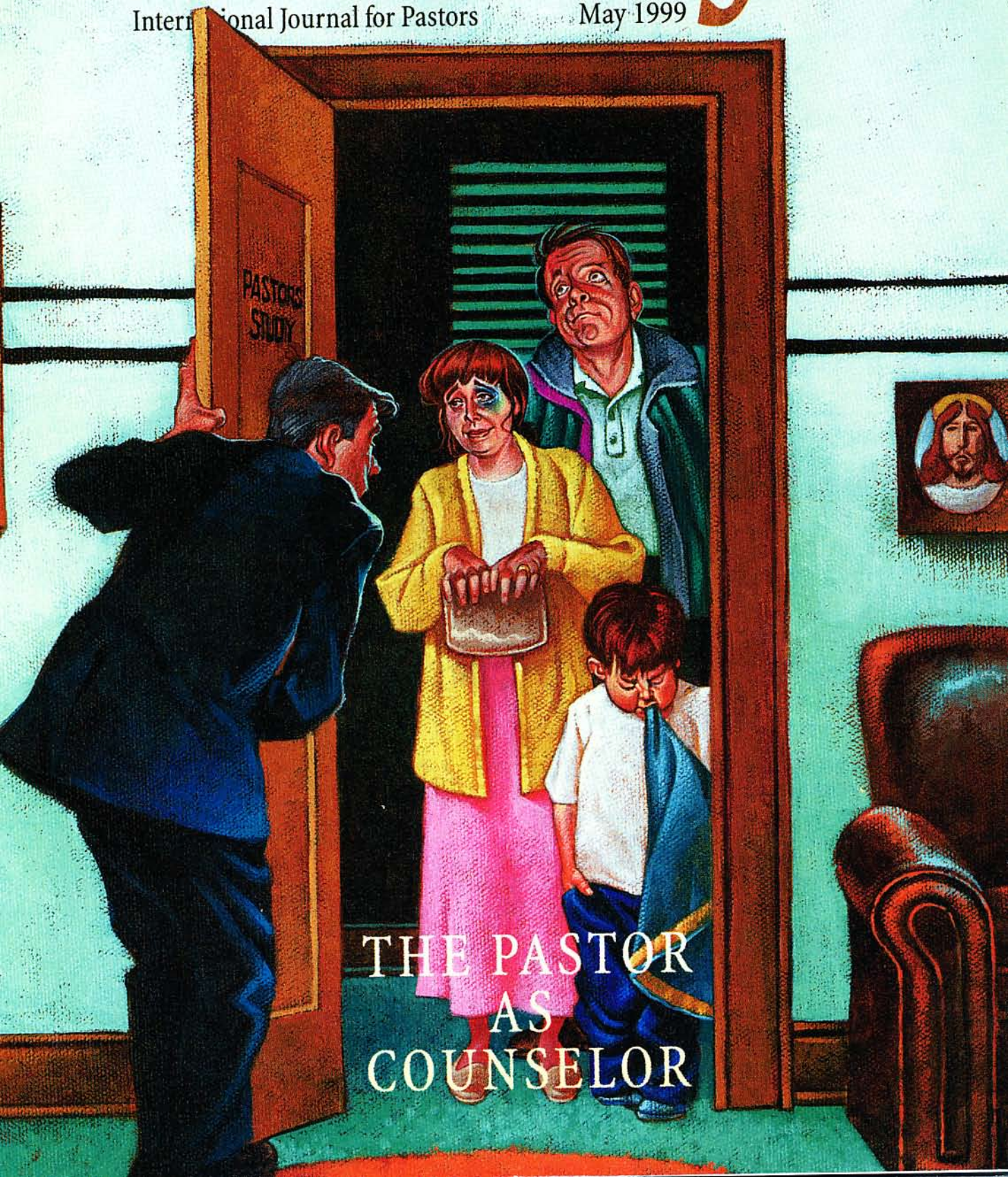


Ministry

International Journal for Pastors

May 1999



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Ministry

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January 1999 issue

The most enjoyable aspect of my ministry is officiating at funerals. David Reid's article "Generic Funerals" was outstanding—thorough and compassionate.

Since retirement from 38 years of pastoral ministry, I continue to serve our community by officiating at "generic" weddings and funerals. What a tremendous opportunity to expose God's love to people at pinnacle events in their lives.

A pastor who shares loving empathy with individuals and families is able to project the Christian message of compassion and caring. The gospel is both seen and heard in a positive tone by persons who may have had misconceptions or bad experiences with the Christian church.—Peter Mealwitz, Grace Lutheran Church, Elyria, Ohio,

● In "Generic Funerals," David Reid makes a significant point in stating that the Christian funeral is a "service of worship." Although short life sketches and short eulogies are appropriate, worship should be directed toward God, not the deceased. Appreciation for the loved one or friend can be expressed while avoiding human glorification. The latter tendency is evident especially in some memorial services that consist of little more than stories and eulogies for the deceased. Personal reminiscences can help people cope with loss. They are appropriate at a "wake" or "when the family receives friends" but should be limited at a Christian funeral.—Rolland Ruf, Collegedale, Tennessee.

● The January issue just arrived, and the first part I saw was the book

review, which had a two-page review of *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives*. I appreciated the lengthy review, but right away a question popped into my mind. While the review was frankly very favorable, considering the controversial nature of the subject matter at this time, I was expecting another review. In previous books reviewed on the same subject, there were two reviews. It seems one is missing. Is another forthcoming? Balance and fairness would indicate it as wise.—Hearley Roscher, Modesto, California.

● Excellent interview article by Jonathan McGraw with Richard Stenbakken on ethics and ethical culture in the church. Would that our denomination incorporate his advice in our publishing work. Case in point: Ellen White died in 1915, yet new books continue to be published under her name as though she were still writing. Yes, I know they are a compilation of articles, paragraphs, and statements, but a "new book by Ellen White" they are not. In the 1950s I fell in love with her commentaries and counsels and wanted a copy of everything she wrote, only to discover I was buying a lot of compilations that someone else put together. Can compilations be trusted? Would you trust a Bible that I compiled on a favorite subject? I think not.

I enjoy some of the compilations, but on each cover it should be perfectly clear that the book is a compilation and not a book by Ellen White. As an example, the book advertised in *Ministry* is *Christ in His Sanctuary*, by Ellen White. Only in the advertisement is it mentioned that the book is a compilation.

I do not believe it will hurt book

sales to be honest with the people. This is a matter of ethics.—Leroy E. Gillan, Arlington, Texas.

● I was quite inspired by the article that Elder E. E. Cleveland wrote for the January 1999 issue. Thank you for allowing the Holy Spirit to impress you to print this most interesting and invigorating article. May the Lord continue to bless you as you labor in His name.—Malcolm G. Taylor, Jr., associate speaker, *Breath of Life*, Silver Spring, Maryland.

November 1998

Just a note to say thanks for including "How Do We Measure Up?" and "First You Must Do No Harm" (Stephen Grunlan and Loren Seibold). While not a minister, I regularly enjoy reading *Ministry*. These two articles touched me.—Terry Burns, Loomis, California.

● In reading the November 1998 issue of *Ministry*, I was surprised to notice that Abraham Lincoln's birthplace was said to be in Springfield, Illinois ("Be Sure to Leave Your Light On," by R. Leslie Holmes).

Some years ago, we took a summer vacation visiting Lincoln sites in Illinois, Indiana, and Kentucky, including a log cabin replica of his birthplace near Hodgenville, Indiana.—Karen Shea, Stevensville, Maryland.

You are quite correct!—Editors.

Appreciation

Ministry has done so much to build my respect for the Seventh-day Adventists. I thought of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a cult until I started reading *Ministry*.—John M. Mikkelsen, Menomonie, Wisconsin. ■

Free Subscription

If you're receiving *Ministry* bimonthly and haven't paid for a subscription, it's not a mistake. Since 1928 *Ministry* has been published for Seventh-day Adventist ministers. We believe, however, that the time has come for clergy everywhere to experience a resurgence of faith in the authority of Scripture and in the great truths that reveal the gospel of our salvation by grace, through faith alone in Jesus Christ. We want to share our aspirations and faith in a way that will provide inspiration and help to you as clergy. We hope you will accept this journal as our outstretched hand to you. Look over our shoulder, take what you want and find helpful, and discard what you can't use. Bimonthly gift subscriptions are available to all licensed and/or ordained clergy. Requests should be on church letterhead and addressed to the editorial office.



He's just a liberal." "She is so conservative." I don't know about you, but lately I have felt the inadequacy and

destructiveness of describing positions taken, philosophies propounded, theologies advocated, and groups or individuals being characterized in the tired terms of "conservative" or "liberal." The real problem is that when we say "He's a bit liberal in his thinking," it inevitably means he's dangerous and should be watched. "They're too conservative" means they are unintelligent, rigid, and censorious. Used this way, the words are much more dismissive and insulting than they are descriptive. They hurt people. Using these words as we often do tends to create a polarizing attitudinal extremism, which is unnecessarily divisive.

Liberal-conservative concerns enter our lives on many levels and are constantly being irritated by their critique of one another. The two words by themselves are decidedly incapable of illuminating things to any beneficial extent. We have a pivotal need to be much more descriptive when it comes to the polarities between which we bounce.

Everyone can perceive extremes in people they have met. On the one hand there are "the high noses, compressed lips, pale complexions, dryness and taciturnity of the one; the open mouths, the facile laughter and tears the garrulity and (so to speak) general greasiness of the others. [There are] the men of rigid systems . . . Stoics, Pharisees, Rigorists, signed and sealed members of highly organized 'Parties.' [And the] less definable; boneless souls whose doors stand open day and night to almost every visitant . . . [and who encour-

Conservative and liberal

W I L L E V A

age] the smudging of all frontiers, the relaxation of all resistances."¹

One might assume logically that the two poles would tend to compliment one another. But because of the characteristic egotism that has a strong tendency to accompany extremes, they are both quite wrong, even evil, and, therefore, they usually aggravate and exasperate each other. They are wrong because their spirit is negative and destructive of the "spiritual house" (1 Peter 2:5, NIV) God is building. Working in a mutually reactionary mode they can wreak, as every pastor knows, a particularly potent brand of havoc in a local or corporate church setting.

More often than not there is much more significant "truth" or "error" revealed in the spirit of those in dispute than within the issues of a particular controversy. The key to the truth or error of a position lies easily as much in the arena of attitude as it does in any objective lines of thought that may be pursued. The objective issues underlying a dispute may be important, but the spirit of a dispute is always crucial. It is also true, however, that the more extreme one's factual positions the more likely one is to display a disruptive spirit.

So, when it comes to the North and South poles of virtually any matter, the pastor's concern should be to avoid both like the plague. A pastor simply must take the high road between the poles. This does not mean, of course, that he or she should take fifty percent of the one and fifty percent of the other and so end up hovering at a sceptic point halfway

between. It does mean that the pastor must simply seek to move lovingly and integratively between the two, traveling the road that the Word, the Spirit, and thoughtful wisdom indicates.

The factions championed by people in Jesus' Palestine were, in principle, uncannily similar to those of our time. The New Testament is replete with numerous portrayals of casuistic contentions between factious people and parties. In the midst of all this, leaders such as Paul operated in a distinct third dimension. This was even more true of Jesus. He was not Pharisee or Sadducee, Essene or Zealot. "My teaching is not my own," He said. "It comes from him who sent me" (John 7:16, NIV). The mere act of aligning oneself with a certain party or philosophy has a way, within itself, of encouraging a level of division that is often quite unnecessary.

