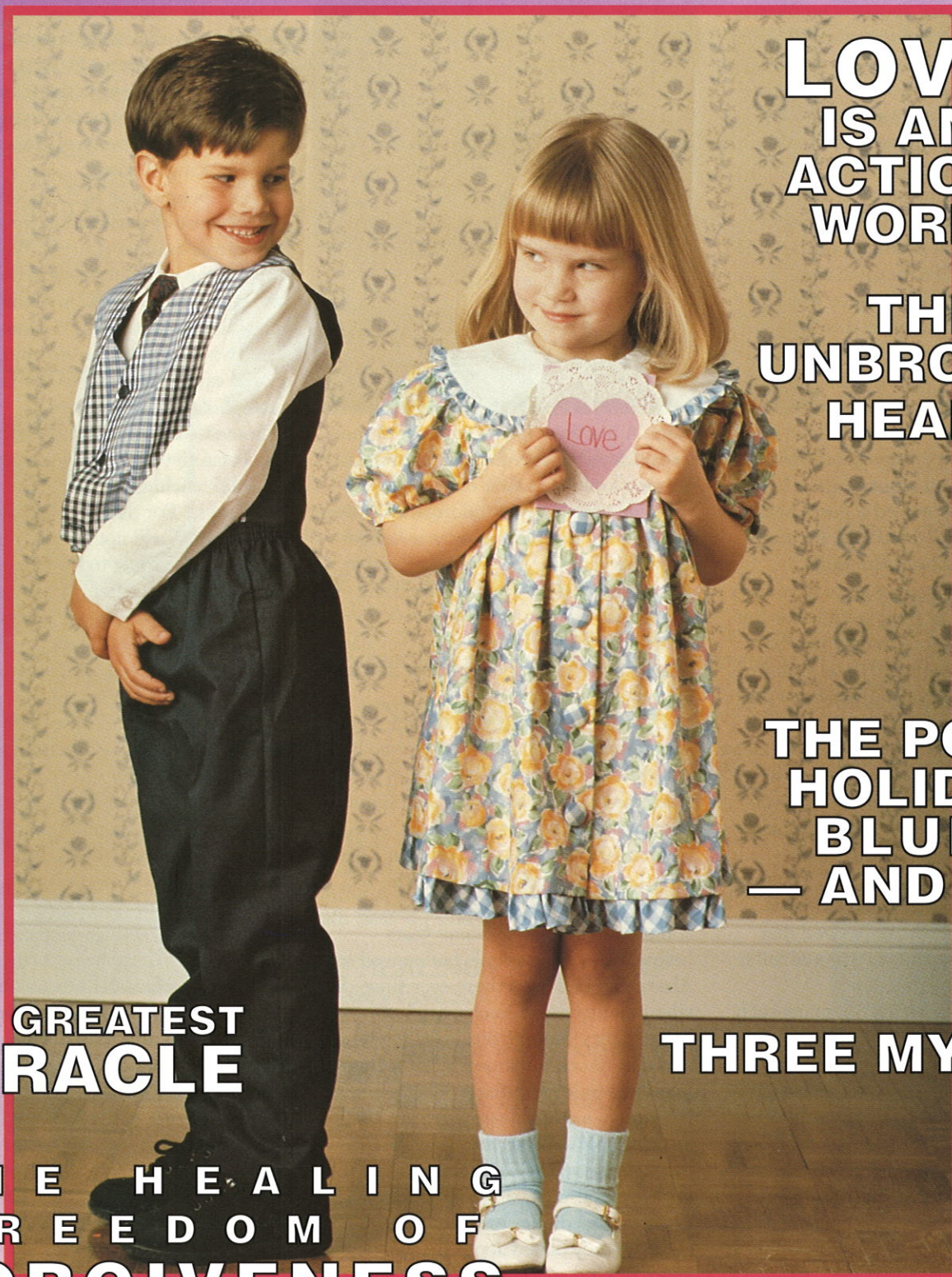


PSYCHOLOGY FOR
LIVING

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1998



**LOVE
IS AN
ACTION
WORD**

**THE
UNBROKEN
HEART**

**THE POST-
HOLIDAY
BLUES
— AND YOU**

**THE GREATEST
MIRACLE**

THREE MYTHS

**THE HEALING
FREEDOM OF
FORGIVENESS**

by Clyde M. Narramore

IN TIMES LIKE THESE

WHEREVER WE GO we hear about the second coming of Christ. Authors write books on the subject; conference speakers emphasize it; pastors preach about it; and Christian radio broadcasts and television programs discuss it nearly every day.

Even unsaved people are talking about "the End Times." There seems to be a stir everywhere relating to the fact that times cannot become much more evil and that **the return of Christ is the only event that will solve the problems of the world.**

As you and I take our first steps in this new year, I would like to give you a challenge. It is summed up in this wonderful portion of Scripture: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (II Timothy 4:7).

I suppose when it is all said and done, **one of the finest commendations that can ever be given a born-again believer is that he has waged a good battle; he has not stopped halfway through the race; he has kept the faith.**

I have lived long enough to have seen people, perhaps in their twenties or thirties, who appeared to be fighting the good fight. They seemed to be winning the race. And from all appearances they were keeping the faith.

But years later I found that these same people were no longer on track. For some reason they dropped by the wayside and are now hardly distinguishable from the unsaved who have never claimed to be children of God. You think about these people, and you wonder what happened. You are amazed that having started so well, they would fail in the middle of their pursuit.

Regretfully, I can think of many such people. I remember, for example, a young man and his wife in their early thirties. They seemed to have a happy marriage, they were friendly and talented, and were leaders in their local evangelical church. They seemed so outstanding and dedicated that I felt almost certain they would continue to magnify Christ, lead others to the Lord, and be an inspiration to all.

But sadly, this was not the way the story



went. A few years later I inquired of them, and a friend told me they had moved to another location. A year or so later I inquired again and was informed that they were having trouble and were no longer attending church. A few years after that, I discovered that they had divorced and were now living a godless lifestyle. My heart sank when I learned how they had turned away from God's purpose and had chosen not to serve Him.

During this same period of time I knew another young man and his wife who had trusted Christ as their Savior. They were living for the Lord and were an inspiration to everyone who knew them.

Many years later — in fact, just a few months ago — Ruth and I were in Anchorage, Alaska, where I would be conducting a seminar. Some years before, this young couple had moved to Alaska and had lived there ever since. So when we arrived in Anchorage last August, they came to our hotel to see us and take us out to dinner. What a blessing it was to be with them. They are serving God in a dynamic way and are still growing spiritually as they have been through the years. Their children, now grown, are also walking with the Lord.

As we had dinner together that evening, they talked about the wonderful Word of God and how it blessed and guided their lives. Nearly all of their con-

versation was about the excitement of living for Jesus. For many years they had been fighting the good fight. They were running the race in a tremendous way, and each day they were keeping the faith.

Satan, as you know, is our great enemy. He is a sneak, a thief, and a deceiver. He is continually trying to discourage us and prevent us from walking with the King of Kings.

Some people stop in the middle of the race because of persecution from friends or relatives or other sources. We who are running the race must realize that "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). Since we know who our enemy is, it should cause us to turn to the Lord who can uphold and strengthen us.

Some Christians will fall by the wayside because they will fail to hold fast to the solid teachings of Scripture. God's Word says, "For the time will come when they (people) will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables" (II Timothy 4:3, 4).

This year — 1998 — can be a great one for you and me if we humbly follow the Lord each day. But we can rest assured that it will also be a year when world conditions, including those in our local communities, will become more and more sinful. Television will carry many more vulgar, filthy programs with profanity, godlessness, and obscenity increasing by the week. We can expect tremendous upheavals, to the extent that we may feel almost dismayed. But **we can find strength in God's Word** which affirms, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

May I urge you, dear friend, to determine that throughout each day of this new year, you will fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith. It's the only way to be a winner!

