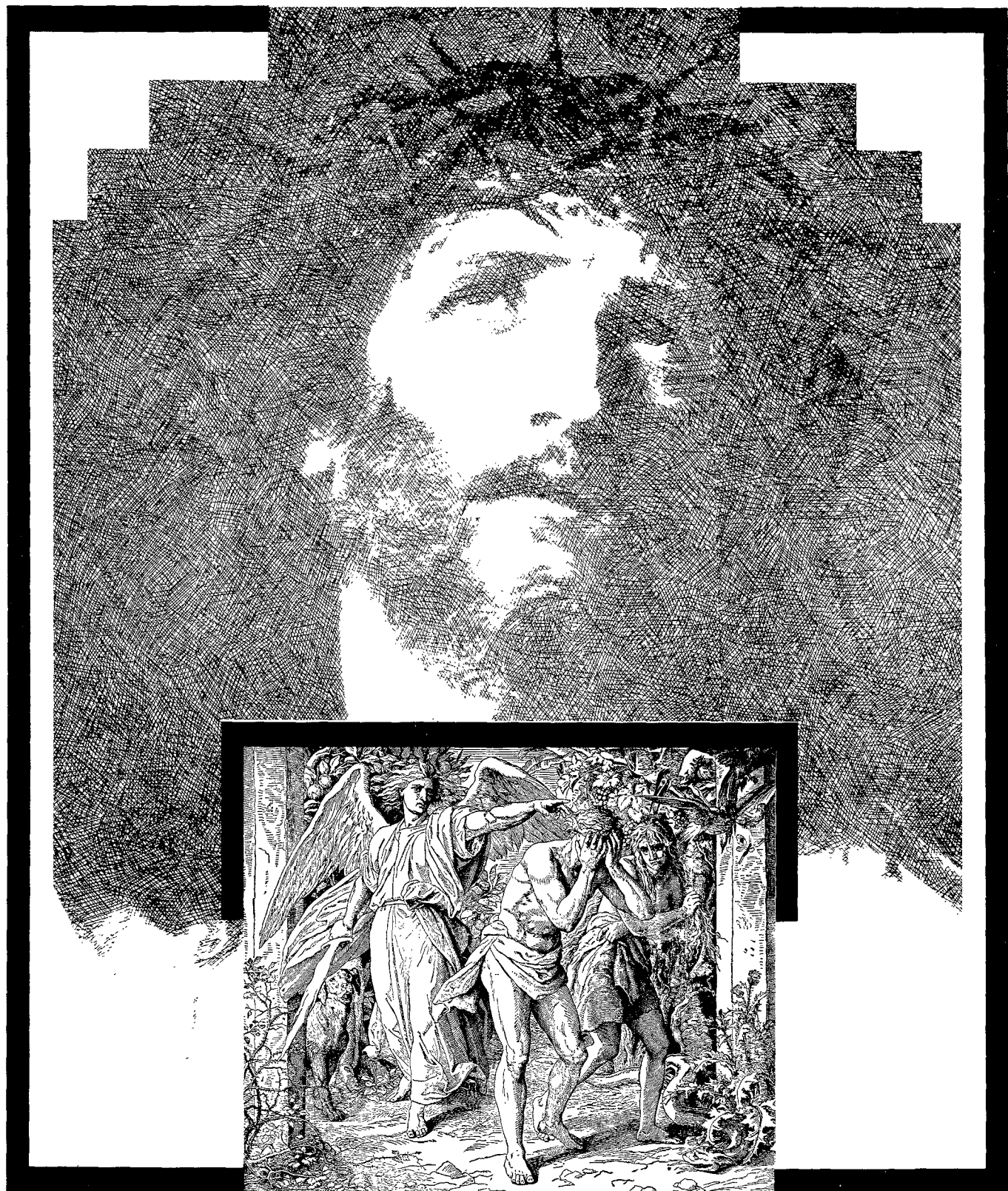


Ministry

International Journal for Clergy

June 1985



What Human Nature Did Jesus Take?

Letters

Keep dreaming!

Seldom have I seen a more needed or more accurate article than "Dream or Die" (October, 1984). Bietz is right when he says that we need to again kindle the dreams of Adventism or die. It seems to me that the genius of Adventism at its beginning was the spiritual appeal it made to its members. Today we see an ever-increasing bureaucracy, with good intentions, consolidating its power while members lose interest and devotion. Only as we realize again our need of the Spirit and of having liberty to walk and dream as God leads us will we ever see this situation reversed.

I am persuaded that we need unity, not uniformity; we need direction, not directives. We do not need those who will merely manage our affairs by devising a policy for every situation as much as we need those who will boldly lead us, beyond the bounds of policy if need be, to test the leading of the Spirit. The church does not need centralized power as much as it needs dispersed power. We do not need a denomination as much as we need a cause, or retrenchment as much as we need daring advance.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." Lord, give us vision once again!—Pastor David E. Thomas.

Women in ministry

I am a father of two daughters ages 9 and 6. I want them to reject sex role stereotypes that limit their dreams.

I turned from your December Annual Council Report with sadness. It hurts me to see the great difficulty my church is having granting equality to its women who strive for ministry. If one of my daughters were to respond to God's call to pastoral ministry, I would feel great pain if a church leader were to tell her she could not serve as fully as her male colleagues. We men should realize that the church would probably come crumbling in on top of us if all the female church officers went on strike for one month! It is mainly women who keep the church functioning on the local level. How long can we deny them leadership on the conference level?

Sexism is sin. If the "world field" is not ready for this, it is time for leadership to point the way fearlessly toward God's ideal of equality.

Please, brethren, you who will be addressing this issue: Be fair with my daughters. Don't make them face the tragedy of secular society's being more open than their church to their talents.—Pastor Dick Donaldson, Gaston, Oregon.

Thanks for understanding

I am a retired United Methodist minister who would like to know what your standards are for ministerial credentials in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I am not committing myself to a switch, but I am so impressed with your ministers that I would like to know "where they are coming from."

I have, for some time, been involved in the program of the local [Adventist] congregation—worship services, Bible studies, Wednesday-night studies, and fellowship—and have become convinced that you are the true church, have the most adequate literature, most effective church program, and proper doctrines.

MINISTRY has been such a blessing to me in helping me to understand your position and your power as a church. I am grateful to you for it.—Retired Pastor, Texas.

Shepherdess International

I was very interested in the Shepherdess section in the September, 1984, MINISTRY ("Shepherdess International—What Is It?"). I was glad to read about Shepherdess International because about the same time I had to fill out a form for our local field president (South France). I had to mention what kind of activities I would like to see encouraged in the future for us ministers' wives. Imagine my surprise when I found three or four of the items I had asked for set down there in black and white! It gave me a lot of comfort because I felt so alone and so inadequate.

First I had asked for *more education*

because I dropped my third year at seminary to become a ministerial helper. Another item I asked for was a newsletter within south France so we could be in touch with other ministers' wives with the same problems and so strengthen our ties.

My letter is to ask you what I can do here in France to promote Shepherdess International.—Christiane Bosdedore, Oullins, France.

We suggest you begin by encouraging development of Shepherdess organizations in your union. Also inform women in your area of the continuing-education courses available for them (see advertisement, p. 30 this issue). Ask your division president's or ministerial secretary's wife to share the "Shepherdess International Resource Materials," which are mailed to her quarterly.—Shepherdess International.

General Conference session

It seems very possible—even probable—that there may not be another General Conference session after 1985. What is done at this conference may lay the groundwork for a spiritual work and revival that is desperately needed by the whole church and each of us as individuals. It seems that we have no real conception of the experience that we need in walking with Christ as did Enoch through these last days, being fitted for translation.—Ray and Frances Foster, Loma Linda, California.

Special needs and blessings

Please send copy of MINISTRY, January, 1985, to replace my copy recently chewed up by the dog. Need article "Is Money the Problem?"—Pastor, Marks, Pennsylvania.

In your January issue I was blessed by the article "Pastoral Counseling: Who, Whom, How?" God's timing is always right! The entire issue is special. Keep up this vital "ministry." Personally, MINISTRY has helped me more than I can say.—Pastor, San Francisco.

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Planned Giving Versus Project Giving/4. When you need funds to keep the church running, is it better to make special appeals or to rely on regular planned giving to fulfill the needs? Donald E. Crane contributes good answers to our Keeping Church Finance Christian series.

The Minister and Anger/7. Is it wrong to be angry, or is it all right to be angry just as long as you don't act angry? What is the best way to deal with feelings of anger? What should you do if you lose your cool in front of the congregation? Marilyn Thomsen continues her popular series of interviews with Dr. Archibald Hart.

What Human Nature Did Jesus Take?/8. For at least the past thirty years Seventh-day Adventists have debated whether Jesus took fallen or unfallen human nature in His incarnation. Kenneth Gage and Benjamin Rand present two different perspectives. We hope that these two articles will lead to greater understanding. And perhaps help draw closer together those who differ.

From the Editors

The Nature of Christ/24. J. Robert Spangler.

Wise Rule in the Church/25. J. David Newman.

How Good Must It Get?/25. Kenneth R. Wade.

The Joy of Friendship/28. Friendship can be important too for pastor's wives. Maria Lorén's story illustrates the value of closeness.

From the Editors/24

Shepherdess/28

Shop Talk/31

Recommended Reading/32

Planned giving versus project giving

When you need funds to keep the church running, is it better to make special appeals or to rely on regular planned giving to fulfill the needs?

Keeping Church Finance Christian ☐ 6 Donald E. Crane



lanned giving versus project giving is a topic of considerable debate within some Christian fellowships. While some believe that all giving should be planned giving, others believe that project giving is better in some cases. Which, then, is the right approach? Is there a reliable methodology for deciding when and

how much to give? Or is it possible that both planned and project giving are at times right and Biblically correct?

In an objective consideration of the options, it is important to first of all define our terms. For the purpose of this article, *planned giving* is "an agreement one makes to give to the Lord continuously and regularly a percentage or an amount of his income." For example, a Christian family practices planned giving by following the Biblical principle of tithing—returning 10 percent of their income to God's storehouse. *Project giving* is essentially "giving whatever seems right to whatever seems worthy." It is often more spontaneous, but generally of shorter duration than planned giving. An example would be a spontaneous gift to keep a religious broadcast on the air.

Donald E. Crane is an associate secretary of the Ministerial and Stewardship Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

With our terms defined, let us consider a few *basic giving principles* that may guide us in understanding the advantages and disadvantages of both planned and project giving.

1. The Bible teaches that we are to give to God the first part of our increase or income. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase," we are told in Proverbs 3:9. Giving the firstfruits to God was an honored tradition in Israel, and is still among Orthodox Jews. Special offerings of the choicest firstfruits were made at each of the three great annual feasts of Israel—Unleavened Bread, Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

We find the God-first principle in the New Testament, too. Paul exhorted the Corinthian church members to set aside an offering every first day of the week (1 Cor. 16:2) for the poor believers in Jerusalem. The key word in Christ's exhortation to His followers in Matthew 6:33 is "first." If we put God first, He says, "all these things shall be added unto

you." Thus it is clear from both the Old Testament and the New Testament that God's portion should be set apart before meeting personal, family, or business needs.

2. We are to give to God as continually and generously as He gives to us. God provides daily for our existence. He sustains the life-giving currents that circulate through our bodies. He is the source of the food we eat, the water we drink, and the air we breathe. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above" (James 1:17). "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:22, 23). As Christians we have much to be thankful for. We should especially be thankful for what Christ has done for us through the plan of redemption. "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Ps. 107:1,

There is no record in the Bible of tithe being used for the construction of buildings such as temples or churches. Voluntary offerings were used for Temple repair and to meet the operating expenses of the sanctuary.

2). In Ephesians 5:20 we are told to give "thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." Certainly, if we are to give continuously and generously as God gives to us, our praises and our giving will not be sporadic or according to how we happen to feel at the moment. Rather, our gifts will flow as continuous expressions of gratitude.

3. *Giving is a sign of allegiance to Christ as our sovereign Lord, and an expression of our stewardship relationship to Him.* Abraham gave to Melchizedek, priest of the Most High God, "tithes of all" (Gen. 14:20). In this record there is no statement to suggest that tithing originated with Abraham. On the contrary, the inference is clear that it was something well understood at the time, that the custom of returning the tithe was of

very ancient origin and that it was in existence before the formation of the Jewish nation. In Hebrews 7:17 Christ is referred to as "a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." If Abraham, who is the father of all the faithful, returned the tithe to Melchizedek, it would be reasonable to believe that tithing is not merely a Jewish custom but rather is Christian in substance. Jesus Himself endorsed the tithing principle in the context of the weightier matters of the law (Matt. 23:23).

4. *We are to give to God as an act of worship.* In the Jewish economy, gifts and offerings were an essential part of the worship service and a joyful expression of praise to God. For example, in Deuteronomy 26 we find the special instructions the children of Israel were to follow in returning the firstfruits to God: "And

now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the Lord thy God, and worship before the Lord thy God" (verse 10). In 2 Corinthians 8 and 9 the apostle Paul lists giving as a "grace" and a "service." Thus the act of giving is not simply a means of supplying the wants of the saints. It is also to be a grace and a service to glorify God.

5. *We are to give to God in proportion to blessings received.* In the Bible system of tithes and offerings the amount given by different people varies greatly because it is proportional to income. "Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord thy God which he hath given thee" (Deut. 16:17). In the New Testament, Paul declares, "It is accepted according to that a man hath,

PLANNED GIVING		PROJECT GIVING	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Tithes and offerings are returned to God as "firstfruits" when personal income is received.	This priority may seem illogical to the unspiritual.	Individual judgment makes the final decision as to "when," "what," and "how much."	God may receive the leftovers or nothing at all.
Giving to God becomes a habit.	Seems to some like a tax.	Individual becomes bonded to a project by direct gifts and promotional appeals.	Giving is more by impulse than principle. In time, increased appeals are needed to do the job. If project is mis-managed or appeals cease, giving may terminate.
Giving to God is based on blessings received.	Less spontaneous and ego satisfying.	The individual determines the project and the amount. Frequent ego satisfaction.	The amount is not always regular and proportionate to the blessings received. Giving is directed to things rather than to God.
Reduces promotional time, thus creating a more worshipful church service.	Members are frequently uninformed, owing to church's lack of communication to members.	No time limitations for promotions. The latest in fund-raising methods can be used.	Spirituality of church services may decrease, owing to constant monetary appeals.
Helps to prevent emergencies.	Some feel it lacks personal appeal.	Can be initiated to meet specific emergencies.	When the crisis ends, giving may stop.

Whichever method you follow, you must develop plans for involving members through education, commitment, and follow-up. A combination of the two has proved satisfying to many.

and not according to that he hath not" (2 Cor. 8:12). And again, "as God hath prospered him" (1 Cor. 16:2). Thus giving should be based not on the merit of certain projects or on one's personal preferences, but rather on the basis of blessings received from God.

6. *Our giving to God should include an honest return of the tithe (one tenth of our income) plus liberal freewill offerings.* In Malachi, God posed the question as to how Israel had robbed Him. Then He answered, "In tithes and offerings" (chap. 3:8). God's plan has always

included a faithful return of tithes and offerings (Ex. 25:2; cf. 1 Chron. 29:9). There is no record in the Bible of tithe being used for the construction of buildings such as temples or churches. Voluntary offerings were used for Temple repair (2 Chron. 24:9, 10, 12) and to meet the operating expenses of the sanctuary (Ex. 30:13-16; Neh. 10:32, 33). There were also special offerings for the poor in both Old Testament and New Testament times. The New Testament church recognized God's claim to the ownership of all their possessions.

"They had all things common. . . . And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need" (Acts 4:32-35). In the first and second letters to the Corinthians Paul stressed regularity and liberality as giving principles for Christians.

7. *A tithe of our increase or income and a portion of our freewill offerings are to be deposited in God's storehouse.* "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house" (Mal.