But Jesus did not hold Himself aloof from anyone. Though acutely aware of His environment, He did not get embroiled in its battles. If you look at Him carefully, you realize that the reason He didn't get embroiled was that, tempting as it might have sometimes been, He did not allow Himself to walk through the extreme left or right doors. Truth is distorted the moment it is sought or carried behind either of those doors. The physical creation is not exclusively black or white, it is expressed in myriad colors. There is an innate righteousness in walking the high road between. Jesus knew where He had come from, who He was, what He was here to do, and where he was going (John 13:3).

The way Jesus handled His world is as always archtypical for leaders everywhere. ■

¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Pilgrim's Regress*, fifth impression (Glasgow: William Collins, 1984), 17.

PSYCHIATRIC PROBLEMS IN THE PARISH

Most pastors would agree that their primary concern is care of the human soul and the avenue to the soul, that deep-seated origin of all that makes us human—the mind.



George F. Gibbs is chaplain, Harding Hospital, Worthington, Ohio.

It follows, then, that pastors can't remain unconcerned about the mental health of the members of their congregations.

I have heard it said that a person with true, strong faith shouldn't suffer mental distress, that if a person would just pray or fully trust God they would be free of depression, anxiety, and emotional confusion. While prayer and faith are certainly part of any program of good mental health, at times that may not be enough. When a person suffers from a mental illness, his or her ability to rely on a faith system is compromised. Thoughts may deteriorate to suicide or other self-destructive behaviors that seem profoundly incompatible with sincerely espoused spiritual commitment.

Common mental health disorders

The fact is that mental health problems do strike people of faith. While parish pastors ought not attempt to practice psychiatry, they should have

sufficient knowledge to screen for common mental health problems. These problems fall into four broad categories.

Depression and mood disorders are the most likely to be encountered. Sometimes people say they're depressed when they're only discouraged or unhappy. But clinical depression is a specific, debilitating condition that impairs family relationships, work function, appetite, sleep, concentration, decision making, and sexual interest. It can also lead to suicidal thinking. People are often reluctant to get help for depression, feeling that they shouldn't have it at all, that they ought to be able to overcome it alone, or feeling self-conscious about revealing a "weakness." Pastors may be tempted simply to tell them to "cheer up," "stop thinking about yourself," or "pray more." But, left untreated, serious depression can lead to broken lives and suicide.

Sometimes periods of depression are interrupted by periods of high energy. During the high energy phase the

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person may seem well—or even better than well. He or she may do wonderful things for church and family and may suddenly appear so completely devoted to God that it may seem odd for a pastor to question it. But in this kind of bipolar illness, emotional letdown and depression inevitably follow the high energy phase. A psychiatric professional can give medication to stabilize extreme mood swings.

Anxiety disorders affect people who chronically worry to the extent that their daily activity is hampered. One may become housebound, unable to face the world or be around people. They may develop specific, illogical, but very debilitating, fears, such as of germs or crowds. Anxiety disorders include obsessive-compulsive disorders: constant and repeated thinking of repulsive or unwelcome thoughts; compulsions to perform tasks that seem to alleviate anxiety such as washing hands, clean-

ing excessively, or organizing life patterns in a particular invariable way, like having to separate articles in the trash before it can be discarded.

Thought disorders most frequently encountered are schizophrenia and delusional disorders. One with thought organization problems might switch subjects rapidly without warning or cause, making conversation difficult. He or she may see things, hear voices, and smell things that aren't real or have illogical fears of conspiracies or persecution. Such problems invariably require professional help, and the most serious demand hospitalization.

It is the bizarre nature of thought disorder illnesses that have helped to generate the common caricatures and jokes about mental illness. This is also the reason people find them the most disturbing and frightening illnesses. Pastors must be careful not to become discouraged when ministering to

people with thought disorders; although the patient may be saying things that sound nonsensical, they can still respond to and gain strength from well-directed love and concern.

Personality disorders are often difficult to describe because of the natural differences between personalities. Yet we all know people who have ongoing problems with relationships, are prone to explosive or emotional extremes, or seek isolation and avoid social activities. These personality problems lead to chronic vocational and relationship problems. In depression, anxiety, and thought disorders the sufferer is in great distress; but personality disorders are often more upsetting to friends and family than to the person himself or herself. Borderline or schizoid personality disorders fall into this group.

When pastoral intervention is not enough

When compassionate pastoral support isn't enough, what should you do?

Your parishioners might call on you to resolve their problems through applying the verities of the faith through practices such as pastoral conversation, prayer, and scriptural guidance. These can provide a vital support and yet may not contribute the resolution so desperately needed. The belief that people of faith should not have mental illness often contributes to guilt and anxiety about getting proper and effective treatment. At this point you would do well to consider recommending the help of a mental-health professional.

Pastors are sometimes afraid of referring parishioners to psychiatrists, having in mind an outdated image of the bearded Freudian who disparages all religious faith. In fact, mental health professionals who are offended by religion or who would challenge a patient's religious commitments are a minority. Good psychiatrists and psychologists appreciate the spiritual dimensions of a patient's life and realize the therapeutic value of a church community.

I recommend that parish pastors

make the acquaintance of several kinds of mental-health professionals to whom they can refer. Psychiatrists are medical doctors who can prescribe medications as well as do talk therapy. Psychologists can do psychological testing and talk therapy. Social workers and clinical counselors are skilled in family and individual therapy. Some of these are also trained in specialties like working with children or addictions.

Good mental-health professionals will be willing to meet and openly discuss their approaches with you. You can ask directly what the doctor thinks about the element of religion in a client's life and at the same time inquire about any area of specialty and fees. You may find such a professional open to an occasional phone consultation with you when you are attempting to make an early assessment of a problem. This is especially true when an appropriate sense of collegiality or comradery has been cultivated with the professional.

If you are successful in making the

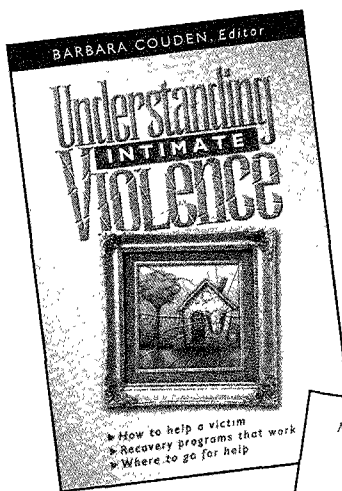
referral, it is important to continue your involvement with your parishioner. This is the time when he or she most needs your love and support. Some mental-health problems are expressed through extremes of religious ideation. As a pastor, you can be very helpful to the treatment process by providing balance to such religious extremes of thought. Good mental-health professionals find a pastor's continued involvement very important, so a close working relationship is ideal.

Be very careful about interfering with your parishioner's treatment. For example, never recommend that your parishioner stop taking a medication prescribed by a psychiatrist unless he or she talks with the doctor. This may actually be damaging to the patient's health. If your parishioner tells you something that his or her doctor said that doesn't seem right to you, don't accept it at face value without checking first. Ask for a signed confidentiality release and talk with the professional

personally. Some of the emotional upheaval the sufferer is experiencing can lead him or her to distort or misunderstand the doctor's words.

Though great strides have been made in the medical treatment of serious mental illnesses, there are few perfect cures. Some bipolar, depressed, or schizophrenic patients may not respond to medication right away, some not at all. Successfully treated patients may relapse. You may be the person in the best position to help a parishioner-patient accept that a mental illness may be something he or she has to live with in this life, even while you build hope that we'll someday live in God's perfect, illness-free kingdom.

Finally, keep confidences. To even casually mention to other church members or staff that a parishioner is seeing a psychiatrist, or to mention the nature of their problem, is not only unethical but illegal. It also destroys the elements of trust so critical in all of our professional and personal relationships. ■



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Helping Others Prepare for Eternity

SHOULD PASTORS COUNSEL?

Psychoiatrists, psychologists, and various other mental-health professionals have become part of today's healthcare deliverers.



Mitchell Henson is pastor of the Glendale Seventh-day Adventist Church in Glendale, California.

Many of them show a keen interest in the therapeutic value of religion and approach their task with a genuine appreciation for spiritual values. With such excellent resource persons accessible, church members and pastors may wonder, "Should pastors counsel?"

The answer is Yes—now more than ever.

Most problems in life have at their core a spiritual essence. Marital issues, midlife crises, and addictions—all have a critical spiritual element. No treatment can ignore this and still bring healing. Insight alone is not enough. There must be energy for change. That energy can come quite naturally in the spiritual context of pastoral counseling.

The advantages of pastoral counseling

Pastors have an advantage in the counseling process. For example, secular counseling calls for professional objectivity. Such objectivity is all but a myth. It is virtually impossible for one person to listen sensitively to another and remain objective. Pastoral counselors are not shackled by this myth. They

are expected to have opinions, provide guidance, and challenge demoralizing situations.

Or consider the question of dual relations. Mental-health professionals are warned against having such relationships, which means they should not mingle with their clients in social settings outside the counseling arena. But pastors can, do, and indeed, in some cases, must relate in more than one setting. They preach sermons and officiate at meetings where their clients may be. A pastor may counsel with a couple about their marriage and later relate to them at a social function or serve with them on a committee. Such contacts can be advantageous in working with parishioners. If they can hear the pastor preach, teach, and then counsel, they get a sense of the consistency of the psychological, theological, and philosophical positions, which adds a high degree of authenticity to all three.

Pastors serve on the front lines of mental and emotional health care. A recent study in the United States indicates that 42 percent of those who seek professional help were referred by a pas-

M I T C H E L L H E N S O N

tor. This compares to only 26 percent of referrals by family physicians. All pastors counsel whether they have specific training or not. When parishioners are troubled, they usually speak with their pastor and ask for a referral, even if they do not believe their pastor is qualified to deal with their problem. There is an increasing awareness of the vital role that trained pastoral counselors can fulfill for those who come to them for help. They may intervene either as a source of referral or as a counselor.

Four functions of pastoral counseling

Pastoral counseling involves four major functions that highlight the value of pastors and their task in this vital area.

Healing as a pastoral function aims at restoring a person to wholeness physically, mentally, and spiritually. From Jesus we have received the command to heal (Matt. 10:1), along with the overwhelming model of His remedial, restorative involvement in the lives of people.

In the early years of church life, anointing the sick with oil was a popular and meaningful pastoral function. By the ninth century fundamental changes in Western Christianity caused this healing function to be seen more as a preparation for death. It remains so today for many uninformed Christians. A contemporary therapeutic appreciation of Christian ministry indicates that anointing may be appropriate for individuals going through any number of physical, emotional, or spiritual crises. To relegate anointing to a preparation for death severely limits its original intended meaning and purpose.

A dramatic and somewhat mysterious aspect of the healing function is exorcism. We have biblical reasons to believe that exorcism is a function of pastoral care. Although this need may not be the same in all places and cultures, wherever it presents itself, the pastor has a role to perform, remembering that Satan is *now* a defeated foe. We as ambassadors of the gospel have a

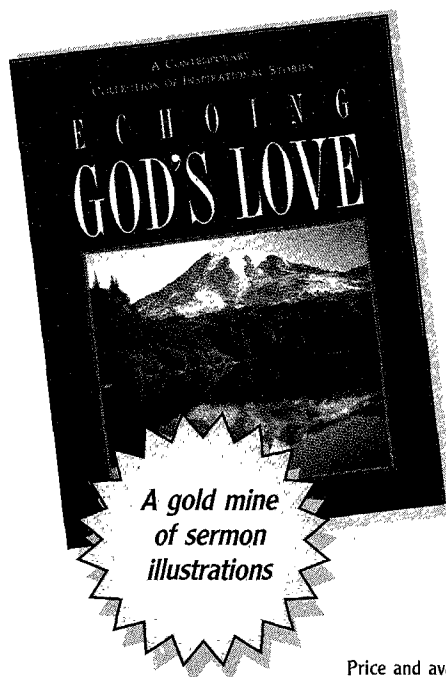
duty to announce that the kingdom of darkness has been overthrown by the kingdom of Christ. We have the authority to command that the defeated foe leave those under his subjection (Eph. 1:18-23).

