite a few Senate races and also gubernatorial races where we would like to get involved.

**Q Just how strong is what's being**

**called the Christian right?**

**A** Over the last nine years, members of the evangelical community have become politically activated in a way I would never have dreamed possible. The reason they have been activated is because they perceive continuous assaults by government agencies and by the courts against their deeply held beliefs. They were told 10 years ago that politics was sinful and evil. Now they're being told that it's sinful and evil *not* to get involved in politics. There's a complete reversal.

The evangelical movement, in fact, is getting to be one of the most powerful forces in American politics. The exact numbers are uncertain, but it appears there are maybe 20 million evangelicals involved today in the Republican Party; and there are probably a total of up to 50 million evangelicals in the country.

**Q Is there a danger the Republicans could be accused of representing a special interest in the evangelicals—as Democrats have been accused of protecting unions?**

**A** If all the evangelicals do is talk about prayer and abortion, without question it will become a very narrow special-interest group. But if they talk about moral renewal, if

they talk about strong defense, if they talk about economic restraint, if they talk about the budget deficit—if they talk about the major problems that confront America and give intelligent solutions, they will actually be reinforcing the mainstream. And that's what I see.

**Q What is the proper role of the church in politics?**

**A** I don't think that there should be an influence from the government upon the church, nor do I think there should be influence by the church as an institution in regard to the government. But I do think that there should be moral influences, and I do think that those who are deeply dedicated, religious people of all faiths should be involved in the governmental process. I certainly don't think the Constitution in any way intended to protect the government from religion. I think religion is a very vital part of the morality of our life in this nation. According to Justice Douglas in *Zorach v. Clausen*, we are a religious people whose institutions presuppose the existence of a supreme being. □

*Reprinted from U.S. News & World Report issue of Nov. 4, 1985. Copyright, 1985, U.S. News & World Report.*



**M**ichael R. Ellison is president of Michael R. Ellison, Inc., a Phoenix-based communications organization that serves Christian ministries involved in television, radio, print, and other media. Ellison's company has long recognized the importance of the media in spreading the gospel. In 1982, the company helped plan and coordinate the World Communion Service, which permitted hundreds of thousands of Christians in three hundred locations around the world to take communion together thanks to satellite communications. Ellison has assisted many ministries, including Kenneth Copeland, James Robison, Jimmy Swaggart, Marilyn Hickey, PTL, and the Christian Broadcasting Network.

*New Wine* recently talked with Ellison about the direction—and the future—of Christian media.

***New Wine:*** What is happening in Christian television today?

**Michael Ellison:** Although it is still in a growth trend, Christian television today is in the process of solidifying the outstanding growth of the past fifteen years. As I see it, the present goal of the media ministry should be to get better penetration in the marketplace, not just coverage. In fact, I'm convinced that future growth will be determined by our ability to produce programing that will have a broader appeal to the television audience without compromising the message. Presenting the gospel in a relevant and acceptable way without compromising the message has always been the challenge of the Church. It is especially difficult in a society where communications is in constant accelerated motion. At one time our objective was to acquire the tool. Now, it is how we will use the tool.

**NW:** Does Christian television have the respect of those in the secular broadcast media?

**ME:** I have seen respect from the secular media grow considerably in recent years. The concern for quality in our industry has contributed substantially to that. Although

there are still programs that are not as concerned with production as they should be, the major trend is to produce programing that is acceptable to secular media.

**NW:** Can the Christian television personality maintain his spiritual quality in the midst of pursuing excellence? How does he avoid a show biz appearance?

**ME:** The answer to the first question is yes. The more knowledge we have about communicating to the viewer, the more the personality will come through on the television screen. But one doesn't have to compromise his ministry because God has chosen people of all kinds of personalities to deliver His message. Of course, if a person uses showmanship or studies Las Vegas for techniques to manipulate an audience, he is going to have problems keeping integrity in his ministry.

**NW:** Why are you in the communications business?

**ME:** I am in communications because God has called me. I do not see us as only a communications company; I see us as a company called by God to assist ministries in communicating the gospel of Christ to people. Our goal is to present a strong message and personality supported by strong management and stewardship principles. That's my focus whether we're developing a radio or television program, placing a program in the best time slot possible to reach the maximum amount of people for the dollars invested, or developing computer software to help us evaluate the effectiveness of a ministry.

