

EXALTING CHRIST · EQUIPPING BELIEVERS · EVANGELIZING THE WORLD

CORNERSTONE

JULY - AUGUST 2017

IN THIS ISSUE:

Expositional Preaching on Narrative Passages

The Challenge of Expository Preaching

...and more

TO YOU WHO BELIEVE, THIS STONE IS PRECIOUS · 1 PETER 2:7

The Challenge of Expository Preaching

Editorial

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”

2 Timothy 4:2

The faithful exposition of the Word of God powerfully transforms lives. This was never more true than in the preaching ministry by the so-called “Plymouth Brethren” 150 years ago. Men of God such as Henry Moorhouse, William Kelly, C. H. Macintosh, and R. C. Chapman were exceptionally gifted expositors of the Bible. C. H. Spurgeon commented that R. C. Chapman, was one of the godliest and most gifted expositors in England. “Brethren” Bible conferences in North America and Great Britain attracted overflowing crowds of serious Christians.

The Legacy of Expository Preaching

Of all the contributions of the so-called “Plymouth Brethren” movement to the evangelical church, it may be that expository preaching is its most enduring legacy. Expository preaching had fallen into disfavor at this time. Most ministers preached topically or textually, using one text or verse and then building a sermon around the theme of the verse. The “Plymouth Brethren” did not follow this method, but introduced a verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter consecutive method of Scripture exposition. Moreover, they preached the Bible as one unified book. They demonstrated that the prophecies of the Old Testament and the teaching of the New Testament could not be isolated from one another; rather, both were essential to a proper understanding of the Bible. They took seriously the historical-grammatic method of interpretation of Scripture, and labored in the exposition of types, dispensations, and prophecies of the Bible. They were recognized as authorities on the original languages of the Scriptures, trends within theology, and biblical history and culture. This style of preaching was a refreshing change, stimulating spiritual growth and stirring great interest in the Scriptures. This unique approach virtually transformed the method in which the Bible was proclaimed and has influenced expository preaching well into our present day. The efforts of these Brethren expositors had a significant impact on L. S. Chafer, H. A. Ironside, and the founders of Dallas Theological Seminary and Moody Bible Institute, influencing the expository preaching of a whole new generation.

The Importance of Expository Preaching

As expository preaching was given great emphasis by the early “Plymouth Brethren,” leading evangelical preachers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean were quick to see its great importance. As expository preaching began to gain acceptance, the spiritual lives of many Christians were revitalized. This expository preaching

movement may have contributed in part to the deep interest in the Scofield Reference Bible, the surge in missionary interest, and the Bible Prophecy Conference Movement of the late 1800s. How does expository preaching transform lives? Why is expository preaching so important? Alfred P. Gibbs, the author of *The Preacher and His Preaching*, explains the importance of expository preaching:

“Expository preaching puts the supreme emphasis on the Word of God. It magnifies the Word of God, and gives it the place of supreme authority... this type of preaching serves the far better purpose of edifying the people of God as the Scriptures are applied to their everyday lives. It provides an opportunity for speaking on many passages that would otherwise be neglected. By means of this method of preaching, little known truths will be given their rightful place, and it will be demonstrated that all Scripture is essential to furnish the man of God. The well-placed emphasis on expository preaching is a great tool in the hand of God for spiritual renewal.”

The Challenge of Expository Preaching

These human messengers of the oracles of God were powerfully gripped by the realization that they were handling divine truth. Therefore, faithfulness and spiritual care were essential in setting forth the truths of the Scriptures. Many hours of careful study were devoted to understanding the truth of God. These expositors, armed with the Word of God in their hearts and skilled with gift from above, brought untold blessing to many. Many were challenged by the godliness of their character, the breadth of their knowledge of the holy Word, and their commitment to the truth of God at all costs. Many who heard their ministry were changed forever. Expository preaching is the appointed way of bringing men and women face to face with the truths of God’s Word. It is God’s method of faithfully proclaiming the whole counsel of God and fully furnishing believers for service. The apostle Paul exhorts Timothy, “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (2 Tim. 4:2). May we take up this important challenge to passionately preach the Word of God, to proclaim it expositionally, and to faithfully make the truth of God known to a new generation!

David Dunlap

by David Dunlap

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Table of Contents

- 2 News & Events
- 4 Expository Preaching on Narrative Passages
Gary McBride
- 6 Current Trends: Sermons That Teach Scripture
David Dunlap
- 7 Salvation Stories
Richie Benitez
- 9 Book Review: Ryrie's Practical Guide to Communicating Bible Doctrine
Charles Fizer
- 10 Preach The Gospel
H. A. Ironside
- 13 Report: Believers Bible Chapel
Rex Trogdon
- 15 Report: Steward's Foundation
Doug Rice
- 17 Report: Walk Worthy Weekend
Sarah Dunlap

News & Events



Skyland Bible Conference 2017

Bluefield College, Bluefield, VA
July 1-7, 2017

The speakers are Joe Reese, Mike Attwood, and Nate Bramsen. For registration please visit www.skylandbible.org

West Virginia Bible Conference

Bluestone Camp & Retreat near Hinton, WV
July 23, 2017

The West Virginia Bible Conference invites you to their annual family camp July 23 - 28 with speakers Bob Brown (LA) and Steve Price (KS). Children's Ministry by Tim McNeal. The conference is held at Bluestone Camp & Retreat near Hinton, WV. Contact Brent Jones for more information at 304-466-4738 or brentandhope@frontier.com.

Lassen Pines Christian Camp

8071 Mineral Road Shingletown, CA 96088
July 30 - Aug 4, 2017

We hope that you will consider joining us for the Lassen Pines Youth & Family Camp as we consider the lives of 12 men who studied and followed Jesus for 3 1/2 years, 11 of whose lives and destinies changed forever... contact Sid & Linda Osborn, mobile 909.238.9908, sid.osborn@cushwake.com

Men's Intensive Bible Study 2017

Pinebush Bible Camp, Bloomburg, NY
August 27-31, 2017

With Randy Amos. For details contact Richie Benitez at royalpriest4him@yahoo.com or call 508-265-3168

The 106th Annual Labor Day Conference

Twin Cities, MN • Sept 1 - 4, 2017

Invited speakers are Dan Smith (IA) and Joe Reese (Ontario). All meetings with the exception of the breaking of bread meeting will be held at Christ the King Lutheran Church, 1900 7th St. NW, New Brighton, MN 55112. There will be nursery provided in addition to children's meetings and teen challenge meetings. Please check the website for contact info & housing accommodations: www.mnldc.net. Schedule as follows: Fri 9/1: Opening prayer mtg 7:30 pm, Sat. 9/2: 10:00, 3:00 & 7:00 (lunch & dinner served), Sun 9/3: Breaking of bread at various assemblies, 3:00 & 7:00 (lunch & dinner served), Mon 9/4: 10:00 am followed by lunch.

