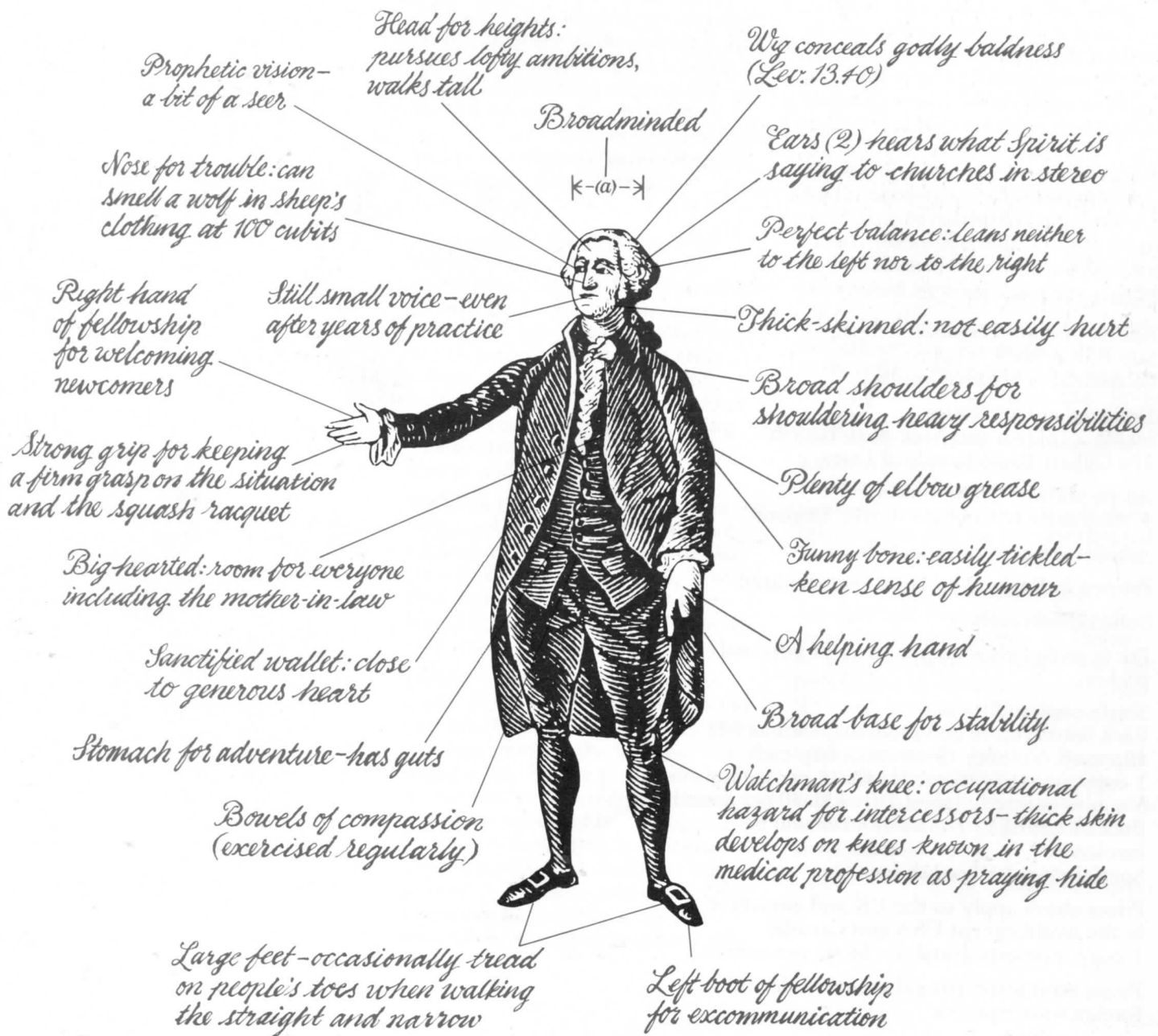


Fulness

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The leader and his attributes



Fulness Volume 24

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Editorial

Leadership

'I will make you fishers of men.' So spoke the greatest of all leaders. Commenting on this verse Field Marshall Montgomery said, 'What Christ meant was that he would teach his disciples how to win the hearts of men, implying that leadership has to be taught. Some will say that leaders are born, not made, and that you can't make a leader by teaching or training. I don't agree with this entirely. Whilst it is true that some men have within themselves the instincts and qualities of leadership in a much greater degree than others, and some men will never have the character to make leaders, I believe that leadership can be developed by training.' (*The Path of Leadership*).

Montgomery acknowledged his debt to those who taught him military strategy, and I think all of us who are leaders to any degree will gladly agree that we have learnt the elements of leadership from others. Joshua spent a lifetime being trained by Moses, and three intense years were spent training 'the twelve'. Leadership can be taught and must be learnt.

We need to build leadership training into our local church life. Walter Lippmann, after the death of war-time leader Roosevelt, said, 'The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on.'

When C T Studd died there was doubt as to whether the Mission he had founded would continue. The test was whether the Mission was based solely on the personality of its founder or whether the Holy Spirit was involved in an ongoing work. A fellow worker, Norman Grubb, rose to the challenge and prayed that God would not only maintain the existing work but send 25 new workers, without any

appeal for men or money. 25 new workers duly arrived within the specified time, and the work grew. C T Studd's vision had been communicated; leadership had been trained.

But leadership training is not to be given with only an eye to the future, for it must have an eye on the present. We need leaders now. Earlier this year *Buzz Magazine* carried out a survey on the leadership in this country which is to take the Church into the 80's. Here are some quotes. Concerning 30 leading names, 'when these were analysed it became clear that there are definite factors which are causes for concern rather than encouragement. . . . Almost all the other names on the list are more closely identified with the Christian ghetto—rather than voices heard and recognised by contemporary society.'

After reading the survey one could be forgiven for concluding that there is little hope here! No sign of the radical, the visionary, the prophetic. One further quote: 'Whatever our assessment of evangelical leadership strengths and weaknesses it is almost inevitable that God will step outside our preconceived plans and do the unexpected.' Thank goodness for that!

John the Baptist was one such unexpected! Prepared for his role away from the limelight of society, he was a voice in the wilderness, but he brought in the Kingdom of God. We must look to God to bring such leadership to our generation, helping us to recognise and support it. Desperate times require a clear and certain trumpet call, voices with a commission to bring the Church to its destiny.