**NW:** What determines whether you take on a client?

**ME:** Our first priority is the message. If we are certain that the message proclaims Christ and doesn't bring division, then we look for the best way to deliver that message. We consider factors such as the person's ability to communicate and the resources available, which include finances, management, and support services.

**NW:** What determines whether a ministry would go on radio or television?

**ME:** Certainly finances play a role, but they're not the major factor. The major consideration is the person's ability to communicate. Some people, such as Pat Robertson, James Robison, and Kenneth Copeland, are photogenic and are comfortable in front of a camera, so they communicate well visually. On the other hand, those who are uncomfortable and don't project well in front of the camera make other people feel uncomfortable watching them.

As for radio, if a person has a good voice inflection and can communicate his personality and message to motivate people without the aid of visuals, he can be successful. It doesn't seem to matter if the people are Bible teachers, talk show hosts, or counselors. If they're good communicators, they'll gain acceptance from the listener.

**NW:** What are the ingredients for a successful ministry?

**ME:** First, I must say it is difficult to measure what is a successful ministry but, for example, a typical media ministry must have a clear message and a cause as well as the blessing and anointing of God. However, it is possible to have God's blessings and be able to communicate well and not be able to manage your resources. Without managing your resources, you won't obtain much success. That's why the major role of our company is to help people who are blessed of God with a clear message to communicate and to manage their resources effectively.

**NW:** As you have helped people to do this have you seen the media market change over the years?

**ME:** When we first started in 1970, available air time was very limited, so initially we set out to introduce Christian programing to stations all across the country. Today, every market in America has Christian programing. In fact, radio, television, satellite, and cable distri-

*continued on page 35*



# Channeling the Gospel to the World

A communications expert airs his views  
about Christian media.





# NEW WINE TAPE



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We'd like to introduce you to New Wine Tape of the Month by sending your first tape absolutely free. Thereafter you'll pay only \$5 (postage and handling included) for the monthly tapes as you receive them. If you're not