Sustaining has traditionally been the function of pastors whose parishioners are under persecution. Believers in Christ have at times had their courage severely tested as their enemies seem to win at every turn. The psalms are replete with this theme. "Why is this happening to me? Why has God turned His back on me?" The preservation of one's spiritual life and faith heritage, while going through physical, emotional, or spiritual trauma, is a vital part of the sustaining and consoling function of pastoral care. At times parishioners have experienced a series of losses so profound that any effort to explain or make sense of the tragedy is lost. Faith is shattered, belief that life is good disappears, and depression follows. The sustaining, counseling presence of a caring pastor can make this passage

through the valley of the shadow more tolerable. Consolation is a vital part of pastoral care.

The pastor as a member of the health care team may work with physicians and diagnosticians to support an overwhelmed patient who must choose from the many options offered by modern health care treatment. Many treatments can themselves be life-threatening or destroy the quality of life for a time. For example, to face a regimen of chemotherapy, patients need strong faith and personal support.

Guiding comes when judgment combines with experience and comes to the help of another. With the breakdown of the nuclear family in so many contemporary cultures and the emergence of one-parent households, a vast number of experienced resource persons are no longer readily available to parents and children. Less than one hundred years ago, a young adult who wanted basic information about life could simply walk down the street and talk to Grandpa, Grandma, uncle, or



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aunt. Today distance, divorce, and lifestyle make this difficult.

Listening and responding with specific and relevant information, along with empathy and compassion, are vital resources to those with little support. Most healthcare professionals do not have the time to provide this kind of help. But pastors can. Pastoral care and counseling can help sustain family values and provide a source of spiritually oriented guidance to parishioners in such areas as parenting, marriage enrichment, and conflict resolution.

Reconciling. In the United States today there are more attorneys per capita than at any previous period in history, along with a proportionate number of lawsuits! For anyone who has participated either as a plaintiff or a defendant, legal solutions rarely satisfy anyone and are often simply a battlefield for more painful confrontation and lengthy litigation. Legal decisions cannot heal broken relationships and wounded souls. Therefore, competent pastors are increasingly involved in mediation and reconciliation. Many colleges and universities offer certificates and degrees in this emerging

Consent for Pastoral Counseling

I, _____, authorize Pastor _____ to perform clergy counseling services as part of his/her pastoral ministry. I understand that the counseling may include spiritual guidance and life-transition issues, including premarital and marital counseling and mediation of family issues.

I further understand that all communications pursuant to counseling will be confidential to the extent permitted by law under the clergy-client privilege.

I further understand that Pastor _____ will refer me to a mental-health professional if I present issues beyond the scope of spiritual guidance and life transition issues.

I have read and fully understand this Consent for Pastoral Counseling form.

_____	_____
Client Signature	Date
_____	_____
Witness Signature	Date

field. Pastors cannot afford to be without the requisite skills in the area of reconciliation.

Most pastors are experienced in the processes of forgiveness. However, even though there is confession and forgiveness, reconciliation does not necessarily follow. Scripture indicates that God has given us the ministry of reconciliation. This spiritual gift can have a significant benefit for conflict resolution in parish life. Reconciling implies walking together again in the same direction.


Counseling with care

Pastoral counselors should have a list of professionals for referral. At times individuals with diagnosed mental disorders seek the assistance of a caring pastor. Without professional support, the pastoral counselor can be most vulnerable. Professional support may include a full psychiatric work-up and a sensitive and caring referral to an appropriate health-care professional. For instance, 82 percent of all lawsuits for malpractice in the physical and mental health professions are brought by those

diagnosed as borderline personalities. Often individuals with a diagnosed illness can triangle, or emotionally hook, the pastoral counselor into a frustrating relationship. Should you find yourself frustrated or angry with a parishioner or client who has come to you for pastoral counseling, you should quickly seek the advice and support of a trusted mental-health professional and consider referral. You will find above a form I require all clients to sign. Feel free to adapt this form to fit your needs.

The need for well-trained pastoral counselors has never been greater. Local, national, and international values, norms, and standards are in rapid transition. Today we have less compliance when it comes to parental, cultural, social, and legal criteria. The consequence is chaos. Sometimes it seems as if a lie is no longer a lie. Perjury is not perjury if "it was not my intent to perjure!" In such an atmosphere, well-trained, clear-headed, wise, moral, pastoral counselors can be a welcome, even vital addition, to the healthcare options available. ■

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RESPONDING TO ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

Working on his sermon, Pastor Paul heard a knock on his office door. There was Ann, a 34-year-old part-time public librarian. Right away, the pastor noticed that Ann was not her usual energetic and pleasant self.



Vergel L. Lattimore, Ph. D., is a professor of pastoral care and director of alcoholism and drug-abuse ministry, Methodist Theological School, Delaware, Ohio.

"I've been away from church for the last two weeks," Ann said as she seated herself. "Pastor, I think I'm losing my faith." Tears swelled in her eyes. "I'm beginning to have some doubts about my marriage. The company has been sold, and Samuel's position is slated for termination. His drinking has increased, and he gets bothered by minor irritations."

Such scenes occur many times in a pastor's line of duty, even in those religious traditions that prohibit alcohol use. The Institute for Public Health has identified substance abuse as the nation's number-one health problem.¹ Twenty-three percent of Americans report that drinking has caused problems in their families.² Alcohol and other drugs are a factor in 36 percent of suicides, 44 percent of spousal abuse, 50 percent of traffic fatalities, 17 to 53 percent of falls, and

38 percent of drownings.³ Yet most pastors have only a limited knowledge of how to respond effectively to the crying needs of substance-abuse victims in their congregations. Let me suggest four key principles a pastor can use.

Evaluate before acting

When a person in trouble comes to you, you want to know: Why is this person seeking me out? And why now? Before rushing to save, listen! Listening does not mean that you should "play psychiatrist." But it does mean that you need to sort out what the person is trying to say verbally, physically, and emotionally. Does Ann communicate fear? Does her physical appearance seem characteristic of a person experiencing depression? Does she talk about her sense of loss in a detached manner? What is her tentative solution to her problem, and does it make sense? Is her

communication “coded”—something she can’t say out loud but hopes you’ll understand?

Before you effectively respond, quiet your heart, saddle your anxiety, open your mind, and engage your ears.

Clarify expectations

This may seem too simple to need saying. Isn’t it obvious that Ann has come because she wants the pastor’s intervention?

Not necessarily. Perhaps Ann wants simply to report what is happening in her family. She may be seeking moral support to implement a difficult decision. Perhaps she needs information. Perhaps she wants to find out how she may have contributed to the family problem. Ann may be hoping that the pastor can persuade her husband to change his behavior. She may want the intervention of the pastor, selected friends, or family members to let her husband know firmly but supportively the exact nature of the negative impact substance abusers have on the behavior of others.⁴

That’s why Pastor Paul should identify what Ann is seeking before volunteering to help. He should raise questions that clarify what Ann hopes to accomplish. Concreteness and clarity go a long way in dealing with substance abuse.

Recognize limitations

Recognize your own level of competency and identify the problems that you are able to address. Historically, seminary and Bible-school curricula have not addressed the matter of alcohol and drug problems. Some have assumed that because the denomination has officially disallowed alcohol and drug use, the pastor has no need to know about them.

I am not suggesting that every pastor needs to be an addiction, treatment specialist, but I do believe that every pastor should have some basic skills to screen for alcohol and other drug addiction.

First, distinguish between substance use, abuse, and dependence.

Although you may have strong convictions against alcohol or drug use, and although the potential for addiction is always present (and often unavoidable with narcotic substances), not every occasional user is an addict, not every casual drinker an alcoholic. *Abuse* is repetitive, excessive use of a drug or controlled substance. If a person fails to fulfill major work, school, or home obligations and continues to use a substance despite persistent legal, social, or interpersonal problems, abuse of the substance may be indicated.⁵

Substance *dependence* generally involves physical as well as psychological dependency. Substance-dependent per-

CAGE

Remember the acronym *CAGE* as a way to screen for the first signs of alcohol abuse or dependence:

- C = Cut down: Have you ever felt you should *cut down* on your drinking?
- A = Annoyed: Have people *annoyed* you by criticizing your drinking?
- G = Guilty: Have you ever felt *guilty* about your drinking?
- E = Eye-opener: Have you ever had a drink the first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover?

sons develop tolerance (the need to increase the amounts of the substance in order to achieve a desired effect). They show the effects of withdrawal if they don’t get the substance. They make many unsuccessful attempts to decrease or discontinue use, while spending much time trying to acquire, use, or recover from the effects of the substance that they are attempting to discontinue. They may also alter social, occupational, or recreational activities.⁶

Intervene appropriately

Beyond basic screening, it is listening ability that is most vital when talking to a person who has come for counseling about an addiction issue.

Sometimes pastors go far beyond evaluation. As a pastor, you should have a good sense of what you are willing to do and what you are capable of doing. While one of the difficulties of helping people with addictions is trying to ascertain the extent of the problem, the difficulty at the other end of the spectrum is that you can easily become pulled into doing far too much helping. Stories abound of pastors being called upon repeatedly, sometimes at all times of day or night, to intervene in situations in which they are, in fact, of minimal assistance when it comes to effecting meaningful change. Pastors who tend to feed on crises and the satisfaction of being desperately needed will respond and may not know when to end their response.

Beyond a certain level of intervention, your assistance may actually be counterproductive. Some addicted individuals will gladly promise you anything in order to get your tacit participation in their addicted world. The rides, cash, meals, and counseling you give simply help the addict stay addicted. At some point a pastor must say, “I will help you get a referral to a professional who can help you. But if you won’t take the referral, if you don’t begin to do what needs to be done to break this life pattern, I can’t be of any further help to you either.”

Knowing the referral process

Most pastors are generalists by training and experience, and this limits the pastor’s ability to help deeply troubled people. Pastors should be able to recognize when and whether they can assist an addict at the critical points of need.

Some pastors get jealous about passing on their clients. They may feel they’re abandoning a person. Perhaps being a helper to a chronically needy person feeds the pastor’s ego. A referral is not an act of defeat but an act of love. A referral says, “There are other people with gifts, training, and resources who can help you. Let me introduce you to them!”

Referring pastors may weaken their

argument for treatment by not being knowledgeable about what is available. Do enough research to be able to tell your parishioner about an agency's philosophy, values, procedures, location, fee arrangements, and hours of operation. Develop a file of referral professionals.

Referral for addiction counseling does not mean that you terminate your relationship with the individual. Most treatment centers and professionals affirm the importance of religious values and spiritual issues in the treatment process. Schedule a transitional visit or two in order to allow people to process the changing relationship.