Believers Bible Conference

Murfreesboro, TN • December 27-30, 2017

An international assembly Bible conference. This year's theme: *The Glory of the Cross*. Plenary speakers: Alan Gamble, Glasgow, (Scotland); Nate Bramsen, (Niger); Keith Keyser, (PA). In addition to plenary sessions there will be over 25 seminars conducted by competent Bible teachers on various themes related to the cross in Christian life and service. Registration is required and details will follow on the conference website. The conference will be held at Embassy Suits & Convention Center, 1200 Conference Center Blvd, Murfreesboro, TN. For more information please contact: Brian Gunning at briangunning1@gmail.com or call (905) 685-5090

Tillsonburg Bible Chapel Fall Weekend Conference

September 9-10, 2017

Please join Tillsonburg Bible Chapel for their fall conference on Sept 9-10, 2017. The speaker is Bob Johnson who will be speaking on "Marriage and the Family." Schedule for the weekend: Saturday September 9 - Sessions 1 & 2 (10:00am - 12:00pm), Sessions 3 & 4 (1:00pm - 3:00pm), Sunday September 10 - Breaking of Bread (9:30am - 10:30am), Session 5 (11:00 am - 12:00 pm), Sessions 6 & 7 (1:00 pm - 3:00 pm) Please note that lunch will be provided both days and that registration is required. For more information or to register please contact Jim Noseworthy Sr. by phone (519 842-7410) or email (tillsonburgbiblechapel@bell.net).

2017 Bible Conference on the Bay

Harvey Cedars Bible Conference, 12 Cedars Ave., Harvey Cedars, NJ

September 11-15, 2017

The conference begins Monday at 5:30 PM and runs until Friday 10:30 AM. The speaker is Paul Young (Wales, UK) and the cost is \$399 per person. Enjoy a great time of fellowship and ministry at the Jersey Shore. Great accommodations, great food, great location. Other events are scheduled for the week. For more information, visit www.knowtheword.com or email Mark Kolchin at knowtheword@gmail.com or call (609) 709-3220

Wanted: Young or Retired Couple

The Deep South Family Bible Camp located in Carriere, MS, is looking for a young or retired couple to care for and oversee the camp grounds. Interested parties should contact Robert Brown at jesusistheway@juno.com

If you or your assembly has a news item or event to contribute, please email George Ferrier at gferrier@cornerstonemagazine.org



News & Events

Commendation to Full-Time Service

Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines, FL would like to announce the commendation of Christian Aichele to the work of the Lord. He has been involved in the work of evangelism, teaching, equipping, and in assisting believers for many years. The Lord's blessing upon his labors has been evident. Therefore, the elders and the believers at Boulevard Bible Chapel have officially and corporately commended Christian to the work the Lord has called him.

Commendation of Rodney and Pam Hain

After much prayer and seeking the Lord, the Bible Chapel of Shawnee, in Kansas City, KS, has commended Rodney and Pam Hain to the work of the Lord at Turkey Hill Ranch Bible Camp with an official start date of May 1, 2017. We value your prayers for them and their labor for the Lord.

Brooksville Bible Chapel Brooksville, FL:

Are you planning to retire or relocate to Hernando County, Florida? The believers of Brooksville Bible Chapel extend a warm welcome to you to fellowship with them. The chapel is located on 21123 Yontz Road in Brooksville, FL. For more information, please contact Richard Whatley at rwhatley1@tampabay.rr.com.

Frostproof Bible Chapel and Shepherd Christian Community:

Are you planning to retire or spend winter time in central Florida? The believers of Frostproof Bible Chapel and Shepherd Christian Community extend a warm welcome to you to fellowship with them. Frostproof Bible Chapel is located at 185 Marion Place, Frostproof, FL. Please contact John Chacko at chacko.jm@gmail.com for more information.

Scripture Teaching Library

STL is a publisher of devotional and expository Christian literature. It uses print-on-demand technology to provide sound biblical literature for Christians world-wide. There are over 40 titles available by respected writers. Their books are available through our website www.scriptureteachinglibrary.com

Christian Missions Press

Christian Missions Press began in 1962 in Waynesboro, GA with the hope that assembly writers could communicate to believers worldwide the importance of sound doctrine. Over 300 titles have been published and distributed. A website www.lifehouse.org has been established with many of these titles available digitally. A few titles are still available in print and can be ordered at no cost. Shipping and handling would be paid by CMP. Email: sgengle@aol.com and phone orders can be taken at 405-424-5433.

Western Assemblies Home

350 Berkeley Avenue, Claremont, CA, 91711. westernassemblieshome.org Western Assemblies Home is an Assisted Living Facility located in sunny Claremont California. They offer Assisted Living with single and two room suites. Eleven Independent Living houses are also available close to the main building. Claremont Bible Chapel is just a short walk or quick ride in the Home's van away. For more information on Independent or Assisted Living in an Assembly focused environment please contact Lynn Hughes or Rod Chance at (909) 626-3711.

The412Project: Blog for Young People

Esther Bosworth from Boulevard Bible Chapel in Pembroke Pines, FL has begun a excellent blog for young people. There are encouraging posts on prayer, outreach, and serving the Lord. Visit her page and tell others about The412Project. www.the412project.wordpress.com


Assembly Request

Would some doctrinally sound, self-supporting Christian couple, or some doctrinally sound, self-supporting single Christian brother, if exercised and able to give help in a small Christian assembly, prayerfully consider contact with the assembly at Gospel Chapel in Avera, Georgia. Curtis Thigpen, correspondent, 1074 Sunset Blvd. Avera, GA 30803, 706-547-6276, thigpens1074@att.net

Homecalls

Edith B. MacLelland (1917-2017)

Edith passed into the presence of the Lord on May 3rd, in Chicago, IL, she was 99 years old, one month shy of her 100th birthday. Edith was in fellowship for many years at the Palos Hills Gospel Hall, in Chicago, and then later at the Holiday Christian Assembly, in Holiday, FL. For many years she contributed poems, prose, and devotions to the Choice Gleanings calendar. She often made trips to the mission field to encourage workers. Edith was a Christian friend to many, an encourager, and a living example to many of what it means to be a woman of God.



EXPOSITIONAL PREACHING

On Narrative Passages

Much of Scripture is narrative, that is, the stories or accounts of events. The challenge for the preacher is to make the story relevant for today. There is a need to develop a lesson or lessons from the account with meaning(s) and application(s) for today.

Narrative as a writing style is different from poetry, found in Job to Song of Solomon, and doctrinal portions, such as the teaching in the Epistles. The stories in Scripture, whether in the Old Testament or in the Gospels or Acts, are factual historical accounts of events. These events were either known to the author or revealed by the Holy Spirit, but they are from a different time, culture, and setting than today.

Dangers in Preaching from Narrative

Preachers may be tempted to use a narrative which is not explained by the Lord or instructed by the Holy Spirit to make a point. This process may take the text far beyond what the Lord intended it to mean and outside the original purpose. Without a “thus says the Lord,” one must use care in the development of a message from the passage.

There is also the danger of allegorizing by taking the text out of the context and making it fit a pattern or support a point. Several examples from recent history may serve as illustrations. A number of years ago some believers allegorized the story of the capture of Jericho. These people felt that if they marched around a city or a neighborhood and prayed against the forces of evil, the walls of opposition to the gospel would come down and they could claim the area for God.