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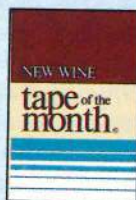
Gloria Schultz  
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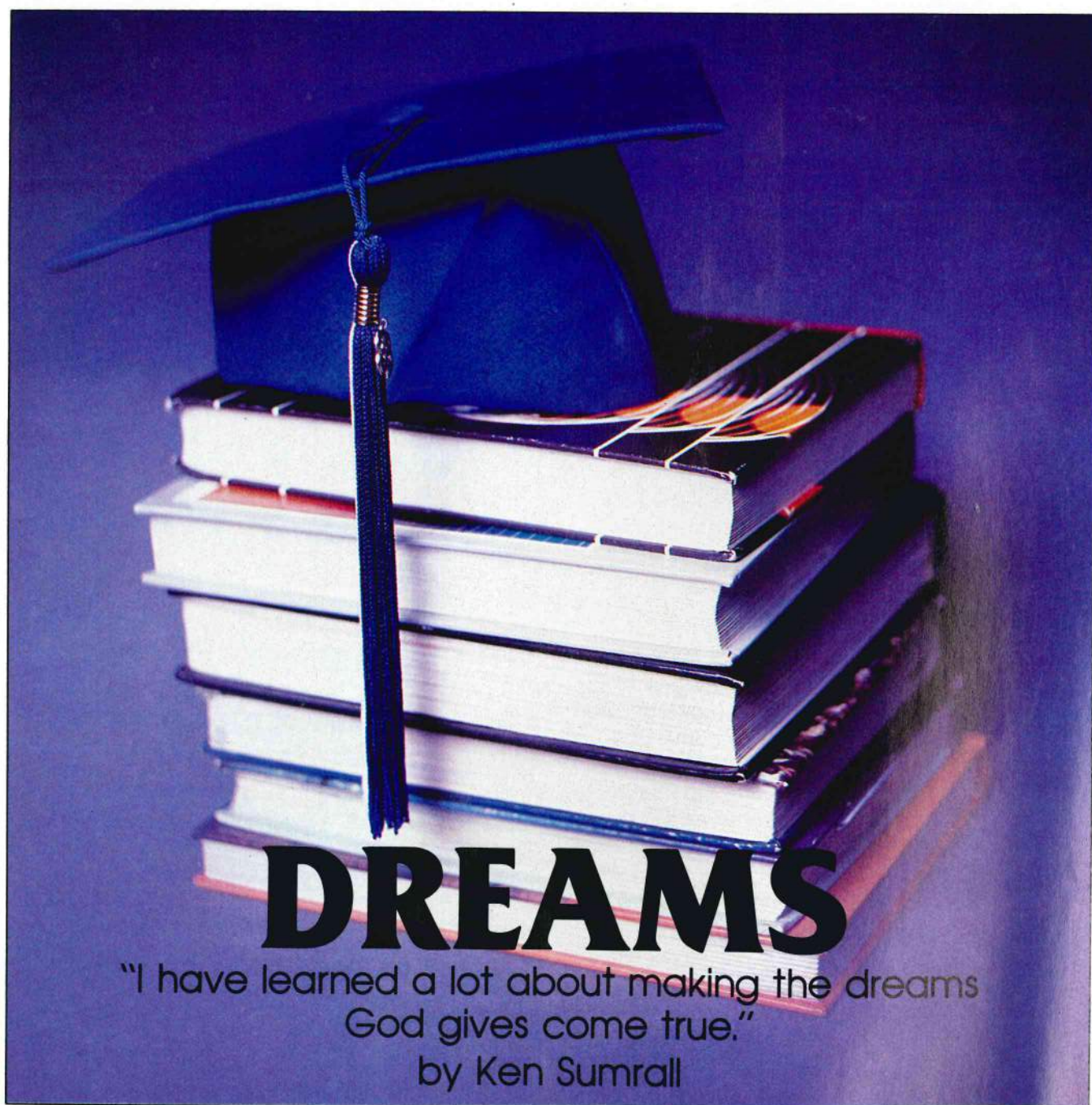
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# DREAMS

"I have learned a lot about making the dreams  
God gives come true."

by Ken Sumrall

**D**uring the early days of the charismatic renewal, I was the main speaker at a regional conference of the Full Gospel Businessmen International. I sat on the platform and awaited my turn to speak. Before me were a thousand excited, expectant participants singing jubilant choruses about Jesus and the Holy Spirit while a few perplexed spectators watched with varied facial expressions.

As I worshiped and looked upon this sea of glowing faces, I began to

weep. At first, I couldn't understand my emotions, but then words from Matthew's Gospel flashed before my eyes, as if on a screen: "But when he (Jesus) saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they...were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd" (Mt. 9:36).

The Holy Spirit said to me: "Many of these and thousands like them in this nation are sheep with no understanding pastor. I am commissioning you to provide a place to train ministers who will

care for My people."

That was the vision that resulted in Liberty Bible College in Pensacola, Florida. Since the school opened its doors almost two decades ago, men and women, young and old, have come from almost every state in our nation and from many foreign countries to receive Bible teaching and other training for ministry. I look back at the word God gave me and marvel at how far He has taken that vision. This very day Liberty graduates are serving all around the



world as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and in ministries of helps (see Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28).

### Holding Fast to the Dream

Getting the vision for the college was simple. As I worshiped and yielded myself to God, He spoke clearly. The hard part has been holding fast to the dream during adversities, such as scarcity of funds and the everyday cares and pressures. Oftentimes over the last eighteen years, all that kept me from giving up was God's promises in the Scriptures:

Let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint...at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint (Gal. 6:9 AMP).

He Who began a good work in you will continue until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. 1:6 AMP).

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor. 15:58).

I am thoroughly convinced that if I had not known that God gave me the college dream, if I had not been willing to correct my methods from time to time to get in line with His ways, and if I had not waited for His timing in building, buying equipment, or employing the faculty, I could not have endured.

By God's grace and faithfulness my co-workers and I have encouraged ourselves in the Lord and have run the race of endurance, looking unto Jesus (see 1 Samuel 30:6 and Hebrews 12:1-2). As a result, the dream is still alive.