Pastoral care and counseling with persons who are struggling with alcohol abuse and other chemical use can be extremely complex and challenging. Effective helping involves hearing with clarity, some ability to help technically and spiritually, and knowing how to set limits. ■

¹ Institute for Health Policy, *Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health*

North American Helplines	
Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters	800-356-9996
American Council for Drug Education	800-488-3784
Data Center and Clearinghouse for Drugs and Crime	800-666-3332
Impaired Physician Program	800-445-4232
March of Dimes Resource Center	888-MD DIMES
Minority Substance Abuse Prevention Project	800-822-0047
Narcotics Anonymous	888-837-8884
National Association on Drug Abuse Problems	212-986-1170
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	800-788-2800
National Cocaine Hotline	800-COCAINE
National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence	800-622-2255
National Drug Hotline (treatment and referrals)	800-662-4357
National Youth Crisis Hotline	800-448-4663

Problem: Key Indicators for Policy (Rockville, Md.: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1993).

²G. Gallup, G. and F. Newport, "Drinking in America," *The Gallup Poll Monthly*, (December 1990).

³National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, *Seventh Special Report on the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health* (Rockville, Md: United States Department of Health and Human Services, 1990).

⁴ An intervention should only be done with the supervision of a trained professional who can help the group prepare the person's entry into treatment or alternatives, should the person resist offers of assistance.

⁵ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, fourth edition (Washington, D.C.: 1994), 181.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 182, 183.

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MARRIAGE COUNSELING: A BIBLICAL APPROACH

From the perspective of many Christians, marital difficulties are caused by the assaults of Satan upon the home.



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When a couple recognizes the presence of negative spiritual forces in their marriage, they can more effectively understand and approach the source and nature of the pressures in their situation. Coming from this perspective they will be more cooperative with each other and their Lord as they work through their problems.

As a Christian counselor, I am constrained to incorporate skills and techniques reflective of a counseling philosophy that includes an authentically spiritual understanding of marriage. Behind a Christian approach to marital counseling is: (1) a unique understanding of what causes marital distress; (2) particular methods of assessing the nature of the difficulties being faced; (3) specific counseling techniques; and (4) identified goals for the counseling situation.

Finding the causes

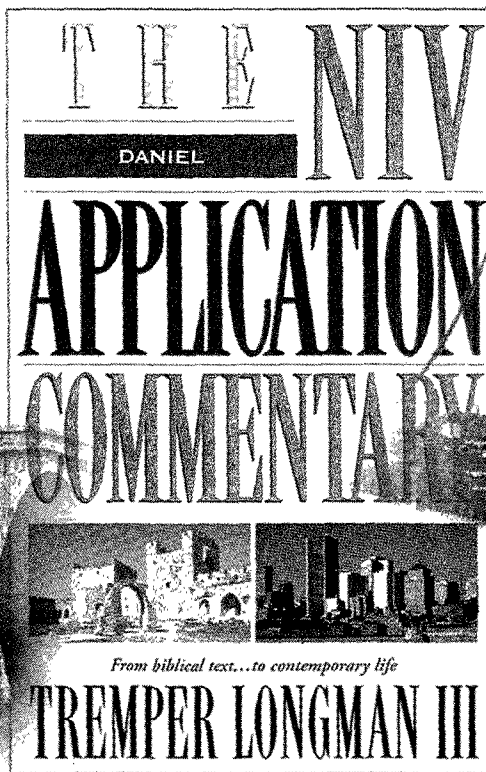
First is the issue of what, on the surface, are the causes for the particular problems being faced by the couple. Research shows that when a person makes the choice of a marital partner, he or she attempts to form a meaningful relationship that yields maximum benefit with minimum effort. When the benefits do not meet the level of expectation, or when the effort seems to outweigh the realized benefits, conflict results.¹

Ellen White expressed a high-level expectation for marriage when she said that the home should be a little heaven on earth, a place where affections are cultivated instead of being repressed. She added that the realization of such an expectation depends upon the cultivation and development of love, sympathy, and true courtesy to one

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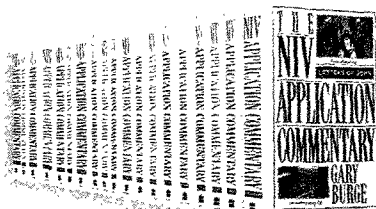
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another, a set of circumstances which the powers of evil work to keep spouses from achieving.²

In order for our homes to be this "little heaven on earth," the marriage relationship needs to actively cultivate mutual unconditional love, acceptance, cooperation, and support. Underlying these qualities is the one reality that above all others is able to generate the other positive traits: a sincere, deep, and meaningful life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ, who alone successfully stands against the principalities and powers (Eph. 6:12) arrayed against human marriages.

Marriage is considered to be a relatively long-term, intimate relationship in which a significant investment of energy and commitment is made between marital partners who each play a major, ongoing role in the lives of one another.³ Some theorists measure marriage and its survival in terms of percentages of interdependency and commitment shown by each spouse.⁴ Van den Broucke, Vertommen, and Vandereycken recognize that the degree of true intimacy experienced in a marital relationship has a major influence on one's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. A deficiency in this area may lead directly to a variety of traumas such as loneliness, chronic depression, physical illness, sexual abuse, and psychosomatic ailments,⁵ all of which make one particularly vulnerable to satanic exploitation. Yet the minimized standards of covenantal marital commitment, which have become an integral part of life in so many contemporary cultures, have (along with other influences) produced a decline in true emotional intimacy in marriage. In light of such destructive patterns, it should come as no surprise that so many marriages experience the degree of loneliness, abuse, and dysfunction they do. Many of the prevailing attitudes and patterns within current marriages cannot help but have a weakening effect on marital trust and happiness in general, opening the way for still more significant satanic exploitation, making marriage and even the prevailing cul-

ture a hellish rather than a heavenly experience.⁶

Methods for assessing the condition of a marriage

Second is the issue of assessing or measuring the strengths and weaknesses of a marriage. The perpetuation of a marriage, like its dissolution, results from a number of factors that need to be appropriately assessed.⁷

Worthington states that the proper treatment of a marriage depends on an

It is important to note that much religion, even when practiced with sincerity, may have either no particular positive effect on a given marriage or may itself be a serious detriment to the marital intimacy God designed in the beginning.

accurate assessment of its actual condition.⁸ For example, although it would seem that warmth, support, and demonstrations of positive emotional response in marital interactions should indicate a high level of satisfaction and harmony in a marriage, the evidence for such a conclusion is not as easily substantiated as the effects of the detrimental influences at play within hostile or otherwise negative marital interactions.⁹ There are a variety of assessment instruments available for use in marriage counseling. For example, there is the *Personal Assessment of Intimacy in Relationships*, the *Couple's Precounseling Inventory*, the *Locke-*

Wallace Marital Adjustment Scale, and the *Dyadic Adjustment Scale*, to name a few.¹⁰

Some literature asserts that there is little substantial support for the idea that an increase in religious activity improves marital relations or decreases conflict and problems.¹¹ Recently, researchers have questioned religion's capacity to serve as a socially integrative force in today's society, emphasizing that modernization has diminished the power of religious institutions to exercise any significant social control.¹² I question such findings, believing instead that the God who declared His unchangeability and who created marriage in the first place, declaring that it was good, still knows what is best to preserve and sustain it and to keep it healthy and mutually satisfying. At the same time, it is important to note that much religion, even when practiced with sincerity, may have either no particular positive effect on a given marriage or may itself be a serious detriment to the marital intimacy God designed in the beginning.

Therefore, in my assessment of a couple in counseling, I ask questions about the nature of each person's personal and corporate relationship with Christ and how He is a part of their daily lives. I also judiciously point them to the wise instruction given in the Bible, according to their level of spiritual maturity and growth. If God created marriage, then He, above any other source, should know how to maintain it as well.

Techniques and goals

Third is the issue of the use of techniques in counseling. Worthington correctly suggests that any counseling strategy should include a clear description of goals for the counseling situation, guidelines for the couple for getting the most out of the counseling encounters, indications that responsibility for change belongs to the couple, and specifications of the limits of the counselor's responsibility.¹³ Contracts between the counselor and the couple are also a possible technique to be con-

sidered. A pastor or counselor should moreover have his or her own goals for a specific counseling situation.

It has been said that the goal of marriage counseling is to alleviate risk factors and to enhance protective factors that are associated with successful marital adjustment before problems develop.¹⁴ Certain research findings show that religious involvement does have a positive impact on an individual. Divine interaction through prayer, meditation, and Bible reading may help the individual resolve and interpret their problems more effectively.¹⁵ Therefore, my goals in marriage counseling include providing suggestions and instruction, as deemed appropriate, for the development and nurture of a spiritual life both individually and corporately for the couple, along with reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors in the marriage.

Despite decreasing divorce rates during the last decade, couples continue

to face at least a fifty percent chance of divorce. Others may never divorce but remain in a distressed or abusive relationship. The good news is that there is more information and help available now than ever before to assist couples in taking meaningful steps to enhance and preserve mutually satisfying relationships.¹⁶ But it remains at the heart of the call of quality Christian counseling to intelligently and comprehensively incorporate a unique approach or orientation to marital counseling that is based securely on the healing, transcendent verities of the Word of God. ■

¹ F. M. Douglass and R. Douglass, "The Marital Problems Questionnaire: A Short Screening Instrument for Marital Therapy" *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (July 1995), 238.

² E. G. White, *The Adventist Home* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Pub. Co., 1952), 15.

³ R. Schafer, K. Wickrama, and P. Keith, "Self-Concept Disconfirmation, Psy-

chological Distress, and Marital Happiness," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (1996).

⁴ S. Nock, "Commitment and Dependency in Marriage," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (1995), 503-514.

⁵ S. Stanley, et al., "Strengthening Marriages and Preventing Divorce: New Directions in Prevention Research," *Family Relations* (October 1995), 392-400.

⁶ Stanley et al., (1995).

⁷ J. Melby et al., "The Importance of Task in Evaluating Positive Marital Interactions," *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (November 1995), 981-994.

⁸ E. Worthington, *Marriage Counseling: A Christian Approach to Counseling Couples* (Downer's Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1989).

⁹ Melby et al., (1995).

¹⁰ Worthington, (1989).

¹¹ A. Booth et al., "Belief and Behavior: Does Religion Matter in Today's Marriage?" *Journal of Marriage and the Family* (August 1995).

¹² Booth et al.

¹³ Worthington.

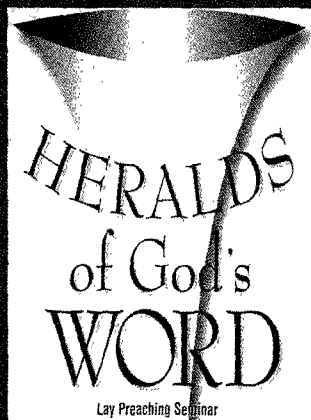
¹⁴ Stanley et al.

¹⁵ Booth et al.

¹⁶ Stanley et al.

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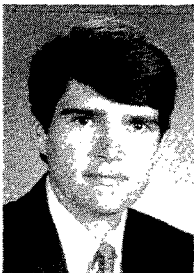
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PREACHING THE CROSS TO A POSTMODERN WORLD

In the preceding companion article, which appeared in the March issue of *Ministry*, it was shown that postmodern theology, hermeneutics, and homiletics argues that preaching “Christ crucified” so offends postmodern cultural and religious relativists that it should be abandoned.



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In this final article of this two part series, we ask, How should cross-centered preachers respond?