Graham Perrins

Servants and initiators

by John Noble

The United Kindom today is governed by the party system. For most the choice between the parties is at least uninspiring, if not actually painful. At the present time the system is expressed, for the most part, in a two party structure—the left and the right. These two extremes, capitalism and socialism, exist in one form or another throughout most of the world's governments. In the end, they produce one and the same effect—namely that power finds its way into the hands of a few people who inevitably abuse it.

On the one side free enterprise encourages men of initiative; hence the power falls to the wealthy and the intellectual. On the other side socialism elevates the worker and so power is grasped by his, so called, representatives. Either way, if these men do not give God his rightful place, the conclusion is corruption and oppression.

In countries where these politics are rampant there is instability. Again and again political collapse paves the way for further reshuffling through election or even revolution. In this country, with our delicate balance of power, we have managed to stagger along for centuries without too many problems. Nevertheless there is now a growing awareness of imminent catastrophe with industrial and economic unrest increasing daily.

The answer to the world's governmental problems is only to be found in a man with the motives, character and ability to rule with total equity. The christian fraternity answer with one voice, 'Jesus Christ.' Or perhaps, since his death and resurrection, I should say that the answer will be found in a church which bows to his authority, for Jesus works through men.

I am not suggesting that to encourage christian leaders to enter politics is the solution. Nor am I



saying that the church should look for more say in state affairs. Both of these methods have had a limited, and at times adverse, effect. History is littered with the Church's blunders (although in all honesty many of these were made by a Church in name only). What I do stress is that wherever God's people have sought to serve by example and by their lifestyle, they have been granted a voice by the Lord. Even the blood of the martyrs speaks out. The Church's authority has always been revealed when she begins to live out in practice what she believes. She has lost credibility whenever her life and message no longer match.

My reason for highlighting the two major political extremes is to emphasise the international and historic problem which exists between servants and initiators; workers and management; employer and employee; rich and poor. If the Church is to be God's answer then we must hear what he has to say on this matter. We must live out his words as an evidence that Christ's authority can and does bring those who will joyfully submit into prosperity and harmony.

The problem is simple. Men gifted to initiate have greedily used their abilities to improve their own lot. Their self-centredness has been met with a response of bitterness and resentment which will finally give way to violence. This is a continuing process that I am convinced will only be arrested at Armageddon, when all parties amalgamate in an effort to destroy the 'Truth' which lays bare their life.

The word 'servant' is not an acceptable word these days. Nobody wants to be thought of as a servant. The Victorian era put paid to that, for in those times many who were under bondage, near to slavery, needed liberating. Women previously 'kept in their rightful place' were emancipated,

and now the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. The feminist movement, in its desire for complete freedom, has actually eroded real womanhood. Now, in a strange way, many feel almost guilty if they find themselves wanting something as mundane as a home and family.

The idea of devotion and loyalty at work is now also old hat. It is seen as a threat to our generation's coming of age. It is below the dignity of our 'enlightened times'. The same senses are offended when employers show any kind of dependence upon others. Strength is the common answer, aggression the need of the hour, and so we become increasingly louder and less secure, stronger and yet more defensive. Away with such thinking in the Church!

Let us not be afraid to accept what we are, together with our limitations and our dependence upon others. I am basically an initiator. After a number of years I have come to the conclusion that for lasting success in my work and ministry I must be fully dependent on the help of other brothers and sisters. I need people to serve me lovingly if my gift is to be fully released. Similarly there are other Christians gifted to be helpers, who are struggling on in their lives, because in our society they are forced to make their own way through life. May God bring us together; we were made for one another.

When initiators are yielded to the Lord the results of their abilities will be showered on the whole community. They will not be 'heaping up treasures for themselves'. The same attitude will be found in them as was found in the first Christians: 'no-one said that any of the things he possessed was his own'. The reservoir of their gifts and possessions will be released to the whole community and all will benefit.

So it is with the helpers. Their willingness to receive burdens and to implement them, and to carry them through, will bring stability and growth to the Church. She will truly be a functioning body, the much spoken of alternative society in action.

Abraham, the father of all the faithful, presents for us a perfect picture of the heavenly family, and also of how the earthly family should be. In his household we see himself, his son and his servant. The bond of love and trust between all three of them is amazing, and to appreciate it you must read the stories in Genesis 22-24. Each of them clearly knowing their roles, found peace and joy in serving God and one another. They graphically portray glimpses of the perfect relationship in the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Spirit. Even within the Trinity, there is initiative and service without loss of equality or dignity. We are encouraged to follow in the footsteps of Abraham and family, they being the first to journey towards the city whose maker and builder is God.

Let us determine to find our true place in the body, and labour together for the glory of God and the joy of fellowship. Let us show our world that submission to the Lamb of God and a right relationship to one another, will usher in the government to end all governments, the age to end all ages.

Footnote: In between starting and finishing this article I have sat with my mother whilst she died. She was a servant. I have seen people angry with her because she would not stop serving. Before she left she was honoured amongst us and was given a throne in our hearts. Now she has a throne in the very presence of God. Beloved, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. There is no shame in servanthood, nor glory in leadership; it's how we do what we're called to do that counts!

The function of leadership



by Ray Ciervo

But Jesus called them to himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.'

'And he gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ.'

In these passages the Lord has decreed two principles concerning leaders. First, those who would be leaders are not to be as the world's leaders. Christ's leaders are to be servants who give themselves for the church, having Christ, who gave himself for many, as their example.

The second principle is that leaders are given to the church as the means for bringing about the saints' work of service. The leaders are to equip the saints for their work of service, not perform that work themselves. The service the leaders render is that of equipping the saints.

Determining Leaders

Determining leaders is a necessary priority. We must recognise those who serve by equipping the church. We can tell those who are leaders by those who follow them. A person who does not have people following

would have to work hard to prove his leadership abilities. And we can recognise them also by their desire to serve. As in Matthew, the leader must be a 'servant' not a 'lord'. Jesus said, 'To be great is to be a servant.' He is our best example. So it can be seen that the leader must create a following by his 'servanthood' not his 'lordship'.

Probably the most important fact about leaders is that only God can make them. Reading a book, listening to a tape, studying the Bible or going to Bible College does not make anyone a leader. Being a leader is a distinct gift of God according to his grace. All we can do as the church is say amen to what God has done and recognise the man who is moving as a servant, equipping the church for its work.