### A New Dream

Recently I had another vision—this time of a four-year charismatic liberal-arts college for educating God's people who are not called to full-time ministry. The Lord said to me: "Hundreds of young people graduating from high school need an affordable interdenominational charismatic liberal-arts college." My heart burned as the words came in-

to my spirit and mind: "Enlarge your vision to encompass and train God's children in the humanities and sciences to prepare them for Kingdom work in areas such as politics and education. I want a college that will provide personal care along with academic excellence in an atmosphere of tough love."

Because of this vision, we have established Liberty Christian College as a four-year liberal-arts school.



*Ken Sumrall serves as chancellor of the new Liberty Christian College.*



*The goal of the college is to prepare business and government leaders.*

offering bachelor of arts degrees in majors such as Bible, business administration, counseling, and music. It will open in August, and we are now seeking accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

We see this school not as something to compete with those of similar calls but as a small part of God's overall plan for equipping the body of Christ.

God is providing the faculty and the funds for expansion, which includes additional dormitories, classrooms, library space and books, and a new gymnasium. We see the in-

visible and have determined to be strong in faith, giving glory to God (see Romans 4:20).

### Examining the Vision

From my experience with the college and other visions God has given me (or that I thought God gave me) I have learned a lot about making the dreams God gives come true. The most important insight is that we must know that the vision we have is from God.

The Lord has a specific calling for each of His children; none of us have the same dreams. I've never had a dream to translate the Scriptures for every tribe in the world. John Wycliffe did. I've never had a dream to build a Christian television network to minister the love of Jesus to millions and to provide a forum against godless humanism in our land. Pat Robertson did. I've never had a dream to be a Christian businessman and give millions of dollars to specific Christian ministries. Many have.

My dream has been to educate and train the minds and spirits of God's people in Bible knowledge and related disciplines so that they can minister truth no matter what field they are in.

Dreams or visions can be birthed by a legitimate desire to do something great for God or they can come from idealistic fantasies and a desire for recognition from the religious world.

I must admit that some of the goals I had for church growth early in my ministry, although conceived with good intentions, were self-centered. They were to improve my self-image and acceptance by others. Of those goals that I attained, many left me feeling empty and frustrated, because I had produced institutional monsters, which "eat preachers alive."

Charles Blair, pastor of the great church Calvary Temple in Denver, wrote a book called *The Man Who Could Do No Wrong*. In it, he candidly tells how he got caught up in a big "dream" to meet spiritual and physical needs of people in Denver. The dream eventually proved to be based on a delusion—that his past successes were reason enough to succumb to pressures to "believe for greater things." His





*Liberty Christian College, a four-year charismatic liberal-arts school set to open in August, will educate those not called to full-time ministry.*

failures and humiliation should be read by every man of God who seeks to do great things for the Lord.

Blair concludes his book by recommending that we examine our dreams with three questions: Is the dream His vision? Is the method His way? Is the timing His moment?

#### **Five Examples in Hebrews**

We can find examples of people who had God's vision, method, and timing in Hebrews chapter 11, known by many as the "faith chapter." Actually, it could well be called the obedience chapter. None of the patriarchs presented called themselves people of faith, neither did they call what they did faith. They simply had a passion to please their God and determined to obey Him in whatever He commissioned them to do. God called what they did faith:

"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice" (v. 4). "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death" (v. 5). "By faith Noah...prepared an ark to the saving of his house" (v. 7). "By faith Abraham....sojourned in the land of promise....(and) offered up Isaac" (vv. 8-9, 17). "Through faith also Sarah herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was

past age" (v. 11).

Four consecutive steps that are necessary to prove genuine faith and make dreams come true are given in verse 13:

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

The first step is that God revealed His plan, or dream, to each of them. Second, they were persuaded and convinced in their hearts that God would perform according to His call and promise. Third, they held fast to their faith during times of trial. Fourth, they spoke of the dream as though it were already achieved, relinquishing any earthly ambitions of their own.