Another example is *The Prayer of Jabez*, a bestselling book, which was based on 1 Chron. 4:10. Jabez prayed that God would enlarge his boundaries, that God’s hand would be upon him, and that God would keep him from evil. These requests are commendable and God granted what Jabez requested. However, there is no indication that all believers of all time should pray the same prayer with assurance that God will grant their requests and prosper them.

Some preachers have invented “assembly truths” from narrative. There is a danger in developing New Testament truths from Old Testament stories. The rebuilding of walls in Nehemiah was not about assembly life, nor was the story of the rebellion of Korah. There is a vast difference between illustration and interpretation.

Developing Points from Narrative

Narrative supplies illustrations for New Testament truth. The story of Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel chapter nine is a wonderful illustration of Ephesians 2:11-22, where Gentiles who were aliens and strangers become fellow citizens

and members of the household of God. The travels of Israel illustrate the leading of God in the lives of His people. Some narratives are specific illustrations, such as the days of Noah, the destruction of Sodom or Balaam as a prophet for hire.

There are lessons applicable to Christian living within Old Testament narrative. We can learn from the choices made by Old Testament characters and the positive or negative consequences that ensued. Some good examples are Abraham choosing to go down to Egypt during a time of famine, Lot choosing to live in Sodom, and Ruth choosing to accompany Naomi back to Bethlehem. The various kings of Israel and Judah provide similar life lessons. Paul states in I Corinthians that there are accounts written for our instruction, admonition, and learning (10:11).

A number of Old Testament narratives reveal the person of the Lord Jesus. The Lord Himself pointed out some of these, specifically on the road to Emmaus in Luke 24. There are people and events referred to as types of Christ in the New Testament. The serpent in the wilderness, the water from the rock, and the ministries

of Moses and Elijah all speak of Christ. There are other stories that remind us of Christ - the life of Joseph, the person of Boaz, Joshua leading the people, and many more such accounts. Devotional teaching on Christ from the Old Testament can “warm” the hearts of God’s people and make the Old Testament come alive.

An Example of Teaching from Narrative - Exodus 35:4-35

This account is not about us, and in a primary sense is not for us; it is from a different time, place, and circumstance and for a different people. It is a great illustration of what is important to God and what is a desired response from His people. This account as an illustration is a reminder of the priority of worship for us individually and collectively at the Lord’s Supper.

- A Command - v. 4, the Lord Jesus commanded us to “Remember Me in ...” (I Cor. 11:24)
- A Heart Response - v. 5, 22 - a willing heart; - “whose heart was stirred” - vv. 21, 26
- A Spiritual Exercise - v. 21 - a willing spirit
- A Response of Love - v. 21, 24, the Lord’s offering; a freewill offering... (v. 29)

There are Offerings

- Everything the people gave in some way spoke of Christ
- What they gave was precious to them and, for the most part, limited in supply
- Everything they gave came from the Lord when they left Egypt
- No one person had all the needed supplies
- Some of the items were more precious and costly
- All these items became part of the Tabernacle under the direction of the Holy Spirit

Conclusion: Making an Application

This passage is an illustration. God is not asking believers today to bring physical items. It is a picture of a spiritual response to the Lord’s command. For us it may illustrate “Do this in remembrance of Me.”

Giving can be forced and compliance enforced, but worship in spirit and in truth must come from the heart. God seeks worshippers but does not force this on His people. True worship is the response of a willing heart and is a matter of spiritual exercise. Any thoughts

presented to the Father concerning His beloved Son come only from what the Father reveals to us. We are merely giving back what He gave to us.

No one person can ever exhaust the glories of the Lord Jesus. Each one can bring aspects that they enjoyed during the week. The thoughts presented and offered up by the Holy Spirit form a fuller picture of Christ.

There may be other devotional thoughts drawn from meditation on this passage, such as, what they brought and who it was that brought various items. Beyond that, the items are suggestive of various aspects of the person of Christ.

Remember this is narrative - it tells the story of the physical preparation for the construction of the Tabernacle. It is not about constructing a “church building,” nor is it about people in this age giving for a project. It is a story that reveals the desire of God and the appropriate response from His people.

Gary McBride is a commended worker residing in London, Ontario. Gary served as a missionary in Zambia. He is a respected Bible teacher and conference speaker.

by **Gary McBride**

CURRENT TRENDS

SERMONS THAT TEACH SCRIPTURE AN ANALYSIS OF A 2017 GALLUP POLL

Despite a new wave of contemporary church buzzwords like *relational*, *relevant*, and *intentional*, people who show up on Sundays are looking for the same thing, which has long anchored most services: Bible-based in-depth preaching. According to Gallup researcher Lydia Saad, who conducted her poll in 2017, the number one reason Americans go to church today is “Sermons that teach about Scripture”¹

Saad found that 82% of Protestants and 76% of all regular worshipers consider biblical lessons as the major factor that draws them into church services. Another factor is application, as evidenced by the 80% of Protestants and 75% of all other denominations value sermons that connect faith to everyday life. Protestants were more likely to cite the importance of sermon content than churchgoing Catholics, about two-thirds (66%) of whom say it is what draws them to church.

Preaching on Scripture Most Important Factor

Preaching on Scripture and its application ranked above factors such as children’s programs (68%), community outreach (61%), and social activities (49%) among Protestants. Churchgoers’ focus on Sunday sermons reveals a hopeful indicator for preachers. Although believers/non-believers’ media diet increases and attention spans decrease, they nevertheless desire the straightforward preaching of the Word.

Even in a distracted, outraged, shallow culture, people hunger for something rare: the focused, balanced, in-depth preaching of the Word of God. This hunger has put more pressure on preachers to ensure their sermons engage listeners by avoiding corny jokes, clichéd illustrations, and unsound teaching. Those Christians in the 20s to 30s age bracket, in particular, are on guard against such teaching: Nearly 4 out of every 10 practicing millennial Christians fact-check sermon claims on Google during the sermon, according to a 2013 Barna Group survey.²

The previously mentioned Gallup survey found that people in the pews care far more about What is being preached than

Who is preaching it. Only half of Protestants (53%) and Americans overall (54%) said they attend church because of “dynamic religious leaders who are interesting and inspiring.”

Shift Towards Rigorous Teaching

According to this Gallup survey more and more churches have discovered that theological depth appeals to both Christians and non-believers. Many larger and smaller churches have shifted toward rigorous teaching. In other words, those churchgoers for whom sermons were being “dumbed down” are not dumb at all. Current church leaders realize that their congregation must be interested in the truth, for, if not, they would be out golfing, or fishing, or staying home. There is a power that comes through the preached Word of God that even reading the inerrant Word cannot replace.

Conclusion

God speaks through the preached Word of the Bible. In fact, it is the major tool of communication by which He addresses individuals today. Biblical preaching is not entertaining your audience with personal anecdotes, overused jokes, and humorous stories. Through the preaching of Scripture, God encounters men and women to bring them to salvation. Something awesome happens when God confronts an individual through preaching and seizes him by the soul. May the church return to preaching in-depth Scripture sermons that transform the hearts and souls of their hearers.