First, we should not be *ignorant*. We must understand the postmodernist perspective. We must acknowledge genuine hermeneutical and communicational questions, concerns, and struggles. Not everything in postmodernism is evil or destructive. Much of it provides a necessary critique of modernist rationalism, from which we have drunk too deeply.¹

Second, we should not be *intimidated*. The elitist academicians and recreational theologians carry the burden of alteration when they, abandoning the Scriptures and the classic creeds, demand a defense of your commitment to biblical Christianity. They, after all, have deconstructed the Scripture and reconstructed the ancient

human-centered philosophy. God, however, does demand an answer and your submission to His revelation of Himself.

Third, we should not be *idle*. We must recover the effective means of preaching the Word of the Cross even to our postmodern, antiauthority, relativistic culture. We must continue to announce the revelation of the God of the Bible.

Yes, we must preach Christ crucified! The question is “How?” By being Word-centered and audience-focused. Word-centered/audience-focused preaching centers its authority in the Word, the Bible, but focuses its relevance on the audience.

Styles of preaching

Bruce Shelley and Marshall Shelley have compared “Truth [Preaching] as a

TIMOTHY S. WARREN

Statement" with "Truth [Preaching] on a slant."² I want to rework their terms and add another: Preaching in stereo, which is Word-centered/audience-focused.

The Shelleys have identified three dominant preaching styles within American evangelical Christianity over the past two hundred years.³ Up through the turn of the last century, traditional evangelical preaching featured the revivalistic or evangelistic sermon, which favored stories, emotion, and entertainment. The goal was conversion, life change. D. L. Moody preached revivalistic sermons.

As the modernist-fundamentalist controversy spread, "preaching as a statement" preempted revivalist evangelism. The lecture, or apology, became the new model. The form was rational, orderly, and pious exposition. This commitment to defending and explaining the Word helped "equip the saints" against theological liberalism. Although attempts to relate the significance of biblical truth to contemporary life were not overlooked, the major emphasis of "preaching as a statement" became understanding, in support of fundamental doctrine. Donald Grey Barnhouse, with his classic years-long expositions of books of the Bible, modeled "preaching as a statement."

In fact, this "preaching as a statement" was an appropriate form, given the context of the 1920s-1950s. I do not demean that style, which is still necessary and effective within the education program of the church.⁴ However, the cultural and theological situation has changed; so, then, must our preaching style.⁵

Because of television and other image media, preaching shifted again. The influence of popular psychology and pastoral counseling intensified the transition to "preaching on a slant," which seeks to evoke feelings more than thoughts. The message, as well as the medium, is grounded in the audience. Preachers like Robert H. Schuller emphasize "personal experience and abundant living" in sermons that are "psychologically informed" and specifi-

cally "designed for a self-expressive, television generation."⁶

Much of the preaching that pours from both liberal and conservative pulpits today exploits this audience-centered/audience-focused "preaching on a slant." Once the preacher discovers a "message" already there in the congregation, that "message" is proclaimed through an audience-focused medium. The medium of choice, for the past two decades, seems to have been narrative. And while we should not be

Yes, we must

preach Christ crucified! The question is, "How?" By being Word-centered and audience-focused. Word-centered/audience-focused preaching centers its authority in the Word, the Bible, but focuses its relevance on the audience.

troubled by audience-sensitive, narrative styles of preaching in general, we cannot allow the audience to determine the message.

Preaching in most of this century has not provided much better fare in either the liberal or the conservative pulpit. Propositional statements, arranged in linear order, with deductive development, proof texts, and an admirable passion for truth but an indifferent attitude toward the audience represented and still represent Word-centered/Word-focused "preaching as a statement."

Authority and relevance in preaching

When I call for Word-centered/audience-focused preaching, I am ap-

pealing for an *authority* that is centered in the *Word* and a *relevance* that is both substantively and stylistically *focused* on a specific *audience*.

Think of a continuum. On the far right side is "Preaching as a Statement"—the Word-centered/Word-focused lecture. The speaker lectures from the Word and about the Word. Any audience will do. Any audience could even be exchanged for any other audience. Application, if it exists, appears so generally as to be benign and appears as merely an appendage to the "real" message—something about the Bible.

On the far left end of this continuum is "Preaching on a Slant"—the audience-centered/audience-focused talk. The speaker talks from the values, realities, and worldview of the audience. Authority resides within the audience. Special effort is made to speak "as one without any higher authority" but with all due audience sensitivity. The talk takes on the form of communication most common to and effective with this particular audience.

The Word-centered/audience-focused sermon resides within the middle ranges of the continuum. Revelation, that is, the Word, determines the message. Still, the particular audience remains strategically in focus, dictating the purpose, structure, images, applications, and other medium, or communication, decisions. This part of the continuum is "Preaching in Stereo." Both the Word and the audience gain a hearing. The Word brings authority; the audience brings relevance. Preaching becomes music—in stereo.

Michael J. Glodo suggested the phrase "The Bible in Stereo."⁷ Glodo cogently argues that Jesus Christ is both the Word (John 1:1) and the image (Col. 1:15) of God. It was this conception of "Word/image" that caused Marshall McLuhan to reply, when asked whether the formula "the medium is the message," could be applied to Christ: "Of course. That is the only case in which the medium and the message are perfectly identical."⁸ Jesus lived and preached in stereo.

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Three stages for preaching in stereo

I offer three strategies for Word-centered/audience-focused “preaching in stereo.” You may have seen and heard these strategies before, even if they are yet to be applied widely and consistently in evangelical preaching.

First, we must preach the message of Christ crucified through the medium of induction. Kenneth Burke, the foremost rhetorician of the twentieth century, wrote that a preacher can reserve closure but just for a while; this can lead to a more intense satisfaction, because the desire for completion has grown over time. The audience is given only as much input as it needs, allowing it to participate in the development of the argument. When we preach deductively, “telling ’em what we’re going to tell ’em—telling ’em—and telling ’em what we’ve told ’em,” we can expect most audiences to close down after the first “telling.” On the other hand, inductive preaching keeps them connected and encourages them to discover the conclusion.⁹

I wish I could preach as inductively as Churchill (or was it W. C. Fields?) who, when intoxicated at a party told a woman he detested, “You are ugly.” To which she retorted, “And you are drunk!” “But,” he responded, “in the morning, I’ll be sober.” She got the point.

Second, we must preach the message of Christ crucified through the medium

of imagination. Stories, pictures, and images are the essence of effective communication. Long ago Quintilian recommended “images, by which the representation of absent objects (or ideas) are so distinctly represented to the mind, that we seem to see them before our eyes. Whoever shall best conceive such images, will have the greatest power in moving the [audience].”¹⁰ Most of us have abandoned the imaginative in favor of the logical, the rational. I am not suggesting that we now abandon propositional preaching. I am suggesting that we *show* at least as much as we *say*.

When I want to communicate the need and benefits of, say, perseverance, I represent the Barcelona Olympics, where Derek Redmond, the pre-game favorite to win the 400 meters, hopped to the finish line after pulling a hamstring on the back stretch and losing his chance for any medal, much less the gold.¹¹ I tell how his father jumped out of the stands to encourage and help him finish the race—just as Jesus will encourage and help us through life’s race when we stumble but persevere.

Visualizing people and events takes time. But the showing must accompany, and ultimately subsume, the saying.¹²

Third, we must preach the message of Christ crucified, that is the Word, through the medium of identification. We are not merely offering an apology for some apparently irrelevant doctrine or distant history. We are applying God’s truth to real people’s struggles and challenges, opportunities, and celebrations. We must speak the language of the congregation. Burke urged, “You persuade a man only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea . . . identifying your ways with his.”¹³

The prophet Nathan, in 2 Samuel 12, modeled Word-centered/audience-focused preaching in stereo. God’s message to David was “You have sinned, and there are mighty repercussions.” The problem the preacher faced was that David’s “inner reality” was out of sync with God’s transcendent reality. David had told his friend Joab, “Do not

let this ‘thing’ displease you” (2 Sam. 11:25, NIV). But the narrator records that “the thing David had done displeased the Lord” (2 Sam. 11:27).

In this classic clash between two worldviews, Nathan preached in stereo. He preached God’s authoritative Word with shepherd/king relevance. He led David, inductively, to the right conclusion. He did so by imaginatively representing a “shepherd” image, with which David could identify. The medium carried the otherwise “unhearable” message.

Yes, there is no question about it, we must preach Christ crucified. But we must preach in stereo if we are to be heard in this postmodern world of ours. ■

This is the second of a two-part serial on preaching Christ crucified to a postmodern, Christless culture that denies the exclusiveness and absoluteness of biblical Christianity. The first part appeared in the March issue.

¹ See David S. Dockery, ed., *The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1995) and Gene Edward Veith, Jr., *Postmodern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1994).

² Bruce Shelly and Marshall Shelly, *The Consumer Church: Can Evangelicals Win The World Without Losing Their Souls?* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 187.

³ *Ibid.*, 188-197.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 198.

⁵ For a defense of this “Preaching as a Statement” style of what some call “exegetical” preaching, see Walter C. Kaiser, “The Crisis in Expository Preaching Today,” *Preaching*, 11 (September-October 1995) 2: 4-12.

⁶ Shelly and Shelly, 196.

⁷ See Dockery, 148-172.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

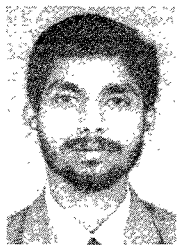
⁹ Kenneth Burke, *Counter-Statement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1931, 1968), 30-34. See also Fred B. Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971, 1979) and Ralph L. Lewis with Gregg Lewis, *Inductive Preaching: Helping People Listen* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1983).

¹⁰ M. F. Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), 1:427.

¹¹ Kenny Moore, “Ode to Joy,” *Sports Illustrated* (August 17, 1992), 26, 30.

¹² See Warren W. Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching With Imagination: The Quest for Biblical Ministry* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1994) and Gary Smalley and John Trent, *The Language of Love* (Colorado Springs, Colo.: Focus on the Family, 1988, 1991).

¹³ Kenneth Burke, *A Rhetoric of Motives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950, 1969), 55.



Waiting for a train that's two hours behind schedule is no pleasure, particularly when you are away from

home for two months and anxious to get to your loved ones. Incessant rain and the noisy crowd on the railway platform added anger to my anxiety. How long can one talk about weather and the train's delay with frustrated fellow passengers milling around the narrow platform?

Suddenly I saw her. She was perhaps eight or nine. Pleading eyes. Hand outstretched. Another tapping her tummy, indicating its emptiness. A coin satisfied her. She ran along to the next person and then to another. She proved good at her business. Efficient, I would say. I watched from a distance. She was just like any other child. Sound distracted her. Colors attracted her. She stared longingly at those who sat around eating. Perhaps she dreamed of money and lots of good food. Impulsively she ran toward her friends with a broad smile. Proudly she shook her bowl, rattling the coins that proved her success. The girls whispered to one another, perhaps identifying their prey. She soon resumed her work, muttering when unsuccessful and joyful when a coin hit her bowl.

By then she had my undivided attention. There was something familiar about her. Was it her walk? Her voice? Her pleading face? Her sparkling eyes? Her mischievous looks or the way she carried herself? Then suddenly it dawned on me. She reminded me of my daughters.

I hadn't seen them for 65 days. Seemed like years. My daily devotion never ended without admiring their photographs. Calling home each

The princess on the platform

MAYWALD JESUDASS

weekend and hearing them say the same things repeatedly was exciting. Letters from my wife described the things our two-year-old did and said, probably never to repeat them again. The eldest one drew pictures, wrote alphabets, numbers, or spellings of newly learned words. She gave me an opportunity to show off to my roommates.