God still gives His people dreams; that's still how He works out His plan for creation. When we yield ourselves to Him, He can speak to us, and if we're sensitive to His voice and obey when we hear, He will enable us to do what He has commanded. There will be times when it would appear that God has forgotten, but if we hold fast and continue to obey like the saints in Hebrews chapter 11, we will see our dreams come true. □

## **"But What If I Fail?"**

**I** imagine, for instance, how easy it would have been for this young man to have bowed his head and given up. He failed in business in '31, he was defeated for the legislature in '32, he was elected to the legislature in '34. His sweetheart died in '35, he had a nervous breakdown in '36, he was defeated for speaker in '38, he was defeated for elector in '40, he was defeated for Congress in '43, he was elected to Congress in '46, defeated for Congress in '48, defeated for Senate in '50, defeated for vice president in '56 and for Senate in '58. But fortunately he was elected president in 1860. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

Where did Lincoln learn such tenacity and such an ability to be undeterred by failure? Much of it came from within, of course—that character which Sandburg called a combination of velvet and steel. But he also persevered because some people believed in him, encouraged him when he despaired, taught him that failure was not permanent, and pushed him on. Perhaps there were other Lincolns born on the western frontier in that century, but for the want of such teachers and friends, they now lie in obscure graves. □

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*Scriptures marked AMP: The Amplified New Testament. Copyright © 1958 by The Lockman Foundation.*



**Ken Sumrall**, a New Wine contributing editor, is the founder of *Globe Missionary Evangelism*, which sponsors missionaries in fourteen countries. He is president of *Liberty Bible College* in Pensacola, Florida, and pastors *Liberty Church* there. Ken is also the author of five books, including *From Glory to Glory*. He and his wife, Wanda, live in Pensacola.





## ELLISON

*continued from page 28*

bution are now opening up worldwide. That's exciting to me. It's not just America; it's the world, and that is the mandate of Jesus Christ.

**NW:** What are some specific things your company has contributed to Christian media?

**ME:** Besides introducing Christian programming to many stations, our contributions include helping the development of several major media ministries. Also, we introduced closed circuit satellite communications to Christian media. I personally consider the World Communion Service in 1982 a major accomplishment of our organization. Hundreds of people around the world were involved technically for that moment of uniting the body of Christ in communion. After that came the development of Christian radio talk-shows via satellite. I pray our greatest contribution has been to help get the gospel message out to people who are in need.

**NW:** Have you experienced different emphases in your business?

**ME:** In the beginning, our goal was to broaden the message of Christ through the media. In 1978 we began looking at new methods of communication and with that came the revelation of how closed circuit

television could be used to bring people together simultaneously and how satellite technology could be used to communicate the gospel more efficiently.

Then, we began to look at other ways that technology could be used, and we started a program with Bob Larson, which was the first Christian talk-show via satellite. We found it was a significant way to reach a younger audience that at the time was only being reached on a limited scale. Today, there are many talk-shows via satellite going into most markets. That's happened in the last five years.

I feel that today the airwaves are nearly saturated with Christian programming. A survey shows that a third of the U.S. population is watching or hearing a Christian program every week. They're tuning in to it. That's significant. I think that now God wants us to be specifically concerned about the message and the form of presentation.

**NW:** Has the Church been naive in the way it has communicated its message to the world?

**ME:** I believe to a degree it has. We have been slow to use knowledge, whether it is the use of technology or management of resources. We seem to reject those gifts, maybe fearing that properly using them would offend God. Acquiring and using knowledge doesn't replace the various kinds of ministry that are needed or the anointing of God on the message, but I think you can be anointed and at the same time be ignorant. The Bible is clear in regard to God's people being destroyed for lack of knowledge. They're still God's people, but ignorance destroys them.

Many of us in communications believe it's because of the Church's knowledge and understanding of communications that it has moved beyond its four walls into the marketplace. As a result, we've seen a dynamic parallel between the growth of the Church and the growth of the media. We are still learning God's ways and tools and I believe they are being revealed for a time of spiritual outpouring on the whole world. □



*Ern Baxter on the raging of nations*

## NEXT MONTH IN NEW WINE: YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

**Ern Baxter** says that modern governments have cast aside the laws of God, and are slowly eating away at the rights of those who still follow them. In his stirring style, he encourages us to challenge the nations with the lordship of Christ.