Endnotes

1. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/208529/sermon-content-appeals-churchgoers.aspx>
2. <https://www.barna.com/research/how-technology-is-changing-millennial-faith/#>

David is the editor of Cornerstone Magazine. He has been a full-time worker for over thirty years. He and his wife Faith live in Land O’ Lakes, Florida.

by David Dunlap

A dramatic seascape with a ship's mast and a life preserver overlaid. The background shows a turbulent sea with a ship's mast and rigging visible in the distance. A large, white, rope-like life preserver is superimposed on the right side of the image. The overall tone is somber and evocative.

SALVATION STORIES

Richie Benitez

I was raised in Washington Heights, New York, in the 1980s. I grew up in the cocaine boom of New York. At the age of 14, I tried “coke” for the first time and the feeling of superiority grabbed me instantly. It wasn’t long before I began selling “coke” in my high school. By the age of 15, I was able to formulate a batch of cocaine that would accommodate my height and weight, so that I could be high all the time and no one would know. I soon found myself dealing drugs and eventually capitalizing on a huge gang movement by bringing gangs together for drug parties. Despite the drug dealing and gang parties, oddly enough, I actually liked school and did rather well. I graduated from high school with honors. If anyone had told my teachers that I was a drug-dealing, prostitution-running, coke-head criminal, my teachers would never have believed it. As a drug addict I became an expert lying, deceptive cheat that could con anyone... so I thought... but eventually the con was on me!

Eventually things got a little too hot and I had to get a job. I became a hospital maintenance worker—and had to learn how to live on a regular paycheck. I thought to myself “This is it... it’s time to stop and get your act together.” However, my addiction had different plans. My attempt to stop using cocaine did not work; as a matter of fact, my addiction grew worse. Soon I started selling drugs in the hospital to provide for my own habit. In my heart of hearts, I wanted out, but I just got deeper into my world of addiction.

"O WRETCHED MAN THAT I AM!! WHO SHALL DELIVER ME FROM THE BODY OF THIS DEATH? I THANK GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD!!!"

Then it happened! I met the woman I wanted to spend the rest of my life with: Lisa. I figured that if I got married, I would stop; I would not need the drugs anymore to be happy. That bubble burst a few days after the wedding; I realized I was still hooked. Lisa was married to a lying, deceptive man; for three years she had no clue that her husband was a junkie. When Lisa found my stash of coke in the house, she was devastated. The drugs were bad enough, but the years of lying overwhelmed her with disgust, and she was heartbroken. I told her this would never stop; this is the way that I would die. But then came the wonder of my life... my first-born daughter, Krista... that’s it ... I’m a dad... it’s finally over... I am definitely stopping now!! But all my good intentions were a farce. When Krista started walking, somehow she found a package of my drugs: a cocaine dose so pure that if she were to put it in her mouth, she would be dead today. I almost killed my first-born baby girl... what was wrong with me?! I thought that my life was over. There were times that I was so high at night that it felt as if my heart were beating out of my chest. I looked over at my wife and my baby girl as they slept and kissed them good-bye, thinking they would see a dead man in the morning.

"O wretched man that I am!! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord!!!"

At the hospital where I worked, there were many “professing” Christians who seemed no different than I was. They were liars; they were cheaters; they were thieves. It was all just nonsense to me. But there was one guy, Tommy Port, who was different... annoyingly different. I hated him because he was always too happy. Jesus this and Jesus that... this guy had so much Jesus that it came out of his ears!! He LOVED Christ. I tried to intimidate him with cursing and sexually explicit language, just to let him know that he couldn’t come with this Jesus stuff. Through more circumstances than I have room to write about, I mustered up the courage to ask Tommy about his faith. I did not know if he was a Jehovah Witness, Mormon, Catholic, or whatever; but I knew that he lived what he preached, and he preached to all who would listen! I asked Tommy, “Hey, what is this religion of yours?”

He looked me straight in the eyes... I have to tell you that I tried many drugs and all kinds of alcohol, but what that man had in his eyes... That love!! That peace!! That joy!! I wanted it in the worst possible way. Tommy said to me, “I don’t have religion, but I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.” Tommy gave me a book by Billy Graham called Peace with God, and it was a lot like my story. I put my trust and faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus in April of 1998. In the middle of my living room, I knew from that point on that I was heaven bound and everything was going to be all right.

Many years have passed, but the Lord has used me to witness, help youth, preach, and become involved in camp

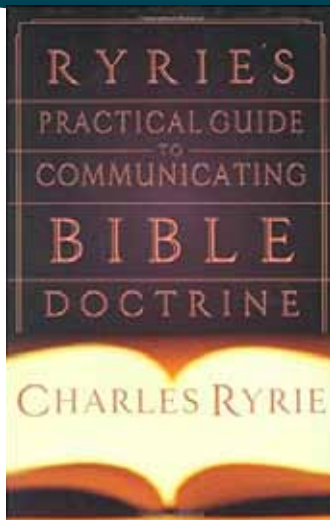
ministry. By God’s grace, now eighteen years later, my wife Lisa and I serve and minister to couples as well. I am in happy fellowship with Lisa and our daughters Krista, Brianna, and Sarah at Grace Gospel Chapel of Jersey City, New Jersey. Alleluia... What a Savior!!!



Book Review: Ryrie's Practical Guide to Communicating Bible Doctrine

By Dr. Charles Ryrie, B & H Publisher's Group,
copyright 2005, 88 pages

The Apostle Paul emphasized the importance of Bible doctrine sixteen times in his letters to Timothy and Titus (I Timothy 1:3, 10; 4:6, 16). Bible doctrine is teaching exactly what the Scriptures reveal, whether it is objective truth or the practical commands they contain. In our desire to be "relevant" or "practical," it is easy to make the Bible say what it really does not say! Our lives must be built on the doctrines in Scripture.



The Purpose of the Book

The late Dr. Charles Ryrie (1925-1916), long-time professor at Dallas Theological Seminary, was well known for his clear and effective Bible teaching. In his brief but excellent book, he helps us learn how to communicate Bible doctrine. He begins in chapter one by asking this question: "Since doctrine is so important and relevant, how then can I communicate the doctrines of Scripture so that they may become implanted in our minds and hearts and displayed in our lives?" (p. 9) After explaining why Bible doctrine is important, the writer outlines five different ways of communicating it clearly. These methods are: (1) using major Bible passages (2) using systematic theology (3) using Biblical Theology (4) using a concordance and (5) using Biblical illustrations.

Important Methods in Communicating Bible Doctrine

The method of using a major passage can be exemplified by studying Romans 3:21-26. By pointing out the confusion over the meaning of the word "justification," one can explain why this truth is so vitally important. Ryrie rightly points out that justification is not "making" a person righteous in the sight of God but "declaring" that person righteous in His sight. This key passage teaches that righteousness is given to a person through faith in Christ's death as a free gift.

Systematic theology is another way to teach Bible doctrine. He defines systematic theology as "the correlation of biblical information as a whole in order to explain and exhibit systematically the total material of various aspects of God's revelation." (p. 21) In the past some have decried systematizing the truth. In reality, it is a good way to compare Scripture with Scripture. Ryrie uses the doctrine of the Holy

Spirit as an example. All the references to the Holy Spirit in the New Testament can be put together for insight into the Spirit's person and work.