Clyde M. Narramore

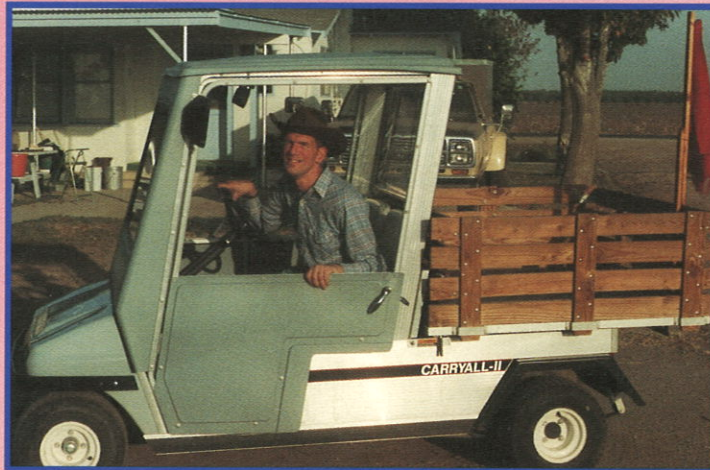
PSYCHOLOGY FOR LIVING

January-February 1998 Vol. XL No. 1

DEPARTMENTS

- 2 A Personal Word
- 4 From The Editor's Desk
- 4 What People Are Saying
- 16 Health Watch
- 16 Living Memorials
- 17 Answers To Your Questions
- 18 Insights And Sharing
- 19 Our World Today

FEATURES



STAFF

Founder and President:

Dr. Clyde M. Narramore

Editor:

Ruth E. Narramore

Editorial Assistant and Staff Writer:

Eva Hallam Solberg

Art Director:

Donald Ensign

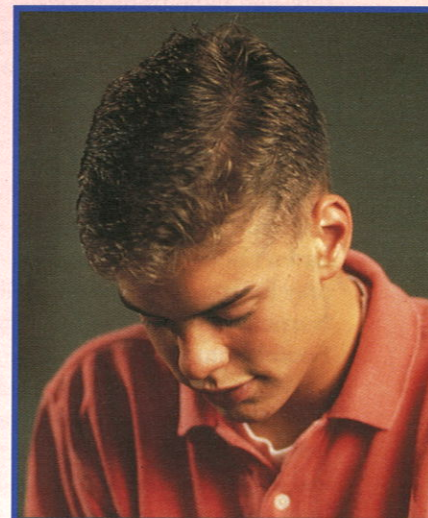
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Benjamin Burnweit

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5 THE POST-HOLIDAY BLUES —AND YOU BY DEODY LANTORIA

Do you struggle with the "blahs"? What can you do about it?

7 THE GREATEST MIRACLE BY ADRIAN ROGERS

Nature forms us, sin deforms us, education informs us, penitentiaries reform us, but Jesus transforms us.

8 THE UNBROKEN HEART BY JONATHAN KATTENHORN

Sometimes loving God requires that we trust Him — for something better.

10 THREE MYTHS

BY VERNON C. LYONS

Religions disagree on the most significant item of all: how a person gets to Heaven.

12 THE HEALING FREEDOM OF FORGIVENESS

BY KEN NICHOLS

The ability to forgive is only possible supernaturally.

14 LOVE IS AN ACTION WORD

by DAVID W. YOUNT

The New Testament tells us how to show our love.

14 TOMORROW (poem)

Author unknown

15 Winners of Distinguished Service Award



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I CAN REMEMBER WHEN Byron, our little grandson, was trying to learn to walk. It was his first birthday and he was thrilled about all the presents and balloons and goodies — but what seemed to excite him most was that he was achieving the ability to be mobile on his own power. This would be the beginning of a new tomorrow.

Not that there weren't lots of failures. There were. He'd take two or three steps and plop. He'd find himself in a sitting position on the floor. But that didn't deter him. He'd roll over, put his hands on the floor, thrust his little bottom up in the air, and raise himself to an upright position. This went on and on. Plop! Bottom up and push to a standing position! The important thing was that he never gave up. Although he continued to fall after every couple of steps, he persevered and got himself up — over and over again.

TO THINK ABOUT

by Ruth E. Narramore



But that stage didn't last very long. Soon he was walking all over the place, then running, then climbing on everything that was climbable. Today, at four and a half years of age he is a vivacious little boy who enjoys all kinds of physical activities. He loves riding his two-wheeler (bike) and swims like a fish. But what prompted him to achieve more and more were his prior successes. Each success opened the door to further success. That's the way life is for all of us.

Success is the basis for greater accomplishments. And when we succeed at little things, we continue to succeed at bigger ones. Even the smallest success prepares us for further achievement.

You have heard the old adage, "Success is a ladder and those who attain it must start at the bottom and climb to the top." Shopworn as this statement is, it carries a lot of truth.

Each step up prepares us for the next rung. When we take one successful step, we look forward to the next — and the next — and the next. When most of our tries are successes, we can take a few bumps and bruises along the way. But when the failures outweigh the successes, it spells one thing — discouragement! And discouragement is the archenemy of success.

There's nothing like failure to kill incentive and ambition. People don't mind working hard when the reward is accomplishment. But to work

without results is no better than aimlessly marking time — going 'round and 'round in the same old rut, getting nowhere. Like a donkey on a treadmill. And that's when life becomes the "same old grind." The truth is that it takes more than striving; it also takes some arriving.

As you embark upon this new year of 1998, think about your goals and what you would like to achieve. Perhaps you have determined that you want to be more faithful in your daily Bible reading and devotions. That's a lofty resolution. But if you should fail a few times, don't get discouraged. And don't give up. Pick yourself up just like little Byron did when he was learning to walk. And go on from there.

You can also have a ministry of encouragement. You can help others see that failure doesn't need to be permanent. It's the will to go on that counts! □

WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING

GOD-GIVEN TALENTS

Thank you for using your God-given talents to the fullest. You have helped me through your magazine, letters, and radio tremendously.

*Elizabeth Jackson
Houston, Texas*

KEEPS OUR MARRIAGE HEALTHY

It's been awhile since I've written. Rest assured, you haven't been forgotten. We pray for you and the Narramore Christian Foundation.

We have been so busy; some days our schedules are just packed full. My husband and I go away together at least one long weekend a

month. This helps to keep our marriage relationship healthy the way God intended. As of last May we have been married for 12 years. God has blessed us.

*Mary Kretsinger
Hagerstown, Maryland*

A LETTER FROM ROMANIA

I'm writing to inform you how blessed and delighted I was after getting to read some of the inspirational booklets of *Psychology For Living*. It was in the school library that I got to know about those booklets.

I would be so glad to have any other materials you have for emotional adjustment.

Thanks so much for being a blessing.

*Prince Samuel
Bucharest, Romania*

LOVE YOUR MAGAZINE

Thank you for your monthly magazine. I can't get you on the radio, but I love your magazine.

*Mrs. Areta Limburg
Concord, Tennessee*

A FRIEND FROM THE WEST INDIES

I thank God for your program. I am always blessed by your various ministries and share your booklets with others.

I teach the young ladies in

my local church and know this material will be of tremendous value to us all.

*Jacqueline Alonzo
Canaan Tobago, West Indies*

GRATIFYING RESPONSE

Thank you for your prompt reply to my question and for the referral. This is gratifying proof that my long-time investment in your ministry has been worthwhile — the fact that you come so quickly to the aid of those in need of psychological guidance.

May God bless you in counseling all who come to you with their needs.

*M. F.
Sarasota, Florida*



THE POST-HOLIDAY BLUES—AND YOU

Do you struggle with the “blahs”?
What can you do about it?

by Deody Lantoria

DO YOU EVER FEEL as withered and lifeless as that tree you routinely toss out after the holidays?

Not everyone reacts this way, of course, but there are those who do. For them, it's an all-too-familiar feeling. Exit holidays, enter blues.

You're probably tired of hearing people say, "If you were really trusting God, you wouldn't let things get you down." Fear of being judged may keep you from turning to other Christians

for support. Yet, you can't brush off the fact that the Apostle Paul did exhort believers to "rejoice in the Lord always" (Philippians 4:4), which suggests they were expected to continually bubble over with joy.

"I get depressed after the holidays," Kristen told me. I must admit that her confession startled me. As a Christian worker, a pastor's wife, and a loving mother, she projected the strength of a fortress that harbored every secret anti-

dote to depression. Nevertheless, her honesty blanketed me with instant comfort, ridding me of the notion that I suffered alone.

As we shared our mutual feelings, we began to question our spiritual standing. We went from blaming ourselves to wondering about the scientific verifiability of our complaints. *Were we inventing a non-existent disorder?*

Why the post-holiday blues and who gets them? While reasons for feeling depressed may be varied, I found they can safely fit into one of three categories: *spiritual, physical, or emotional.*

1. **Your relationship with God**—A Christian leader once told me, “Depression takes place when one’s fellowship with God is shallow.” But as I thought about this, I realized that while this may be so in some cases, it isn’t always true. Even those who enjoy a rich relationship with God will sometimes feel low and depressed.

2. **Your physical condition**—You are probably tired after the holidays. You’ve been pushing yourself to get ready — shopping, cooking, decorating, helping with the Christmas program at church, going to parties, and involved in a myriad of activities. Your adrenaline kept you going. Now that it’s over, you feel deflated. You may also have been eating too much and eating a lot of the wrong things, such as sweets and goodies of all kinds.

3. **Loneliness**—My co-worker, Lisa, a chronic post-holiday-blues sufferer told me, “When my daughters were growing up, I don’t remember feeling depressed after the holidays. But now that they’re grown and independent, when the Christmas holidays are over, it’s a terrible letdown — and I’m left feeling lonely and depressed.”

4. **Boredom**—The absence of goals can lead to boredom. When you’re not aiming to accomplish something, there’s nothing to look forward to or fire you up in the new year.