(Continued on page 26)

PLANNED GIVING		PROJECT GIVING	
ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Allows church to develop long-range goals that can be sustained indefinitely with adequate education and communication.	Church bureaucracy may take member support for granted and become less responsive to grass-roots issues.	Allows churches to develop creative ideas to fulfill church mission.	Irregular income can prove disastrous to creative ideas and lead to unfinished projects.
Is successful in funding group projects, and forms the basis of the church budget process.	Some believe it inhibits private initiative and individual freedom.	Is successful in funding specific projects.	Frequent promotions for special projects neutralize church budget effectiveness.
Encourages members to deposit tithes and offerings in God's "storehouse." This creates a solid financial base for church growth	Members sometimes feel deprived of direct influence in church enterprises.	Members are free to support a variety of independent special projects.	May undermine unity and effectiveness of group effort, and erode the church's financial base.
Regularity in following the Bible plan of tithes and offerings liberates members from feelings of pressure, manipulation, and guilt. Members know they are contributing their fair share.	Supporters may become critical of project givers who frequently do not carry their fair share of church financial responsibilities.	A financially successful method for funding capital improvement and construction projects.	Members frequently have guilt feelings and wonder if they have given enough. The spiritual effect may be negative.
Motivating principle is love to God. Encourages self-denial and self-sacrifice.	Some members may give because of duty, with legalistic motivations.	Motivating principle can be love for God, but project giving also fulfills human need for recognition and reward	Frequently greater recognition is given to the human donor than to God. Selfishness may increase.

The minister and anger

A minister's position sets him up for many hurts that can lead to anger. Is it wrong to be angry, or is it all right to be angry just as long as you don't act angry? What is the best way to deal with feelings of anger, and what should you do if you "lose your cool" in front of the congregation?

□ by Marilyn Thomsen and Archibald D. Hart

Thomsen: *What is anger?*

Hart: Anger can be a feeling or aggressive behavior. Anger as feeling is always legitimate, because it serves as a signal. Anger is to the emotions what pain is to the physical body. It says, "Something is wrong with my environment. What can I do now?" It can motivate you to move to the next step of dealing with whatever is wrong. Unfortunately, our human mechanism is such that by nature we want to quickly move on to angry behavior.

Thomsen: *We want to resolve our anger.*

Hart: Yes. And the quickest way is to turn it into aggression. If I can express my anger as an aggressive act—"You stepped on my toe so I'll punch you in the nose"—I'll quickly get rid of my anger. But in the process I may start a war, so it wouldn't serve any good purpose.

Thomsen: *Is anger ever appropriate?*

Dr. Archibald D. Hart, dean of the Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, is interviewed by Marilyn Thomsen, director of public relations and media, Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Hart: There are at least three types of anger. Anger as a defense, as instinctive protection, is legitimate. When the organism is threatened, anger will be aroused to defend it. The other forms of anger—anger in response to hurt, and anger as a response to frustration—are seldom justified.

Thomsen: *When does anger become a moral issue?*

Hart: When you translate it into aggression. The moment you move beyond the point where it is a feeling and a signal to take constructive steps to deal with the source of irritation, then it becomes a moral issue.

Thomsen: *Do pastors have any unique or especially difficult-to-control anger triggers?*

Hart: The multiplicity of people they minister to invariably creates a multitude of hurts. The pastor is open to being criticized, offended, and hurt by everyone. The more people a person is responsible for, the greater is the potential for hurt. Unfortunately, most pastors who experience the feeling of anger don't understand the difference between the feeling and the behavior. There is an erroneous idea that when you're angry, you should give expression to it. Since pastors often feel that they cannot

express anger back to the one who caused it, they will either internalize it or take it out on someone else. And the most common "someone else" is, of course, the family.

Thomsen: *Is a minister more likely than most people to misdirect his anger toward his family because they're "safe"?*

Hart: I'm not sure he's more likely. I think that we're all prone to taking it out on the immediate family. They are very convenient scapegoats. Because the pastor has more reason for anger, perhaps there would be more scapegoating tendencies.

Thomsen: *How can the minister's spouse help the minister deal with anger?*

Hart: She needs to understand that when she's being jumped on, it's not a personal thing. It will help if she can adjust her thinking and her attitudes and learn not to take things personally. Second, the best way to resolve anger is to be able to talk about it and get it outside you so you can objectively look at what's causing the trouble. A spouse can be a sounding board for a pastor—that other person with whom he can talk and share his frustrations and anger.

(Continued on page 22)

What human nature did Jesus take? Unfallen

What Greek terms underlie the key words and phrases in the discussion? What was Christ's primary mission? What limits does His primary mission impose on the human nature He took in the Incarnation? □ by Benjamin Rand



eventh-day Adventist theology presents two alternative views concerning the human nature of Jesus Christ. Christ had a sinful human nature because He had a sinful mother like the rest of us, or He had a sinless human nature because, unlike the rest of us, He had God for His Father.¹ The first view stresses His identity

with man; the second focuses on His uniqueness as man. Some try to bridge the two by saying Jesus had a sinful physical nature but His human birth was like our new birth—born of the Spirit. They say that Jesus began in Bethlehem, where we begin when born again. Others suggest that the parallel breaks down under investigation. They believe that Jesus was both sinful and sinless in human nature, sinful only in that He took sin-weakened physical nature but sinless in that He never became sin in birth.

Are we simply left to take our pick? Does it really matter which view we choose? Is this merely academic hair-

splitting, with no practical meaning? I believe we must understand Christ's human nature to really appreciate what He endured, how He alone can be our Saviour, how He can be our example, our utter need of His substitution all the way to the kingdom, and our urgent need of a Christ-centered, not man-centered, outlook. These practical implications will become obvious as we explore the Biblical evidence.

First, a broad overview. 1. We will confine ourselves to the Biblical data, acting from the premise that all doctrinal truth issues out of Scripture.² 2. We will come to grips with the linguistic and theological meaning of the Greek words *sarx*, *hamartia*, *isos*, *homoiōma*, *monogenēs*, and *prōtotokos*. 3. Allowing scripture to interpret scripture, we will

penetrate to the real meaning of Christ's humanity as "the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16) and "the seed of David" (Rom. 1:3). We will note the harmony between these passages and the Greek terms we studied. 4. We will then take a look at Christ's mission to save man. Throughout the investigation we will document the overwhelming Biblical evidence that Jesus did in fact take a sinless human nature at birth (spiritually) while possessing a similar physical nature to others of His day. 5. This will force upon us the question Does He really understand us, then? Or, put other ways, is He a remote extraterrestrial being who had an unfair advantage over us? Was He really tempted in all points as we are? Can He really be a sympathetic (Continued on page 10)

Benjamin Rand is a pseudonym.

What human nature did Jesus take? Fallen

What backgrounds do the early church councils provide for our current debate on the nature of Christ? What do the key New Testament passages indicate about the kind of human nature He took? Why did He take human nature, and what does this reveal about the kind He took? □ by Kenneth Gage



In the early Christian centuries, thinkers generally agreed that Jesus had a preexistent life as God and lived a sinless life as man. But differences of opinion arose when certain Church Fathers (mostly the Alexandrian school) tended to emphasize Christ's divinity at the expense of His full humanity.¹ Equally earnest

theologians (the Antiochene school) stressed His full humanity, fearing that the Alexandrians were doing great damage to the meaning of Christ's role as man's Saviour.² In their counterresponses, these two schools of theological thought tended to overemphasize their positions.

As years went by, the Alexandrian emphasis became the prevailing teaching of the Roman Catholic Church,³ primarily through the overpowering

influence of Augustine's theology—a theological system that generally rested on Neoplatonic presuppositions.⁴ The Jesus of the Middle Ages, immaculately conceived and barely touched by the troubles of humanity, was the logical result of Alexandrian-Augustinian theology. Until recent times this Alexandrian emphasis also dominated Protestant Christology.

Chalcedon, an early church council (A.D. 451), decreed that Jesus was *vere Deus* and *vere homo*—"truly God" and "truly man." But the church councils did not fully answer basic questions about Christ's nature. Ever since, people have attempted to supply the answer, the results depending upon their philo-

sophical presuppositions. Without some higher point of view, some transcending Biblical principle or later prophetic authority, the decision of the councils appear open to several interpretations, depending upon which side of the Chalcedonian formula seems to be underemphasized at the moment.

Unfortunately this formula placed two apparently irreconcilable contradictions side by side without defining how they could exist in a baby born of an earthly parent. Since Chalcedon we have learned (1) that both truths must be stressed with equal emphasis and (2) that nothing is gained by merely settling for a mutually exclusive contradiction. If

(Continued on page 10)

Kenneth Gage is a pseudonym.

* All Scripture quotations in this article, unless otherwise marked, are from the Revised Standard Version.

Unfallen

From page 8

high priest? If Christological discussion is to be fruitful and faith-building, it must first clearly define terms in a way that is either informed by or true to Scripture.³

The Word became flesh

The Bible says, "The Word [Christ] was made flesh" (John 1:14). What does the Greek word for "flesh" mean? Does it tell us whether Christ's human nature was sinful or sinless? *Sarx* appears 151 times in the New Testament.⁴ Arndt and Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon* gives it eight meanings: (1) the material covering a body [1 Cor. 15:39]; (2) the body itself as a substance [chap. 6:16]; (3) "a man of flesh and blood" [John 1:14]; (4) "human or mortal nature, earthly descent" [Rom. 4:1]; (5) "corporeality, physical limitation(s), life here on earth" [Col. 1:24]; (6) "the external

or outward side of life" [2 Cor. 11:18]; (7) "the willing instrument of sin" [Rom. 7:18]; and (8) the source of sexuality [John 1:13]. Only one of these (number 7) has to do with sin. Therefore *sarx* does not necessarily mean "sinful."⁵

In Greek, the usual word for "sin" is *hamartia*⁶ and not *sarx*. Schweitzer's theological dictionary notes that *sarx* may designate an earthly sphere (see 1 Cor. 1:27), not necessarily "sinful and hostile to God, but simply . . . limited and provisional."⁷ It also says *sarx* may mean an object of trust (see Rom. 2:28). Here "what is sinful is not the *sarx*, but confidence in it."⁸ Schweitzer concludes, "Where *sarx* is understood in a full theological sense, as in Galatians 5:24, it denotes the being of man which is determined, not by his physical substance, but by his relation to God."⁹

Does God becoming flesh merely mean He received a human body? Christ said of His incarnation, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me" (Heb. 10:5, N.I.V.). In agreement Paul wrote, "He appeared in a body" (1 Tim. 3:16, N.I.V.). The Greek word for "body" is

sōma, yet the word "body" (N.I.V.) in 1 Timothy 3:16 is not *sōma* but *sarx*. It merely means "enfleshment," not "sinful."

How, then, do we understand these words: God sent His "Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and . . . condemned sin in the flesh" (Rom. 8:3)? First, consider what Paul could have said. He might have written, (1) God sent His Son in sinful flesh or (2) in the likeness of flesh. The first would mean His flesh was sinful, and the second would say that He only appeared to be in the flesh but was really some extraterrestrial being (cf. 1 John 4:1-3, a text misunderstood by some).¹⁰

Paul said neither. He focused on Christ coming in the *likeness* of sinful flesh. The key word is "likeness." Two Greek words are translated "like" in English: *isos*, meaning "same," as in Acts 11:17, where "God gave them the like [same, *isos*] gift," and *homoiōma*, used in Romans 8:3, meaning "similar" (because human), but not "same" (because not sinful). Scripture is consistent on this point. Thus Philippians 2:7 says of Jesus that He "was made in the likeness [*homoiōma*] of men."¹¹ Hebrews 2:17

Fallen

From page 9

either emphasis is qualified by philosophical presuppositions, the central truth of Christianity is distorted, if not destroyed. And in the process most other fundamental Christian doctrines are severely warped.

But what more could have been done at Chalcedon? The Chalcedonians were at the limit of human understanding when they tried to fathom *how* the nature of God merged with the nature of man. And once we begin asking *how*, we merely revive fruitless, ageless controversies. And we end up either with liberal Ebionitism, which refused to accept our Lord's divinity as *vere Deus*, or with unconscious Docetism (so-called orthodoxy), which refused to accept His humanity as *vere homo* in the fullest sense.

When we focus first or only on the abstractions of the two natures and on what appear to be logical impossibilities, every "solution" arouses someone else's

difficulty. Therefore it is surely not soteriologically helpful or appropriate to conclude that the core event of Christianity can tell us nothing more than that we face a divine paradox. We must move beyond the wrong question.

The primary issue

The salvation issue is not primarily *how* God became man, but *why*. Whenever we try to answer the first question without first asking the second, we unconsciously (1) are driven by our own presuppositions (such as our thoughts regarding the nature of sin) or (2) fall into Greek categories of thought (that is, trying to define such concepts and words as *hypostasis*, *anhypostasia*, *ousia*, and *prosōpon*), (3) tread in areas for which there is no divine revelation, and thus simply (4) relive all the futile controversies that have divided the church for centuries.

Without question, mystery envelops the Incarnation. But the mystery is regarding *how* God and man were blended, not *why*. A perceptive writer observed: "There is no one who can explain the mystery of the incarnation of Christ. Yet we know that He came to

this earth and lived as a man among men. The man Christ Jesus was not the Lord God Almighty, yet Christ and the Father are one."⁵

"The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study."⁶

Why have many who claim orthodoxy resisted the full implications of "truly man"? Psychologically, all of us feel the need to put distance between Jesus and ourselves. We know who we are. We know our thoughts and our failures. So we find it very difficult to accept the thought that Jesus possessed the same flesh and blood, the same genes affected by the same law of heredity, that have affected the rest of us. Some, trying to appear faithful to Biblical terms, have gone so far as to suggest that He "vicariously"⁷ took weakened human flesh. That Jesus started life carrying the weaknesses of His human ancestors strikes many as something improper, even as being blasphemous.

Theologically we state the resistance in other ways. We ask, How could Jesus be sinless without being separated from

says, "He had to be made like (*homoioō*) his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest" (N.I.V.).

Do these Greek words and these passages suggest that Jesus was only *similar* to other humans in having a sin-affected *physical* human body, but not the *same* as other humans, for He alone was sinless in His *spiritual* relationship with God? Ellen White thought so.¹² The Biblical evidence we have looked at so far supports such a conclusion.

Why only similar, not the same?

From this Biblical material come two principles that guide us in our quest. The first is: *Who* Jesus Christ is determined the extent of His identity with our human nature. In other words, He was more than Mary's baby. He was God. In becoming man He did not cease to be God.¹³ This means that His eternal unbroken relationship with God was not shattered by His becoming human. The Incarnation was not just another human birth. It was God spanning the chasm gouged by sin, and within His very being

forming the bridge from God to man. God creatively worked on the planet again, as in Eden. Whether using dust of the ground or Mary's womb, the life came from Him. Both constituted miracles never known before or repeated since. The sheer Godness of these events must not be lost in superficial comparisons with other humans. All others have two human parents. But not Adam and Christ. Man comes into the world in one of three ways: creation, birth, or Incarnation.

The second principle is: Christ's mission must determine the extent of His identity with our humanity. To be our Saviour, Jesus must become one with us. But He could not go beyond the requirements of His mission, He could not become a sinner (in nature or act) Himself. As in the sacrificial system, Christ's mission could be accomplished only by a Lamb without spot or blemish or any such thing.

The original sin

In this discussion we must take seriously the devastating nature of sin. Every baby is self-centered before know-

ing what constitutes sin. How was Baby Jesus different if born with a sinful nature?

The Bible gives two definitions of sin, one in terms of behavior, one in terms of relationship. Thus "sin is the transgression of the law [lawlessness]" (1 John 3:4), and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23). Both of these were present in the original sin in Eden. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command not to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree (Gen. 3:2-6), and they doubted God's word. He has said, "Don't eat it or you will die." Eve thought it looked good for food and desirable for gaining wisdom. So they took the plunge and ate. Why? *Doubting* God led to *disobeying* Him. To doubt someone is a cessation of trust or faith in him—a broken relationship. The tempter caused them to believe him and their senses more than God. Out of this broken relationship he caused them to break God's commandment. The original sin was first a broken relationship. To define *sin* merely as "lawbreaking or wrong acts" is looking only at its outer manifestation. At its root, sin is a broken relationship

the infected stream of genes and chromosomes shared by the rest of the children of Adam? Or we affirm "that Christ could not have had the same nature as man, for if He had, He would have fallen under similar temptations."⁸ As John Knox put it: "How could Christ have saved us if He were not a human being like ourselves? How could a human being like ourselves have saved us?"⁹

The issue seems stalemated until we ask *why* He came the way He did. If we do not face this question correctly, every other Biblical theme seems to become distorted.