The little girl on the platform reminded me of my beloved daughters. Fairer than the second. Prettier than the first. She looked beautiful. A hot shower should clean her up. Shampoo should make her matted hair breeze down her back. A lacy pink dress with flowers and beads should suit her. Shoes with stockings to match. Good food. Warm clothes. Hugs and kisses. She could be the princess of a lost empire.

Hours later, my mind raced back down the tracks, in the opposite direction from which the train traveled. Unlike the trees, mountains, meadows, and distant houses that disappeared from my gaze, that little girl lingered in my mind. She was becoming a lovable problem. If she reminded me of my daughters, surely she would be attractive to Jesus. Shabby clothes, unkempt hair, hunger and cold, homelessness, . . . *being poor* makes inheriting eternity easier. Poor or rich. Adorned by human garments or Christ's righteousness. Either way, she is a princess. The difference is that one fades and is forgotten while the other grows brighter.

My eyes grew heavy. Yet, a question remained unanswered. Would she ever realize she was a princess in Christ Jesus? Who will tell her? I wondered. Missed opportunities rarely return. Maybe I should pray for the laborers who would harvest this difficult vast field of *nobodies*.

Abba Father, thank You for the rains, for train delays, and for beggars. It is wonderful to see beauty through filth. In shepherd David You saw a king. In cowardly Peter You saw a rock. You are the only one who sees beyond mere humanness. See through her, Lord. Send prophet Samuel or Paul to speak those words. Words that can transform lives and build nations. Maybe like Mary, someday she will break an alabaster box. Compel Your kingdom to come . . . *soon*. Once again, work through the little ones for heaven's gain. Thank You for the princess on the platform. For Your name's sake, begin the miracle in her life. Amen.

I woke up. Don't know when. The train was still speeding along. The starry sky and the smiling moon stood guard over the night. It wasn't the girl who woke me. It was the wind—the disturbing wind, which penetrates through closed windows and hearts! Its whisper was deafening. Its grace and power overcame me. Its message was loud and clear. . . .

Peter is dead. You are chosen as Christ's mouthpiece. Go make daughters and sons of footpath and platform dwellers. I'm counting on you.

Even as the night lingered on, *light* dawned on me. My pastoral ministry should encompass the homeless, the unlovable, and the nobodies of this world. ■

Maywald Jesudass is the pastor of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Hosur, Tamil Nadu, India.

WHY PASTORAL VISITATION?

Weary from a tense encounter with a patient, I took a few minutes to relax in the visitor's lounge.



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While preparing for another visit, I noticed a woman in her fifties whose warm smile and eye contact invited me to introduce myself as a member of the pastoral care team.

"I work as a church treasurer," she said. "Have been there for over fifteen years. Within my tenure, we've had four pastors."

"How is your pastor doing now?" I asked.

She paused and then confided, "He has just returned after a year of recovering from burnout."

I expressed concern for her pastor's welfare and asked, "What do you think contributes to a pastor's success?"

"Visitation!" she answered without hesitation.

Amazed, I assured her that "I, too, am interested in pastoral visitation. I'm in training to supervise pastors to make meaningful pastoral visits. This supervisory program is called Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) Supervision."

"What methods are used to teach you the values of pastoral visitation?" she asked.

"The pastoral caregivers make innumerable visits, including ministering to scores of families who have lost

loved ones. In the last few years, I've visited about 1,000 patients and church members. Usually I listen, pray, and read the Bible with them. Afterward, I reflect and evaluate each visit as to whether I have been caring. I am under constant supervision from several experienced supervisors at the same time I'm supervising others. Pastoral visitation creates a thousand opportunities for real ministry and attracts just as many blessings."

That encounter sparked in me a desire to analyze the importance of visitation.

Benefits of visitation

Spiritual growth. Without a deep personal experience with God, pastors cannot make meaningful visits. Spiritual preparation before visiting is important. Without communion with God, visitations can become social events only. Mutual interactions between pastors and members evoke a desire to know each other better. Thus it enhances both pastors and members to a better knowledge of God and themselves.

Several years ago, as a church pastor, I repeatedly visited a former church

member. We enjoyed a series of Bible studies. This eighty-year-old gentleman expressed with utmost sincerity his renewed longing for God. "I want to be rebaptized," he said. What a remarkable transformation; from estrangement to "new creation"! (2 Cor. 5:17).

Relationships. Pastoral visits cement relationships between pastors and their members. Since relationships are vital in Christian ministry, these visits help parishioners know their pastors. Pastors also can encourage members to visit one another. In the first church I pastored, members lived in close proximity. I encouraged them to visit one another. As a result of their frequent contacts and my visits, the church, a small congregation, became very close. Visitation fosters unity and is key to establishing a warm and caring congregation. The pastor's sincerity in making effective visits is certain to produce results.

Preaching. Pastoral visits give pastors insights into the lives of members, which enables the minister to preach with a particularly focused relevance. In my presentation on baptism, I recalled a recent visit to a young couple who rejoiced over their first newborn. I described the way I and the parents held the infant, how we felt in doing so, and what happened between us as we did it. This experience enabled me to urge the congregation to care for new members, as these parents cared for their baby.

Nurture. Pastoral visitation is an integral part of church ministry. Jesus' parting words to Peter urged him to feed His lambs (John 21:15-19). Coming close to people is essential in nurturing them. Each day their minds are bombarded with unwelcome ideas. Attaining nurture through shepherding is crucial, and it includes healing, sustaining, and guiding.¹ To prioritize shepherding in pastoral responsibility is essential in these days when most church members constantly experience stress and hurt. This calls for an increase in training in pastoral care and pastoral education in both the seminary and continuing education programs.²

Stewardship. Pastoral visitation is key to communicating the relevance of

stewardship. During the Wall Street collapse of October 1989, an elderly member of our church lost heavily. The impact of the loss was so great that he suffered a stroke. During my visit, he welcomed me as I prayed for his recovery and conducted a Communion service for him. The following Sabbath, his wife gave a very substantial offering to the church. There is no better motivation to giving than for the pastor to provide a member with effective pastoral care through preaching and visitation.

Personal growth. Visiting others often reveals inadequacies in the pastor's own life. One professor at the Adventist Theological Seminary confided that "most seminarians are poor in comprehending the weaknesses and needs of their own inner being. They do not know themselves. They are not sure of their personal and professional identity." Ministers need to rediscover themselves by asking, "Who am I and what is a pastor?" This can be clarified for the pastor in his or her visitation of people.

My own lack of self-understanding became clear when I visited Joseph, a young student wrongfully sentenced to fifteen years of imprisonment because of his involvement in an automobile accident. In spite of the unfairness, he grew spiritually while in prison. We encouraged each other. I shared that I, too, had been unfairly judged. However, upon reflection, I over-identified myself with him. Had I concentrated and focused more on him and his concerns, and not so much on my own, I could have been more helpful.

It has been said, "You must educate and train yourselves to visit every family that you can possibly get access to. The results of this work will testify that it is the most profitable work a gospel minister can do."³

Why the lack of pastoral visiting?

Why do pastors make comparatively few visits?

Most seminaries teach students how to preach, exegete, and manage a church. These roles are important. But

we should not minimize or omit training in how to listen, counsel, and visit? It is probably true that some of us are tempted to be negligent and uncaring about visitation because pastoral visits demand patience, compassion and genuine diligence. But one of the great pastors of this century said it well when he wrote: "Many a pastor does not become a true Christian until he engages in spiritual care."⁴

Perhaps some pastors don't visit because they do not plan effectively. Setting aside the hours and energy to visit takes planning. Perhaps we do not visit because we are afraid it will reveal too much of us—because in visiting we become too vulnerable. Or could it be simply because of a lack of love for God and others? To know God brings new challenges and responsibilities; to know self leads to genuine repentance and a daily conversion.

Some pastors are satisfied with a superficial relationship with parishioners. When they lack the depth of understanding of God and self, relationships with others remain at a distant, shallow level. This is followed by vagueness in preaching. Thus many congregations have been hurt because church members who expected pastoral care do not receive it.

As pastors we need to be stricken with awe as we read passages such as Psalm 23 and John 10—great chapters on shepherding. One commentator on the shepherd psalm challenges: "Do I sit up on my pedestal of self-pride and look with contempt upon my contemporaries, or do I get down and identify myself with them in their dilemma and there extend a small measure of the goodness and mercy given to me by my Master?"⁵

Indeed, pastoral visitation is not an option but a way of pastoral life. ■

¹ Steward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1958), 28.

² *Ibid.*, 32.

³ Ellen G. White, *Evangelism* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1946), 440.

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Spiritual Care* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 45.

⁵ Philip Keller, *The Inspirational Writings* (New York: Inspirational Press, 1993), 115.

BEREAVEMENT MINISTRY: THE IMPORTANCE OF FUNERAL HOME VISITS

On January 9, 1997, Tony DeMarco's world turned upside down. The *Denver Post* sportswriter received word that his wife, Maureen, 37, had died in a plane crash.



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Christian Church
[Disciples of Christ].*

A chaplain from Detroit's Metropolitan Airport made the call informing DeMarco. Suddenly DeMarco had to deal not only with his grief but with the reality of abruptly becoming the single parent of his eight-year-old daughter. As soon as word of Maureen's death spread, an informal network of support for the DeMarcos emerged. Friends brought flowers and food, and people from all walks of life came to offer condolences.¹

Upon learning of a death, the broader community of family and friends must mobilize to form a circle of love and support. To surviving families, funerals are painful and tragic, but the pain and tragedy can be softened and eased by supporters. And it is the church—pastors and parishioners—who are called to the front lines of a grief ministry. God declares: "Comfort, comfort my people" (Isa. 40:1, NIV). Christians are to administer emotional and spiritual first aid when a family has experienced a death.

Funeral visits

One important aspect of grief ministry is funeral home visits (or to say it in terms of a generic world culture: visit meaningfully with the bereaved family), which demonstrates for the bereaved that they are not alone in their suffering. Such visits constitute the beginning of an important bereavement ministry. Here are some guidelines when visiting the funeral home.

Amazingly, some choose not to visit the funeral home. Such persons may send a note or make a quick phone call, but they avoid the personal touch of being there. Death of a family member is one of life's most severe blows and one from which the bereaved can recover only with the comfort and consolation extended by others through their caring presence. As soon as you hear of a death, plan to be at the funeral home. Whether the death was sudden or expected, that of a younger or older person—be there. The greatest gift one can offer during such a difficult time is

VICTOR M. PARACHIN

the gift of presence. By visiting the funeral home, you become a strong reminder that although mourners are experiencing a difficult loss they are not without love and support. Your presence is vital.

Consider Mary Anne's experience. She was preparing dinner when she received a phone call from police alerting her that Kenneth, her husband, had been in an automobile accident. Rushing to the hospital, Mary Anne was greeted by a nurse who gently told her that Kenneth had died. She recalls: "Although I was in shock and quite numb during those first few days, I distinctly remember marveling at all the people who came to the funeral home. Not only family and friends but acquaintances, Kenneth's work colleagues, and children's schoolmates. So many people came to show support and share our grief. Even though some of them found it hard to be there, they were generous in letting me share my feelings. The funeral visitation left me feeling hopeful.

Somehow the presence of so many people made the unbearable bearable."

The power of the ear

Listening is a powerful therapeutic tool for hurting people. Those who listen carefully and from the heart become instruments whereby light penetrates darkness, hope punctures despair, and clarity replaces confusion. Dr. Alan Wolfelt, director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, says: "When a friend is grieving, listen with your heart. Helping begins with your ability to be an active listener. Your physical presence and desire to listen without judging are critical helping tools. Don't worry so much about what you will say. Just concentrate on listening to the words that are being shared with you. . . . Allow your friend to have his or her own feelings."²

The expressions of sympathy

Use words and sentences that convey tenderness and compassion.