Another way to recognise the leaders in the church is by the influence they have on others. Do they model Christianity in a way which causes others to desire what they have? Do they encourage others in the faith? Do they use others to gain ascendancy or do they serve others in order to see them prosper?

Distinction in Leadership

Not every leader is an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher. These leaders are specifically given by the Lord to function in the church, and, although every leader will find his function in aiding one of these gifts, he will not necessarily be one of them himself. Paul says to the Corinthians, 'Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for ministry to the saints), that you also be in subjection to such men and to everyone who helps in work and

labours.' Here he is mentioning two different categories of leaders. Firstly, there are those who are devoted to ministry for the saints (plainly the Ephesians 4 gifts), and secondly, those who help in the work and labour. Those who help in the work need not be full-time men. They might be men who have received a gift of administration from the Lord or the gift of helps. With their gifts they aid the Ephesians 4 ministries. These men cannot be denied the place of leadership. On the other hand they need not be given the recognition of an apostle. However they function they will serve the church at large and find their expression in aiding the Ephesians 4 ministries.

The Church's Responsibility

After men are recognised as leaders we must see what our responsibility to them is. The Bible gives clear principles to follow. In 1 Corinthians 16, Paul says to be in subjection to such men. Again these are men who have proven their leadership abilities by serving the saints. This principle of subjection is a biblical one, not a worldly one, and our spirits would say amen to the word God has spoken. The scripture says, 'Obey your leaders and submit to them.' Obedience speaks of our response to instruction, whether it is direction or correction, while submitting is the attitude of my heart towards them. The attitude must be one of trust, as leaders must many times call for things that only they can see.

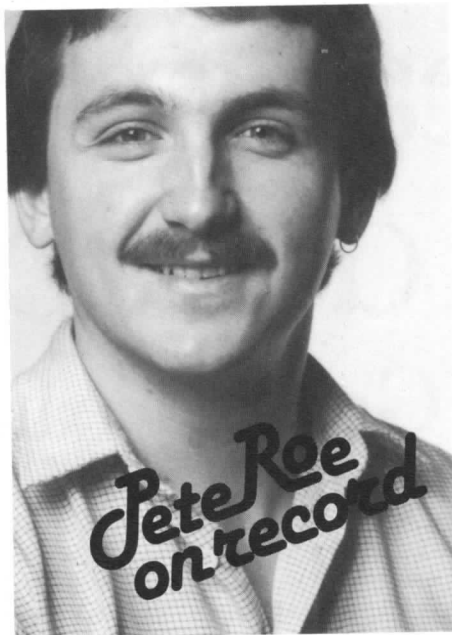
A very good example of this is when Community Gospel Church numbered about thirty, and as elders we saw that we must split into home groups. At that time the people could not see what we saw. After a brief discussion, the people willingly followed. Perhaps their

feelings were not in it, and although the thought of small group encounters threatened some, they obeyed. They could obey because they were submissive. They were in subjection. Today each home group means very much to those same people.

Leading

Leadership means finding God's way and breaking new trails. Along with that goes the ability to withstand the pressure and tension that accompany God's direction for the church. As a result, the church does not have to take that pressure and is free to simply follow. An excellent illustration of this is a particular type of swan, the whistling swan. If you have ever noticed the majestic 'V' in which swans fly while migrating, you will be interested to know that the formation is more than orderly. The swan who flies at the head of the formation is actually taking the pressure of the head winds for the entire group. Because of that, the group flies at a speed of 100 miles per hour for a few thousand miles. Because the leader takes the pressure, the rest are able to follow along in his air stream. Without that lead swan, the rest would move at a much slower speed. It is doubtful that any two swans would find themselves near each other at the end of their migration. The winds would scatter them and prevent many from arriving at their destination. This picture is very applicable to the church and its leadership.

Leadership in the church is for creating more than the appearance of order. It is for bringing the people intact to the destination determined by the Lord; that destination is an equipped people doing its work of service. It is more than doubtful whether any two saints could arrive together at their destination without leadership. And God planned it for more than two; it is for all. This helps us to understand Paul's words to the Thessalonian church: 'Appreciate those who diligently labour among you. . . esteem them very highly in love because of their work.' Paul is not directing us to think of our leaders as more than human or partly angelic, but to recognise their work and appreciate it. More than appreciating their work, we are to appreciate the men. Showing them esteem is regarding them highly, respecting them. The outcome of this will be that the church will care for its leaders in such a way as to free them to lead.



Keith Green: No Compromise
TC—Bird 118

They don't come more highly recommended than this. John Pantry told me that Keith Green could enter the secular charts, then months later Gerald Coates came round raving about him and suggest-

ing that we could use some of his material. Two respected men independently recommending an album—it must have something.

It has. Keith's boundless voice, coupled with his competent piano playing, richly supported by strings and guitars, ends up resembling Andrae Crouch and Elton John. Clever production technique combined with Keith's laughing, half-speaking, shouting and crying the words, produces a vital, heart-felt, energetic sound.

The highlight is the perceptive cutting edge of the lyrics, prophetically revealing truth from God's viewpoint. *Asleep In the Light* and *To Obey Is Better Than Sacrifice* cannot leave you unaffected, whilst *Dear John Letter* is plainly addressed to the devil with phrases like 'you creep' and 'You're gonna get yours'; no punches pulled.

Gerald and John were right. Keith Green combines high contemporary musical standards with gutsy spiritual content. I heartily recommend him to you.

Bind us Together

On October 3rd *Bind us Together* begins a two week tour visiting the following cities:

October 3	Southampton Mountbatten Theatre
October 4	Westminster Central Hall, afternoon and evening
October 6	Plymouth Guildhall
October 7	Birmingham Methodist Central Hall
October 8	Liverpool Methodist Central Hall
October 10	York St Michael le Belfrey
October 11	Edinburgh Usher Hall
October 13	Manchester Free Trade Hall
October 14	Bristol The Victoria Rooms
October 15	Cardiff Welsh National School of Medicine
October 17	Dublin Liberty Hall
October 18	Belfast The Church House

For seat reservations and further information about your local presentation full details will be found on the LP lyric sheet. If there is no Christian bookshop in your area the LP or cassette will be mailed to you upon receipt of a cheque for £5.50 (including post and packing) made out to London Literature. Send to Bind us Together, PO Box 54, Cobham, Surrey.