5. **The bills are rolling in**—Those post-holiday bills are guaranteed to trigger as much anguish as the pleasure you enjoyed when shopping. As a result of non-prudent buying, you may find yourself facing more bills every time you check the mail.

6. **Falling short of your own standards**—Perhaps you set certain goals for yourself last year but felt you didn’t come close to achieving them. The result? You feel depressed. That this happens at the beginning of the year can be explained by the fact that the new year is when most of us undergo a process of self-evaluation.

7. **Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)**—If you find yourself face-to-face with the blues when the days are shorter, experts say it’s related to environmental light changes. Before the holidays, people are so busy with other things that the darker days are ignored.

8. **Facing reality**—A reader griped to a syndicated advice columnist: “My wife and I enjoy a wonderful vacation and go into mourning when we return to the grind.” His wife suspected there was something wrong

with them both, but the real answer lay in his own closing statement: “I like my job, but I’d rather play.” Aren’t most of us like that?

If you are struggling with post-holiday blues, try the following strategies. To do nothing about your problem is to roll out the welcome mat for your negative thoughts and feelings.

1. **Begin and end your day with thanksgiving.** Isn’t this God’s will for us anyway? I Chronicles 23:30 exhorts us to “Stand every morning to thank and to praise the Lord, and likewise at even.” The more you count your blessings, the better.

2. **Study the Scriptures.** Immerse yourself in the Word. The Bible is a gold mine of life-giving verses waiting to be tapped. My favorite is, “Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me” (II Timothy 4:17).

3. **Join a Bible study group.** Meet with them for prayer and the study of God’s Word. This can be a great source of encouragement.

4. **Find a prayer partner.** Look for someone with whom you can share your problems and in whom you can confide. Pray together, either in person or on the telephone.

5. **Be faithful in church attendance.** Be sure that you are attending a good Bible-believing church where you are spiritually fed. Fellowship is important.

6. **Be a witness to others.** Share Christ with those around you. “Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day” (I Chronicles 16:23). Start with your friends, neighbors, or even co-workers; you need not sail to the Aleutian Islands to share the gospel.

7. **Lend a helping hand.** You can be a blessing to those who are less fortunate than yourself. There are many things you can do to make a difference—read to the blind, visit hospitals and nursing homes, or do a multitude of other helpful things. You’ll find that this will also result in a difference in your own attitude.

8. **Reach out to others.** There are many who are just as lonely as you are. Reach out to them and plan special activities that you can do together.

9. **Find a qualified Christian counselor.** If after following these suggestions you still feel depressed, your problem may be deeper than the “blahs.” If this is true, a trained Christian counselor or a Christian psychologist may be able to help you find the real root of your problem. While holidays fill a temporary need, they merely mask, not heal, untreated wounds. So do not hesitate to go for help.

Christmas is a reminder of God’s love shown through His Son. Christ came to give us “abundant life,” both here on earth and for eternity. Living (as opposed to merely knowing) this simple truth makes it possible to continue with a cheerful heart, long after the dried-out tinsel tree has been tossed away. □

Deody Lantoria lives in Astoria, New York, and holds an M.A. degree in education from New York University. Formerly a teacher, he is now employed as a computer operator in a Public Relations company. In addition to being a freelance writer, Mr. Lantoria is involved in a deaf ministry in his church.

WHAT IS THE MOST STUPENDOUS MIRACLE the human mind can envision? Perhaps to raise the dead? Actually, there is an even greater miracle than that — the miracle of the new birth. No other miracle can compare to the radical transformation that Christ can make in our lives.

Someone wisely said, “Nature forms us, sin deforms us, education informs us, penitentiaries reform us, but Jesus transforms us.” I think of how He transformed Simon Peter. Here was a blustering, burly, smelly fisherman whom Jesus changed into the flaming apostle of Pentecost.

I think of how Jesus transformed John, the author of the fourth Gospel. We think of John as the aged, tender apostle of love. But he had a hair-trigger temper in his younger days. Remember, his nickname was “son of thunder” (Mark 3:17). It was Jesus who transformed this thundering disciple into an apostle of love.

I also think of how Jesus transformed Matthew, the tax collector, into Matthew the apostle chosen by the Holy Spirit to record another of the Gospels.

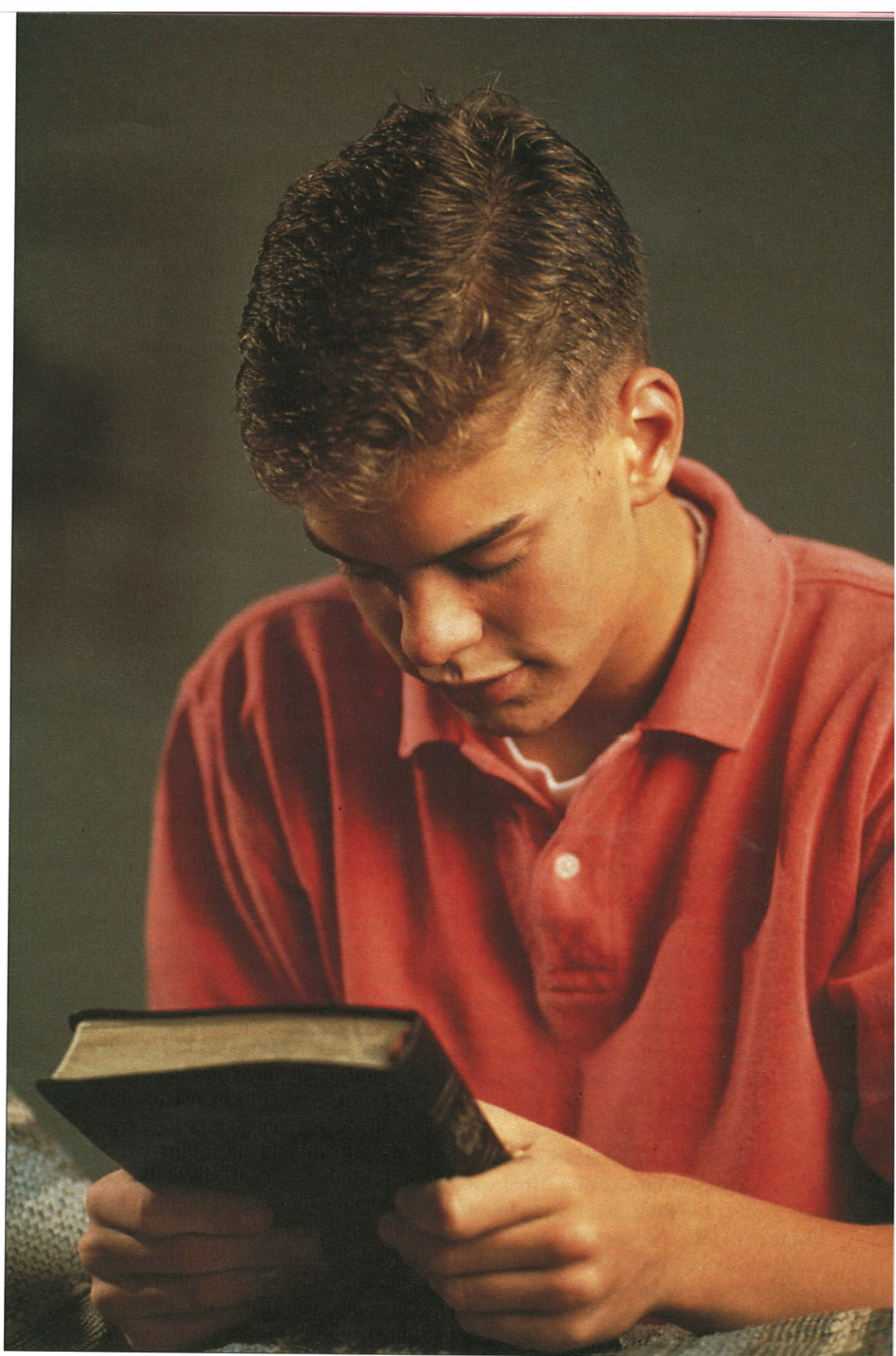
I think of the transformation Jesus made in the life of Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven demons (Luke 8:2). She became the first human herald of His resurrection.

A man was giving his testimony at one of those old Salvation Army open-air street meetings. As he was testifying, a heckler in the crowd yelled, “Why don’t you shut up and sit down? You’re just dreaming.”

Immediately that heckler felt a tug on his coat. He looked down to see a little girl who said, “Sir, may I speak to you? That man who is talking up there is my daddy. Daddy used to be a drunkard. He used to spend all of the money he made on whiskey. My mother was very sad and would cry most of the time.