Mourners identify the following as especially helpful at a time of loss: *I'm so sorry; Words fail me at a time like this; I want to share your grief any way I can; This must be very painful for you; I'm here because I care and want to help; You will all be in my prayers daily; I hurt for you.*

Don't hesitate to use touch or an embrace to further convey your love and care but avoid empty clichés or trite expressions such as these: *You've got to hold on; Don't cry; Everything will be all right; It was for the best; He's better off now; At least she's not suffering any more; You'll get over it; Time will take care of everything; Be brave and strong.*

The dynamics of mourning

While most people engage in healthy and normal grieving patterns, some fall into the trap of complicating their bereavement. There are some pitfalls that people can unwittingly get into, particularly actions that limit or negate aspects of the funeral. Some

Conference

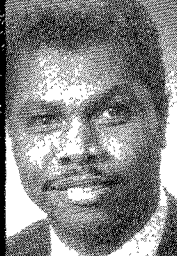
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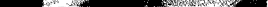
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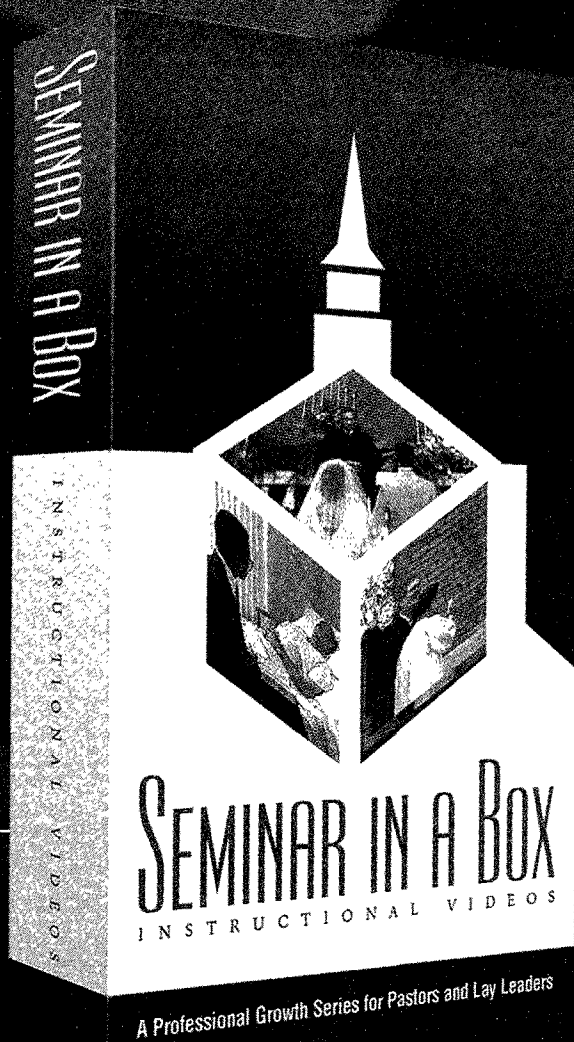
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individuals set themselves up for unhealthy, complicated bereavement by engaging in what Raoul L. Pinette calls "popular escape mechanisms." While we should always be deeply aware of the funeral customs and practices of the culture in which we minister, it is worthwhile noting Pinette's cautions as he states them in an article titled *Acute Grief and the Funeral*.³

The closed casket. "What better way is there to run away from death than to have a closed casket and not look at the dead person at all. . . . The closed casket is a very convenient manner of withdrawing into denial."

An exception to an open casket would be in the case of a death where the body has been extremely disfigured and impossible for an embalmer to properly reconstruct. In such cases, a closed casket may be preferable because it protects survivors from being confronted by a haunting and lasting visual image.

No visitation. Some mourners, and their well-meaning family and friends, feel that a funeral visitation time is an additional hardship survivors do not need. However, visitations play an important role in the recovery and adjustment phase of grief. Visiting gives relatives and friends opportunity to share their concern and also to feel and express their own grief. It is natural that joy shared becomes joy augmented and grief shared becomes grief diminished. There is nothing worse than going through a crisis alone.

Limited funerals. Some mourners and their families will insist on a "small, private funeral." This, too, should be gently challenged. Is it fair to dictate the number of people who should or should not grieve and how many should be accorded the privilege to express their grief through the funeral?

The resources of faith

Because bereavement can create intense emotional and spiritual darkness, the bereaved will need gentle reminders that they have not disappeared into the "valley of the shadow of death" but, as the psalmist majesti-

cally declares, they "walk through the valley of the shadow of death" (Ps. 23:4). The bereaved need assurance and reassurance that God is with them and is quietly guiding them from the darkness of grief into the light of recovery.

During the time of grief, grievors may need reminders that they have an invisible means of support. The bereaved can benefit from gentle suggestions that they are not completely alone with their pain; that no matter how abandoned they might feel, God shares their burden of sorrow. There are always biblical passages such as the following that can be shared: "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you" (Isa. 66:13). "How good it is to sing praises to our God. . . . He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds" (Ps. 147:1, 3). "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me" (John 14:1).

In his book, *The Funeral and Mourners*, Dr. Paul Irion stresses the importance of spiritual leaders sharing their personal faith, the "vital conviction that God is the loving Father who abides with his children in life and in

death." "There is a contagious nature to faith in the God of mercy who understands the needs of his children and who accepts them in spite of their weakness."⁴ Of course, sharing your personal faith does not mean lecturing a mourner or delivering a minisermon but rather approaching bereavement ministry from your own deep confidence that God is actively present and lovingly engaged in the task of transforming darkness and despair into light and new life.

Death is an inevitable part of life; thus, helping mourners is an inevitable aspect of ministry. All church members need, therefore, to learn how to take part in that ministry. ■

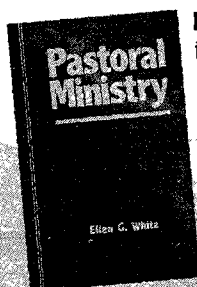
¹ *People* (October 13, 1997).

² Alan Wolfelt, quoted in *What to Do When a Loved One Dies: A Practical and Compassionate Guide to Dealing With Death on Life's Terms*, by Eva Shaw (Dickens Press, 1991), 67.

³ Raoul L. Pinette, "Acute Grief and the Funeral," in *For Those Bereaved*. Austin Kutscher, ed. (Arno Press, 1980), 23-25.

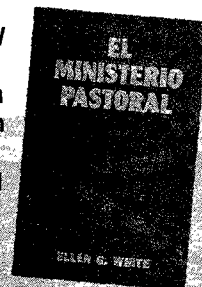
⁴ Paul Irion, *The Funeral and the Mourners* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1964), 151.

Pastoral Ministry



From the rich treasury of Ellen White's pen, the compilers of this book have woven a fine tapestry of Ellen White's writings that deal with the joys, challenges, and trials of the local church pastor. *Pastoral Ministry* attempts to be a complete and balanced, if not exhaustive, compilation of her statements regarding the function of the pastor. The topics cover everything from the minister's personal devotional life to ministerial ethics,

health, and time management. It's a reference book all pastors and elders should own.



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What is your idea of a church library? From my viewpoint, the typical church library consists of a

shelving unit, small cupboard, or locked, antique bookcase filled with a few dusty old books which someone once "donated" to the church.

In fact, I suspect these "donated libraries" usually came from someone who was busy disposing of the possessions of a deceased relative and couldn't deal with the guilt of discarding Uncle Joe's books!

Now I believe churches should sponsor libraries and as a pastor I have encouraged laity librarians in two different congregations to establish a church library. So you can imagine my delight when I recently received information from Louise Swartz, who operates a church library ministry. Her organization, Librarians for Christ, provides encouragement, instruction, and guidance, but not financial resources, for churches who are hoping to begin or to improve their library.

From her research, Louise states that only about 50 percent of Christian churches have a library of any kind with only about half of those active or successful. She believes the percentage of Adventist churches with libraries would be even lower which is a tragedy for a denomination that places such strong emphasis on publishing books, magazines, and other resources.

She believes that we would especially encourage new believers to read more and study deeper into biblical teachings and the church's history and doctrines if the outstanding resources we produce were readily available in the congregation. Thus the library can become a crucial

Church libraries needed

JAMES A. CRESS

educational tool for the local church.

If you would like to encourage your church to establish or improve its library, you may find the following suggestions helpful.

First, recognize that a church library is a ministry. A well-functioning library provides both members and prospective members with opportunity to discover for themselves the great themes of Scripture and the serious impact that a relationship with God can have in their personal lives. The Bible itself visions encounters with "the Word of God" as saving lost humanity.

A good library is valuable. It equips the members and leadership for program and activity planning. It shows that the church is seriously interested in helping members develop their spiritual gifts, and it stimulates people to dream about ministry possibilities.

The variety of materials available in a church library also promotes an eclectic view of ministry that invites every member to participate in church life in some way. The books, videos, periodicals, and other resources offer material for education, personal growth, and sharing.

A pleasant library, hopefully in a dedicated room with comfortable accommodations, also provides wholesome, needed relaxation and recreation.

A church library can begin small and expand as resources and interests allow. In my own congregation, we

recently expanded from a small, closet-sized room, to a much larger classroom which has comfortable seating, good lighting, project tables and planning space.

A good church library needs much more than books. It can include archives of the local congregation's history (photographs, artifacts, mementos), career information, games, maps and charts, periodicals, sermon tapes, videos, transparencies, etc. To encourage an interest among youngsters, stories, videos, craft and mission projects can be featured.

At the very least a library should contain several good commentaries, reference books, Scripture translations, representative denominational books, and current periodicals both from the denomination and from the general Christian press. Of course, no Adventist church library would be thorough without a complete collection of Ellen White's books or a wide collection of heritage, mission, and doctrinal resources.

Your local church library deserves planning and budgeting. Staff should be recruited from those who have an interest in seeing this ministry flourish and adequate funds to provide new purchases and current subscriptions should be included in the church's budgetary process.

Your library staff should not feel dependent upon other people's discards to stock the shelves. While some donations are valuable, often a willingness to discard a book is an appropriate evaluation of its potential worth. It is better to have fewer resources while we maintain those that are current or are a valuable, ongoing resource. Free does not always mean worthwhile.