Leadership and deception

by Gerald Coates

Money, sex, pride and alcohol are usually the issues over which leaders stumble and fall. I am somewhat ashamed to confess that I could name at least a dozen or more well-known, anointed leaders who have recently committed gross immorality, have taken to the bottle, are under scrutiny from official sources regarding their finances or are simply proud and therefore out of the reach of their peers.

The arch-enemy of Christ need never bother with sowing corruption among God's people if he can get at a leader. A shepherd is worth more than a thousand sheep in his eyes. In days when it seems that global conflict is hotting up in both the world and the church it is vital that we know what we are up against. Satan is a deceiver, and if he can deceive those in responsibility the church will wander off course in a very short space of time.



Mr Miraculous

He, it seems, is more liable to deception than most, perhaps

because he deals in the supernatural more than the rest of the ministries. I cannot think of one well-known miracle worker in this decade who didn't fall in some way either sexually or financially. In some cases occult powers took over. We have a desperate need of healers and miracle workers, but these gifted men must function in the light of what God has been teaching us regarding submission, team ministry, openness and discipline.

There is a healthy tide of faith rising among God's people at present for such ministries to emerge but it is vital that they are seen only as a part of the current restoration of gifts and ministries. That much and no more. We must keep seeking for the miraculous but stay in close step with our brothers as we do.



Mr Prophetic

He could be called Mr Isolation, and here lies his problem. He is a seer and can see what others are blind to. The temptation to feel superior in the light of his revelation is ever

present. His authoritative insights can also distract from his own weaknesses.

There is a need for seeking the Lord in isolation, away from the hubbub of everyday affairs, but our motivation must be to find God and not to sever ourselves from his Body. There is an unwritten law among prophets: 'the rules don't apply to us'. Once that takes effect sin is inevitable and disqualification follows, at least until trust has been regained. Without trust progress is impossible, and prophets become unheard in the local body.

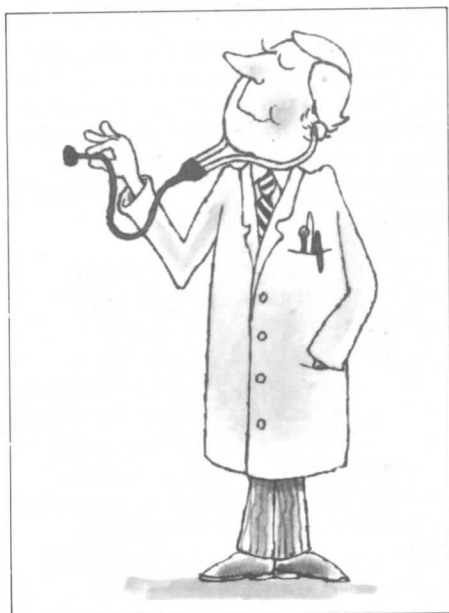


Mr Colourful

Colourful personalities are not necessarily godly. We must judge by our 'inner witness', as Wesley put it, rather than be swayed by outward appearance. Some of us are intimidated by colourful personalities, others idolise them. We must do neither, simply accepting that God has made some characters more colourful than others. We are not to insist that everyone conforms to our idea of a 'christian'

personality. We need the joker, the talker, the initiator and the ideas man. But don't think that colour can replace character; overtalkativeness and even openness itself can be a cover for character weaknesses.

We need men of charisma; they can get things done and say things that those of us with a more dour approach would never think of, but don't let intimidation ruin fellowship.



Mr Caring

The mind can only receive what the heart can endure. A colleague of mine ended up in serious immorality which was partly sparked off by listening to too much too soon from those looking to him for help. Being a blessing to others can often injure oneself. Large doses of other people's inner secrets, especially those of close friends, don't ease the mind or soothe the heart. This is why I am against counselling services and organisations. The mind and heart can only take so much, and we can only cope with daily dustbin-emptying sessions

by having no involvement with the confessor. A caring ministry with its necessary emotional involvement has this weakness built in.

I have noticed how many people counselling on financial, sexual and family matters are completely blind to their own needs. When did you last hear a leader confess sexual or financial sin, indeed, when did you last hear a leader confess any sin? 'Confessing your sins and faults to one another' isn't to fill in time or make the meetings spicy, but a vital expression of our need of one another. Practising this will keep leaders free from sin as they sort out other people's problems.



Mr Religious

Now this is the man to watch. Almost anything religious turns out on close inspection, to be ungodly. This was why Jesus was such a hit with the common people and such a bother to the religious. The need of de-religionising the charismatic movement has never been greater than now. God wants us to be prophets of a new order, not priests

of the old. It might shock folk to know that Jesus would be no more comfortable in a charismatic meeting because of its trite, religious, unreal atmosphere than he was with religious folk two thousand years ago.

In my opinion we need to be a little more drunk and mad than we are at present. That, as W Sangster said, was the testimony of the early church. Times of prayer punctuated with 'ooh' and 'aaah' and 'Jeeesus' are often more make-believe religious experience than real spiritual abandonment. Don't be conned; be yourself and then maybe our meetings will have more resemblance to everyday life than we are currently experiencing.

The tragedy of religious people is that they've often got two or three lives to lead. They fall into neat compartments at work, at home and 'at church'. After a period of years, they find themselves completely trapped, sometimes against their will, and highly defensive towards anybody who might bring the walls down.

The worst thing about deception is that when you've got it, you don't know it. If someone is deceived we must not demand that he 'sees' instantly that he is deceived. It is vital, however, that he submits to those around him so that his mind can be renewed and his heart cleansed.

Deception, of course, does not come overnight. It grows day by day, month by month, year by year. As Paul said, 'Don't be deceived; what you sow you reap.' An open, humble heart, confession of failure, and a genuine sense of our need of others, will go a long way towards helping us walk honourably before God and his people, leading them in truth and integrity and not deception and unreality.

If life
in the Kingdom
of God presents
you with practical
problems that you
feel could be aired
on this page, please
write to Gerald Coates
and John Noble at
47 Copse Road,
Cobham, Surrey.

John Noble and Gerald Coates

Q. I am having difficulty knowing how to live and go on with other christians when we have differing opinions. It seems that there are often two sides to issues and there is no way of proving one to be conclusively right. Frequently neither party feels able to concede as conscience is involved.