We assume that Jesus' true humanity neither diminishes His divinity nor implies that He would have to be a sinner. And we further contend that to focus on Jesus as *very man* is not an exercise in peripherals or an act of spiritual arrogance. On the contrary, this emphasis may be the surest way to understand the simplicity of the plan of salvation.

Three groups exist among those who have no question about the deity of Jesus: (1) those who view Him as taking the nature of fallen man, as every child of Adam who has come into the world; (2)

those who believe He took the nature of unfallen Adam and thus was exempt from certain liabilities all other children of Adam share at birth; and (3) those who consider these differences immaterial to the plan of salvation.

Each group arrives at its position on the nature of Jesus because of certain (perhaps unconscious) presuppositions. These determine their understanding of such categories as human depravity, atonement theory, and righteousness by faith. It seems to me that these theological concepts will remain relatively unclear until we understand *why* Jesus came to earth. Further, we will understand neither these nor the nature of Christ's humanity until we stand on the vantage point of the great controversy theme that permeates Scripture.¹⁰

Why did Jesus, like every baby two thousand years ago, take the condition of fallen mankind and not that of Adam "in his innocence in Eden"?¹¹ If Christ had taken the pre-Fall state, only a few of the issues in the great controversy would have been settled. He came: 1. To set forth clearly the character of God the Father (see John 14:9; Heb. 1:3).¹² 2. To silence Satan's falsehoods, such as that

God did not have sufficient love for man to exercise self-denial and self-sacrifice on man's behalf (see John 3:16). 3. To reveal Himself as man's substitute and surety, showing what justice and love meant as He conquered sin and suffered its consequences, as He paid the penalty that justice required (see Rom. 3:25, 26).¹³ 4. To reveal Himself as man's example by providing fallen men and women with a model of obedience (1 Peter 2:21, 22). He thus gave them hope that the same power that enabled Him to resist sin was freely available so that those who sought it could also obey the laws of God (see 1 John 3:3; Rev. 3:21).¹⁴ 5. To reveal Himself as man's teacher as He defined clearly the principles of God's government and the plan of redemption (see John 13:13).¹⁵ 6. And to reveal Himself as man's high priest as He established His credibility and proved His ability to make overcomers out of men and women (Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:14-16).¹⁶

Scholars who agree

This understanding is far from unique. Many Biblical scholars have challenged the so-called orthodox view that Christ

between the sinner and God.¹⁴

Christ came to the world to restore the relationship, not to continue in the separation. Thus He came *similar* to us (as a human, physically speaking) but not the *same* as us (in broken relationship with God, spiritually speaking). Immanuel, or "God with us," means He crossed the abyss between God and man, He annihilated the estrangement by coming from God's side to ours. But He established the connection once more only because throughout the Incarnation He remained in unbroken relationship with God—He remained sinless spiritually.

Romans 5:12-14 is considered "one of the most difficult places of scripture,"¹⁵ and "the details of the exegesis of Romans 5:12-21 are disputed,"¹⁶ but I believe the analogy between Adam and Christ is the clearest found in the Bible. Lenski is right in stating: "It is so vital because it goes to the bottom of both sin and deliverance from sin. All else that is said in the Scriptures regarding either or both rests on what is here revealed as the absolute bottom."¹⁷ Note what it says: "Therefore, . . . sin entered the world

through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned. . . . Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous" (Rom. 5:12-19, N.I.V.).

Note the thrice-repeated parallels between the two Adams. Death, or condemnation, does not pass on to each person only because of his own sin. It does that, too. But in a more profound sense, death passes on to every man because of Adam's sin, or broken relationship with God. (That Adam's sin affects all the race is mentioned five times in verses 15-19.) It simply isn't true that sin isn't present until the person's first act of sin. Men are born sinners. "Death reigned" (verse 14) from Adam's sin. Babies die before knowingly sinning. Severed from the Life-giver, death, not guilt, passed on from Adam to the race.¹⁸ This is why Christ came to restore the

connection, to bring eternal life. The parallelism in Romans 5:12-14 is crucial to its meaning. "As *sin* ends in *death*, so *righteousness* in *life*."¹⁹ If "Adam's one sin is the fount of death for all men, and was so the moment it was committed before any men were born,"²⁰ then Christ's sinlessness is the fount of all righteousness. He was *similar* to us, as born within human physical limitations, but not the *same* as us, because not born a sinner in a broken relationship with God.

The Biblical fact that sin is passed on from Adam to each baby born (not Adam's guilt, but death, the result of his sin) means that *sin* cannot be defined merely as "act."²¹ That is too superficial a definition. Though sin includes wrong choices, and therefore acts, and even thoughts (see Matt. 5:28), it also includes nature.²² If we were not born sinners, then we would not need a Saviour until our first act or thought of sin. Such an idea does terrible disservice to the tragic consequences of sin and to the mission of Christ, as the only Saviour for every human (John 14:6, Acts 4:12). It also means that if Jesus came with a sinful nature but resisted, then perhaps

somehow took Adam's pre-Fall nature rather than the human equipment inherited by every other child of Adam. Among them are Edward Irving, Thomas Erskine, Herman Kohlbrugge, Eduard Bohl, Karl Barth, T. F. Torrance, Nels Ferre, C. E. B. Cranfield, Harold Roberts, Lesslie Newbigin, E. Stauffer, Anders Nygren, C. K. Barrett, and Eric Baker.¹⁷

Wolfhart Pannenberg wrote (1964): "The conception that at the Incarnation God did not assume human nature in its corrupt sinful state but only joined Himself with a humanity absolutely purified from all sin contradicts not only the anthropological radicality of sin, but also the testimony of the New Testament and of early Christian theology that the Son of God assumed sinful flesh and in sinful flesh itself overcame sin."¹⁸

None of these men believed that Christ sinned in either thought or act or that because He took fallen sinful flesh He needed a Saviour. Generally speaking, the term *sinful flesh* means the human condition in all of its aspects as affected by the fall of Adam and Eve. Such a nature is susceptible to temptation from within as from without.

Contrary to the Grecian dualism that early pervaded much of orthodox Christianity, the flesh is not evil, nor does it sin of itself. Although the flesh is amoral, it does provide the equipment, the occasion, and the seat for sin if the human will is not constantly assisted by the Holy Spirit. But a person born with sinful flesh need not be a sinner.¹⁹

It has been frequently observed that the New Testament presents a very uncomplicated, straightforward understanding that Jesus was a man in every sense of the word.²⁰ True, New Testament writers remembered Him as possessing much more than human significance: They reverently referred to Him as God who became man. But their witness to Jesus does not suggest that they thought of Him as having physical, emotional, or moral advantages not available to His contemporaries.

At Pentecost, Peter simply called Him "Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst" (Acts 2:22, N.K.J.V.). And Paul says Jesus Christ "was born of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3, N.K.J.V.).

New Testament support

Nowhere in the New Testament do we get the slightest impression that Jesus visited earth in some kind of heavenly space suit that insulated Him from the risks inherent in a sin-permeated world. Let us examine some of the New Testament references to our Lord's humanity to see whether this observation can be supported.

A. *The virgin birth* (Matt. 1:16, 18-25; Luke 1:26-38; 3:23). The fact that one human parent was organically involved in the birth of Jesus is sufficient to indicate His indebtedness to human heredity. To suggest that He was born free from the liabilities of heredity is to go down the same road that Roman Catholicism started upon when it confused sin with physical substance. After this confusion, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception became a theological necessity. In turn, that doctrine led to the assumption that Christ took a pre-Fall human nature.

No Biblical evidence suggests that the stream of human heredity was broken between Mary and Jesus. The burden of proof lies with those who believe (1) that there was a physical break in the heredity

someone else will do the same, and that person would not need Jesus to save him. We must understand that both aspects of sin's effects—corporate death and personal guilt—necessitate a Saviour. We need Jesus as substitute for all of our life, and not just from the first time we knowingly rebel.

Sinners at birth

Every human, save Christ, is born a sinner. David said, "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Ps. 51:5, N.I.V.). Yet David could also say about God, "You brought me out of the womb" (Ps. 22:9, N.I.V.). "For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb" (Ps. 139:13, R.S.V.). Are these contradictory? Was David born a sinner or not? They speak of two sides of a truth, both equally Biblical. Whereas the first speaks of David's status as a sinner at birth, the others tell of God's saving love to him in that state.

Then, how do we interpret the text "The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father

suffer for the iniquity of the son" (Eze. 18:20, R.S.V.)? The Bible also says, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me" (Ex. 20:5, R.S.V.; cf. chap. 34:7; Num. 14:18; 1 Kings 21:29). Are these also contradictory? Again, they constitute two sides of a truth, both Biblical. The first says one's behavior results in either life or death, whereas the second states a person's sin affects his posterity, too. This is why the Bible affirms, "Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward" (Ps. 58:3, N.I.V.).

"Rebel from birth" (Isa. 48:8, N.I.V.) and "filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb" (Luke 1:15) again look at two sides, both the human status at birth as well as God's mercy to one in that state. By contrast Jesus was not only filled with the Holy Spirit from birth but, unlike anyone else, was born of the Holy Spirit. Unlike others He was also God. Does this mean He has an Immaculate Conception?

Catholic theology since Augustine believes everyone is born with original

sin.²³ That is, each comes into the world with the guilt of Adam's sin, for everyone was seminally present in Adam, and therefore shares in his guilt. Thus, similarly, Jesus would come into the world with the guilt of original sin. To get around this predicament, Catholic theology invented the Immaculate Conception. This doctrine postulates that Mary was born without the taint of sin. But if God could perform such a salvific act for one human, why not for all? This would have saved Christ all the anguish of becoming human. Besides, if Mary became immaculate without Christ, this calls Christ's mission into question.

The Bible knows nothing of an Immaculate Conception, but proclaims a miraculous conception. Jesus was unique. It was out of His uniqueness as God that His birth was sinless. At this point Catholic theology overlooks *who* Jesus was. It is not necessary to find in Mary the reason for Christ's uniqueness. That uniqueness issues out of His own selfhood as God. We now turn to the Biblical data concerning His uniqueness.

stream between Mary and Jesus and (2) that because of some special insulation, He was "exempt" (a familiar word in Roman Catholic theology) from the full liability of fallen human nature.²¹

Some refer to Luke 1:35 as if that text conclusively indicates Christ had a pre-Fall nature. (See various English translations, such as the R.S.V.) But Luke is not discussing our Lord's human nature. He simply states that Christ's holy character would always distinguish Him as our sinless Saviour.

B. *The Son of man* (Matt. 8:20; 24:27; et al.). In this self-description, Jesus declared His identification and solidarity with mankind. The second Adam is not a special creation or a clone of the first—He is a hereditary descendant, born of a woman. Only by assuming the same fallen nature shared by those He came to save could He truly be the Son of man.

C. *The Adam/Christ analogy* (Romans 5; 1 Corinthians 15). This first/second Adam analogy seems to be one of Paul's significant theological motifs. The analogy is often considered Paul's counterpart to our Lord's self-identification, Son of man. In brief, it seems to suggest most

strongly the solidarity and identification of both Adam and Jesus with the human race. In Adam we have the head of sinful humanity, and in Jesus, the head of the overcomers, humanity that conquers all temptations.²²

Many consider Romans 5:12 as evidence that men and women are born sinners, but such is not Paul's argument. He is simply stating an obvious fact—the stream of death began with Adam. But Adam's descendants all die "because all men sinned." *

All men and women are "in Adam" through natural birth, but only those who choose can be "in Christ," the second Adam. Our Lord has called everyone to be "in Christ," and only those who frustrate His call will be ultimately lost.

The assumption that Jesus took Adam's pre-Fall nature seems to destroy the force of Paul's parallel and his principle of solidarity. Paul's Adam-Christ analogy becomes relevant to mankind and to the great controversy only if Jesus incorporated Himself within fallen humanity—only if He met sin in the arena where all men are, "in Adam," and conquered every appeal to serve self,

whether from within or without. Jesus intended that those in Him would be united corporately with the results of His saving work. But to accomplish this, He must first have been corporately connected with humanity in its fallen condition.²³

D. *Paul's use of sarx*. Paul uses *sarx* ("flesh") in a variety of ways,²⁴ including (1) its ordinary meaning of flesh as a physical feature (1 Cor. 15:39; 2 Cor. 12:7; Col. 2:1); (2) in a metaphorical sense, as that which distinguishes mankind from God (1 Cor. 15:50; cf. Eph. 6:12) or that which refers to human nature or earthly descent (Rom. 1:3; 4:1; 8:3); and (3) as a synonym for sin (chaps. 6:19; 7:18; 8:4).

Paul flees from Hellenistic dualism and does not ascribe to *sarx* a substantive evil and sinfulness. Although *sarx* is morally neutral, Paul teaches that it does provide the seat and material in which evil may operate. It is the place where self-indulgence is expressed. Christians, though living in physical flesh (*sarx*), should no longer allow sin to rule their *sarx* (flesh); the Spirit provides power to the committed believer who chooses to control the desires that naturally arise in

Jesus as unique man

Jesus was unlike other humans in the center of His consciousness. This determined all else. No other human lived before his birth and made a decision to be born to please the Father. Christ's consciousness was always Godward. He came to do His Father's will (Heb. 10:9), glorified Him throughout life, and finished the work He gave Him to do (John 17:4). No other baby, child, or adult has lived in such utter selflessness for God and man. Both His sinless acts and sinless spiritual nature issued out of His unbroken Godward orientation. His union with God determined the extent of His union with man.

The Greek word *monogenēs*, translated "only begotten" in the King James Version, actually means "one of a kind." *Monogenēs* comes from *monos*, "one," and *genos*, "kind" or "type." *Monogenēs* must not be confused with *monogennaō*, which derives from *monos*, "one," and *gennaō*, "begotten." *Monogennaō* means "only begotten."

Monogenēs is used nine times in the Greek New Testament, five times of Jesus (John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18; 1 John

4:9). Its use in the other four references throws light on what the word means when used of Jesus. First, the dead son of the widow of Nain was all she had (Luke 7:12). Second, Jairus may have had sons, but it was his only daughter who died (chap. 8:42). Third, and the demoniac was the only son of his father in this condition (chap. 9:38). In these three passages *monogenēs* doesn't mean "only begotten," but "only one of its kind." This fact is even clearer in the fourth example, Hebrews 11:17. There Isaac is called *monogenēs* when, in fact, he was the secondborn (Ishmael being Abraham's first). Nevertheless he was one of a kind, unique, as he alone was the son of promise.

When used of Jesus, *monogenēs* always has this one of a kind, unique, connotation. He was the Son of promise—unique in mission and birth as well as in His life. His unique birth consisted not only in how He was born (without human father) but in what nature He was born (without human sin).

He was one of a kind in that He was the only man who was also God. He was the only man who was born by the Spirit,

without a human father. He was the only man who existed eternally as God before becoming also man, and thus was uniquely independent of parents for life. And He was the only man who was *similar* but not the *same* as other humans.

His uniqueness issued from *who* He was. *Who* He was made His birth different from that of all other humans. Possessing the sin-weakened physical humanity of His time, He came with an eternal and sinless relationship with God. Attention to Christ as *monogenēs* would have saved many from pantheism (Kellogg, Jones, Waggoner) and the holy flesh movement (Donnell, Indiana Conference).²⁴

The Bible requires that Jesus' uniqueness be our starting point in Christology. He is not just another man, but God become man. "The Word became flesh" (John 1:14, N.I.V.). This manward movement is the context from which to unfold the meaning of the God-man. Some neglect this, choosing rather to begin with the final generation and their postprobationary demonstration. They reason that if that generation will no longer do sinful acts while still having

sarx. (See chap. 8:3-9.)

At times Paul uses *sarx* as a synonym for sin. And his doctrine of sin is as deep as his doctrine of creation is high. But he always keeps sin on the personal level, as a fractured personal relationship or an act of a responsible person (cf. James 4:17). The results of sin—fallen human nature—are given to all men and women at birth. But no one is held personally guilty or responsible for that fallen human condition (*sarx*).