“Sometimes when my daddy would come home, he’d hit my mother. I didn’t have shoes or a nice dress to wear to school. But look at my shoes. And see this pretty dress? My daddy bought these for me.” But the little girl wasn’t through with

(Continued on p. 14)



THE GREATEST MIRACLE

Nature forms us, sin deforms us, education informs us, penitentiaries reform us, but Jesus transforms us.

by Adrian Rogers



THE UNBROKEN HEART

by Jonathan Kattenhorn

Sometimes loving God requires that we trust Him — for something better.

I FIRST SAW KATE during the summer of 1979 at the Christian Berets Camp — a facility in the high Sierras of California for those of us who are handicapped. I was working there as a maintenance man; my job was to keep down the dust. Kate, a non-disabled counselor at the camp, caught my eye. Her long, shiny dark hair attracted me right away.

I saw a lot of her that summer while I was supposed to be working. I observed her reading her Bible, writing letters, and doing her job.

One Sunday, instead of going to the home of a friend, I decided to stay in camp and go to church with Kate. That began a friendship that didn't end when camp was over.

At summer's end Kate and I started writing to each other about every week. I began to wonder where our relationship might be headed. I had steadily dated a handicapped girl awhile back, and we'd even talked about marriage—but we had broken up. Now, at twenty-five, was I about to find a girlfriend at last?

Kate's third letter said she would soon be back in college. She asked me to pray for her since it would be her last year. I

was going back to school too—but for me, because of my handicap, school would be a taped home-Bible course. As the school year began we continued to write; as soon as I got a letter from her, I would answer it right away.

Since I don't read or write without help, my mom read Kate's letters to me. Another helper would write the letters for me that I would send back to Kate. Often I'd want to talk to Kate without Mom knowing, so I'd call her on the phone. One day my dad, who had noticed all my correspondence and phoning, warned me, "You'd better slow down or you'll ruin your friendship with Kate." But I didn't heed his advice.

Since the college Kate attended was between my home and the Christian Berets office, I would make it a point to visit her when I went to camp meetings. Meanwhile, I found a job at a school where, under the supervision of another teacher, I taught agriculture to other handicapped students. Since Kate was a special education major with a teaching credential, we wrote many letters about our work in education.

In one letter I invited Kate to go to the

camp banquet with me in Modesto. As my parents' anniversary was around the same time, I asked her if we could double-date with them at lunch before the banquet that evening.

"That sounds like fun," Kate wrote back.

Mom wasn't prepared to meet this sweet, normal girl who was able to accept me the way I was and help me with things like eating. She thought I was imposing on Kate. Between the two of them, I had a lot of help with my lunch that day.

That night at the banquet, the lady who'd been camp cook during the summer said to me, "I see you have a girlfriend."

"That's my big sister," I replied. I'd called Kate my big sister because I didn't want to drive her away. But deep down I was hoping she would become my girlfriend.

In the months that followed, Kate and I saw more of each other. At Christmas we got together. She helped me pick out a gift for my parents. Then, so that Kate could better understand the things I wrote about in my letters, I took her to

the hospital to see one of the patients I'd been calling on. We went by the school where I worked as an aide, and I showed her the garden our handicapped students were cultivating.

Dating Kate was a joy. I was able to be myself with her. When we went out to eat, Kate would drive, and we enjoyed our time together. In February I wrote to Kate and asked, "What are you doing Friday? Can we meet and have a date? You drive, but I'll buy the gas."

"Yes, we can meet," she wrote back.

I knew of a nice little restaurant we could go to. Again we had a good time; I wrote her and said, "Thank you for giving a handicapped young man a good time." I will always remember her reply: "I didn't go out with you because you were handicapped. I went because you are who you are."

One night in March while I was sitting and playing my autoharp, I began to realize that I'd been thinking more about Kate than of my Lord Jesus Christ. I prayed, asking forgiveness. As I told Kate about it the following day, she said, "You know, we need to keep our minds on Christ more than on other things." Through Kate, God was trying to show me that He had to be Lord no matter what happened.

That summer I went back to work at camp and wrote Kate regularly. I still told everyone she was my "big sister." But more and more I was thinking of her as a *girlfriend—a sweetheart*.

One day, however, the camp cook gave me some news that stunned me. "I hear Kate has a boyfriend," she told me.

Walking back to my cabin, I couldn't believe it. *I am Kate's boyfriend*, I thought. I had things all planned out.

Sitting on my bed, I opened my Bible. I found Romans 8:28: "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." *But why?* I thought. *There must be some mistake.*

I didn't have a telephone, so I got someone to help me write a letter to Kate. "I heard a rumor that you have a boyfriend," I said. "I want to know all about it."

Later that afternoon I talked to my friend Bill. He asked me, "Do you love Kate?"



Jon cultivating with the tractor on the family farm.

"Of course," I answered.

"Do you want the best for her?"

"Yes, I do," I replied.

"Let's pray about it," Bill advised.

A week went by before I got an answer from Kate. "Yes, there's someone I've been writing to," she wrote. "It's Dick. We grew up together. But the more I think about it, I don't think he's the one for me."

"Can we get together?" I wrote back. Kate was willing to see me, but every weekend something interfered. Finally in September we were able to get together. I asked her, "Can there ever be any more to our relationship than there is now?"

Her answer: "I don't know; I'm not ready for anyone yet."

As we continued to correspond, I hoped and dreamed about Kate. One day she asked for prayer because Dick was coming from Florida to see her.

"Is this a 'Dear John' letter?" I asked, typing the letter myself, so that no one else would read it.

Three days later on the phone she replied, "No, that wasn't a 'Dear John' letter. Dick and I are looking for God's will."

That was a hard blow for me. I knew, though, that Kate was an honest friend. I prayed for her, for Dick, and for myself during the next couple of months.

Then came the evening in February 1981 when Kate and I went to dinner to celebrate her birthday. I asked her about Dick. "We have to talk about that," she said. "You see, I didn't have a tape and I wanted to tell you myself. Dick and I are engaged."

All at once my hopes and dreams had crumbled. I managed to make a joke about it, saying, "Well, that means no more dates, because I don't date engaged or married women!" But inside I was hurting. It was very difficult.

"But I still want you for a friend," she said. "The wedding will be June 28th and I would like you to be there."

The next day while trying to finish my

Bible course, I came upon Hebrews 11:39-40: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us."

I wrote Kate to tell her about that verse and what it meant to me. God could provide "some better thing" for me, too.

"Let's take that as our verse," Kate wrote back.

I fought bitterness, but in the end I was happy for Kate. I went to the wedding and actually enjoyed it. The ceremony was not the one I had hoped for or dreamed about, but I knew it was what God wanted.

It wasn't without a struggle that I accepted this fact. At first I didn't want to write Kate anymore. But the Lord began to show me that Kate would really like me to continue as a friend.

To my surprise, Kate's marriage was the start of a new and better friendship. No longer did I have to put on a front around her so that she'd like me. Now I could be "just Jon."

As I look back over the two years of friendship that have followed, I would not change one thing. I had learned to accept God's message in Isaiah 55:8-9: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways."

I may still be single, but I have a healthy friendship with Kate. I'm working on a friendship with Dick, too. Relationships like these are put together by God; He knew from the beginning that, although I would never be Kate's husband, we'd be good friends.

Sometimes loving God requires that we trust Him—for something better. □

Jon Kattenhorn did not breathe soon enough when he was born. As a result he has cerebral palsy, a condition that makes his movements shaky and his speech slow and difficult to understand. He cannot read or drive a car and needs help with eating and writing. He also takes medicine to control epilepsy.

But Jon, who accepted Christ when he was six, is far from helpless. He drives a golf cart around his hometown of Shafter, California, edits a newsletter for disabled people, has worked as a teacher's aide and a maintenance man, and is a blessing to all who know him.



MYTH #1: ALL RELIGIONS ARE
BASICALLY THE SAME

THREE MYTHS

Religions disagree on the most significant item of all:
how a person gets to Heaven.

by Vernon C. Lyons

THERE ARE SOME widespread religious myths. They gain acceptability because of frequent repetition. They are believed by folk who do not stop to think about the statement that has been made. Let's take a moment and look at three of these widely-held, but erroneous beliefs.

Myth number one is, *All religions are basically the same.* The truth is just the opposite; there are some very basic differences. Here are two extremely important ones.

Religions disagree on the most significant item of all: How a person gets to heaven. Many religions believe and teach that a person gets to heaven by what he does or what others do to him. He attains eternal bliss by acts of kindness, a life of virtue, and by keeping the rules of his particular faith. This is commonly known as "salvation by

works" and is flatly contradicted by numerous passages of Scripture, such as Titus 3:5, "He saved us not because of righteous things we have done...", and many others such as Ephesians 2:8, 9.

Historic, Biblical Christianity from the time of the apostles down to the present has always held to the solid scriptural truth that anyone who is saved has been saved, not by what he has done, but by what Christ has done for him on the cross. As Peter said, "He Himself bore our sins in His body on the tree" (I Peter 2:24), or as Paul plainly puts it, "Christ died for our sins" (I Corinthians 15:3).