A. There are many christians experiencing this particular difficulty. The move of God is at a stage where many of us have come together to work at our relationships and therefore we have begun to discover how entrenched we are in our beliefs and opinions, and how difficult it is to adjust without very clear guidance from God.

We are rather like ships at sea for months and then, seeing land, have to negotiate the rocks and reefs in order to gain the security of the beach. The 'land' is the joy of secure and well-founded relationships, the 'rocks' being our differences and eccentricities which we have to negotiate in order to live at peace with one another. Many have become shipwrecked here, some lost for ever as they have been disillusioned by their efforts to achieve harmony.

What we must do is seek to discover whether our differences are fundamental or peripheral. If they are the latter then we can learn to live with them, but if the former, then we must hold off until there has been some radical dealings in one life or another, or both. Fortunately most of our differences are of a minor nature, although at times they loom very large. When we have talked

them through and, outside of pressure, seen that our attitude is right towards one another, then we must co-exist and maintain harmony even though we may still disagree. This is what the scripture calls maintaining the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and forbearing one another in love.

We must not dwell upon the differences, but face them as is necessary and lay them aside in order to live and work together. This is where structure and judgment will develop in our family or fellowship. However, if problems are fundamental, that is, a wrong spirit or attitude has developed and cannot be changed, then we must be satisfied to separate as we will otherwise only hurt and wound one another beyond repair. If we are in a church or fellowship situation, then such matters need to be judged and dealt with within the group for the peace and safety of all. Rebellion, arrogance, divisiveness, drunkenness, etc. without repentance, call for serious measures to be taken. I suppose, in a nutshell, we are trying to say that what the scripture calls heresy is not differences of opinion or a doctrinal difference, but it is a difference of spirit and attitude. For a heretic can be a heretic with the truth as well as with error. We are cautioned by Paul, 'Mark those who cause divisions among you; don't keep company with them.'

Q. I have attended a number of meetings which Fulness writers and others have either been leading or speaking at, and I must confess they have been more akin to something like Sunday Night at the

Palladium than what I consider to be the New Testament order of gathering. Are you not in danger of encouraging the personality cult with singers, speakers, musicians etc. Applause for people has its place I admit, but I feel you are in danger of going overboard with humour, appreciation for peoples' ministry expressed on and off the platform, clapping etc. It all seems far removed from what I see in the New Testament where there was sobriety, the fear of the Lord and prayer.

A. First of all we would like to say that there are many dangers attached to what we Fulness writers as you call us, are doing. Indeed there will always be dangers with any pioneer venture. We would also readily admit that it is quite possible for us to find ourselves down a blind alley; I only trust that should this happen, we will be willing to get back onto the main highway again. Whenever one embarks on a journey there is the possibility that we will get lost on the way.

As to the place of applause, I would feel the bible is our yardstick and throughout its pages there is a healthy tension between appreciation of one another and speaking the truth to one another. We find many places in scripture where men are commended for what they have done, as at times they are rebuked for their misdemeanours and mistakes. Both the Old and New Testaments encourage us in these areas. Christians seem to have a warped idea of humility because we have emphasised one type of

scripture. For instance in the area of giving we often talk about not letting the left hand know what the right hand is doing, thus we screw our notes into tiny balls in an endeavour not to let the person next to us see what we are giving. However in the Old Testament there were occasions when the gifts that people gave were recorded in great detail, and they were praised for their giving.

Humour too finds its place in the bible. I can imagine people rolling up with laughter at some of the statements Jesus made. The Old Testament records that God 'sits in the heavens and laughs'. If by sobriety you mean that we are not to show our emotions, then that is not what we understand it means from the scriptures. Certainly the day of pentecost was not a sober affair, nor was the returning of the ark to Jerusalem. We understand sobriety to mean giving serious matters their rightful place and not being flippant in our approach. We certainly would not want to defend the type of meetings we have as we do not see them as being ideal. Most of us would like to see a greater spontaneity and an outbreak of power and praise in the open air, but we do feel that our gatherings

are a step on from where we were and with God's help we will continue to move towards all that he has for us.

Q. Why aren't we seeing apostolic ministries founding churches and moving on to other districts? Surely there is a world of difference between taking a series of meetings, and settling in the locality until Christians are well founded?

A. Yes, as you say, there is a world of difference between speaking at meetings and building redeemed, biblical communities. Over the last 10 years there has been a partial restoration of the Ephesians 4 ministries, apostolic ministry being perhaps the most cautious area of advance.

What is an apostle? The word itself, simply translated, means 'sent forth' or 'sent out'. One could foresee an apostolic prophet or teacher in the light of that meaning. We know the evangelists evangelise, the teachers teach, prophets prophesy and pastors pastor or shepherd, but apostles don't apostle. In that sense there is no defined apostolic ministry. The apostle works through the gifts of prophet, evangelist, teacher and pastor and is more often part of a team—an apostolic team.

The early church apostles were sent into virgin territory, a situation which no longer exists in Great Britain, nor indeed in the rest of the Western world. Towns are littered with so-called christian churches. We have to re-evaluate and overhaul our idea of the apostolic ministry and how it should operate in the light of so many believers already existing all over the country. We must learn to build community without becoming sectarian.

A prophetic voice has already been raised directing God's people to a new order of things. The proliferation of house fellowships and the renewal taking place within the institutional church straddles the globe. Prophets have knocked down cherished religious ivory towers, and men who can structure lives and families into powerful communities are beginning to emerge. We need to pray that these men will make the sacrifices necessary in order that what is on their hearts might become reality.

A booklet by John Noble *First Apostles, Last Apostles* is available from London Literature, 33 Hogshill Lane, Cobham, Surrey, 50p including post and packaging.

Kingdom Life

Peter Lyne and Roger Davin are among the speakers for the Kingdom Life Festival held in Cobham, Surrey from 6th to 13th September 1980. Hundreds will be camping in family and church fellowship groups on a nearby site and around 2,000 people from the locality will be attending the 8 o'clock evening meetings.

The launch presentation of *Bind us Together* takes place on the first Saturday evening, the 6th, and invitations have been sent to a number of speakers and singers to

share in the week. Those planning to camp should write to Kingdom Life, 6 Haleswood, Cobham, Surrey, reserving space now. Adults £14.00, children (5-15) £10.00, children under 5 free. No deposit is needed at this time. An application form will be sent to you later on with further details. As space on the site is limited, it is advisable to reserve space as a group now to avoid disappointment.