E. "The likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. 8:3). Here we find Paul using words with great care. He states clearly the perfect sinlessness of Jesus. But he also emphasizes that our Lord overcame in the same sinful flesh (*sarx*) that since Adam all men and women have inherited. Paul's message: Jesus remained sinless in the arena where sin had conquered all other human beings. In so doing, He exposed the nature and vulnerability of sin.

Anders Nygren commented: "It was to be right in *sin's own realm* that the Son was to bring sin to judgment, overcome it, and take away its power. It is therefore important that with Christ it is actually a matter of 'sinful flesh,' of *sarx hamartias*.

...

"Christ's carnal nature was no unreality, but simple, tangible fact. He shared all our conditions. He was under the same powers of destruction. Out of 'the flesh' arose for Him the same temptations as for us. But in all this He was master of sin."²⁵

Karl Barth adds that Christ's perfect obedience in our fallen nature means that "the commission of sin as such is not an attribute of true human existence as such, whether from the standpoint of its creation by God or from that of the fact that it is flesh on account of the Fall."²⁶

"In every respect" (Heb. 2:17) He was "in the likeness of sinful flesh"—except that He did not sin. What better way could sin be condemned? How much clearer could Paul have said that possessing "sinful flesh" does not necessarily make a person a sinner? Jesus beat back Satan in sin-entrenched territory, Satan's home field. Never again need anyone, anywhere in the universe, doubt the fairness of God's laws or the adequacy of enabling grace and obedient faith.

Perhaps C. E. B. Cranfield, professor of theology at the University of Durham, has said it best. After taking into view all the possible interpretations of Romans

8:1-4, he wrote:

"By *sarx hamartias* Paul clearly meant 'sinful flesh,' i.e., fallen human nature. But why did he say *en homoiōmati sarkos hamartias* ['in the likeness of sinful flesh'] rather than just *en sarki hamartias* ['in sinful flesh']?"²⁷

Cranfield summarizes five answers that have been suggested: (1) Paul did not wish to imply the reality of Christ's human nature. (2) He wanted to avoid implying that Jesus assumed fallen human nature. Jesus really took flesh, but it was only like, and not identical with, our flesh. (3) Paul used *homoiōma* to indicate that Jesus took our fallen human nature, but it was only like ours because ours is guilty of actual sin and He never sinned. (4) *Homoiōma* here means "form" rather than merely "likeness." (5) *Homoiōma* here "does have its sense of 'likeness'; but the intention is not in any way to call in question . . . the reality of Christ's *sarx hamartias*, but to draw attention to the fact that, while the Son of God truly assumed *sarx hamartias*, He never became *sarx hamartias* and nothing more, nor even *sarx hamartias* indwelt by the Holy Spirit and nothing more (as a Christian might be described as being),

sinful natures, then Christ must have been sinless in a sinful nature too. For will that final generation do better than Christ? This is eschatological Christology, or a reading back from the future into Christ's human nature. It allows reality outside of Christ to inform us about Christ. But Christ, and not eschatology, should be the starting point. We need a Christological eschatology rather than an eschatological Christology.

The theological mistakes of Schweitzer and Barth should warn and guide us here. Both Schweitzer and Barth (in his early writing) began with eschatology and read back into Christology, with devastating results. Schweitzer's Jesus ended up as a deluded man,²⁵ and Barth's Christ as a "wholly other" God²⁶—two opposite overemphases, neither doing justice to Jesus Christ.

Christological thought needs to begin with Christ's uniqueness as Son of God rather than with His similarity to humans as Son of man. Further, epistemologically, we cannot move from the human to the divine, but we can from

the divine to the human. In determining the human nature of the man Jesus, *monogenēs* must be the starting point and center of Christology.

Prōtotokos, or "firstborn," is used of Jesus seven times (see esp. Heb. 1:6; Rom. 8:29; Col. 1:15, 18; Rev. 1:5). "Firstborn" refers not so much to time but to importance. As in Hebrew culture the firstborn received the family privileges, so Jesus, the "firstborn" among men, won back all the privileges man lost through the Fall. Thus "only begotten" and "firstborn" are not to be interpreted literally when applied to Jesus. Rather, they imply that He was one of a kind, unique. His mission was to become the new Adam, the new firstborn, or head, of the race. This qualified Him to be our representative, high priest, and intercessor in the great controversy.

Jesus is our example in life, but not in birth. If He is our example in birth, maybe some other human could achieve a perfect life and not need the Saviour. This thought lies at the heart of Friedrich Schleiermacher's theology. He believed that Jesus was only quantitatively and

not qualitatively different from other humans. Was He not born like everyone else? Was it not the fuller consciousness of God's presence and His feeling of absolute dependence upon God that made Him different from others? Yet someone will come in the future who will transcend Him.²⁷ Such thinking warns us that it is dangerous to miss the full Biblical distinction between Christ's birth and that of all other humans.

Karl Barth's theology also contains problems concerning Christ's nature at birth.²⁸ Although he believed Jesus to be truly God, he didn't allow the Biblical consequences of that to control his understanding of the Incarnation. He claimed that the baby Jesus was born with sinful flesh.²⁹ The only way Barth could get around the consequences of this was to say that Christ assumed this sinful flesh within His divine nature in such a way that temptations and sin were an impossibility.³⁰

The Biblical data leads in the opposite direction of Schleiermacher's and Barth's thinking. The man Jesus is unique. He is our substitute in life. He covers our imperfect characters with His

but always remained Himself" (cf. Phil. 2:7).²⁸

As to number 1, Cranfield notes that it attributes to the phrase a docetic sense inconsistent with Paul's thought. And it is contradicted in this very verse (Rom. 8:3) by *en tē sarki*. He objects to the traditional answer (number 2) by saying that it "is open to the general theological objection that it was not unfallen, but fallen, human nature which needed redeeming."²⁹ In regard to number 3, he points out that *homoīōma* is related to the nature discussed and not the question of sinning. "The difference between Christ's freedom from actual sin and our sinfulness is not a matter of the character of His human nature (of its being not quite the same as ours), but of what He did with His human nature."³⁰ As to number 4, he comments that if Paul meant to say this, it is difficult to understand why he did not simply say *en sarki hamartias*.

Cranfield says: "We conclude that . . . [5] is to be accepted as the most probable explanation of Paul's use of *homoīōma* here, and understand Paul's thought to be that the Son of God assumed the selfsame fallen human nature that is

ours, but that in His case that fallen human nature was never the whole of Him—He never ceased to be the eternal Son of God."³¹

Like Nygren and Barth, Cranfield sees this passage as stressing where the conflict occurred. God's "condemnation" of sin "took place in the flesh, i.e., in Christ's flesh, Christ's human nature. . . . If we recognize that Paul believed it was fallen human nature which the Son of God assumed, we shall probably be inclined to see here also a reference to the unintermittent warfare of His whole earthly life by which He forced our rebellious nature to render a perfect obedience to God."³²

In a footnote to this, he says: "Those who believe that it was fallen human nature which was assumed have even more cause than had the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism to see the whole of Christ's life on earth as having redemptive significance; for, on this view, Christ's life before His actual ministry and death was not just a standing where unfallen Adam had stood without yielding to the temptation to which Adam succumbed, but a matter of starting from where we start, subjected to

all the evil pressures which we inherit, and using the altogether unpromising and unsuitable material of our corrupt nature to work out a perfect, sinless obedience."³³

F. *The High Priest's solidarity with humanity (Hebrews)*. One of the principal lines of argument in Hebrews is that the high priest's efficacy depends upon how closely he identifies with those for whom he mediates. Jesus is a perfect high priest because of His real identification with man's predicaments, whether of the spirit (temptations) or of the body (privations and death).

1. *Hebrews 2:11*: "For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified have all one origin. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brethren." For specific soteriological purposes, Jesus and His fellow human beings had a common human heredity (this is clearly stated in verse 14).

2. *Hebrews 2:14*: "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same nature." Paul is here more explicit and provides the specific context for the chapter. For Jesus to be truly man's Saviour and effective High Priest, He

perfect human character. His character is our robe of righteousness, the wedding garment without which we cannot enter the kingdom. He is our substitute in death. He died to pay the price of sin in our place so we can have eternal life. But He is also our substitute in birth. He was born sinless to meet our first need of Him as Saviour, when we are born sinners.

The Bible places no salvific value on our first birth. In fact, it clearly states, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3). Only the man Jesus didn't need the new birth. That puts Him in a class by Himself.

Christ from Abrahamic, Davidic line³

From the Biblical data studied thus far, what can we conclude the following expressions mean: "He took on him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16) and "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh" (Rom. 1:3; cf. John 7:42; 2 Tim. 2:8)? Do these passages declare that Jesus took a sinful nature issuing from Abraham and David? In the light of the broad Biblical context, these texts

are not considering the *nature* but the *mission* of Christ. They are not concerned with the type of flesh in which He was born (sinless or sinful). Rather, they maintain that, as a Jew (Heb. 2:16) and as their real king (Rom. 1:3), Jesus came as the fulfillment of the covenant. God called Abraham out to form a people through whom He could bless all nations (Gen. 22:18). Similarly, Jesus came through Mary to save the nations (Matt. 1:18, 21; cf. John 3:16). Mission and not nature is the context.

Israel, in the Old Testament period, and Christian Jews, in New Testament days, looked back to Abraham as the "father" of God's church in its first form (see Isa. 51:2; Rom. 4:12; and James 2:21 and their contexts). So Matthew, writing to Jews, begins Jesus' genealogy with Abraham (Matt. 1:1). And the author of Hebrews, also writing to Jews, says Jesus "took on him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. 2:16). That Jesus is placed in the line of the Abrahamic covenant does not negate His actualizing the very purpose of that covenantal line by becoming the second Adam. In fact, the same book that mentions Christ's connection with

David also presents Him as the second Adam (see Rom. 5:12-21).

Does substitution include becoming exactly like us in birth? Could Jesus really save us if He did not actually become one of us in sinful nature? Did He really come down into the pit where we are in order to pull us out? Down in the pit He took hold of real human flesh only to the extent that His union with the Father remained unaffected. In other words, He could not be sinful in nature, for by definition such a nature is the result of separation from God. Union with God and sinful spiritual nature are as far removed from each other as are heaven and hell. To say that He became identified with us but remained loyal to God is to misunderstand the terrible nature of sin. *Sin means separation from God*. Either Jesus maintained an unbroken relationship with the Father or He let go and plunged into our estrangement.

Jesus was both our substitute and example, and in that order. There is a priority of substitute over example as there is of God over man and Saviour over saved. This is important to note.

had to enter man's terrible predicament, the enemy-occupied territory of human flesh shared by all descendants of fallen Adam.

3. *Hebrews 2:16-18*: "For surely it is not with angels that he is concerned but with the descendants of Abraham. Therefore he had to be made like his brethren in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make expiation for the sins of the people. For because he himself has suffered and been tempted, he is able to help those who are tempted."

Here the person and work of Jesus are unified in a breathtaking statement. All the risks resident in assuming fallen human nature are recognized in this chapter, but in no place more clearly than in these verses. Paul's inescapable message seems to be that Jesus completely identified with sinful men and women in the liabilities inherent in the human equipment received at their birth.

Jesus is called men's "pioneer of their salvation [made] perfect through suffering" (verse 10). He was the first, from birth to death, to break the power of sin,

beating the path for all to follow. He broke down every subtle enticement to do things His way rather than His Father's. He rose triumphant in the very arena where His human counterparts have fallen, employing no other weapons than fallen men and women have at their disposal.

In its most immediately obvious sense, verses 16-18 seem to say that Christ took the human nature common to all post-Fall humanity.

4. *Hebrews 4:15*: "For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." Jesus felt the full force of temptation because He never succumbed. Those who yield too soon never know the oppression of spirit caused by the full tug of a self-serving opportunity. From the standpoint of the theology of the great controversy, this text strongly suggests that because Jesus did not sin, no man must sin. Our High Priest was "made like his brethren in every respect," was "tempted as we are," yet He did not sin. "Let us then with confidence draw near" (verse 16) is a marvelous, intensely coherent, and tight

transition of thought. What more could language say in getting across Paul's argument: Jesus was victorious with the same liabilities and disadvantages common to all mankind; therefore, men and women can also be victorious with the same help He depended on if they too "draw near" in time of need.

When Paul refers to our Lord's temptations, he employs simple language in order to be easily understood. Whatever the nature of temptations common to man, whether they arise from within (such as envy, self-will, self-exaltation, self-indulgence) or from without (such as direct appeal from Satan, or objects that elicit unholy desire), Jesus experienced them. He had the power of choice and the heredity that weakens and misdirects it. He had a nature wherein temptations common to men and women could find appeal. But in Jesus, evil found no response. In only one sense was Jesus exempt from being "tempted as we are"—He never had to contend with a willpower weakened by His own previous decisions to sin.

Paul does not support such ideas as that (1) Jesus was exempt from the clamor of humanity's fallen nature or

Christology must never begin with example and hope to do justice to His substitution. It must take the path that leads from substitution to example. We need His substitution all along the line: We need His eternal divinity, His sinless birth, His sinless life, His perfect death, His resurrection, His high priestly intercession, and His second return. We also need Him as a man to exemplify total dependence upon God.

The fact that He was born sinless in no way suggests that law-keeping isn't important to the rest of us who are born sinners. *It is not true that belief in Christ's sinless nature means no one else can or should even try to keep the law. Jesus is not our substitute so that we can live as we please.*

Tempted like us

We have seen that the Biblical data presents a unique human Jesus who couldn't have had a sinful nature. The question presses, Does He really understand us, then? Or is He a remote being who had an unfair advantage over us? Can He really be a sympathetic high priest? In short, was He really tempted in

all points as we are?

Our Christology affects our understanding of Christ's temptations. For hundreds of years classical Christology considered that Jesus lived on earth as God. He had powers that are not natively available to other men. Little wonder that temptation was considered no ordeal for Him. Although Anselm (1033-1109) was the first significant scholar to focus on Christ living on earth as a man (he wrote *Cur Deus Homo*), others subsequently continued to overlook the reality of His ordeal. Thus Calvin's belief that Jesus remained on heaven's throne while living on earth (*extra Calvinisticum*), Luther's commingling of the divine and human natures (*communicatio idiomatum*), and Barth's enfolding of the assumed humanity within an impregnable divinity (*ganz anderer*) all made Christ's temptations unreal and His sinning impossible. E. J. Waggoner, like Barth, believed that Jesus took sinful flesh but couldn't sin because He was divine.³² What good is a sinful nature like ours if He had a divine nature unlike ours? The one cancels out the other, removing the reality of

temptation from Him.

By contrast, the Bible states He "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). "In all points" doesn't mean the same temptations (plural), but the same temptation (singular). For example, Jesus was never tempted to watch TV, smoke pot, or break the speed limit. But He was tempted to cease His dependence upon God. Satan employed different *means* for the same *end*. For the thrust of all temptation is to break one's relationship with God.

Christ's temptations were greater than ours, for only the One who never gave in could feel their full force.³³ B. F. Westcott expressed it this way: "Sympathy with the sinner in his trial does not depend on the experience of sin but on the experience of the strength of the temptation to sin, which only the sinless can know in its full intensity. He who falls yields before the last strain."³⁴

But does "in all points" include "in the same way"?³⁵ James writes, "Each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (James 1:14, N.I.V.). Evil propensities (a lean-

that (2) He never risked all or that (3) He didn't really fight the battle of faith as every son and daughter of Adam has had to fight it. Despite His inherited human liabilities, Jesus did not sin—such is a substantial part of Paul's simple good news.

5. *Hebrews 5:7-9*: "In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to him who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him."

The followers of Jesus apparently remembered Him as a man such as they were, except that they could find no fault in Him (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Peter 1:19; 2:22; Heb. 4:15; 9:14). He was known as a man who radiated unusual courage, integrity, personal freedom under all kinds of stress, and victory at every turn, under every circumstance.

But the New Testament does not indicate that His followers ever considered that this remarkable Man could not sin. It does not suggest that He possessed

special advantages or that all His marvelous moral characteristics were precast in some other world. His disciples had eaten and slept with Him; they had listened to His most intimate prayers and heard His most confidential comments on circumstances and people in good times and bad. They knew that the counsel He was giving them was counsel He Himself was practicing.