Another basic difference has to do with the issue of authority. Various religions rest on different sources for their authority. Many accept traditions, the statements of church councils, creeds, or catechisms along with the



MYTH #2: JUST
BELIEVE IN JESUS

Holy Scriptures. Real Christianity rests on the Bible and the Bible alone. It is only Scripture that is "God-breathed" (II Timothy 3:16), and it is Jesus who says, "Your Word is truth" (John 17:17). That's why we accept no authority other than Scripture.

A second myth widely held is *Just believe in Jesus!* The repeaters of this fiction are well-intended because they want to put an end to arguments, controversy, divisions, and, of course, all discussion of any doctrine so that we can all come together and be one big, happy religious family.

But there is a hitch! Who is this Jesus in whom we are supposed to believe? Is He the Jesus of the artist? Which artist? The Jesus of the theologian? Which theologian? The Jesus of tradition? Which tradition? Or is He simply the Jesus of your imagination, which would mean you have an imaginary Jesus. One can only hold this myth if he is somewhat careless and quite thoughtless.

Since there is not a person alive who has physically met face to face with the Lord Jesus Christ, there is only one source that all of us have as to His identity, and that is the Scripture. Only through the Bible can we know for certain who is the real Jesus.

So, in order to believe in Jesus, you must believe what the Bible says about Him. Furthermore, this real Jesus is not some floating phantom but actually lived on this earth and publicly taught about the church, baptism, the Supper, the new birth, money, the devil, tradition, race, love, heaven, hell, the kingdom, the resurrection, miracles, motherhood, false prophets, death, His second coming, marriage, sin, salvation, and taught very clearly about Himself, who

He was. Now, of course, you cannot believe in Jesus without believing what He taught and you cannot know what He taught apart from the Bible. So the approach of "just believe in Jesus" is a thoughtless oversimplification, a myth.

Another commonly held myth is *Since God is Love, we will all somehow end up in heaven.* This is easily accepted because we would all certainly want to believe it. It appears plausible because it contains some truth. It certainly is true that "God is love" (I John 4:8).

But it is the fact of God's love that causes Him to separate people for all eternity. How could a loving God eternally force the pure to co-

habitate with the perverts, the righteous to forever endure the company of the renegades? It does not make sense! Even on this earth where we are all sinners, it is deemed wise to segregate some in prisons, and certainly heaven is going to be an enormous improvement over this planet.

Furthermore, if God sent all people to heaven, He would be violating His own Word, for He has said that on the Judgment Day, "If anyone's name was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:15). And God is honest! He will do what He says.

Eternal life is promised only to those who believe sav-

ingly on the Lord Jesus Christ, for the Bible says, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him" (John 3:36).

People who get their theology from uninformed individuals standing around the water cooler during coffee break-time will end up with a predictable amount of bad doctrine. **Sound teaching comes from the Word of God,** and "the law of the Lord is perfect" (Psalm 19:7)! □

Rev. Vernon C. Lyons has been senior pastor of the Ashburn Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois, since 1951. Through the years he has also had a ministry in writing, radio, and television.



MYTH #3: SINCE GOD IS LOVE WE WILL ALL SOMEHOW GET TO HEAVEN



THE HEALING FREEDOM OF FORGIVENESS

The ability to forgive is only possible supernaturally.

by Ken Nichols

HE WAS RAISED in a conservative Christian home. He and his siblings attended Sunday School and Vacation Bible School and spent a week at camp every summer. Throughout his junior and senior high school days there seemed to be outward compliance and inner contentment with being a Christian.

When Ted went away to college, he began to drift away from spiritual priorities. His lifestyle took on the characteristics of a non-Christian. He became rebellious, indifferent, and turned away from God.

His family was troubled by these changes, but remained faithful in prayer for him and constant in encouragement. His abandonment of the Biblical path of life led to painful personal consequences. His heart became hardened to God's Spirit, and his interest in life was dominated by self and sin.

He had developed an anti-war attitude and was present at Kent State University during the demonstrations when students were shot by National Guard soldiers.

I will never forget the day he came to our apartment in Cedarville, Ohio, where my wife, Marlene, and I were college students. We had not heard from him for a long time but had kept up with what was going on through the family. We were quite shocked to have him show up at our door one Sunday afternoon.

Ted looked awful. We had not seen him in his hippie clothes, beard, and long hair. He looked scared. He sounded desperate. He asked if he could talk with us. Ted related how his journey from God had been tormenting in so many ways. He had finally come to a cul-de-sac in his life and wasn't even sure he wanted to continue living. He had nowhere to turn...except back to God.

He had begun to doubt his salvation, rationalizing that a true believer couldn't behave the way he had over these years. It was apparent to Marlene and me that God had initiated in Ted a genuine conviction and a broken spirit. It



God's plan for forgiveness is thorough and when followed, makes a forever difference in the lives of those who obey.

was an evident and powerful work of God.

Forgiveness From God

After a time of talking we got on our knees together. Ted prayed out loud, pleading with God for forgiveness and restoration. He actually listed specific sins and confessed his rebellious attitude.

When we got up from our knees, Ted asked if I had a razor. I said yes, but reported that it had never been faced with as great a challenge before. He shaved and cleaned up, and trimmed his hair. Though there is certainly nothing innately wrong with a beard or long hair, it had come to symbolize his running from God.

The healing freedom of God's forgiveness was overwhelmingly apparent. In an instant his countenance changed, his spirit was lightened, and the process of retooling his purpose in life was immediately apparent in his conversation. It was truly miraculous.

Forgiveness From Family

Later that afternoon Ted and I drove the three hours to our parents' home. Our conversation in the car continued to indicate that Ted was once again coming alive in Christ. He seemed to go back and forth from jubilation to sorrow — jubilation for the healing freedom of forgiveness, and genuine sorrow for the losses he experienced during his time of rebellion.

I will never forget the expressions on Mom and Dad's faces when Ted said hello, reached out to give them each a big hug, and asked for their forgiveness for the concern and embarrassment he had caused the family during his sinful, rebellious years. It was one of those moments in life that

makes a permanent impression. Tears were shed, forgiveness was gladly given, and a new relationship with his family was begun. Forgiveness is only possible supernaturally.

It was Sunday evening and we all went to our home church. The pastor loved Ted very much and had been a faithful prayer partner with my parents on his behalf. Ted still looked like a hippie, so just imagine how those conservative saints were wondering who this guy was and why he was sitting so far up front.

Forgiveness From the Family of God

The pastor gave an invitation and Ted went forward to ask the church family for forgiveness. It was a spiritually and emotionally moving moment. Many tears of joy were shed and shared together. God's plan for forgiveness is thorough and when followed, makes a forever difference in the lives of those who obey.

The Rest of the Story

You may want to know what happened in the years to come. Ted transferred to Cedarville College, a fine Christian school where God gave him godly training, a passion for ministry, and a lovely Christian wife, Karen. He pursued further training and received his master's degree from Grand Rapids Baptist Seminary (now Cornerstone).

From Protester to Preacher

Ted is now a Major in the U.S. Army and currently serves as a Chaplain. He ministered in Desert Storm with his company and led literally dozens to Christ during the height of the conflict. He tells how

the men dug a huge hole in the sand and filled it with water so they could be baptized.

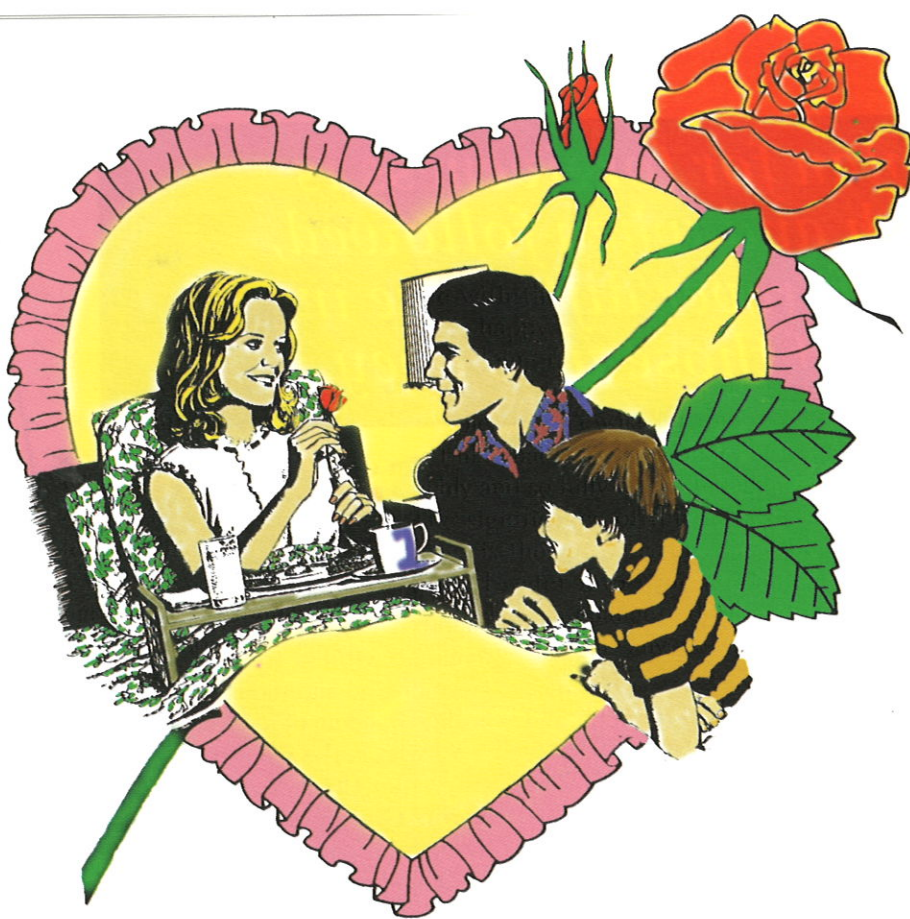
God has wonderfully and faithfully used Ted in many parts of this country and around the world as a dynamic witness to the limitless grace of God and the life-changing healing freedom of forgiveness.