Note: we have just heard that Michael Harper will also be speaking during the week.



Peter Lyne



Roger Davin



Fatherhood

by Tom Marshall

Taking as his example the fatherhood of God, Tom Marshall examines the role of a father in the life of his child.

In the ultimate there are few things more important to a christian than a living experience of the fatherhood of God. Our salvation through Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit are really means to that end; the settled purpose in the heart of God has always been that we should be his sons. But it is sad to find many

earnest christians attempting to live as sons without really knowing the Father.

The fatherhood of God is, however, crucial for us in quite another area. Not only do we need to learn how to live as sons, we also need to learn to live as fathers. God longs for those who will live as sons

towards him and as fathers for him. But real fathers, natural or spiritual, are rare. The greatest weakness in society today is the absence of father, for fatherhood is very much more than a mere biological function. Behind the delinquent child is usually the inadequate father or, increasingly, no father at all.

I was talking recently about fatherhood to a professor of child development from one of our universities, and was astonished to hear him say that what a child needed was parenting, and there was really no need for both father and mother as long as the child had a good relationship with one or the other. Now circumstances sometimes force one parent to be both father and mother to their children but that is not the divine plan. Fathering and mothering are not the same thing; complementary, yes, but distinctly different.

How then are we to learn to be good fathers? Is there a model for us to follow? Yes there is, a revelation of fatherhood that is underived, absolute and eternal—that of the Father himself.

The incarnation not only revealed the nature of the eternal Son of God, it also revealed the nature of the eternal Father. The contribution of God the Father to the manhood of the Son is an area of study that has never received the attention it deserves. Indeed, from the testimony of Jesus it is not too much to say that he was the man he was as much because of the Father he had, as because of the person he was himself. We have often searched the Gospels to understand how Jesus lived as a Son towards his Father, but we need also to study how God lived as Father towards his Son. This aspect is extraordinarily rich. May it lead all of us who are parents to learn fathering at the feet of our perfect example and teacher, God the Father himself.

The father as the source of the child's life

The mystery of the growth in self consciousness of our Lord is ultimately beyond our full comprehension. Yet the scriptures are clear that he came in his manhood to a complete and full awareness of his divine origin. He knew that he was the only-begotten Son of the Father. This knowledge of his identity Jesus received from his Father.

Here is a starting point of very great significance for earthly fathers. A child needs to know his origins, to be aware, through his father, of his roots in the family and of his living link with past generations. Lack of such awareness creates an inner loneliness and insecurity, a sense of belonging to no one and having obligations towards no one. It is the prevailing sickness of youth in many cultures today.

A child's sense of identity begins with this knowledge and fatherhood begins with giving the child his identity. More children than you would imagine have recurrent doubts about their parenthood, and more still carry into adulthood a basic uncertainty and lack of self identity.

The father as a source of caring love

Love is a word that has been so misused and depreciated that it needs redemption. It needs content put back into it. The father-love of God is expressed in a number of ways that can help to rehabilitate the word:

Father-love identifies with the child. This is the significance of the Son coming in the Father's name. To be a father means that you identify your children, so that their problems are your problems and their joys are your joys. Furthermore they know about this identification, that, because they bear your name, anything that threatens or disturbs them, or makes them afraid, will bring you on the scene and to their side.

Father-love discerns the child's needs. 'Your Father,' Jesus said, and he spoke as always out of experience not from speculation, 'knows what you need before you ask him.' To be a father is to be able to discern the child's needs often long before he is aware of them or understands their real nature.

Father-love recognises and rewards intentions rather than achievements. 'Your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly' (Matt 6:4,6). Behind the child's clumsy imperfect and even misguided attempts, father love should discern when there is a desire to please him. If he is wise he will bring these hidden intentions out into the open and acknowledge them. Positive reinforcement of right desires can go a long way towards avoiding the need for more negative forms of correction.

Father-love gives the child what is good for him. What the child may want is not always what is good for him. The father is responsible for giving what is good, based on his greater time perspective and greater wisdom. That includes the responsibility at times to say, 'No.'

Father-love shapes and develops the child's life. It is the father's responsibility to shape the child's life. He cannot delegate this responsibility to the school, the church, the Sunday school or the youth group. He may share the task with his wife, but he cannot relinquish his responsibility. There are many groups and individuals who will at different times, and to differing degrees, influence the life of the child, but the God-given responsibility for its development belongs to the father.

Father-love affirms the child's value. Every child is born with two basic needs, the need for love and the need for self worth. Unless these needs are met he will inevitably suffer. It is especially the fatherly role to meet the latter of these needs, to affirm to the child, both in attitude and in words, that he is a worthy and valuable being in his own right. In other words the father must be concerned with the child's honour.

It is wonderful to see how far God the Father went in the crisis times of Jesus' life to reassure the Son of his value: 'My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.' Earthly fathers need to affirm their children in this way. Society places a great value on the beautiful and the clever. A child who is neither outstandingly clever nor markedly beautiful, needs to know that neither of these things has anything to do with his real worth, that he is truly valuable in himself, just because he is who he is. A child turns instinctively towards his father for this reassurance.

The father as the model for the child's life

Jesus continually bore testimony to the life on which he modelled his own. He does nothing but what he sees the Father doing. Thus the Son came to seek and to save the lost because it was not the will of the Father that even one little one be lost. We are to be merciful, to love our enemies because he is kind to ungrateful and evil men, and to be perfect because he is perfect.

The father is the model on which

his children unconsciously build. But they model on his behaviour rather than on his words, on what he is rather than on what he says.

The father as the son's teacher in relationships

I counsel many people who have difficulty in relating to others. Almost always I find that the relationship they had as children with their father was a distant or defective one. The problem begins in the home because that is the place where children are meant to learn to relate, to share themselves on a level of secure intimacy with a father who knows how to share himself with them.

The gospels are full of the openness and intimacy that existed between the Father and the Son. The Father 'knows' the Son and the Son 'knows' the Father. The Son is always 'in the Father's bosom'; this relationship is the glory that John so often mentions in his gospels.

Fathers, do you really know your children? Do they know you? You need to live towards them in an open intimate way so that as they begin to know you they will want to let you know them—more, they will instinctively and intuitively learn how to do it. When that relationship begins to flower, loneliness is impossible. Even on the eve of Calvary, facing the desertion of his disciples, Jesus was able to say, 'I am never alone, because the Father is with me.'