**Bob Mumford** offers help for the Christian to stand for Christ and His Word in a time when biblical morality is eroding like sand from a beach in a terrible storm. He urges us to examine our convictions, and to do something about them.

**Gary Bergel**, executive director of Intercessors for America, takes a look at abortion, and presents an often overlooked alternative.

Plus the Supreme Court, pornography, and addiction—practical guidelines for how the Church can make a difference.

All in the March *New Wine*



# Pedestals aren't meant for people **For Statues Only**

by Don Basham

**E**very man in public ministry collects his own share of "pedestal placers"—loyal followers who mentally design elaborate pedestals for him. In my case, God periodically arranges for me to fall off the pedestal, thus revealing to the pedestal placers that I am not "God's man of faith and power" but rather an ordinary Christian who puts his trousers on one leg at a time, just like every other man.

Some years ago I was ministering in Texas. By the last day of the conference I was extremely exhausted, but the minister asked if I would mind if a "prominent" woman in the church joined us for dinner before the last session. "She has received so much help from your books that she's just *dying* to meet you," he explained.

Although I wasn't feeling well at all, I felt I behaved in a fairly courteous way during dinner. As soon as the meal was over, I excused myself and returned to my room to rest.

The next morning as my host drove me to the airport, I thought he seemed unusually quiet. Finally, he said, "I must tell you that the woman who joined us for dinner last night was terribly offended by your behavior."

I was stunned. "Whatever did I do to upset her?"

"After you left the table," he explained, "she became furious. She said she had looked forward to meeting you for months, but then you just sat there and ignored her during the whole meal. She said you weren't anything at all like she imagined from reading your books."

"But didn't you tell her I wasn't feeling well?"

"Yes, but she still thought you were about the rudest man she had

ever met."

The problem, of course, was the pedestal! According to the lofty one she had me on, I should have spent the entire dinner hour entertaining her with scintillating conversation filled with sparkling gems of spiritual wisdom. Sadly, all I could think about was finishing my meal and getting an hour's rest before I had to speak. I'm sure my failure to meet her expectations provided food for some caustic comments to her friends about "what traveling Bible teachers are really like!"

It is a cunning tactic for discord that Satan uses when he tricks us into putting people on pedestals, for the moment they fall off we begin to resent and criticize them.

"Why I never dreamed that (my husband, wife, pastor, employer, neighbor, or friend) would do a thing like that! I thought he was a Christian!" And so we storm around, plowing up the peace and sowing seeds of discord, piously venting our outrage through the respectable sins of self-pity and self-righteousness, because people we held in high regard let us down.

The truth is, people almost always fall short of our expectations. Many times, however, the problem is not so much poor performance on their part as unreasonable expectations on ours.

Even John the Baptist had certain expectations about the kind of ministry that the Christ would conduct, and Jesus didn't seem to be fulfilling them. The scripture says:

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" (Mt. 11:2-3 NIV).

The devil has a way of enlarging our expectations until they assume proportions that no mortal could possibly fulfil. He prompts us to mentally fashion pedestals of near perfectionism and place those whom we admire on top of them. Sooner or later—because such pedestals don't allow for human frailty—those we put there come crashing down.

Pedestals aren't meant for people; they are meant for statues, because only statues never do anything wrong. They never fail or fall short of people's expectations. Statues never complain and they never misbehave. They never have bad days. They just stand there on their pedestals, looking important and being admired.

But for real live people, pedestals are no help at all. They assign no corner for compassion; they leave no ledge for love. Pedestals supply no walls for weakness to lean on; they show no pity for poor performance. Pedestals grant no grace for failure; they afford no chance for correction.

We think the people we put on pedestals don't need our help to stay there, and don't deserve our help if they fall.

So the next time we decide to place someone on the lofty pedestal of our own unrealistic expectations, we should do our best to resist the temptation. Not only the person we admire, but the whole body of Christ will be better off for our effort.

At least, that's the way I see it. □

*Don Basham is chief editorial consultant for New Wine.*



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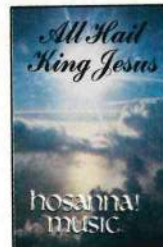
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