So who is the centerpiece of a story like this? Not his family whom God used to help him through his confession, recommitment, and forgiveness, and not the church who lovingly forgave, and not Ted who followed God's plan for restoration. The centerpiece, expressed respectfully, is God. Imagine His wonderful Holy Spirit bringing conviction into Ted's heart; imagine the wonderful Word of God that gave direction for what Ted needed to do; and imagine the wonderful power of prayer spoken from a broken and contrite heart. Praise be unto God for His gracious, supernatural forgiveness and for His faithfulness in using the "all new" Chaplain Ted Nichols in a ministry that is making an eternal difference.

There are literally tens of thousands of spiritual warfare casualties who have lost health, relationships, and purpose in life as a direct result of not following God's supernatural plan for giving and receiving forgiveness.

This true story of my brother, Ted, illustrates the comprehensive nature of God's plan for forgiveness. He was forgiven by God, his family, and his church — and he forgave himself for the losses of a disobedient lifestyle. Then it was that he truly experienced the healing freedom of forgiveness! □

Ken Nichols, Ph.D., is director of Alive Counseling Ministries, El Cajun, California.



Miracle

(Continued from p. 7)

that heckler yet.

"See my mother over there? She's the one with the bright smile on her face. She's happy now. She sings even when she's doing the ironing." Then the little girl said, "Mister, if my daddy is dreaming, please don't wake him up!"

I like that story because it illustrates so richly and so fully what I'm talking about. The significance of this miracle is that Jesus is the transformer. The One who turned water into wine at Cana is the One who can change radically, dramatically, and eternally anyone who will come to Him.

Miracles of grace are always greater than miracles of glory. Jesus turned the water into wine with just a word. But to save us, He had to hang on a cross. If you're a child of God, you have already experienced the greatest miracle of all — the new birth! □

Dr. Adrian Rogers is pastor of the Belview Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee. The above article is excerpted from his book, BELIEVE IN MIRACLES, BUT TRUST IN JESUS, ©1997. Used by permission of Good News Publishers/Crossway Books, Wheaton, Illinois 60187.

LOVE IS AN ACTION WORD

The New Testament tells us how to show our love.

by David W. Yount

VALENTINE'S DAY comes...and then is gone again, but love is needed all year 'round. And Jesus tells us that we are to love one another.

The Apostle Paul informs us that of all the gifts given by God, "the greatest of these is love" (I Corinthians 13)! The Bible states that God is love. He is the source and essence of love. It also tells us that if we do not love others, the love of the Father is not in us. (See I John 3:14-18 and 4:7-12.)

The New Testament gives us plenty of light on how we are to love one another. The following passages clearly show some of the ways God would have us express our love:

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love" (Romans 12:10).

"Honor one another above yourselves" (Romans 12:10).

"Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you" (Romans 15:7).

"Serve one another in love" (Galatians 5:13).

"Carry each other's burdens" (Galatians 6:2).

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other" (Ephesians 4:32).

"Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you" (Colossians 3:13).

"Encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing" (I Thessalonians 5:11).

"Encourage one another daily" (Hebrews 3:13).

"Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling" (I Peter 4:9).

Surely the world — our community — would be a better place if we would practice what Christ preached by word and deed! Our "soft-drink" generation has said it very well: "What the world needs is love."

What the world really needs is to experience the love of Christ "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts" (Romans 5:5). Is there a better alternative? □

Rev. David W. Yount is one of the pastors at Ashburn Baptist Church, Chicago, Illinois.

TOMORROW



*I do not know what still awaits,
Or what the morrow brings;
But with the glad salute of faith,
I hail its opening wings!*

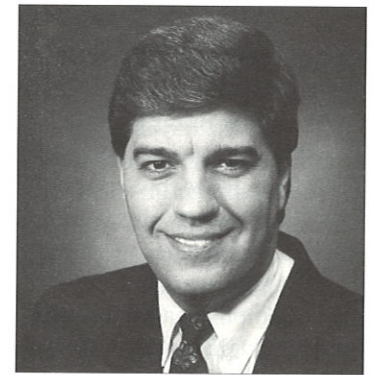
*For this I know— that in my Lord
Shall all my needs be met;
And I can trust the heart of Him
Who has not failed me yet.*

—Author unknown

WINNERS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



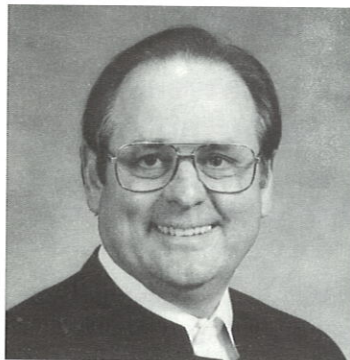
Annemie Grosshauser (DP)
ORA International,
Central Asia



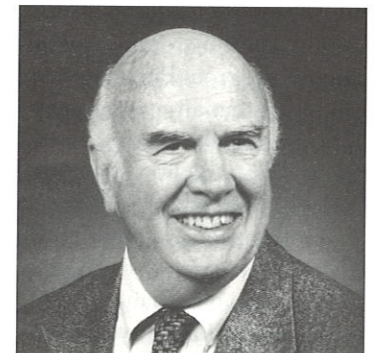
Dr. Vance Maloney
Taylor University,
Upland, Indiana



Drs. Kelly & Michelle O'Donnell
Youth With A Mission,
High Wycombe, England



Dr. Clair Schnupp
Northern Youth Programs,
Dryden, Ontario, Canada



Dr. John Powell
Professor Emeritus,
Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan



Dr. Janice Strength
Fuller Theological Seminary
Pasadena, California

The Narramore Christian Foundation, an international counseling ministry in Arcadia, California, announces this year's six recipients of the First Annual Award for Distinguished Service in Christian Psychology. The winners are pictured here.

The award recognizes Christian psychologists engaged in sacrificial, Christian service beyond a private practice or university setting. Priority is given to those who have received little public recognition.

Final selection committee members were: Mrs. Elizabeth Dole, Dr. James Dobson, Charles Colson, Art Linkletter, Rev. D. James Kennedy, Dr. Gary Collins, Rev. E. V. Hill, and Dr. Clyde Narramore.

Following is a brief biography of the six winners.

Mrs. Annemie Grosshauser, D.P., of Germany is a counselor to Americans serving in Central Asia. She is involved in refugee work, and crisis intervention.

Dr. Vance Maloney is on the faculty of Taylor University, Upland, Indiana. He leads student seminars at universities in former Communist countries.

Drs. Kelly & Michelle O'Donnell, husband and wife psychologists, serve with Youth With A Mission in Europe, and travel to many countries, helping multi-agency teams to minister to missionaries.

Dr. John Powell, professor emeritus at Michigan State University, has served missionaries, pastors, and conference workers, often free, both in the U.S. and overseas, for the past 33 years.

Dr. Clair Schnupp, head of Northern Youth Programs of Canada, works with aboriginal people of Canada, United States, and Central America. He has

authored workbooks on the family for these groups.

Dr. Janice Strength, professor at Fuller Seminary, directs an annual international conference on the integration of psychology and theology in Russia. She has helped to establish a Christian Graduate School of Psychology in Moscow.

For further information, contact

The Narramore Christian Foundation
250 W. Colorado Blvd., Suite 200, Arcadia, CA. 91007,
Ph. 626/821-8400, Fax 626/821-8409, e-mail ncf@pacbell.net

HEALTH WATCH

by Eva Hallam Solberg

MANAGED CARE AND PRESCRIPTIONS

The list of drugs your insurer will pay for is narrowing and tilting more toward specific drug makers' products as big drug companies work in concert with managed-care plans and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs).