The father as the source of the child's inheritance

In the modern welfare state we think of inheritance generally in terms of death duties and taxes. But in scripture inheritance is inseparable from fatherhood. The Old Testament patriarchal principle is the passing on of an inheritance. 'A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children.'

What inheritance will we leave our children? Vastly more valuable than real estate is the inheritance of character, of goodness, and the ability to live openly, responsibly and lovingly towards one another. But supremely the inheritance speaks of Christ. Therefore we need to possess him, to live out his life in the sight of our children till he becomes their personal possession also. The ultimate joy of any father is to see his children in the secure enjoyment of that eternal inheritance.



Bind them together.

In response to readers' enquiries we have produced an attractive binder to hold your issues of *Fulness*. This hard-backed binder is covered in tough black vinyl and silver blocked with the *Fulness* symbol on both spine and cover. Each binder accommodates 12 copies of your magazine held securely in place by an 'Easibind' system.

The binders are available at a cost of £2.75 each, inclusive of postage and packing (outside the UK please write to us for details of cost). Send your order and cheques, made payable to *Fulness*, together with details of your name and address to Mike Blount, 47 Copse Road, Cobham, Surrey.

Maurice Smith Dripping on



We were all gathered for a few days of retreat. It was a very spiritual affair. By that I mean we rose early for prayer, fasted most of the day accompanied by the inevitable bowl of fruit for anyone so desiring. Never have I known such a bunch of health food fanatics; for some the fruit consumption bordered on the astronomical.

On the morning in question we were deeply involved in a discussion on the qualifications for leadership and in the multiplicity of words we seemed to be drifting farther and farther away from a conclusion. 'When I'm looking for a leader, I usually look around to see who has got someone following him. . .'. The remark was not calculated to make impact, but it stopped us dead in our tracks. It was as though someone had opened the double doors and a blast of fresh air had come into the stale atmosphere of our deliberations.

In an attempt to typecast the man for the job, we had majored on the first letter that Paul wrote to Timothy, where he lists the character qualifications of a bishop, quite overlooking the fact that Paul has prefaced his list by saying that if a man desired the office he is after a good thing. We surely want leaders who desire to be leaders, who have their eyes on responsibility, and not men who have to be continually pressganged into accepting it. We want men who can be happy with-

out responsibility, but more fulfilled with it. If such men have not been baptised into unselfishness and raised up to live for their fellow men, then inevitably they will lord it over others and use their ability to flatter their own egos. Wives of such men will soon find they are not married to ordinary men at all, but to authoritarians who are on parade 24 hours a day; carried to extremes they might even have their pips sewn on their pyjamas! In order to counteract such wrong attitudes, we are at times guilty of selecting anyone who seems to have a godly character and promoting them far in excess of their ability. The result of such folly is that folk are over-stretched and subsequently become insecure. Their charisma is quite insufficient for the job.

One trait I have noticed time and time again is that of pushing men into public speaking. Maybe one could endeavour to textually justify this by the apostle Paul's admission, 'I was not among you with excellency of speech,' but to do so can easily be at the expense of his continuing statement, '... but in evidence of the spirit's power'. There was evidently some result of his speaking; it did more than bore people or confuse them.

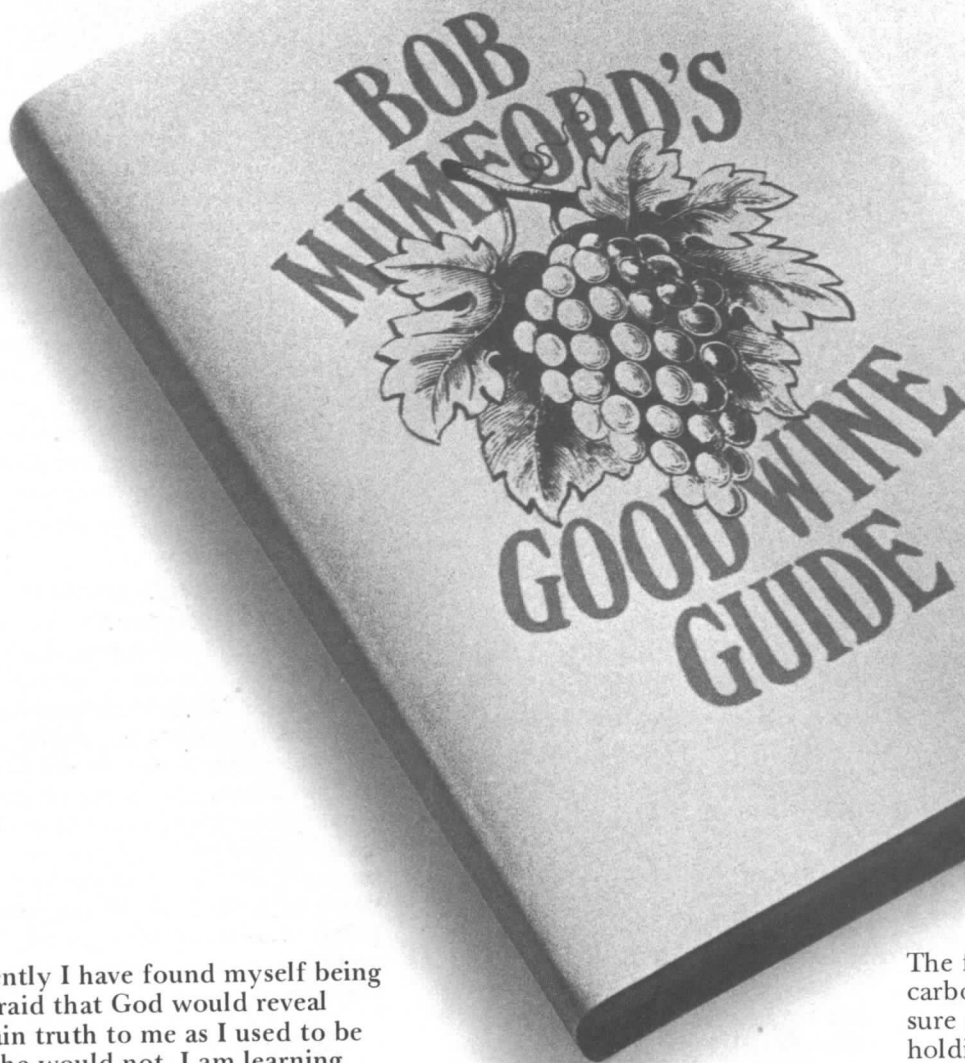
Granted not all leadership is necessarily centred in the regular ministry of a weekly sermon, but it does entail being able to sound a clear and certain note on whatever your particular trumpet is. It is important that people understand what we are trying to say and that our words are not suffocated in wooliness.