A third way to communicate biblical truth is by biblical theology. This "theology pays careful attention to the fact that God's revelation was embodied in history." (p. 30) The times, the revealed truth about the author, and the circumstances can be addressed to bring understanding to a particular section of Scripture. The author uses a fascinating example of "The Doctrine of Inspiration in the Letter of James," in which he demonstrates James's view of inspiration and his use of the Word of God.

A fourth way to communicate doctrine is by collecting references from a concordance. If the student understands Greek and Hebrew (which most of us do not!) he should use a concordance based on the original words. Others can use an English concordance, remembering that some translations use different English words to translate the same Greek or Hebrew word. He does not mention Bible software programs that are available for Bible students today.

The last approach is that of using biblical illustrations. Examples like "the potter and the clay," "salt and light," "birds and flowers" and "the lost coin" are given to show how images and pictures can teach important doctrinal lessons. The author of this review found the chapter entitled "Of the Making of Principles There Seems to Be No End" very helpful. Ryrie addresses the problem of attempting to make a text of Scripture teach something that really is not in the text. Helpful guidelines for proper recognition of principles are given in this chapter. The importance of expository teaching and preaching is also addressed in a clear and stimulating way.

This book is highly recommended for those who teach and preach the Word. But the book may be useful even for those who do not have these spiritual gifts, they, too can be better prepared to evaluate what he or she hears by reading this book.

Charles Fizer served as the director of the Emmaus Correspondence School until 2001, he is now involved in an itinerant ministry among assemblies in North America

by **Charles Fizer**

It is the business of servants of Christ to proclaim the Word of truth to a lost world. But the mere statement of gospel truth, apart from the power of the Holy Spirit, is not likely to bring many results. It is true that God in His sovereignty may use His Word, no matter who proclaims it, or even if it is found on the printed page; He has often done so effectively.

New Testament Preaching

However, His general method is to empower devoted men to set forth the Word with clearness and the energy of the Holy Spirit. The results are assured. Speaking in the power of the Holy Spirit is something that should never be ignored. To mistake human eloquence or oratory for preaching in the power of the Spirit of God is a great mistake. Someone has well said that, "Preaching is eloquence touched with fire." It was in this way that Paul and his companions proclaimed the gospel as they went from place to place, and the result of such a proclamation was not only that people were led to trust in Christ, but that they also received "much assurance." It is a lamentable fact that a great deal that passes for gospel preaching today would never give assurance of salvation to anyone. Sermons may be theologically correct, but they make no true application to the needs of the hearers, and are, as someone has said, "clear as crystal, but cold as ice." When the Word is preached in simplicity and in the energy of the Holy Spirit, those who believe it receive the full assurance of faith.

Spirit-Led Preaching

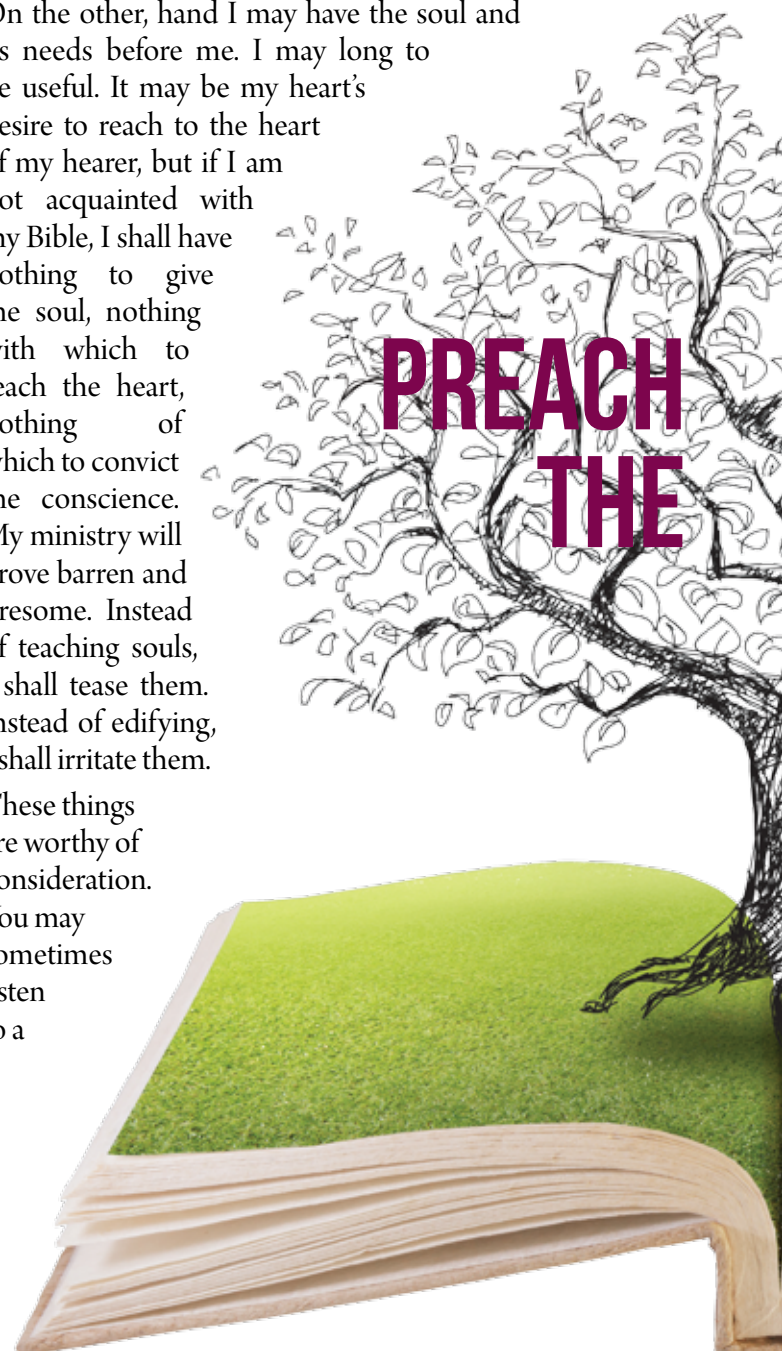
The grand end of preaching is edification. An earnest heart is better than a clever head. A fervent spirit is better than an eloquent tongue. In preaching it is essential to remember the following simple rule, "Do not set about looking for something to say because you have to speak, but speak because you have a message from God." This is very simple. It is a poor thing for a man to be merely collecting information to fill up a certain space of time. This should never be. Let the teacher or preacher attend diligently upon his ministry. Let him cultivate his gift; let him wait on God for guidance, power and blessing; let him live in the spirit of prayer and breathe the atmosphere of Scripture; then he will be always ready for the Master's use. Then his words, whether "five or ten thousand," will assuredly glorify Christ and do good to men. In no case should a man rise to address his congregation without the conviction that God has given him something to say and the desire to say it as to bring blessing.

The Soul and the Book

There are two ingredients that are essential in every minister of the gospel—an accurate acquaintance with the Bible and a due sense of the value of the soul. To possess only one of them will leave a man a thoroughly one-sided minister. I may be deeply read in Scripture; I may have a profound acquaintance with the contents of the Book but if I forget the soul, my ministry will be lamentably defective. It will lack point, pungency, and power. It will be ministry from the Book, but not to the soul. True and beautiful, no doubt, but deficient in usefulness and power.