When financial pressures and health-plan policies combine to prevent your doctor and pharmacist from furnishing you with your first-choice medication, here's what you can do:

Ask your insurer how you can request reimbursement for drugs that are not covered. To find out which drugs are included on the list of medications your health plan will pay for, call your plan's administrator of pharmacy benefits.

Question any changes in your medications. If your doc-

tor or pharmacist raises the possibility of switching you to another drug, ask questions. If you are not satisfied with the answers, insist that your doctor help you get the drug that works best for you.

Report your experience. If you have suffered because you were switched to a different prescription, let the FDA know. Call its Med-Watch program (800/332-1088), which monitors patients' adverse reactions to drugs.

(Reader's Digest)

PERSONALITY COUNTS

Men who dominate conversations and frequently interrupt others are more likely to die early than men with a more relaxed style. The finding reported in the *Journal of the American Psychosomatic Society* stems from a 22-year

study of 750 white, middle-class men who were interviewed and scored on 12 behavior characteristics, including verbal competitiveness, loudness, and self-aggrandizement. After controlling for other health risks, researchers found that "socially dominant" men were about 60 percent more likely than others to die of any cause. There's no evidence that adopting a more laid-back manner lowers the risk, but it might reduce potentially damaging stress hormones in the body.

(*New England Journal of Medicine Health News*)

OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis means "porous bones." Bones that were once strong become weak and brittle — so brittle that even mild stresses can

cause a fracture.

Long-term use of corticosteroid medications, such as prednisone, cortisone, prednisolone and dexamethasone, is very damaging to the bones. If you need to take steroid medications for long periods, your doctor may monitor your bone density and advise other drugs to help prevent bone loss.

To decrease your risk for osteoporosis: Don't smoke; build maximum peak bone mass by consuming adequate calcium and performing weight-bearing activities during peak bone-mass-building years; and consider estrogen replacement therapy. There are risks which need to be considered, however, in taking such therapy. Discuss these with your physician.

(*Mayo Clinic Health Letter*)



Living Memorials

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COMING NEXT ISSUE

✳ The Fellowship Of Suffering

✳ The Resurrection News

✳ The Darkness Of Depression And The Road To Recovery

✳ Two Easters—Take Your Choice

✳ He Is Risen Indeed!

✳ Restoration Through Reconnection

by Clyde M. Narramore

WHY DO SOME SIBLINGS ABUSE ONE ANOTHER?

QUESTION:

We hear so much today about parents, especially fathers, who abuse their children. I know that is bad, but there is also another kind of abuse I have never heard anyone discuss. I have experienced it myself.

When I was growing up I had an older brother who abused me almost every day. You name it, and he probably did it.

I am still suffering from his abuse although I am now a middle-aged woman. Maybe you could discuss this problem sometime in your Question and Answer column. If it happened to me, it has probably happened to lots of other people, too.

ANSWER:

Many siblings do not get along well together. This is unfortunate because they really ought to be best friends. Of course, when children are young and still immature, some disagreements and arguments are inevitable. But it is one thing for children to have occasional differences and to quarrel — and still another to be abusive to one another.

Unfortunately, sibling abuse is not at all uncommon. Because of their close proximity living in the same house and many times sharing the same room, many things come up that make children unhappy with one another.

Sometimes a child is upset with things that are happening in school or between himself and his parents. He can't very well express his anger against his teacher or his parents, so a younger brother and sister may get the brunt of his hos-

tile feelings. This may show up in numerous ways.

A child who has feelings of anger (perhaps unrecognized even by himself) may constantly be picking a fight with his sibling. He may demean the other child by calling him degrading names, trying to embarrass him, poking fun at him, blaming him for things he didn't do, lying to him and about him, and delegating all the hard or unpleasant jobs to him. When that brother or sister complains about it, he cleverly makes it look like the complaint is unjustified, and the guilty child comes out "smelling like a rose."

But it is not only emotional abuse that may be heaped on the child by a domineering sibling; it can also be expressed physically, and sometimes involves sexual abuse. Often the abuser threatens the sibling being abused, telling him or her that if any of this gets back to the parents, the abuse will be much, much worse.

Naturally, a child growing up in an abusive environment suffers many wounds and he is left with multiple scars. When one is the victim of abusive treatment, it destroys his self-image. It may also cause him or her to become overly sensitive, jealous, develop a critical attitude, or become paranoid and suspicious of others. He may fight back, or on the other hand, he may become overly submissive. In order to cope, he or she may learn to be manipulative and deceitful. He or she, in turn, may learn to be domineering. Often the one abused will himself grow up to be abusive. These are some

of the results of being the recipient of abuse.

Why would any child treat his brother or sister so cruelly? Already mentioned is the fact that he may have problems of his own that need to be resolved.

He may feel jealous of his sibling because he thinks he or she is being favored over him. He may feel the other child is smarter, better looking, more talented, and receives more love and attention than he does. It may also be that he sees abusiveness between his mother and father at home. A child without a positive role model has a decided disadvantage.

Another major cause of sibling abuse concerns brothers and sisters with neurological impairments. When a child has a neurological impairment, it is usually marked by considerable anger. Sometimes he has difficulty learning to read, is hyperactive, and does not function well with other children. Often he does not do well in school, and other children make fun of him. But perhaps neither he nor his parents realize he has a neurological abnormality that is triggering his undesirable behavior. This difficulty seems to feed upon itself, inasmuch as day after day he realizes that he is not liked, doesn't get along well with others, can't make it in school, and is not chosen by other children. He learns to view himself as a misfit.

So what does such a child do? It's only natural that he would strike out at others, especially those closest to him — his brothers and sisters.

Many children suffer at the hand of an abusive brother or sister (more likely a brother) who has a neurological problem.

Another factor contributing to abuse is divorce. Children who go through the divorce of their parents are often frustrated and angry, striking out at brothers and sisters. If the mother should remarry a man who brings his children into the family, many complex situations arise. We often hear about blended families, but in many cases, they're not blended — they're embroiled.

Parents need to be aware of what is going on between their children. All too often, they just don't notice. Any indications of abusive treatment between children needs to be dealt with in its early stages. It is important that parents work to develop happy relationships in a peaceful, well-organized, Christ-honoring family. Home should be a place where love abounds. Children need to be taught to love one another and to show kindness.

As for the lady who asked this question, it is essential that you turn to the Lord who will comfort you, love you, strengthen you, and give you a new "biblical" self-image. God can give you the ability to forgive, and this is very healing.

In addition, it may be beneficial to have professional counseling from a qualified Christian psychologist. A trained counselor can help you get to the root of your problems so you can resolve them. Many people also find relief by joining a support group. This can be a very positive experience. □

by Lee and Gloria Bendell

LOOKING AHEAD

A NEW YEAR IS DAWNING, and it provides an excellent time for reflection. What did we accomplish during the past year? What do we hope to accomplish in this new year? Or, from a broader perspective, what is the purpose of our life? What is our vision for what we can contribute during the relatively short span of time that the Lord has given us on earth?

"Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18 KJV). Just as companies establish a mission or purpose statement to keep their activities focused, so should we as individuals have a definite mission or purpose for our lives — a vision for our future. It defines "why we exist." Perhaps you have already done this in the past — but it is wise to review or update it!

As Christians, we find many verses about our purposes in life. Perhaps the most concise reason for our existence is stated in I Corinthians 10:31, "Whether then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." The Westminster Shorter Catechism poses as its very first question, "What is the chief end of man?" The answer is, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever." **Glorifying God in everything should be a primary part of every Christian's mission statement.**

Charles Swindoll, in his special edition book titled *Rise and Shine*, summarizes an examination of what it means to glorify God. He writes: "What does it mean for the church or for even individual Christians to glorify God? It means to magnify, exalt, and elevate the Lord our God as we humble ourselves and defer to His wisdom, His authority."

This should be our overarching purpose in life — it gives meaning to our very existence! It does not tell us, however, what we are to do or should be doing; these are our functions or roles. **Ideally, all of our functions or roles will reflect and contribute to our life's mission.**

For instance, I have a set of functions or roles in my vocation. At work I want to be dedicated, ethical, and professional. I want to relate well to superiors, peers,



and subordinates, and motivate others to perform well, thus contributing to the success of the organization in which I serve. I want to be a testimony to all in my competence and Christian character.

I also have a role in my family life. I want to be a good and godly husband, father, grandfather, and, if my parents were living, a good son.

In addition, I have the function or role of an individual. I want to be healthy, enjoy a measure of happiness, relate well to friends, be a positive influence in the lives of others, have a degree of self-confidence, continue to grow spiritually, and both give and receive love.

Our tendency is to skip the above and just establish our goals. In a moment, we shall see the wisdom of avoiding that tendency. The Narramore Christian Foundation has a booklet that can help you formulate your goals: *My Prayer, Praise, and Personal Goals*°. Included in this booklet is a chart that breaks down our life's goals into categories: **Intellectual, Emotional, Physical, Spiritual, Social, Family, and Financial**. This helpful booklet will encourage you to be specific by listing potential goals for each category.