His followers had every reason to believe that Christ's goodness was a result of daily struggles with the same temptations they had to face. Paul could not say it more plainly: "He learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect . . ." In other words, His moral development was an example of how all men and women would develop a character such as His: They would be made perfect by learning obedience amid hard decisions. They must choose God's will and reject the allure of temptations, whether from within or from without.

Barth wrote plainly regarding the inner temptations and struggles that Jesus had to face: "The New Testament has treated the *vere homo* so seriously that it has portrayed the obedience of Jesus

throughout as a genuine struggle to obey, as a seeking and finding. In Luke 2:40 it speaks of a 'growing and waxing strong,' and in Luke 2:52 it speaks of a *prokoptein* (strictly speaking, an extension by blows, as a smith stretches metal with hammers . . .) of Jesus in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and men. Moreover the temptation narrative (Matthew 4:1ff.) obviously describes the very opposite of a mock battle, and it would be wrong to conceive of it as a merely 'eternal molestation by Satan,' to reject it as an 'inward temptation and trial' of Jesus. To the *vere homo* there also belongs what we call man's inner nature."³⁴

As one modern scholar stated it: "It is hardly a picture [Heb. 5:7-9] that the early Christians would have invented: they would be more likely to have created a picture of effortless superiority to all human weakness, such as we find later. . . . In any case, its value lies in giving us the most forceful evidence that Jesus was remembered as a man of like passions with ourselves who had to win in the same way as everyone else."³⁵

In *Hebrews 5* Paul refers to Christ's "loud cries and tears" and to the fact that

ing to sin) are acquired in two ways: through sinning and through being born a sinner. Christ did neither. He was born "that holy thing" (Luke 1:35), and Satan found in Him no evil at all (see John 14:30). "Being in all points tempted like as we are" must be understood in the light of the Biblical data already considered. It indicates that He, as a unique human, was tempted in all points like us. Again, temptation basically involves Satan's attempt to break one's relationship with God.

It is unthinkable that Jesus would plunge into separation from His Father in the very act of coming to do His will. The two are mutually exclusive. His uniqueness in birth is no cause to cry out, "Foul play—You didn't really become one of us, You had it easier than us! Who couldn't resist temptations if he had a sinless nature like Yours!" How else could it be? Any supposed advantage that Jesus had was not for Himself. His saving mission determined the extent of His identity with us.

Yet saying this brings us to a paradox. His remaining unlike us did not give Him an advantage; it was actually disadvan-

tageous to Him. For if the thrust of temptation is to get one to rely upon himself rather than God, who would have the greater temptation, Jesus, who had His own divinity to rely upon, or we, who have nothing comparable?

Christ's disadvantage in temptation issued out of His uniqueness. And in this uniqueness rests our salvation. Only Jesus felt the full force of satanic hatred, for Satan's controversy is against Christ and not any other human. All hell broke loose against this dependent man Jesus; and besides, Jesus could not get forgiveness if He were overpowered. Imagine the pressure when every moment, every act held such consequences for Himself and the whole world!

If Jesus must be sinful flesh to understand our struggles from experience, then how could He empathize with the dregs of the race? How could He save the generation plunged two thousand years further down into genetic degeneration? If His taking our sinful nature was prerequisite to His being tempted like us, then He should have come contemporary with the last man born. Yet, even if Jesus were a last-generation person, His

contemporaries would still be more degraded because of their own sinning. If sinful nature is a necessary element of being tempted like us, then Christ wasn't tempted like our generation and those degraded through personal sin. But if His uniqueness made His temptation greater, then He didn't need our fallen nature to be tempted like us.

Not until His death did He, "who knew no sin," become "sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). Never before that moment did sin bring a separation from His Father, which caused Him to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Mat. 27:46). The man Jesus became sin for us in *mission* at death and not in *nature* at birth.

Doxology

Theology is a human quest to understand God's self-revelation. Christology is the center and heart of theology, for Jesus Christ is the greatest revelation of God to man. He is also the best revelation of authentic man to man. Jesus Christ was unique not only as God with us but as man with us. He was sinless divinity united with sin-weak-

He "learned obedience." We have only to review the texts that speak about Christ's personal will and how He had to use it—deliberately and perhaps painfully—to understand Paul's reference. At times Jesus had to struggle to subordinate His will to His Father's. It is because of this that He becomes relevant to us, that He truly becomes our Saviour and Example.

The "nevertheless" in the Gethsemane experience (Matt. 26:39; Mark 14:36; Luke 22:42), for instance, is patently not playacting. Jesus could have recoiled from the cross and turned from His Father's will. He could have sinned. But when the decision had to be made, He did not fail. "Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Scripture says Jesus was "being made perfect" during His thirty-three years on earth. Perhaps not enough attention has been given to this important Biblical account of how He developed. Jesus emphasized His full humanity when He reminded His hearers: "I can do nothing on my own authority; as I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me" (John 5:30). "For I have

come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me" (chap. 6:38). Paul later recapitulated Christ's experience as one who had to choose between His will and His Father's: "For Christ did not please himself" (Rom. 15:3).

Sebastian Moore summed it up well: "If you have never seen Jesus, in your mind's eye, as faced with inescapable political, social, and personal-integrity options, then you are a Docetist. Your Christ never existed. He is a puppet in a theologian's puppet show."³⁶

The book of Hebrews constantly emphasizes that Jesus is our perfect high priest and sacrifice *because* He stood in the same arena where all sons of Adam stand. It stresses He fills those roles because He faced every temptation common to sinners, He experienced every need of helpless men—all without capitulating to sin.

In order to explain adequately how a perfect atonement could be made, Hebrews seems rather obviously to require not a pre-Fall but a post-Fall human nature of the Son of God. Jesus must be one with man in every respect from the standpoint of human *equipment*

(the principle of solidarity), but He is not one with them as a sinner, that is, from the standpoint of human *performance* (the principle of dissimilarity).

These two principles describe a simple reality; they do not constitute a paradox, as if two irreconcilable truths must be kept in tension. These mutually supporting principles made Jesus into the divine fact that forms the basis for all the rest of the good news. In the Incarnation, the Saviour became a man in every essential respect; He was beset with all the human liabilities. He has shown the universe that the sons and daughters of Adam, through His grace, can keep the law of God and prove Satan wrong.³⁷ In taking on man's nature as it was when He became incarnate, Jesus spanned the gulf between heaven and earth, God and man. In so doing, He became the ladder that was both secure in heaven and planted solidly on earth, one that men and women could trust.³⁸

Barth draws the connections

Karl Barth drew with quick, clean strokes the indissoluble connection between the humanity of Jesus and man's salvation: "Flesh (*sarx*) is the concrete

ened human flesh, but He was equally sinless in both natures. He was God with us, but He lived as man with us in a complete self-emptying (see Phil. 2:7). While remaining God, He laid aside the use of His divine attributes, living as authentic man totally dependent upon His Father in heaven.

O wonder, ye inhabitants of the far-flung cosmos! Be amazed, ye angels in heaven! O worship Him, ye sinners on earth! For what other human, born of woman, can match this One in nature and deed? Who else gave up so much for so few? Who else became limited to one human body when He existed everywhere before? Who else chose to remain so limited forever? Who else plunged into sin's inoperative, terminal cancer to bring radical healing and not become infected Himself? Who else could become a human physician while distancing himself from the human plague?

How could Jesus be my example in all these? How could I copy Him? How could I be eternal, be God, be sinless in birth, sinless as a baby, and sinless throughout life? How could I overcome all He overcame? And when He finally

overcame Satan by His death at Calvary—which has cosmic and salvific consequences—how could I follow? Yes, I long to be like Him, but I admit that He is forever unique. With Peter I confess, “Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!” (Luke 5:8, N.I.V.). Yet He in mercy says, “Come unto me” (Matt. 11:28). He draws me by His uniqueness. I desperately need that which makes Him different from me.

Christianity is not just to be like Him. Christianity is life in Him. We are righteous only in Christ, never in ourselves. The good news is more than “Copy me.” It is always first and foremost “Cling to me,” “Abide in me” (John 15:4), “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27), and “You are accepted in the Beloved” (see Eph. 1:6).

True Christology ends, not in debate, but in grateful worship and joyful obedience. By beholding Him we not only praise Him but become like Him (see 2 Cor. 3:18). To see His love for us, His unique love as a unique man, galvanizes us; we yearn more to be filled with Him than to be like Him. This focus is crucial. It is on Him and His works, and away

from ourselves and our works. We do not just follow, we fellowship. It is not just rules, but relationship. Not just a practice, but a Person. For Christianity is Christ through and through. Out of this communion comes a marvelous wonder—we become like the One we admire the most! It is a natural by-product of longing to have Him dwell within. Christology climaxes in the exclamation “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20). Only in this dependent union can Jesus be our model man—never in His nature at birth.

¹ See E. C. Webster, *Crosscurrents in Adventist Christology* (Berne, Switzerland: Peter Lang Pub., Inc., 1984), for a comparative evaluation of the Christology of H. E. Douglass, E. Heppenstall, E. J. Waggoner, and E. G. White. Those focusing on Christ's sinful nature include (alphabetically): T. A. Davis, *Was Jesus Really Like Us?* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1979); H. E. Douglass and Leo Van Dolson, *Jesus: The Benchmark of Humanity* (Nashville: Southern Pub. Assn., 1977). Those focusing on Christ's sinless nature include (alphabetically): N. R. Gulley, *Christ Our Substitute* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1982); E. Heppenstall, *The Man Who Is God* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1977); H. K. LaRondelle, *Christ Our Salvation* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1980). Classical Christology has three major overemphases, Jesus as (1)

form of human nature marked by Adam's fall. . . . The Word is not only the eternal Word of God but 'flesh' as well, i.e., all that we are and exactly like us even in our opposition to Him. It is because of this that He makes contact with us and is accessible for us. In this way, and only in this way, is He God's revelation to us. He would not be revelation if He were not man. And He would not be man if He were not 'flesh' in this definite sense. . . .

“He was not a sinful man. But inwardly and outwardly His situation was that of a sinful man. He did nothing that Adam did. But He lived life in the form it must take on the basis and assumption of Adam's act. He bore innocently what Adam and all of us in Adam have been guilty of.”³⁹

“There must be no weakening or obscuring of the saving truth that the nature which God assumed in Christ is identical with our nature as we see it in the light of the Fall. If it were otherwise, how could Christ be really like us? What concern would we have with Him? We stand before God characterized by the Fall. God's Son not only assumed our nature but He entered the concrete form of our nature, under which we stand before

God as damned and lost. He did not produce and establish this form differently from all of us; though innocent, He became guilty; though without sin, He was made to be sin. But these things must not cause us to detract from His complete solidarity with us and in that way to remove Him to a distance from us.”⁴⁰

“The point is that, faced with God, Jesus did not run away from the state and situation of fallen man, but took it upon Himself, lived it and bore it Himself as the eternal Son of God. How could He have done so if in His human existence He had not been exposed to real inward temptation and trial, if like other men He had not trodden an inner path, if He had not cried to God and wrestled with God in real inward need? It was in this wrestling, in which He was in solidarity with us to the uttermost, that there was done that which is not [done] by us, the will of God.”⁴¹

In commenting on Barth's position, John Thompson, joint editor of *Biblical Theology* and professor of systematic theology of Presbyterian College, Queen's University, Belfast, asks: “Does the assumption of fallen humanity imply

sin in Christ? What is the Biblical witness? There can be little doubt that in this regard Menken, Irving, Barth, and others are right as over against the long weight of ecclesiastical tradition and exegesis. Those passages adduced by Barth as testimony to this view (see *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 152, e.g., Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21; Gal. 3:13; Matt. 27:38; etc.) are much more readily interpreted in this way than in the other. There is also clear testimony in the New Testament to the sinlessness of Jesus. These two strands, though logically hard to reconcile, are yet clearly discernible and point to the mystery, paradox, and meaning of the Incarnation.”⁴²

Until the third quarter of the twentieth century Adventist spokesmen consistently set forth Jesus as one who took our fallen nature. Like many non-Adventist scholars, they would have been appalled at the nonsequitur that to believe Jesus took fallen human nature necessitates believing also that He had to be a sinner!⁴³ Or that He would need a Saviour! Such assumptions are straw men. In no way did a taint of sin rest on Jesus—because He was never a sinner. He never had “an evil propensity”⁴⁴

too divine, the leading view for hundreds of years, seen in the Athanasian-Calvin extra Calvinisticum, in which Christ's divinity remained on heaven's throne while His humanity lived on earth; (2) too human, Arians; or (3) a divine-human mix, such as Luther's *communicatio idiomatum*. The two main views in Adventism consider each other's Christology as making Jesus either too divine or too human. This has obvious influence on how He is considered as our example in overcoming temptations.

² For a study in the Ellen G. White corpus, see Norman R. Gulley, "Behold the Man," *Adventist Review*, June 30, 1983. There is a serious need for a theological and hermeneutical study of Ellen White's writings in general, and her Christology in particular. Further research also needs to be done to see whether Ellen White's endorsement of Jones and Waggoner's theology was particularly supportive of their new emphasis, away from man to Christ, and not necessarily an endorsement of every detail of their Christology, such as the human nature of Jesus. (See Åge Rendalen, "The Nature and Extent of Ellen White's Endorsement of Waggoner and Jones" [research paper, Andrews University Library, 1978].) The fact that the Christology of Jones and Waggoner became ever more pantheistic also needs to be kept in mind. Pantheism is an overidentification of God with creation, which could be considered the logical conclusion of trying to make the man Jesus, in nature, altogether like other men. Ellen White's use of the term "sinful nature," and its synonyms, needs to be defined in the context of its use in her time, as well as within the historical context of each manuscript, letter, or article occurrence. Compilations drawn from a multiplicity of sources usually fail to give proper place to historical background. It is obvious that many doctoral dissertations could be helpful here. One fact is sure:

because He never sinned. Genuine temptations, real enticements to satisfy worthy desires in self-centered ways—unquestionably our Lord experienced these with every possibility of yielding. But "not for one moment" ⁴⁵ did Jesus permit temptations to conceive and give birth to sin. He too waged stern battles with self and against potentially sinful hereditary tendencies, but He never permitted an inclination to become sinful ⁴⁶ (see James 1:14, 15). He kept saying No, while all other human beings have said Yes.

We close where we began, by asking again the first question that should direct all studies regarding the humanity of Jesus: Why did Jesus come to earth? As noted earlier, He came to silence Satan's misrepresentations and accusations and to fulfill the role of fallen man's substitute, surety, and example. *The reason for His coming determined the way He came*—or else His coming would not have fulfilled its purpose. He gloriously triumphed over evil; He became the suitable substitute, the pioneer man, mankind's model. And He achieved all of this amid the worst of circumstances, exempt from nothing, in the same

The study of Christology must begin with the Biblical data. Then one can go on to read the Ellen White corpus. Ellen White never intended that the reverse procedure be followed, nor is it true to the Seventh-day Adventist presupposition that the Bible is the basis of all Seventh-day Adventist doctrines.

³ Definition of terms is crucial in this discussion. From the Biblical data to be considered, we will note: 1. Christ was unique as man (similar, not identical). Therefore, I define His human nature as at most sin-affected physically but absolutely sinless spiritually. He was the height of a man of His time; He became tired and hungry and felt pain. But spiritually He maintained an unbroken communion with God as had the pre-Fall Adam. 2. His birth by the Spirit was unique. It cannot be compared to our new birth by the Spirit, for we sinned prior to our new birth, whereas He was holy before His birth. Our new birth comes out of the context of the corruptible. His birth came within the context of the holy. 3. The doctrine of sin (harmartiology) lies behind the debate on the nature of Christ (Christology). Sin when understood as a broken relationship makes impossible a sinful nature for Jesus at birth. For there could be no greater demonstration of union with God than to go to the extent Christ did to do the Father's will (Heb. 10:7-9). Both schools of Christology within the Seventh-day Adventist Church need to use terms such as flesh, sin, same, similar, unique, Immaculate Conception, original sin, seed of Abraham, and seed of David as they are used by Biblical writers or as explained in this article. If this were done, then true communication between them would be established (they would be speaking about the same things), and many of the differences between them would dissipate.

⁴ *Englishman's Greek Concordance of the New Testament* (London: S. Bagster and Sons, 1903),

pp. 680, 681.