On the other hand I may have the soul and its needs before me. I may long to be useful. It may be my heart's desire to reach to the heart of my hearer, but if I am not acquainted with my Bible, I shall have nothing to give the soul, nothing with which to reach the heart, nothing of which to convict the conscience. My ministry will prove barren and tiresome. Instead of teaching souls, I shall tease them. Instead of edifying, I shall irritate them.

These things are worthy of consideration. You may sometimes listen to a



person preaching the Word who possesses a great knowledge of the Word of God, but never applies it to the heart of the hearer. He is so occupied and engrossed with Scripture - so engrossed as almost to forget that he has souls before him. There is not a pointed and powerful appeal to the heart, no fervent grappling with the conscience, no practical application of the contents of the Book to the souls of the hearers. It is very beautiful, but not as useful as it might be. The minister is deficient in the second quality. He is more a minister of the Book than a minister to the soul.

Then again, you will find some who, in their ministry, seem to be wholly occupied with the soul. They appeal, they exhort, they urge. But from

lack of acquaintance and regular occupation with Scripture,

souls are absolutely exhausted and worn

out under their ministry. True,

they ostensibly make the

Book the

basis of their ministry,

but their use of it is

so unskillful, their handling

of it so awkward, their

application of it so unintelligent, that

their ministry proves as uninteresting as it is unprofitable.

Counsel to Gospel Preachers

This is the order of Scripture: The Word of God is proclaimed, heard or read; the Spirit of God convicts the sinner, bringing him to the place where he desires to be saved, and is ready to receive Christ. Believing the gospel, he is justified by faith.

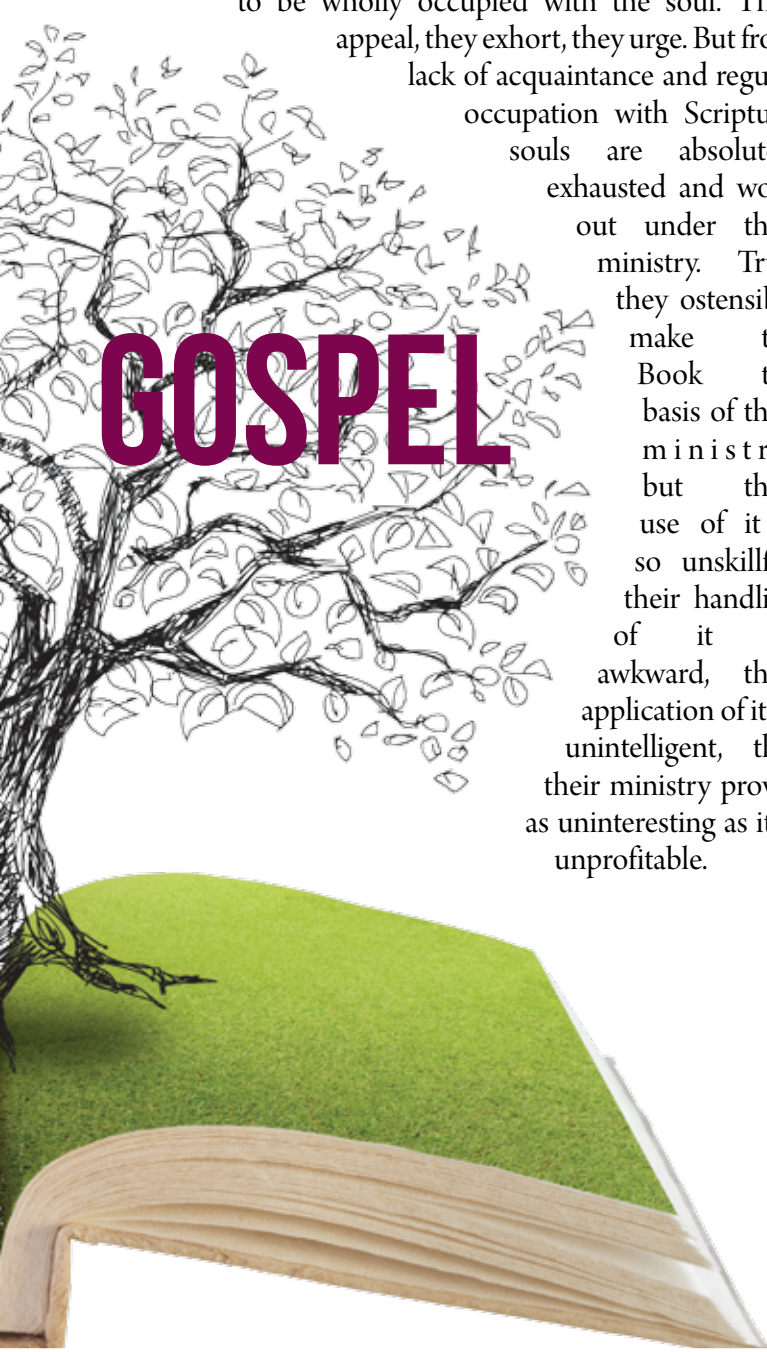
Let me give a word to those who seek to win souls: Do not try to rush people into confessing Christ; do not try to make them say they are saved. Endeavor to find out if there is any real exercise about their sins, if the Spirit of God has awakened them. The reason a great many people make a profession of Christianity and appear to come out for Christ in revival meetings, and then soon afterward drift back into their former ways, is that there is no real work of God in the soul. They have never been sanctified by the Holy Spirit; they have never known divine conviction. The first consideration is that men might be awakened to see their need of Christ. Then give the gospel to them.

That is the divine order: sanctification by the Spirit which leads to a belief in the truth. The purpose for which God is sending His gospel out into the world is that the Holy Spirit might awaken men and lead them to believe it. When they believe the gospel message, they may be assured of eventually sharing the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. When people have been really born again, they will go on in the Christian life.

The Privilege of Preaching

Paul repudiated any selfish motive in his own preaching. There should be no hidden evil, nothing unclean in his life, nothing that grieved the Holy Spirit of God. When ministers preach Christ simply as a means of livelihood, they have missed their path altogether. Paul declared that there was no deceit, no uncleanness, with him and his companions. They were perfectly open about everything; they had no hidden schemes. Paul was very careful about this. He did not go out preaching in order to make money, but to exalt Christ and to win souls. The Lord will support those who faithfully carry on His work, but if they make personal gain their object, their ministry becomes obnoxious to God. There should be a holiness of life that characterizes one who proclaims the message of God.

Paul looked upon the business of gospel preaching as a privilege. He says "As we were allowed of God (permitted by God) to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak; not as pleasing men, but God, which tries our hearts" (1 Thess. 2:4). Notice this: they were put in trust with the gospel, and that is the one great message which the servant of



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BARREN AND TIRESOME.

Christ has to give to a lost world. We find people suggesting all kinds of themes to ministers on which to preach, but it is his business to preach the gospel and the Word of God.