Undoubtedly, you will be able to come up with numerous goals that are extremely helpful. Some may even be in conflict with each other: e.g. spending more time with family; getting ahead in the business world.

Now is when our identification of mission, functions, and roles come into play. Even though they are more generalized,

they help us establish a priority for our goals. We must ask ourselves, *How much does each goal contribute to my mission, function, and roles?* **The goals that contribute the most ought to be given the highest priorities.**

Let's take the spiritual category to illustrate a few of the goals I might set for myself: I want to have a devotional time every day in which I read a portion of God's Word and commune with Him in prayer and praise. I want to be consistent in church attendance and stewardship. I like several areas of Christian service, hopefully related to gifts God has bestowed upon me. I want to be a better witness and be ready to share the way of salvation. Although each of these is important, in light of my mission to do all for the glory of God, time in the Word followed by prayer and praise has the highest priority for me.

Of course, **establishing goals and priorities is only beneficial if we resolve to follow them.** As I again apply this process to my own life (as in previous years), I find that I need to spend even more time reading the Bible and praising the Lord during my private devotions. **My priorities need to be revised in light of my mission and my current status.**

It is my prayer that you will take the time to follow this process in *your* life. Some goals can be broken down into time periods as well. What would you like to accomplish during the next year? the next three, five, or ten years?

As you do this, keeping in mind your purpose to glorify God, your life will be even more focused and meaningful.

"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Our mission and goal-setting can help to keep us in the center of God's will — planning and doing His good works! □

° For a donation of any amount, you may request the booklet, *My Prayer, Praise, and Personal Goals*. Write to the Narramore Christian Foundation, P. O. Box 661900, Arcadia, CA 91066-1900, or phone (626) 821-8400.



OUR WORLD TODAY

by Eva Hallam Solberg

“WHY DO YOU DRINK OUR WATER?”

After a Good News crusade service in a small village in Taiwan, the crusade team ate dinner. As they finished their meal, a man from the village asked a question which caught a member of the team by surprise:

“Why do you drink our water?”

He continued, “Everyone else brings his own water. Why do you drink what we drink?”

The next day a local pastor said to the team member, “You are one of us.”

Suddenly the mystery of the Incarnation and the significance of Christmas became real. This is what Jesus came to do — to be one of us. He came to “drink our water.”

(Taiwan missionary Mike McAteer)

FIRST CHRISTIAN PRISON PROGRAM IN U.S.

Prison Fellowship has opened “InnerChange” — the first completely Christian prison program in the United States. It is located near Houston, Texas.

Prison Fellowship founder Chuck Colson said, “This is our chance to demonstrate that Christ changes lives, and that changing prisoners from the inside out is the only crime prevention program that really works. If we are successful, I believe that prison doors across America will be flung open to the Gospel in a way we have only dreamed about before.”

All prisoners in InnerChange participate voluntarily, have two years or less

What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.

—William Morrow

remaining on their sentences, and are approved for a minimum-security prison. They will participate in a two-year program designed to heal their relationships with God, the community, and their families.

(EP News Service)

AN ADULT-SIZED PROBLEM

Children younger than fifteen — some under ten — were part of the fighting forces in at least 265 conflicts around the world last year, according to “The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children,” a United Nations report overseen by Mozambique educator, Graca Machel. Girls forced into military service are often used as soldiers’ sexual slaves. It’s an adult-sized problem with frightening implications, both for the youngsters who witnessed and participated in these atrocities and for societies that must come to terms with a generation that started killing at a morally tender age.

(World Vision)

INCOME TAX TIPS

Never make out a tax-payment check to the “IRS.” Reason: If the check falls into the wrong hands, “IRS” can be changed to “MRS.” followed by a name. Better to make the check out to

“Internal Revenue Service.”

Ninety-five percent of all IRS audits are triggered by unexplained “excesses” on tax returns — such as an unusually large deduction relative to income. Self-defense: To reduce audit risk, include an explanation.

(Bottom Line Personal)

FAT CITY: NEW ORLEANS

Famous for high-fat dishes and large portions, New Orleans, Louisiana, has the highest percentage (37%) of obese citizens of the 33 largest U.S. metropolitan areas, according to the recent national weight report. Here are the rest of the top ten (all topping 28%), in descending order: Norfolk, San Antonio, Kansas City, Cleveland, Detroit, Columbus, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, and Houston. The large cities with the lowest obesity rates are Denver, Minneapolis, and San Diego.

(University of California at Berkeley Wellness Letter)

YOUR RIGHTS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Court rulings limiting religious activity in public schools involve state-directed and state-sponsored activity — not individual actions, says John Whitehead, founder of the civil liberties organization of

the Rutherford Institute which defends religious freedoms. “While the Supreme Court has held that the state may not prescribe religious activities, it has never ruled unconstitutional individual religious expression in public schools,” he wrote in the pamphlet, *Your Rights in the Public Schools*.

More information about religious rights may be obtained by calling 1-800-441-3473.

(EP News Service)

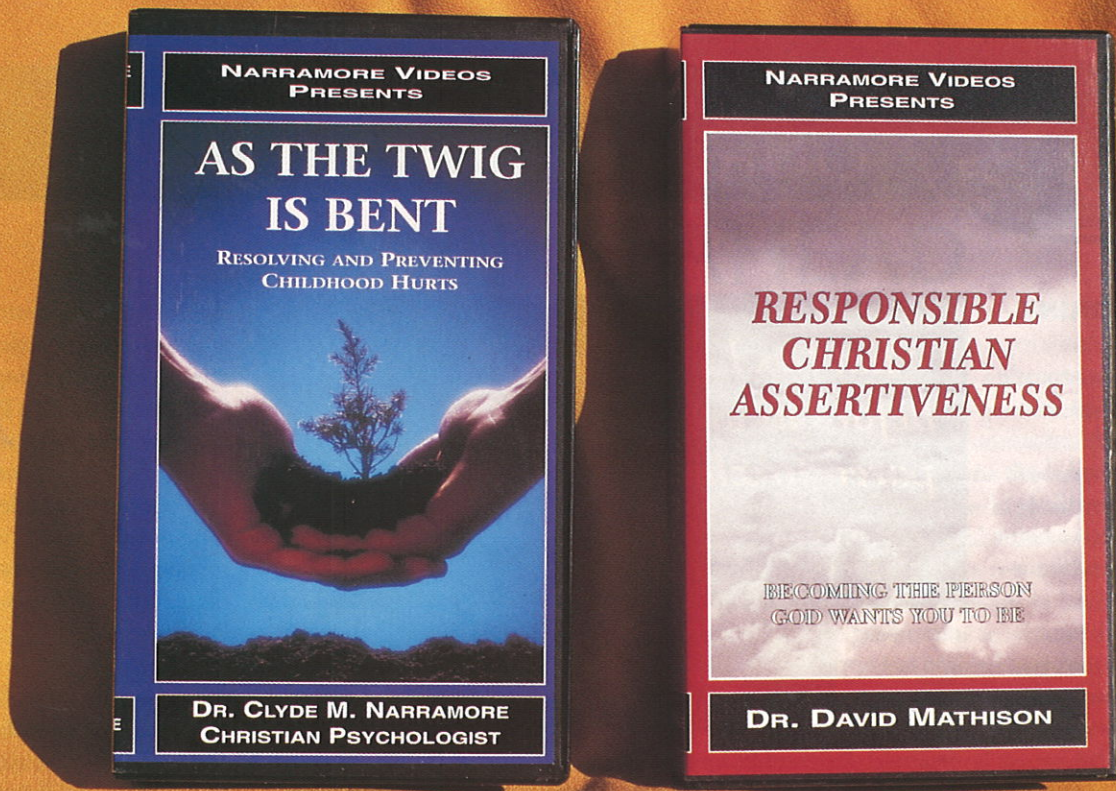
IMAGINATION IS GATEWAY TO THE SOUL

What is the secret of imagination’s power? Part of the answer involves the way imagination affects us biologically and neurologically. Our brain is an organ with chemical needs. Sex floods the brain with endorphins and enkephalins, which produce a sense of well-being. The resulting biochemical buzz is one reason sexual fantasy is so addictive, especially for those who are trying to avoid dealing with emotional pain.

Women are just as vulnerable as men to fantasy’s powerful affects. Soap operas that portray sexual situations, movies that portray sexual situations, movies that evoke erotic feelings, and titillating romance novels have the potential to be as addictive as items we classify as pornographic.

Truly, we need to guard our minds diligently; the imagination has the power to change our very being.

Proverbs 23:7 says, “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.”
(Virtue)



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In this video, Dr. David Mathison, a Christian psychologist and college professor, explains successful and Scriptural ways of handling confrontations and differences. This frees people to have good and honest relationships with each other.

Exciting speaker and content!