⁵ Reinhold Niebuhr incorrectly believed *sarx*, in Paul, to be the "principle of sin" (*The Nature and Destiny of Man* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949], p. 152).

⁶ *Hamartia* and its cognates are found 174 times in the New Testament, more than fifty times in Paul's writings. *Adikia* is a more specialized, legal word, which means "not righteous" (opposite to "righteousness," *dikaionē*). *Paraptōma* comes from *parapiptō*, "to fall down beside." See ed., Colin Brown, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), vol. 7, p. 573. For general information on *hamartia* and its uses, see Kittel's *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), vol. 1, pp. 308-311; W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* (London: Oliphants, 1946), vol. 4, pp. 32-34.

⁷ G. W. Bromiley, trans. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), p. 126. For full article see pages 124-144.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 130.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

¹⁰ 1 John 4:1-3 does not speak about which kind of human nature (sinful or sinless) Jesus took, but human nature itself. Gnostics, and later, Docetists, believed that He did not really become human, but merely appeared as human. This passage labels such a denial of His genuine humanity as antichrist.

¹¹ Here similarity doesn't mean a being other than human (extraterrestrial). Rather, as a human He was only similar to all other humans.

¹² "In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed. . . . He was touched with the feeling

heredity shared by men and women He came to save. Viewed from the standpoint of the basic issues in the great controversy, His victory takes on a marvelous and eternal perspective. And surely this is exceedingly good news in a universe awash with the bitter fruit of sin and mesmerized with endless misrepresentations about the character of God and what He expects from His believing children.

¹ J. F. Bethune-Baker, *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine* (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1957), pp. 255ff.; Arthur C. McGiffert, *A History of Christian Thought* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), pp. 276-290; John A. T. Robinson, *The Human Face of God* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1973), pp. 39, 40, 101-110, 196ff. See also "Alexandrian Theology" and "Cyril" in J. D. Douglas, ed., *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Pub. House, 1978), pp. 26, 277, 278.

² Douglas, loc. cit., See also "Antiochene Theology," p. 49, and "Theodore of Mopsuestia," pp. 964, 965.

³ Kenneth S. Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), pp. 172, 173.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 173, 174. See also Robinson, op. cit., p. 110; Hubert Cunliffe-Jones, ed., *A History of Christian Doctrine* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), p. 122.

⁵ Ellen G. White, in *The SDA Bible Commentary* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub.

Assn., 1980), vol. 5, p. 1129.

⁶ ———, in *The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 13, 1898.

⁷ *Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1957), pp. 59, 60.

⁸ See E. G. White's criticism of this argument, *Selected Messages* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1958) book 1, p. 408.

⁹ John Knox, *The Humanity and Divinity of Christ* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 52, quoted in Robinson, op. cit., p. 89. Robinson here notes that Knox "presents the ultimate choice for Christology thus: 'One may believe that Jesus was not an actual normal man, a man like us, and that He could be the Saviour only because He was not; or one may believe that He was an actual normal man—and moreover the particular man He was—and that He could become the Saviour only because He was.'"—Page 88.

¹⁰ See E. G. White, *Education* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1952), pp. 190, 125, 126; in *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 1, 1890.

¹¹ ———, *The Desire of Ages* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1940), p. 49.

¹² ———, in *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 20, 1890.

¹³ ———, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 686.

¹⁴ ———, *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 135; in *Signs of the Times*, Dec. 22, 1887; July 18, 1878. See also *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 136-141.

¹⁵ ———, *God's Amazing Grace* (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1973), p. 141; see also *Education*, pp. 77, 78.

¹⁶ ———, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1958), p. 64.

¹⁷ See the surveys in Harry Johnson, *The Humanity of the Saviour* (London: The Epworth Press, 1962), pp. 129-189; Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 155ff.; D. M. Baillie, *God Was in Christ* (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd.,

of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He 'knew no sin.' . . . We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ."—E. G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898 (cited in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131). "He was to take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man."—E. G. White, in *Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901 (cited in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 912).

¹³ He preserved His divinity throughout the Incarnation. It was quiescent within the self-chosen limitations of the kenosis (Phil. 2:6-8).

¹⁴ "The Old Testament's view of sin is the negative reverse side of the idea of the covenant, and hence is often expressed in legal terms."—*The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, vol. 3, p. 578. "Hamartia is always used in the New Testament of man's sin, which is ultimately directed against God."—*Ibid.*, p. 579. "In the fourth Gospel hamartia designates . . . a particular sinful deed, a state, or even a power which thrusts man, and the world taken as a whole, away from God."—S. Lyonnet and L. Sabarin, *Sin, Redemption, and Sacrifice: A Biblical and Patristic Study*, vol. 48 of *Analecta Biblica* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press), p. 39.

¹⁵ R. Govett, *Govett on Romans* (Florida: Conley and Schoettle Pub. Co., 1981), p. 134.

¹⁶ E. F. Harrison, ed., *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1969), p. 488.

¹⁷ R. C. H. Lenski, *Interpretation of Romans* (Columbus, Ohio: Wartburg Press, 1945), p. 366.

¹⁸ John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), vol. 1, p. 183. Read also pp. 178-209 on "The Analogy."

1961), pp. 16-20.

¹⁸ L. L. Wilkins and D. Priebe, trans. *Jesus—God and Man* (London: S. C. M. Press, Ltd., 1968), p. 362.

¹⁹ See Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 24, 25.

²⁰ See Robinson, *op. cit.*, pp. 36, 37.

²¹ See Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-45.

²² White, *God's Amazing Grace*, p. 141; White, in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 1092.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 1074.

²⁴ See William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 750-752.

²⁵ Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), pp. 314, 315. See also H. C. G. Moule, *The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans* (Cambridge: The University Press, 1899), pp. 138, 139.

²⁶ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

²⁷ C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, vol. 1, *The International Critical Commentary* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, Ltd., 1980), p. 379.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 379-383.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 158.

³⁵ Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

³⁶ Quoted in Robinson, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

³⁷ E. G. White, *My Life Today* (Washington: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1952), p. 323.

³⁸ ———, *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 311, 312; see also *Testimonies* (Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1948), vol. 6, p. 147.

³⁹ Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 151, 152.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 153. (Italics supplied.)

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁴² John Thompson, *Christ in Perspective: Chris-*

¹⁹ Govett, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

²⁰ Lenski, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

²¹ Several Greek words end in *ma* in Romans 5. The *ma* ending signifies "result." Two of these words are *fall* and *grace*, and compare the results of Adam's sin with Christ's salvation. Both results passed onto the human race from these two Adams equally irrespective of man's works, which is the central theme of Paul's Epistle.

²² There are eleven words in the Hebrew that connote different nuances of sin (see footnote 23).

²³ For a detailed study on sin, see G. C. Berkouwer, *Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), and Piet Schoonenberg, S. J., *Man and Sin: A Theological View* (South Bend, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965). And on Catholic "original sin" see R. C. Broderick, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Pub. Co., 1976), p. 440; *Baker's Dictionary of Theology*, pp. 486-489; George Vandervelde, *Original Sin: Two Major Trends in Contemporary Roman Catholic Reinterpretation* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1982); and John Murray, *The Imputation of Adam's Sin* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959).

²⁴ Both pantheism and the holy flesh movement failed to give proper place to Jesus as *monogenēs*. Pantheism overidentified God with man, removing the possibility of uniqueness. The holy flesh movement so focused on becoming like the sinless Jesus that again His uniqueness was not given proper place.

²⁵ Albert Schweitzer, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1954), pp. 254, 358, 368ff.

²⁶ Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 4 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1936-1969), vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 50; vol. 2, pt. 1, p. 63; *The Humanity of God* (London: Collins, 1961), pp. 44ff.

²⁷ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928).

tological Perspectives in the Theology of Karl Barth (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1978), p. 149.

⁴³ Ellen White, for example, took special care not to give the slightest impression that Jesus sinned in thought or act (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 123). He remained untainted, though He was tempted from within and without (*ibid.*, p. 329; *The Ministry of Healing* [Mountain View, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Assn., 1942], p. 71; *Selected Messages*, book 1, p. 95. See also *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 177; *In Heavenly Places* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1967], p. 155; *Signs of the Times*, Oct. 17, 1900; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 122, 123). He did not overcome sin because He was God or because He had a special kind of human nature; He overcame because He willed to resist, depending upon enabling grace as every overcoming Christian may (*Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 127-142; see also *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 73, 336, 363).

And yet she described the nature Jesus took in such phrases as the following: "man's fallen nature" (*Early Writings* [Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Pub. Assn., 1945], pp. 150, 152; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 112; *Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 134); "the form and nature of fallen man" (*Review and Herald*, Dec. 31, 1872); "the place of fallen Adam" (*ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1874); "identical with our own" (*Selected Messages*, book 3, p. 129); "bearing the humanity we bear" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 925); "our sinful nature" (*Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896); "man's nature in its fallen condition" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131); "fallen, suffering human nature, degraded and defiled by sin" (*The Youth's Instructor*, Dec. 20, 1900); "the nature of Adam, the transgressor" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 926); "the level of fallen humanity" (*General Conference Bulletin*, April 23, 1901); "the head of the fallen race" (*Signs of the Times*, April 26, 1905); and "the offending

²⁸ "What God is in His revelation, He is antecedently, and eternally in His own inner-Trinitarian Being" is the basic "revelation" presupposition behind Barth's theology. In this context his *logos ensarkos*, following enhypostatic Christology, considers that the humanity of Jesus has existence only in the eternal divinity of Christ. This comes close at times to presenting an eternal humanity of Jesus. (See *Church Dogmatics*, vol. 3, pt. 2, pp. 484ff., 493.) He also suggests that Jesus is not one man (*homo*) but mankind (*humanum*) (*ibid.*, vol. 4, pt. 2, pp. 48ff.).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pt. 1, p. 191; vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 51; vol. 4, pt. 1, pp. 69, 88, 90, 93-95, 98, 100, 203.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pt. 2, pp. 158ff., 191; vol. 3, pt. 2, p. 51.

³¹ The Gospels reveal the covenantal context in which Jesus and His contemporaries lived. Abraham was the father of the faithful children of Israel, who looked for the Messiah to come as the "son of David," or from the Davidic line. Mary's song recognizes this (Luke 1:55) as does Zechariah's. He mentioned that salvation had come to the house of David (verse 69), for God had remembered His covenant with Abraham (verse 73). The blind cried out to Jesus as "son of David" (Matt. 9:27; 12:22, 23; 20:30ff.; Mark 10:46, 47). Teachers of the law called Him "son of David" (Mark 12:35). During His triumphal entrance to Jerusalem, the throng cried out hosannas to the "son of David" (Matt. 21:9). Christ called the crippled woman "daughter of Abraham" (Luke 13:16). In the story of the rich man and Lazarus, the beggar was carried to Abraham's side after death (chap. 16:22), and eternal life is pictured by Christ as participation in the kingdom feast with Abraham (Matt. 8:11). While the Jews claimed Abraham as their father (John 8:33-39), Jesus went beyond this conventional line, stating, "Before Abraham was, I am" (verse 58). Two things must be kept in balance: Jesus is said to be from Abraham only because He was the promised Messiah, bringing to fulfillment all the covenantal promises. And Jesus is said to be before Abraham because antecedently and eternally He is God.

³² E. J. Waggoner, in *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 21, 1889; cf. *Christ and His Righteousness* (Oakland, Calif.: Pacific Press Pub. Co., 1890), p. 28ff.

³³ F. F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1974), pp. 87ff.

³⁴ Quoted in *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 88.

³⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer apparently thought so. See *Temptation* (New York: Macmillan, 1955), p. 16.

nature of man" (*Review and Herald*, July 17, 1900).

Other influential Adventists who have set forth the post-Fall human nature of Christ include: A. T. Jones, E. J. Waggoner, J. H. Durland, W. W. Prescott, S. N. Haskell, G. E. Fifield, Uriah Smith, M. C. Wilcox, Joseph E. Steed, Allen Walker, H. M. Kelley, G. B. Starr, Meade MacGuire, R. S. Owen, W. Howard James, C. P. Bollman, T. M. French, A. G. Stewart, M. N. Campbell, H. L. Rudy, Dallas Youngs, A. E. Lickey, W. B. Ochs, Frederick Lee, Carlyle B. Haynes, W. H. Branson, and M. L. Andreasen. Until its revision in 1949, *Bible Readings for the Home Circle* clearly taught this position.

⁴⁴ White, quoted in *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1128.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*; see also *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 131, 132.

⁴⁶ *Selected Messages*, book 3, pp. 131, 132; see also *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 49, 122, 123.

Minister and Anger

From page 7

Thomsen: Do ministers often direct their anger inward?

Hart: Yes. Depression and negativity are the two main signs of it. An inwardly directed anger usually gives rise to significant depression. Depression is self-punishing. It keeps a person from feeling good—from letting himself feel pleasure at all. It's a way of self-punishment.

Thomsen: Are there certain times when a pastor is more likely to experience anger?

Hart: Some physiological states make us more prone to anger. When we have been subjected to a prolonged period of stress, our tolerance for frustration and our resiliency go down, and we are likely to experience anger. Sunday evenings, when the weekend is over and it's back to the grind again, I find myself ruminating and not sleeping well. Monday I'm prone to be angry. I've got to watch myself very carefully on Mondays.

Thomsen: Is unresolved anger a major source of stress?

Hart: Yes, because anger triggers the fight-or-flight response. If you maintain that response, you are in a state of extreme stress.

Thomsen: Can stress-management strategies help prevent anger?

Hart: Stress-management strategies have the benefit of getting our stress levels down generally, and that will increase our tolerance in anger-producing situations.

Thomsen: Can you recommend a few strategies?

Hart: Well, you need to pay attention to three areas in keeping stress levels down. First, you need to improve your coping skills. Learn how to be assertive

in a healthy way. Learn how to communicate better. Learn how to manage your time. The second area has to do with cognitive skills, attitudes, and values. Learn how to filter out irritations, how not to take things too personally. Third, and most important of all, learn a good relaxation skill. Learn how to relax physically, because whether it's anxiety or stress, the damage cannot occur if you know how to relax physically.

Thomsen: Does a tendency to anger diminish with age?

Hart: I don't think that age has much to do with it. As we get older some of us learn not to take things so personally. We mellow with experience. But sometimes aging accumulates hurts. Our resentment builds, so we become angrier as we get older. It can go either way. It depends on whether or not you're a well-adjusted person. If you're well adjusted, you'll get better as you get older. But if you're not, you're in trouble.

Thomsen: How does a minister avoid overcontrolling emotions in the attempt to prevent acting on angry impulses?

Hart: By "overcontrolled," you're saying he suppresses his emotions?

Thomsen: He becomes very closed.

Hart: He retreats, you mean. He becomes afraid and self-protective. That's a habit that has to be unlearned. The only way you can unlearn it is to go and get some therapy. You have to learn new habits. It's a slow process and something that has to be done with the help of another.

Thomsen: If a minister has lost control and shown anger to parishioners, how can he resolve that situation?

Hart: With much embarrassment and much eating of crow. You can rapidly lose credibility with the congregation if you keep losing your temper. I think you need to avoid unnecessary self-justification. Apologize. Admit you were wrong. "I lost my cool. I became angry. I should not do that." And try not to do it again. Too often ministers become defensive

and try to justify themselves by saying, "Yes, but . . . you did this, or you said that." That erodes credibility with the congregation.

Thomsen: What is the role of forgiveness in dealing with anger?

Hart: Contemporary psychology teaches us how to hit back at the hurts that people cause us, not how to forgive. It has alienated us further from the source of our hurt and moved us farther away from forgiveness, not toward it. We need to rediscover the centrality of forgiveness in human relationships. Learning how to forgive and knowing when to forgive the hurts that are caused us are crucial steps to resolving the resentment that underlies so much of our anger. For the anger that is the response to hurt, forgiveness is the gospel solution.

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The nature of Christ

Discussion of Christ's human nature has gone on for nearly two thousand years, and continues among Seventh-day Adventist scholars. Perhaps we will never fully understand Christ, but we can accept His gift of life.