Paul's object was not to give a political address or a scientific lecture. He had but one object, and that was that men might know the gospel of the grace of God. Paul was so deadly in earnest that he went through real agony of soul if people did not come to Christ; he felt keenly responsible for them.

Conclusion

No one who really wants to count for God can afford to play at Christianity. He must make it the one great business of his life. Whether he is set apart for special ministry, as a missionary who is going to a foreign land or a laborer in the gospel at home, or whether he remains in business, he needs to give himself entirely to a life of devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Editor's Note: This article is compiled, edited, and revised from Harry A. Ironside's commentaries on 1 Thessalonians and 1 Timothy, (Loizeaux: Neptune, NJ, 1946) and from C. H. Mackintosh's articles "The Soul and the Book" and "Five Words" found in Short Papers, Vol. 2 (Sunbury, PA: Believers Bookshelf, 1975).



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Report: Believers Bible Chapel

Pineville, NC



Ebenzer: *Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us!* Samuel set up a memorial stone and called it Ebenezer, meaning stone of help. It was a way of acknowledging the Lord's help up to this point. We, too, can raise our Ebenezer as we look back over the past 16 years since the beginning of Believers Bible Chapel in Pineville, North Carolina.

Nancy and I believe that our experience on the mission field in Central Africa prepared us to serve on the mission field of North America! There we learned that Discipleship is the heart of the Great Commission. It is also the greatest need in the overall testimony of the so-called assembly movement.

The Goal of Starting an Assembly

When we returned home from Africa we settled south of Charlotte and began a home Bible study every Friday night to teach the Word of God. Our area became one of the fastest growing zip code communities in the U.S. As we saw the growth around us we gained a burden to plant a New Testament Church. From our Bible study group the Lord raised up believers that joined us in the effort. After a few months of teaching NT principles of the church and much prayer, we determined with the Lord's help, to take the first step.

We secured a meeting place —a conference room at the Hilton Garden Inn located just off the beltway and set a date for our first official gathering of Believers Bible Chapel. Then we went door to door throughout our neighborhoods and invited everyone we knew. We also purchased radio time on a secular radio station to air a Gospel message in brief and set up a website as a point of contact. On November 12, 2000, the Lord amazed us with a group of about sixty that met that first Lord's Day and the rest is history —that is, History! By this I mean this is what the Bible teaches us to do as we serve Him.

In the early days of the Church, everywhere there was an inroad of the Gospel, a pocket of believers formed and an assembly was established. This continued through history as recorded in the Book of Acts and up to this point. We followed this example in Africa.

The Beginning of the New Work

Here at home brethren from two generations ago who came into the southern part of the U.S. also followed this same Biblical pattern. They had a heart to preach the Gospel and plant new assemblies. So we thought, why not today? Our desire was to reach out with the Gospel of Christ, make disciples, and establish an assembly according to the New Testament pattern.

Our little group watched as God worked on our behalf. The reward of their faith was realized that first Sunday morning when we met together in our new location to remember the Lord.

Were there challenges? Oh yes. But, the joy of serving the Lord in fellowship with other believers far outweighed the difficulties we faced. Godly men that I knew in ministry prayed with us and for us. Their words of counsel and encouragement still echo in my heart.

We made it to our goal of starting the assembly, only to find it was the beginning of a lot more to do in order to establish the work. Our weeks were filled with visiting, discipling, and entertaining in our home. As for the ministry, I kept an emphasis of the Gospel on Sunday mornings while Nancy worked with the children in Sunday School. Sunday evenings were for teaching. We scheduled our midweek prayer meeting on Tuesday evenings and encouraged the men in the assembly to study and prepare a message to share before our prayer time. For many, this was their first opportunity to speak. We all were blessed. The Lord brought wonderful families to BBC who heard about the new work. They were such an encouragement —like the coming of Titus to Paul.

Since our beginning we have grown with families and children to a healthy and happy fellowship. We are glad to have visitors come and it is a privilege to present the Gospel to a world in need.

The Establishment of This Growing Work

At the end of the first year, we met as a body of believers to determine whom the Lord would have to serve as elders of the assembly. After some specific teaching on the shepherding ministry of elders, a decision was reached that was agreeable to all the saints and three men were recognized as elders.

We continued to meet at the hotel for a little more than one year. Then the management informed us that it was time to find a new home. With just one week's notice I began visiting local churches, but after two days I found none that would cooperate with what they viewed as competition. So, I went to the public schools in the area. I found an elementary school that was agreeable and available. We began using their facilities the following Sunday. The Lord is faithful!

We prayed for a place to meet that would be a testimony to the community. We wanted a building that was ready to use, in a great location, and at a reasonable price. Three months later while driving on the main road we saw a church building that had been converted to a small Christian school that was going on the market for sale. We actually saw the realtor placing the sign in the yard. It was a sign for us! We copied the telephone number and stopped within five minutes and called. The realtor was a believer and responded favorably to our burden to preach the Gospel and teach the Word in this area.

Our little group watched as God worked on our behalf. The reward of their faith was realized that first Sunday morning when we met together in our new location to remember the Lord.



Since our beginning we have grown with families and children to a healthy and happy fellowship. We are glad to have visitors come and it is a privilege to present the Gospel to a world in need. The New Testament assembly is the great alternative in this day of mega churches and modern ways. Christ is preeminent, His Word is prominent, and the fellowship is precious. Believer Bible Chapel is located at 13531 Lancaster Hwy, Pineville, NC. For more information about meeting times and contact information please visit our website: www.bbccharlotte.com.

The Lord is our Ebenezer, our Stone of help, who “hitherto has helped us!”

Rex Trogdon is a church planter and Bible teacher in Charlotte, North Carolina. He and his wife Nancy served for many years as missionaries in D. R. Congo. They are in fellowship at Believer's Bible Chapel, Pineville, NC.

by Rex Trogdon

William McCartney first conceived of the idea of Stewards Foundation as the result of a personal experience. His home assembly was in need of a new facility and decided to undertake financing the project by receiving gifts from, and offering interest-bearing notes to those in fellowship. Someone asked, why not seek financing from a bank? The response was that banks had no interest in loaning money to small nondenominational churches. Such groups having no association with a permanent convention of churches were considered too risky without the personal guarantee of the largest donors among those in fellowship. Mr. McCartney reasoned that loaning money to the assembly was risky, so he made a small contribution to the project and then invested the greater part of his funds in bank stock. Soon after, the bank failed and he lost all of his investment. Noting that all those that invested their funds in the assembly project received their money back plus interest, Mr. McCartney realized that Christians are faithful in meeting their financial obligations. The reality of I Corinthians 4:2 was borne out, "it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." This experience led him to the idea of a nonprofit organization financing assembly projects through the sale of bonds to those in assembly fellowships. Such an organization would give the Lord's people a source of investment income, and the satisfaction of assisting in establishing assembly testimonies across the U.S.

Beginnings

On March 26, 1945, William McCartney, Paul Erickson, James Humphrey, Clyde Dennis and Donald Tyler signed Articles of Incorporation establishing Stewards Foundation as an Illinois nonprofit corporation. The

Articles clearly define Stewards Foundation's purpose:

"This corporation is organized and shall be operated exclusively for the purpose of serving and assisting churches or assemblies organized in the pattern outlined in the New Testament, and to perform the scriptural ministries and functions of the churches or assemblies which they cannot effectively perform when acting alone."