Finally, bathe your whole project in prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to bless your staff and plans and to use your library as a means of reaching people with the good news. ■

Ordained/Commissioned Pastors

Nwachukwu, Daniel Okwudire (Ngozi), dist. leader, East Nigeria Conf., AID

Nweke, Sylvanus Onwume (Peace), dist. leader, Rivers Conf., Nigeria, AID

Nwosu, Vine C. (Joyce), dist. leader, East Nigeria Conf., AID

Odermatt, Beat (Ursula), pastor, British Columbia Conf., NAD

Ogola, Sabi (Nancy), pastor, North East Papua Mission, SPD

Okai, Moses Onyendu (Sira), dist. leader, Rivers Conf., Nigeria, AID

Oli, Peter Alama (Ruth), president, Sepik Mission, SPD

Olivera, Belarmino Senhorinha (Diomar Silva), pastor, Espirito Santo Conf., SAD

Onyendi, Azubuike H. (Nelly), dist. leader/evangelist, East Nigeria Conf., AID

Ortiz, Edgardo (Vilmari Porrata), pastor, East Puerto Rico Conf., IAD

Ortiz-Colli, Guastavo Daniel (Maria Veronica Noverola Calderon), pastor, Central Mexican Conf., IAD

Owen, John (Esther), pastor, North East Papua Mission, SPD

Palomares, Danielo (Jill), pastor, Davao Mission, SSD

Paris, Mark (Yetta), pastor, Central States Conf., NAD

Parson, Carlos (Esther), pastor, Arizona Conf., NAD

Patili, Nick (Manly), dept. dir., Sepik Mission, SPD

Patterson, Kingsley (Andrea), pastor, West Jamaica Conf., IAD

Perkins, Richard (Nancy), pastor, Mountain View Conf., NAD

Petrov, Plamen (Vessalka), pastor, Bulgarian Union, EUD

Phookchit, Pairoj (Puang-Ngarm), youth/family dir., Thailand Mission, SSD

Pokawin, James (Priscilla), pastor, Sepik Mission, SPD

Posse, Daniel (Sandra), evangelist, Central Argentine Conf., SAD

Primo, João Batista (Vilma Saraiva Viera Pinto), pastor, South Brazil Union Conf., SAD

Punay, Eper (Josephine), pastor, Davao Mission, SSD

Pupichitprai, Phamor (Suwakon Kierdo), pastor, Thailand Mission, SSD

Rakotondrasoa, Florentin (Ravaosoa Gerthine), dept. dir., Indian Ocean Union, AID

Ramirez, Abraham (Mirna Castrejon Alonso), pastor, Central Mexican Conf., IAD

Randriamanantena, Heriniaina (Elza), pastor, Indian Ocean Union, AID

Randriambeloston, Frederic (Valerie), pastor, Indian Ocean Union, AID

Rantung, Steven Jonah (Anna Liza Chua), pastor/asst. prof. of theology, East Indonesia Union, SSD

Ratsimbanirina, Christian (Myriam), pastor, Indian Ocean Union, AID

Redlich, John (Kari), pastor, Newfoundland Conf., NAD

Reyes, Frendell (Gladys), pastor, Illinois Conf., NAD

Ritthitaipop, Prasert (Chua Seawa), pastor, Thailand Mission, SSD

Rocha, Jose Enio (Maria Vilma de Moraes), radio dir., South Minas Conf., SAD

Rodriguez-Villarreal, Joel (Nidia Sanchez Jimenez), pastor, Central Mexican Conf., IAD

Roszkowski, Krzysztof (Roza), pastor, South Polish Conf., TED

Rudin, Martin (Esther), pastor, German Swiss Conf., EUD

Ruis, Adoniran Lourenço (Elaine Sá), pastor, South Brazil Union Conf., SAD

Saadi, Jr., Eduardo (Alina Vargas), evangelist, South Minas Conf., SAD

Sadiq, Samuel (Rani), pastor, Northern India Union, SUD

Saeyong, Anucha (Boontawee), regional dir., Thailand Mission, SSD

Samosir, Berlin (Siagian Melyn), pastor, Jakarta Conf., SSD

Sanana, Ray (Lei), pastor, North East Papua Mission, SPD

Sangi, Timothy (Jenny), district dir., Sepik Mission, SPD

Santos, Elmir Pereira Dos (Perla de Lourdes Santos), pastor, South Minas Conf., SAD

Sarip, Milita, dist. dir., Sepik Mission, SPD

Satayawaksakool (Saejang), Rungsit (Patcharin), president, Thailand Mission, SSD

Shelley, Tibor (Connie), youth min./health and temp. dir., Arkansas-Louisiana Conf., NAD

Shiroma, Herbert Z. (Jeanette), ABC manager, New Jersey Conf., NAD

Sicinski, Andrzej (Malgorzata), pastor, East Polish Conf., TED

Simalango, Lasker (Gurning Lolita M Enny), pastor, Central Sumatra Mission, SSD

Simi, Brian (Grace), dept. dir., North East Papua Mission, SPD

Sinaga, Jefta (Siregar Agustina Raya), pastor, Central Sumatra Mission, SSD

Singh, Gurcharan (Shakuntala), pastor, Upper Ganges Section, SUD

Singh, Johnson K. (Taramani), pastor, Upper Ganges Section, SUD

Disabled list

Church members will often visit fellow members if they know they are in the hospital. Our church created a bulletin board titled "Disabled List" with pictures of hospitals, doctors, nurses, and a photograph of the member who is in the hospital. The bulletin board is strategically located in the foyer. Many Sabbath afternoons, I have walked into hospital rooms to find my members already there! And more come before I leave! —Bill Peterson, Mississippi Gulf Coast District.

Is your church online?

Many baby-boomers, baby-busters, and Generation X-ers have access to computers. Put your weekly services, special events, current activities, and study groups on a Web site. Last year a new church was started with only a few people but now ministers to hundreds more on the Internet. The Internet can already reach shut-ins and people too ill to get out to church.—Douglas R. Rose, Grand Prairie, Texas.

Proton Treatment Center at Loma Linda University

A new feature has been added to the Proton Treatment Center Web pages. An "Online Tour" offers prospective patients a glimpse of what they might expect to experience during treatment at Loma Linda.

To take the tour, point your browser to the Proton Treatment Center homepage at <http://proton.llu.edu>. Click the "Patients and General Public" link, then click on the "Online Tour" link. Please send all comments or suggestions via e-mail to soeinck@dominion.llumc.edu.

For more information about patient referral information, call the Proton Treatment Center referral service: USA: 800-496-4966; Interna-

tional: 909-558-4288; fax inquiry: 909-558-4829. Written inquiries may be directed to: Proton Treatment Center, Loma Linda University Medical Center, 11234 Anderson Street, Loma Linda, California 92354.

Chancel Drama Ministry

One of the things I have been doing recently to make my ministry more effective is to create inexpensive Church Chancel dramas.

For several years we had been doing Ernest K. Emurien's "The Last Supper" using the men of our church. Then I wrote a Chancel drama for women; it was an immediate success. In fact, when the United Methodist Interlink and Interpreter got hold of it, they applauded it and promoted it as a grass-roots local church ministry—something smaller churches could do with ease.

We began sending the script to people, charging only for the cost of paper, photocopying, pictures, special printing, envelopes, postage, and handling. From all over the United States I have been hearing good things of how the drama brought people together in wonderful fellowship as well as education. If you would like to obtain a copy of one or both of these dramas, please contact Charles E. Goodin, Bethany United Methodist Church, 110 Thora Street, Johnstown, PA 15904-1869. Phone: 814-266-8817.

Name bulletin cover

At least once a year, we designed a special bulletin cover made up of the names of everyone in the congregation, from youngest to oldest. It's easy to do with the computer software you may be using now.

We start with the names from our membership database. Using the report feature, we print just the first names from each record into a text (ASCII) file on the disk. Then we

import these into our word processor. If necessary, we remove the carriage returns (line breaks at the end of each line). We also remove the duplicates. Setting the margins as small as possible, we set the document to print at the size of our bulletin cover.

We select all of the names then change the font to a script font (examples are Zapf Chancery and Brush Script). We change the color to a light gray (a good background color). Then we slowly increase the size until it fills the page (typically 100 names at 24-point size will fill an area the size of our bulletin front cover—about 5.5 inches by 8.5 inches). With most word processors, it's best to turn off hyphenation and to turn on full justification (which creates even right and left margins). For fine tuning, we use the word processor's paragraph formatting features to adjust the spacing between lines and character formatting to create spaces between words.

This becomes the background for a piece of scripture which can become the title, or printed as a graphic over the background of names. If you don't know how to make your word processor do this, simply print out the background of names and photocopy the scripture on top. The Bible verse is printed in a carefully chosen script font (either the same as the names or similar), and printed in a large 48-point or more.

Depending on the theme of the worship service, we have chosen texts such as: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine" (Isa. 43:1, NRSV); "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his faithful ones" (Ps. 116:15, NRSV); "Called to be saints, together with all those who in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2, NRSV).

Because we have an annual service, during which we recall a multitude of saints who have died in God's service during the year, we have used the same technique for celebrating the names of those deceased or to recognize those who have participated in different volunteer functions on our Volunteer Recognition Sabbath. —Rev. Neil Parker, Burnaby, British Columbia.

Ministry ideas

- *Lay mobilization.* Is your church serious about including everyone in ministry? If so, you could try these three things: (1) Place high value on ministry; (2) Create a lay-equipping process; and (3) Select the right leader. A strong lay mobilization program must be lay-led. For more information, see the article "Lay Ministry Impact" (*Current Thoughts and Trends*, July 1998, page 18; Web site: www.navpress.com/CTT).
- *Small-church ministry.* Small churches (150 members or less) tend to be less formal and more family-oriented. This provides unique opportunities for personal encounters (both positive and negative). Find positive support in Steve Bierly's book *How to Thrive as a Small-Church Pastor* (Zondervan Pub.; available through Church Source, phone 800-727-3480, price \$11.69).
- *Seed Planters*, by Gale Hendrick, is a step-by-step way to start a new church. Used as the textbook for the first Seed Planters' Conference, this

manual is the most detailed information the Seventh-day Adventist Church has produced on the subject of church planting. Price: U.S.\$19.50. Order from AdventSource, 5040 Prescott Avenue, Lincoln, NE 68506. Phone: 800-328-0525/402-486-2572.

Pastor's solitude

In this age of cell phones, e-mail, and faxes, people are constantly communicating. But we pastors also need time alone, to understand how we think and feel. Solitude is important because it gives the person the opportunity to sort things out and relax, intellectually and emotionally. Time alone restores integrity, allowing one to think about the beliefs and values that matter most. It forces the creative side to flourish, as ideas and solutions emerge that were buried by the daily rush. Despite all of these benefits, many pastors are still afraid of solitude.

Alone time renews our energy and feeds our curiosity, so when we resume interacting with others, we have the insight and courage to take risks. A person's irritability level is a good way to tell whether we need alone time. Rather than waiting until one has a whole day or week free, think of alone time as part of everyday life. Walking in a park, sitting in a room listening to music, soaking in the bathtub, even focusing on ones breathing for ten minutes are all good ways to pull back from the excessive activity and tension of the day.

A good way to announce the need for solitude without making other people feel rejected is to say "I'm really looking forward to spending time with you, but first let me unwind for a half-hour."

Some people get a lot out of writing in a journal. It's a very effective way to get started. Others use the time for contemplation.

If you're often distracted or preoccupied, simply paying attention to your surroundings can be very refreshing. So can pursuing any absorbing activity on your own, such as reading or painting.

If you aren't used to being alone, you might feel a little bored at first. Stay with it. After a few minutes without the usual external stimulation, you'll start getting in touch with resources that you had forgotten you had, and you'll feel energized, relieved, and better able to be a full-time minister and pastor!—Dan W. Tohline, retired minister, Jonesboro, Arkansas.

\$25 for your ideas

Send us your suggestion about how pastors can make daily ministry more effective. If we publish it, we will send you \$25. If your idea promotes a product or service, we'll be glad to consider it for publication but won't pay you \$25. Send ideas to *Ministry*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904. To receive payment, all U.S. citizens must include Social Security number. ■

Moving?

Let *Ministry* move with you! Send address changes to Jeannette Calbi, *Ministry*, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, or E-mail us at calbij@gc.adventist.org. Please notify us eight weeks in advance.

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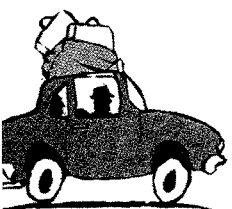
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