Did our Lord in His human nature begin where all of the other children of Adam began? Did Christ take the human nature of pre- or post-Fall man? If the human race was affected by the Fall of Adam and Eve, was Christ also affected the same way or was He exempt? If Christ accepted sinless human nature, did He have an advantage over us? Did He vicariously take upon Himself fallen human nature? If He took fallen human nature, was the "fallen" element related only to the physical and not to His moral character? Is it possible to settle the issue of the nature of Christ, which the Christian church has struggled with for two thousand years? Is it necessary for us to have a very definitive and accurate understanding of Christ's nature in order to be saved? Must Christ have our fallen nature (without ever sinning, of course) in order for Christians to live the unsullied life that He lived?

Through the years this subject has been one of fervent discussion. The book *Questions on Doctrine*, published in 1957, startled the thinking of Adventist ministerial leadership, since numerous statements from Ellen White's pen were used to support the concept that Christ had a sinless nature. M. L. Andreasen in a series of publications titled *Letters to the Churches* took issue with the position of *Questions on Doctrine*. L. E. Froom's book *Movement of Destiny*, published in 1971, again emphasized the sinless human nature of Christ, based largely on Ellen White's statements. In 1975 the book *Perfection*, published by the Southern Publishing Association, presented the views of four Adventist theologians on Christian perfection. The point was made that a person's soteriology is affected by his Christology. Eric Claude Webster in his published doctoral thesis, *Crosscurrents in Adventist Christology*, states, "The significance of this rift in Seventh-day Adventism is not insignificant."—Page 122.

We have purposely avoided placing

anything in our journal dealing with the nature of Christ for several years. My editorial in the April, 1978, *MINISTRY* testified to my own struggle with this subject. I pointed out that I had been overwhelmed with feelings of inadequacy in attempting to express my convictions. I prayed earnestly for the Lord to help me to dip my pen in the rich ink of love and truth rather than the ink of argument and debate. I am still convinced that the average man in the street or pew would be hopelessly lost if his salvation depended upon an incisive, scholarly understanding of Christ's nature. Yet, in view of the fact that there are those who earnestly believe that the church will fall or rise on its understanding of Christ and His nature, and in view of the renewed printed and verbal discussions on the subject, I feel that both sides of this question should be examined again. Therefore, we are setting forth two rather lengthy articles from two Adventist scholars.

We will leave it to our readers to study carefully the theology and reasoning introduced in these articles. If after reading them you wish to respond, we urge you to write short, pithy letters of not more than 250 words. We cannot promise to publish all letters, but we will select some and publish them on a percentage basis to give an idea of the direction the field is taking in this matter.

Above all, may the study of these articles lead us to a deeper understanding of the purpose of our Lord's incarnation and the tremendous sacrifice made on our behalf. Let not any argument over His nature obscure His eternal love and

the fact that the need of a personal relationship with Him as our Saviour transcends all arguments and debates. Let it be remembered that although there may be two camps of believers on this subject within our church, there are significant major points of agreement.

Both sides believe that our Lord was fully human and fully divine; that He was tempted in all points like as we are; that He could have fallen into sin, thus aborting the entire plan of salvation, but that He never committed one sin. (It seems that to a large degree the difference in views may be attributed to different understandings of what constitutes sinful nature. There may be much less separating the two sides in this debate than there seems to be.)

I am confident that both of the scholars who authored these position papers would agree with me that we all stand before Christ realizing so little of His unfathomable love! That our Lord's divine-human nature in many respects is inscrutable.

I conclude with the same words that I used to conclude my editorial of 1978. "I can barely touch Your incarnation with the fingertips of my mind, knowing an infinity of knowledge lies beyond a thousand lifetimes of study. But I can, by faith, believe You came as One who was fully God and fully man; One who could successfully challenge Satan to find in You the slightest fault; One who identified Himself with me as a human being; One who ran the risk of failure in order to guarantee my eternal life; One who made the ultimate sacrifice as a ransom for my soul; and One who still stands at the door of my heart daily knocking and seeking

I am convinced that the average man in the pew would be hopelessly lost if his salvation depended upon an incisive, scholarly understanding of Christ's nature. Yet I feel that this question should be examined again.

entrance, not to condone my sins, but to help me overcome them. Forgive me, O Saviour, for my feeble response to Your love. Forgive my arrogance in thinking that I know all about Your nature. Fill me with Your magnificent love so that I may never in the perversity of my mind

harshly judge my brother who may not see every point in doctrine as I see it. My only plea is that You will enable me to lift You, and You only, high before the world, not with words alone, but with a life surrendered and obedient to Your will."—J. R. S.

Wise rule in the church

Power. This word conjures up many images: strength, explosion, force, energy, authority, vigor, persuasion. Power is neutral; it can be exercised for good or evil. Pilate asked Jesus, " 'Don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?' " (John 19:10, N.I.V.). This was the display of "position" power. The source of this power comes from the title—the position held—and is given to us by others, usually by some formal decision.

Jesus demonstrated another form of power, "personal" power. "When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law" (Matt. 7:28, 29, N.I.V.). The source of this power lies in the individual's ability and character. Jesus' power came not so much from the fact that He was the Son of God but from living what He preached. The obvious goodness of His life, His purity and trustworthiness, set Him apart from all others.

The soldiers of Pilate obeyed out of fear, the disciples of Jesus obeyed out of love. Pilate commanded, Jesus requested. As a leader in the church, what is your power base? Do you rely on the power inherent in your position as pastor, president, chairman of the board, or on the power built upon your own personal integrity?

The exercise of the two forms of power depends on the maturity of the group being led. A father disciplining a 1-year-old will be forced to use coercion more than reason. The right to use coercion comes from his position as parent. By the time that child becomes a teenager the father, to be effective, needs to rely on personal power, the relationship he has built with that child. If coercion is still his style, it means his personal power is bankrupt.

The same principles apply in the church today. The wise leader does not

rely on rewards and threats, subtle as they may be, but on the genuine relationships he has built with his followers. When people sense that the leader considers their good first and his own second, they will go to extraordinary lengths to follow him. But if they feel that they are being manipulated, fed partial information, or ignored, they will find many subtle ways to sabotage the plans of the leader. People react in negative ways if they feel that they must

rubber-stamp decisions already made by a small elite. Some leaders seem to be arbitrary in selecting personnel to fill church offices. In dealing with pastors, a leader may be tempted to use the power inherent in the position to further his future rather than the future of the church.

Something within human nature wants to use position power. But that is not wise rule in the church. Jesus said: " 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you.' " Instead, Jesus taught that we must lead with the personal power that comes from being a servant. " 'Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant' " (Matt. 20:25, 26, N.I.V.). Evaluate your leadership today and ask yourself whether you approach others with a servant or kingly attitude. Servant power is based only on personal integrity and unselfishness.—J.D.N.

How good must it get?

Does timing of the Second Coming depend more on what God does or what Satan does? Is the world's end foreshadowed more by increase of evil or increase of good? How bad (or how good) must it get before Jesus comes back?

We noted in last month's editorial that Jesus spoke of various signs of imminence, but that the one He considered most significant was the preaching of the gospel to all the world (Matt. 24:14). In emphasizing this sign, He challenges us to focus our attention on His triumphs instead of Satan's. If we will focus our eschatological preaching on God's work instead of Satan's, we will escape the label of doomsayers and regain our proper standing as bearers of good news.

Admittedly it is sometimes easier to notice the gaudy workmanship of the archdeceiver than to ferret out the quiet working of the Holy Spirit. But there are evidences, positive points worth dwelling on, that can give courage to our souls and point our listeners to God's power instead of Satan's.

A great place to start telling of God's triumphs today would be to point to the success of combined lay/pastor evangelism in fields like Latin America and the

Far East. Not only are these stories compelling evidence of God's working, but they also paint a picture of what a person who believes in the soon return of Jesus should be doing.

But God's Spirit is not confined to working in only a few places. There is much more that we can say. As we view the world scene today, several major trends and situations are opening doors that have long been shut against the spread of the gospel. Among these I would list:

1. The increasing awareness in the world of the bankruptcy of the atheistic political system that only a decade ago seemed to many intellectuals to be the most viable hope for the future. Related to this is the new freedom granted to Christians in China.

2. The desire of the elite of almost every developing nation to learn English, the very language in which our church is best equipped to produce workers, opens the door for contact with thought leaders worldwide.

3. The progress we are making in spreading the gospel where we don't even have missionaries or members—through Adventist World Radio and

other media outreach. Our new radio station on Guam will count over half the world's people in its potential audience.

4. The success of the One Thousand Days of Reaping.

5. The famine and refugee situations that have disrupted millions from their human security and put them where the church could minister to them. While it may seem harsh to view disaster as opportunity, surely those who find eternal life because disaster disrupted their temporal life will praise God eternally. Related to this in the United States is "Reaganomics," which looks to private groups and churches to pick up the slack left by cutting back on government aid to those in need.

All of these are positive signs worth

dwelling on as we seek to point people to God's work instead of Satan's. Dwelling on Satan's work makes us want to hunker down in our own safe little homes, sheltered away from evil's marauding menace. Dwelling on the positive signs will challenge us to reach out and win the day for the Lord.

It's time to catch and share a vision of what God can do in this hour of opportunity. It will take courage and myriads more of dedicated workers to march through the doors that have swung open. But isn't it time for God's people to march to the drumbeat of faith instead of fear? How much better must the opportunities be before we seize them and do the work God has given us? How good must it get?—K.R.W.

purpose of proclaiming the Word of God and supporting public worship.

8. *Some of the freewill offerings that we give to God may be distributed to specific projects and areas of personal interest or special need.* There are many Biblical illustrations of project giving—for example, the building of the sanctuary and Solomon's Temple (Ex. 25:2, 8; 1 Chron. 29:6-9; 1 Kings 5 and 6). Today's special projects might also include special funds for paving the church parking lot, Bibles for a citywide crusade, special requests for disaster relief, and funding for simple houses of worship in Third World countries.

9. *Both planned giving and project giving should spring from the principle of grateful love to God. There should be no sense of coercion or compulsion.* The Scriptures clearly indicate that a willing heart is to be preferred over a sense of duty. "Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the Lord" (Ex. 35:5). "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor. 9:7).

With these basic giving principles in mind, let us evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of planned and project giving.

It is plain that planned and project giving both have advantages and disadvantages. It seems obvious, for example, that planned giving is a Biblically sound principle. In planned giving, members are educated to return to God their tithe and a set amount or a percentage of income as offerings. Within this amount of offerings they are then encouraged to distribute to specific needs, such as to the local church budget, regional church development, world missions, and special projects. In this way planned giving supports a proportionate distribution of funds. Every area can receive its fair share. The inequality that frequently results from one special project receiving disproportionate publicity is eliminated. Planned giving also makes possible the church budget plan, which has proved to be a successful and businesslike method of funding church activities.

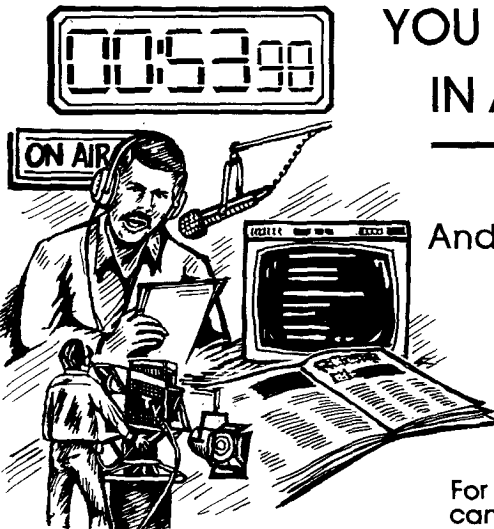
On the other hand, project giving is also a Biblically supported method, having the advantage of personally involving church members in a given project, and raising the level of member interest. Project giving may also reach segments of church membership who are not committed to or willing to follow the

PLANNED GIVING

From page 6

3:10). "The first of the firstfruits of thy land thou shalt bring into the house of the Lord thy God" (Ex. 23:19). The firstfruits were made up of both tithes and offerings. The tithe, which was a part of firstfruit giving, was considered sacred. "And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord" (Lev. 27:30). Many Christian

churches hold to the belief that the tithe should be used exclusively for those who minister the Word. "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? . . . Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:13, 14). The tithes and offerings given to God and placed in His storehouse are for the



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planned-giving method. It may also be the preferred method for funding capital improvements and church construction.

There are, however, some drawbacks to project giving. Some churches have launched a whole series of special projects and still asked church members to support the church budget through planned giving. The result was reduced group support for planned giving.

In project giving, the motivation behind both the project and the giving must be carefully monitored, for in the hands of the unconverted the wrong type of motivation may strengthen selfishness instead of benevolence. To help determine the motivation behind a given project, ask yourself: Who is being honored in this special gift or project? Am I supporting this special project because of some personal benefit? (For a fuller discussion of this topic, see "Church Fund-raising" in next month's issue of MINISTRY.)

Whichever method you follow, you must develop plans for fully involving church members through education,

commitment, and follow-up reporting. Your goal must be to make church members help claim "ownership" of church plans and projects through personal involvement as you match the method to your local church needs.

A combination of the two giving modes has proved effective and satisfying to many givers. The following illustrates such a plan.

Joe Church Member likes planned and project giving. He has covenanted with God to return the tithe (10 percent) and to give an additional 6 percent of his income as offerings. Joe divides the giving from his income as follows:

\$2,000 INCOME

10% = \$200 tithe, for gospel proclamation

6% = \$120 offerings, divided as follows:

2% = \$40 local church budget

1% = \$20 regional church development

2% = \$40 world missions

1% = \$20 special projects

Joe especially enjoys this giving plan because it includes a percentage for special projects of *personal interest*. This can include funds sent to an underprivileged child in India, an anonymous payment on a student's parochial school bill, a bag of groceries to the unemployed single parent down the street, gift subscriptions to Christian magazines sent to friends and relatives or any other special need that comes to his attention.

This plan allows Joe to give to special projects in a systematic way. It places a budgeted amount at his disposal for fulfilling special needs out of his regular planned giving to God.

In planning stewardship education in your church, first consider the basic Biblical principles suggested in this article. Returning regularly to God an honest tithe, and giving generous freewill offerings, "as God hath prospered," makes it possible to underwrite financially the great gospel enterprise in your local church and around the world.

YOUTH BAPTISMAL CELEBRATION GUIDE

Church leaders have been asking for a concise, easy-to-present study guide to help prepare youth for baptism. And now it's here. Formatted in an easy-to-use packet of removable lessons, the *Youth Baptismal Celebration Guide* is for use by all those who work with Adventist youth. Each of the 27 studies begins with a short illustration to set the mood and keep the interest of the baptismal candidate.

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The joy of friendship

We often hear it said that a pastor's wife cannot have close friends. But is it possible that there are other women like the author who need a kindred spirit to help them through life's hard times?

She came into my life one day just shortly after I had penned a poem of loneliness.

Whoever you are—
wherever you are—
come quickly
because I need a friend
different from all the rest.

I need a friend whose soul
is kin to mine;
a friend who can reach out
and heal my heart
with a gentle touch.

I need a friend
whose heart keeps time with mine,
for mine is out of step
with all the rest.

My Drummer is far up ahead.
His beat is clear,
but I must listen well
to march in step with Him.
Come, march with me
so I need not march alone!

The day she started working in our building another secretary brought her into the workroom and introduced us. She was tall, strikingly attractive, with a quiet dignity and what I recognized as an air of reserve and shyness. Each of us briefly acknowledged the introduction, but I don't remember with what words. I hope I welcomed her to our "team."

I don't recall what we said; what made the deepest impression on me was her clean, natural beauty, her noble bearing, and the trace of quiet suffering in her eyes. I don't remember that either of us smiled. Perhaps we didn't. An introduction is uncomfortable for two reserved people.

As she turned to walk down the hallway to her office I was not aware that the Lord had just brought a precious jewel into my life, one in whom I soon would see a resemblance to the Pearl of Great Price. After I came to know her better I would recognize that her friend-

ship had taught me much about what it means to have Jesus as a friend.

Because we were both reserved, it took some testing of the waters before we were able to converse easily. But in time I realized how accepting and responsive she was. I easily could have misinterpreted her reserve as unfriendliness, aloofness, or cold conceit. But beneath that exterior I discovered a humble, warm, loving, and gentle nature. She was a sincere and gracious lady, sensitive to the needs and hurts of others, but not intrusive. I recognized that she was not the type to impose her friendship on anyone, but neither would she reject friendship that was offered sincerely. She was a pastor's wife, a shepherdess.

write. We thought alike. We felt alike. We responded alike to life's experiences and challenges. We had the same basic temperament, the same ideals, and many of the same goals. We even shared some dislikes.