The Articles also specify the means and the parameters of our service:

"Membership in this corporation shall be open to all of those autonomous churches or assemblies, which:

- 1. Are located in the United States, its territories and possessions,*
- 2. Are composed of individual Christians gathered in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ alone,*
- 3. And are organized and operated in accordance with biblical principles*

These parameters, as enumerated in our Statement of Faith and Service Guidelines, are the basis of nonprofit foundation membership in Stewards Foundation."

The Ministry of Steward's Foundation

For the last 71 years Stewards Foundation has served assemblies of the Lord's people in the U.S. through our Loan Program. Financial statements from the early years reveal the following:

1. In the first year of its existence, 1946, Stewards Foundation made 4 loans totaling \$11,735
2. Through the first decade, 1946-1955, 327 loans were made totaling \$2,934,122
3. By the end of the second decade, 1956-1965, 652 loans were made totaling \$7,600,000

It is difficult to accurately determine how many assemblies have been assisted over 71 years through the Loan



Program, but the number could hardly be less than 2,000. A conservative estimate of funds loaned over this period is in excess of \$50,000,000.

Today, some of the assembly structures originally purchased or constructed through Stewards Foundation funding are being remodeled and expanded with Stewards Foundation loans. At the end of our 2016 Fiscal Year (June 30, 2016), the Loan Program had a balance of \$10,694,637 invested in 48 assembly loans across the U.S.

Health Care For Workers

Stewards Foundation has assisted the Lord's servants with their health care for the past 64 years. The beginning of this assistance can be traced back to the purchase of Belmont Community hospital in Chicago, IL in 1953. Within 8 years, Stewards Foundation owned or controlled the operation of six hospitals: two in Chicago and four in the Seattle, WA area. Many of the Lord's servants were assisted with health care at these hospitals until they were sold in 1982. Following the sale of the hospitals, Stewards Foundation continued this ministry by paying for commended workers' medical expenses. However, by the mid-1990's, medical costs had risen so dramatically that the Board of Trustees realized a change was necessary. Beginning in 1995, financial assistance was converted to an annual gift program with funds distributed to those in the Health Care Assistance Program (HCAP) through their commending assemblies.

From 1989 through 2016, almost \$23,000,000 was given for health care expenses and HCAP gifts. However, almost \$9,500,000 was from the principal fund, jeopardizing Stewards Foundation's primary purpose of providing loans that in turn support HCAP through loan proceeds. In 2011, the Board of Trustees enacted a five-year plan to eliminate giving in excess of net income. Today, funds for the annual HCAP gift come only from Stewards Foundation's cash profit.

Recently, the Board of Trustees agreed to share in the funding of a new venture by Assembly Care Ministries (ACM). The feeling is that ACM's Health Line will benefit those serving the Lord in the U.S. and overseas. More information on the Health Line will be made available to the assemblies and their commended workers in the near future. Stewards Foundation remains committed to the privilege of assisting the Lord's servants with health care needs.

Location

Stewards Foundation's first office was set up within the offices of Mr. McCartney's wholesale furniture business on West Lake Street in Chicago, IL. By 1956, both the furniture business and Stewards Foundation were in need of additional space, so a ten-story building on South Wacker Drive in Chicago was purchased. Stewards Foundation sold the building in late 1965, but remained as a tenant until the end of 1969. In 1970, the corporate offices were moved into a newly constructed building on Willow Street in Wheaton, IL. In 1998, Stewards Foundation relocated

its operations to Addison, TX. Presently, the corporate office is located at 1420 W. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas, TX 75247. Visit our website, www.stewardsfoundation.org, to sign up for our newsletter and find more information about Stewards Foundation.



Doug Rice is the executive Director of Steward's Foundation. He serves as an elder at Wheatland Bible Chapel, in Dallas, Texas. He is married to his wife Denise, and has two daughters.

by **Doug Rice**

Report: Walk Worthy Weekend

Leesburg, Florida

The Walk Worthy Weekend is a three-day retreat with in-depth Bible teaching for serious young adults. This retreat is held every fall at Camp Horizon for young people from throughout Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina. This retreat features excellent Bible teachers tackling some very relevant and difficult topics. In recent years capable speakers such as Dr. Steve Price, Nate Bramson, and Dr. Ben Scripture, among others have ministered the Word of God. This weekend began seven years ago as a one-day event on a farm in Land O' Lakes, Florida but for the last five years, it has been held at Camp Horizon in Leesburg, Florida.



On the weekend of October 29-31, 2016, Christian teens and young adults united at Camp Horizon in Leesburg, Florida, for the seventh annual Florida Youth Retreat, which features a weekend of invigorating Bible teaching and warm Christian fellowship. The year's attendance numbers peaked around one hundred and forty young people and adults combined. Many of those in attendance came from local assemblies in Florida; however, several attendees proudly represented assemblies from across the United States, in states such as South Carolina and as far west as Kansas. Bible teacher Rob Sullivan, of Yonkers, New York, brought a series of powerful, relevant messages on the theme of "Angels and Demons, and the Christian Life." Throughout the course of his sessions, Mr. Sullivan discussed topics such as how and why angels were created, their function in relation to the Church and believers, the differences between angels and fallen angels, and the trend of personalizing angels that has arisen in secular society over the recent few decades. Following the

first session on Saturday morning, the teens and young adults participated in a creative scavenger hunt, which involved teams, cameras, and Bible charades. On Saturday afternoon, two Q&A seminars were held in addition to Mr. Sullivan's regular messages. In the first seminar, Mr. Sullivan answered the young people's questions on angels and demons; while in the other, David Dunlap answered questions related to Satan and his challenge to the Christian walk. Besides Mr. Sullivan's teaching, the conference attendees enjoyed afternoon free time, during which they could mingle with one another and relax, and later, they played a group game of dodgeball, a camp favorite. On Saturday evening in Camp Horizon's spacious dining hall, the young people competed in several exciting rounds of Bible trivia, while snacking on custom-made ice cream sundaes, popcorn, brownies, and a variety of cookies. Like its previous years, the

seventh annual Florida Youth Retreat was a time of growth, fellowship, and fun for all.

Next year, the Walk Worthy Weekend 2017 will be held on October 20, 21, 22 at Camp Horizon in Leesburg, Florida. Our speaker at that conference will be Dr. Jeff Johnson, from Reidsville, NC speaking on the theme of "We Are Living Stones." For more information, please visit the Walk Worthy Weekend website: www.walkworthyconference.com.

Sarah Dunlap is a college student attending Southeastern University in Lakeland, FL. She has been involved with the planning of the Walk Worthy Weekend for seven years.

by Sarah Dunlap

“You know the old proverb ‘beware of the man of one book.’ He is a terrible antagonist. A man who has the Bible at his fingers’ ends and in his hearts core, is a champion in our Israel; you cannot compete with him: you may have an armory of weapons, but his Scriptural knowledge will overcome you, for it is a sword like that of Goliath, of which David said, ‘there is not like it.’”

*- C. H. Spurgeon, Lectures To My Students
(Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), p. 180*