When I pondered these things I shook my head in wonder. We were so different, and yet so much alike, this quiet, kind lady and I. For the first time in my life I felt myself really a part of the planet, no longer an alien, alone. I had a number of wonderful friends whom I loved dearly, but I had always felt somewhat different from them. Now here was someone like me, someone in whose soul I saw a reflection of mine. I had never before experienced the type of

I easily could have misinterpreted her reserve as unfriendliness, aloofness, or cold conceit. But beneath that exterior I discovered a humble, warm, loving, and gentle nature.

First I learned to respect her intelligence and quiet spirituality. Next I learned to admire her creativity and her many skills and talents. And then I learned to appreciate her keen interest in all aspects of life. She was a compassionate, caring listener, one who listened with her heart and offered encouragement without judging. I felt that whatever I told her in confidence was safe in her keeping.

Our developing friendship was an adventure for me, because nearly every time we conversed I became aware of something we had in common. We shared an interest in books and art, an intense love of nature, a longing to

friendship I had now embarked upon—friendship with a kindred spirit. It seemed almost mystical.

We spoke about many things, but we never discussed our friendship. I don't know if she felt about it as I did. Perhaps she didn't take the time to think about it and analyze it. She had a family to occupy her thoughts and surround with her love. Perhaps she accepted our friendship as a matter of course. But my analytical mind pondered, evaluated, and savored it. It was something precious, something to be treated with the greatest care, something to be enjoyed and cherished and nurtured.

We could discuss serious matters, and

we could tease each other and laugh together. When I referred to her as "a delightful study in contrasts," she quipped, "You mean I'm schizophrenic?" But she knew I didn't mean that. I just found her personality delightfully refreshing.

Because she had the courage to admit that she was emotional, I learned not to be embarrassed if she saw the tears in my

And I marvel
at the beauty of your soul.
And I, who love all beauty so,
Thank God for tulips and for you.

For more than three years we worked on the same floor and sat side by side at morning worship. For more than three years we shared memories, concepts, ideas, concerns, sorrows, joys.

Perhaps she accepted our friendship as a matter of course, but my analytical mind pondered, evaluated, and savored it. It was something precious to be enjoyed and cherished and nourished.

eyes when something touched my heart. She had better surface control than I did, but a time or two we wept together. And we often prayed for each other and each other's concerns.

I wrote a poem for her one day:

A tulip pierced through the sod,
Summoned by some mysterious
force.
It grew and grew, until at last
It formed a bud that
promised to be red.
But the spring was cold and wet,
And the bud stayed closed
In self-protection from the elements
Lest it be ruthlessly destroyed.

At last a warm day came,
And the bud,
with newfound confidence,
Parted its petals to display
Unrivalled beauty—and, oh, the joy!
You are like that tulip, Friend.
Reserved and quiet, cautious
Lest your heart be broken,
You protect your secret self.
But when warmth and love
Are offered you,
You learn to trust,
And you part the petals of reserve
To reveal an inner beauty
That is precious, unsurpassed.

I marvel at the beauty of the tulip

And then she moved away. When she told me she was leaving I closed the door of my office and wept in private. That time I could not let her see my tears. I had to be alone with my grief.

I suppose my friend has faults, for she is human, but I don't know what they are. She has so many delightful traits that I have no desire to look for flaws.

Prayers from the parsonage

I'm tired of long commutes, rush-hour traffic, and exhaust pollution. My eyes are weary of billboards and neon signs. My ears ring with the sounds of cursing men, shouting women, and squalling babies.

This city neighborhood makes me claustrophobic. Hemmed in, I cannot avoid intrusion—even inside my home. I can still hear the loud discussions and parties. A steady stream of salesmen phone or appear at my door.

If only I could live where I'd have privacy and serenity! I want to escape to a barren beach, a sun-dappled woods, or a lofty mountain.

Cherry B. Habenicht

Why should I when I can see the beauty of Jesus in her? She has been such a blessing to me and has enriched my life so much. A kind heavenly Father sent her into my life just when I needed her, at a time when I was attempting to piece my shattered life together into something meaningful and useful. My friend's understanding and encouragement supplied the balm I needed, the "gentle touch." I learned to love her as deeply as my own sister.

Now we write often, and she is never out of my thoughts for long. So many things bring her to mind—a song, a phrase, a poem, a picture, a flower, a bird, a book, a landscape, a characteristic in someone else. It is easy to speak about her to others. How I wish everyone could know and appreciate and love her as I do!

Once, in pondering my deep love for my friend, I thought, This is how we should feel about Jesus!

Indeed, Jesus is our greatest blessing. If our friendship with Him is strong and beautiful and brings us joy, we shall be able to speak about Him enthusiastically and joyfully. We shall want everyone to know and appreciate and love Him as we do! And isn't that the ultimate goal of Christian friendship—to reveal the beauty of Jesus and make Him attractive to others? My friend, a gentle shepherdess, has done it well.

Escape . . . Yes, that is what it would be. Here I am in the thick of people and activities. Do plants and animals need my witness? Will trees and flowers be better because I have lived among them?

"Then the Lord said, ' . . . And why shouldn't I feel sorry for a great city like Nineveh with its 120,000 people in utter spiritual darkness?' " (Jonah 4:10, 11, T.L.B.).

Silence my complaints, Lord. May I walk in peace among the rushing crowds. May my ears be tuned to people's needs in the midst of noise. May my eyes focus on beauty in spite of prevailing ugliness.

You have called me to this city. Make me a light in the darkness. I will not run away.

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This course, written by Dr. Floyd Bresee and others, is based on the principle that practice is the best way to learn the art of preaching. Each lesson expounds one preaching principle and then gives an assignment designed to help the participant apply the principle and test the success of application. This course originally appeared in MINISTRY magazine during 1984 and is now available as a unit.

Cost: \$7.50—includes twelve articles, study guide, loose-leaf notebook.
Earns: Two continuing education units (20 clock hours).

DECISIONS Course No. HCM-7013

This course was written by Mark Finley, a highly successful evangelist and teacher of evangelism. It presents solid spiritual and psychological principles for getting decisions. Ministers are using this course to train their laypeople as soul winners. The course is designed especially for Seventh-day Adventist ministers.

Cost: \$3.50—includes textbook and study guide.
Earns: One continuing education unit (10 clock hours).

COPING WITH GRIEF Course No. HCM-7014

The church, above all organizations, should care about helping those who hurt. But how? This is not just a course about grief. It is about how Christ can use you as a healing pastor, and your congregation as a healing community, to help those who suffer any kind of loss. The course was written by Larry Yeagley, a hospital chaplain and frequent presenter at MINISTRY Professional Growth Seminars.

Cost: \$23.95—includes two textbooks, study guide, and loose-leaf notebook.
Earns: Two continuing education units (20 clock hours).

PRINCIPLES OF PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION Course No. HTH-7015

Written by Hans K. LaRondelle, Th.D., this course is a must for anyone who has never

investigated the historicist method. Here are seven principles that will help keep your study of prophecy on track and make it exciting. You will discover answers to such questions as, Is the modern nation of Israel a fulfillment of Bible prophecy? How can Christ be found in Old Testament prophecy? Can the New Testament be used to interpret the prophecies of the Old?

Cost: \$20.95—includes textbook, study guide, loose-leaf notebook.
Earns: Two continuing education units (20 clock hours).

KEEPING CHURCH FINANCE CHRISTIAN Course No. HCM-7029

Written by Mel Rees, popular lecturer specializing in Christian stewardship, and others. Each month during 1985 a continuing education article will appear in MINISTRY. These articles give practical principles for the pastor who must see to the financing of his church program. Those wishing to take the course must send for the study guide.

Cost: \$ 3.00—includes study guide only, or

\$12.00—includes study guide plus alternate issues of MINISTRY (for those receiving the magazine only every other month).

Earns: Two continuing education units (20 clock hours).

COURSES FOR WIVES OF MINISTERS

TRANSITIONS Course No. HGS-7028

Designed especially for ministers' spouses, this course was written by Dr. Donna Webb, of Walla Walla College. Needs change as we go through different stages of life. Failure to understand this changing process can lead to feelings of failure, depression, mid-life crisis, wanting out of a relationship, or even a desire to escape from the ministry. To understand these changes and resolve them through Christ is to keep growing and to stay happy.

Cost: \$5.00—includes textbook, study guide.
Earns: Two continuing education units (20 clock hours).

CARE-FRONTING Course No. HGS-7086

Is the minister's wife most like Jesus when she's passive or assertive? How can she serve without feeling imposed upon? Can she be assertive without being overly aggressive? This course on appropriate Christian assertiveness was prepared especially for wives of ministers by Betty Lou Hartlein, of Andrews University.

Cost: \$14.95—includes two textbooks, study guide, and loose-leaf notebook.
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Let's Talk

Let's Talk, the Voice of Prophecy's newest program, has been drawing good audience response. The program consists of a twenty-minute interview followed by forty minutes of call-in time. This attempt to reach another unique segment of radio's listener potential first aired in January of this year. It originates on Saturdays at 7:00 P.M. Pacific time and is heard on twenty stations coast to coast.

Among the first guests on the program were Jack Provonsha, Kay Kuzma, and Ariel Roth. Harold Richards, Jr., serves as program host, assisted by his brother Kenneth.

Those interested in having the program broadcast in their area should contact Franklin Hudgins, The Voice of Prophecy, P.O. Box 2525, Newbury Park, California 91320. Phone (805) 499-1911. The Voice can supply a demonstration tape and information for you to take to your local stations.

Intervention in substance abuse

"Pastoral Intervention in Substance Abuse," a conference for ministers on roles and action steps to take to intervene in problems of alcoholism and drug usage and dependency among families, youth, and the community, will be conducted by the Institute of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency and the Andrews University Theological Seminary from July 8 to 11, 1985. The conference will present helpful strategies and informa-

tion useful in meeting substance abuse problems.

For information contact Dr. Patricia Mutch, Institute of Alcoholism and Drug Dependency, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49104.

"I Care" center

The Orangeburg, South Carolina, Seventh-day Adventist church transformed its fellowship building into a multipurpose room and opened an "I Care" center in 1982. In 1983 the church received a commendation from the county council for distributing 20,000 items of clothing, shoes, and other personal items in its first year of operation. In 1984 it distributed more than 50,000 items and had contact with an average of 100 people per week. The center is open only two hours (one evening) per week.

Pastor Marvin Hunt says this is not just another Dorcas center, because "I Care" operates on an exchange basis. People who come are asked to bring something usable to exchange for anything they take, and although those with nothing to exchange are not turned away, the exchange basis helps preserve dignity. The program has greatly increased community awareness of this small rural church, and many non-Adventists make donations. The center also hosts community service programs and seminars.

For further information write to Elder Marvin Hunt, Orangeburg Seventh-day Adventist Church, 780 Ben-

nett Avenue, Orangeburg, South Carolina 29115. Enclose a 22¢ stamp for postage.

Booklet on charismatic movement

A fifty-page booklet called *The Charismatic Movement* was prepared by a group of SDA scholars in 1973. It includes chapters on the history of the gift of tongues prior to the eighteenth century and during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, plus excerpts from a confidential report to the General Conference on theological considerations, a charismatic case study, and counsels and practical helps for pastors. Contributors to the booklet include V. Norskov Olsen, Jan Paulsen, N. R. Dower, G. M. Hyde, Morris Venden, and Roland Hegstad. MINISTRY has a small supply of these books. They are available at U.S. \$1 for individual copies, \$3 for twelve, or \$10 for fifty. Write to us at 6840 Eastern Avenue NW., Washington, D.C. 20012. Include your check or money order.

Witnessing to Witnesses

E. B. Price, who was communication secretary of the Greater Sydney Conference, Australia, for fourteen years, has just updated an excellent tool for use in working with Jehovah's Witnesses. His sixty-page book, *Our Friends: The Jehovah's Witnesses*, contains many helpful items including a history of the Watchtower Society, photocopies of Watchtower materials, and

Bible studies to use in leading Witnesses in their search for further truth. If you or your members are working with Witnesses, you will find the resource material invaluable. The author has had excellent success in winning Witnesses and has recently returned to the pastoral ministry to have more time for this work.

Books are available for US\$4 postpaid in the United States. Outside the United States add \$1 for postage. Order from MINISTRY Services, Box 217, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866.

NIV Bible on cassette

Hear the New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs in a beautifully produced multi-voice production of the New International Version that will make you feel as though you were right there when the events happened. Using the actual text of the Bible for their script, actors portray events with narration and musical background. MINISTRY has a limited quantity of tapes available at savings of 50 percent for our readers. Regular price is \$59.95 for the New Testament, \$29.95 for the Psalms and Proverbs. MINISTRY readers' prices are US\$29.95 for the New Testament and US\$14.95 for Psalms and Proverbs.

Also available: Narrated KJV New Testament US\$25.00; Narrated KJV Psalms and Proverbs US\$14.95. Add \$3 postage and handling per order. Order from MINISTRY Services, Box 217, Burtonsville, Maryland 20866.

Recommended reading

The Person of Christ

David F. Wells, Crossway Books, Westchester, Illinois, 1984, 224 pages, \$7.95, paper. Reviewed by Jack Blanco, professor, division of religion, Southern College, Collegedale, Tennessee.

This volume is intended primarily for college students, laymen, and teachers. But studious pastors will find David Wells's work helpful in explaining the doctrine of the nature of Christ from scriptural, historical, and theological perspectives.

The author places the current discussion of the nature of Christ in proper perspective. He takes a wholistic view and examines how the church's understanding of Scripture has affected the doctrine through the centuries.

An additional benefit this little volume provides is insight into the interrelatedness of Christian doctrines and of how philosophical forces and theological preferences have contributed to our present fragmented understanding of the person of Christ.

In his final chapter Wells takes soundings of the Christologies of Barth, Pittenger, and Schillebeeckx. For Barth, the author points out, Christ was the Wholly Other and "Christ in you" needed to be understood not as a reality experienced, but only as an objective reality in history.

Pittenger's view, Wells says, is a shift from the antiliberalism in Barth to a repristination based on Whitehead's process theology. Here Christ is merely the forerunner of other men who each in their own way are imitations of God.

According to Wells, Schillebeeckx, a Dominican priest prominent in shaping the New Catholicism, holds that Christ is whatever He means to each of us as we experience the life He experienced. Thus Jesus differs in degree but not in kind from religious people everywhere.

Although the reader may find a few "dry" places in the volume, the insights gained make it worthwhile reading.

Lord of the Impossible

Lloyd John Ogilvie, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1984, 224 pages, \$9.95. Reviewed by Jack Blanco.

As the title suggests, Lloyd Ogilvie has lifted his Hollywood congregation and his TV viewers to new heights of positive Biblical thinking. This is an excellent little volume for creative preaching.

The book consists of twenty experience sketches from a fresh viewpoint. Ogilvie has related the experiences of yesterday's men and women to the hurts and hopes of men and women today.

The content is familiar and so provides easy reading, but the challenge this little volume provides is to customize the experiences of Scripture to meet the needs of people in congregations everywhere and to inspire them to read more Scripture. This volume should not be used as a book of ready-made sermons, but as a seedbed of ideas, outlines, and insights that can be repackaged and ignited. As a sermon workbook this little volume peppered with applicable illustrations will bring rich dividends.

In His Image

Paul Brand and Philip Yancy, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1984, 291 pages, \$11.75. Reviewed by Jerry Lastine, director of stewardship and communication, Indiana Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

The authors of *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made* (1981) have produced another best-seller. They use the latest information available on the human body to give the reader a practical understanding of the body of Christ.

Sections dealing with one's images, blood, head, spirit, and pain make the book a valuable pastoral asset for illustrating gospel truth.

Since the advent of the Caring Church concept, the final section on pain is especially appropriate. Lepers and Laodicea have similar problems. The spiritual application of pain teaches us that "the body poorly pro-

tests what it does not feel." Illustrations from Dr. Brand's work among lepers give impressive explanations of the value of pain.

I have six pages of notes in the flyleaves of this book suggesting sermon illustrations. It is more than a book; it is a masterpiece of new and creative ideas.

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