That phrase, 'in evidence of the spirit's power' is absolutely vital to spiritual leadership. Here we have a man who knows that to obtain any eternal spiritual values means a dependence upon the working of the Holy Spirit himself, but that should be basic to all christian thinking. Let us not, however, construe such a statement as meaning that God delights in overlooking

the natural gifts which he has bestowed upon each one of us. For myself, I went through a whole super-spiritual trip where for many years I believed in only doing those things which I could not do naturally; or to put it in reverse, I did not pursue anything that I was good at. How crazy can we get? For example, around about this time I encountered several very gifted musicians who did not exercise their musical gifts for fear that they themselves would receive some glory. Thank God that phase has been left behind.

Now we are being released to be what we really are and to become what God can develop us into. The Lord made us suitable for the purpose he had in mind and for some that includes the ability to lead men and women in the warfare of the Church and in the establishment of the kingdom of God. So if God has given you an eye for responsibility and a desire to lead, don't automatically be ashamed of it and view yourself as unduly ambitious; we probably need you very much.





Recently I have found myself being as afraid that God would reveal certain truth to me as I used to be that he would not. I am learning that truth has equal potential to both help and harm, depending on my ability to handle it properly.

A firecracker cannot do much harm—but nor is it of any practical use. Atomic power, however, can destroy a city or light a metropolis. The degree of potential usefulness is directly proportional to the degree of potential danger. Likewise, those spiritual truths which are ultimately the most beneficial can also do the most damage if not properly understood and applied.

It will help us to learn how to better apply truth if we can understand the process by which the Lord restores truth to the Church. Jesus illustrated the process in the parable of the wine and wineskins.

The wine is truth or understanding about God's life, and its production

takes place in three steps: harvest, fermentation and ageing.

During the harvest the grapes are placed in large vats or presses and the pure juice is extracted from the pulp, seeds and skins of the grape. The juice of the grapes is then placed in large vats or containers for the second step.

Fermentation is the action of natural yeasts which transform the grape juice sugars into wine. It is critical during this stage that the right strains of yeast interact with the grape juice, since a good yeast will produce a sweet, mellow wine, but a bad strain produces wine which is sour and vinegary.

The fermentation process produces carbon dioxide which exerts pressure on the container. The container holding the fermenting wine must either be flexible enough to stretch with the expanding gas, or the gas must occasionally be allowed to escape, otherwise the container will burst under the increased pressure. Though the wine making process is technically completed with the fermentation process, the new wine is still not totally fit for consumption. New wine has a strong, tannic flavour and aroma because of residual impurities, and tends to go to the drinker's head faster, making him dizzy and heady.

To make the wine enjoyable and palatable, it must be aged. During the ageing process, the wine is allowed to sit while the impurities, called lees, settle to the bottom. Several times during the ageing process, the wine is drawn off the lees, or racked into another vessel for more of the impurities to settle.

Removing the lees helps soften the wine to a mellow vintage which is enjoyable and less heady.

The wine making process paints a graphic picture of the introduction of new truth to the people of God. Throughout history there have been great 'harvests' of truth as the Lord poured out fresh enlightenment. During the harvest the essence of what the Lord is saying is extracted from the men and ministries.

Following an outpouring of truth, there is generally a period of fermentation, of upheaval and controversy. The turmoil of the fermentation process is the changing of the sweet 'juice' of theory and vision into potent, practical reality. As in the making of a real wine, the yeast is the critical factor in the finished product. Scripture pictures yeast as influence: either of the Kingdom of God, or of evil. When new truth is applied under the influence of godly men with proper motives, the vintage will be enjoyable to all who drink. However, when wrong motives, or improper attitudes are applied to new truth, the results are sour and unpalatable.

During the fermentation process the structures into which the new truth has been poured undergo a period of stretching and change. Many which are inflexible end up being shattered. Those which are flexible continue to adjust until fermentation is completed.

Like new wine, however, new truth is not immediately consumable when the upheaval begins to subside. Very often it is still harsh, dogmatic and heady. Like wine, it must age. The impurities still require some time to settle and be eliminated. The truth may go through many transitions, and be poured from vessel to vessel, as it interplays between groups, ministries and churches. As the ageing process continues, truth loses its harsh flavour and becomes more balanced.

New truth, balanced with all that God has said before, brings reality to our ministries. I see seven areas of balance that we need to incorporate.

COMMUNITY V. INDIVIDUAL

Our world is struggling between two alternatives: mindless collectivism

and rugged individualism. Collectivism disregards the individual; the individualist cares nothing for anyone other than himself. The Gospel, however, offers us a third choice—membership in the Body of Christ. Membership is a uniquely christian concept. A member, or organ is not merely a part of the whole, nor merely a part unto himself. As with the organs in our bodies, it is our individuality that makes us useful members. Community emphasized at the expense of the individual results in the stifling of motivation. Over-emphasis on individual welfare produces self-centred believers.

There is a healthy balance when each member functions within the sphere of his gift, his motivation being the edification of the Body and not personal profit. Paradoxically, it is our willingness to live for the Body that ultimately develops in us individual fulfilment in the gifts God has given us.

HORIZONTAL V. VERTICAL

The New Testament teaches that the believer needs both a vertical relationship with the Lord and horizontal relationships with other members of the Body of Christ.

In the past, we have so strongly emphasized the vertical relationship that we have not adequately functioned as members of the Body. Now we are in danger of swinging to the other extreme.

We must always teach and allow time for the priestly ministry of each believer even in the press of community activities. While it is proper to teach that delegated authority and fellowship are sources of spiritual life, we must never allow believers to lose sight of the ultimate source of life, which is the Lord himself!

ORDER V. SPONTANEITY

In the past, we taught people to act as they 'felt led'. The result in many places was chaos. In an effort to help people more accurately

interpret the leading of the Holy Spirit we asked people to 'check out' their guidance with a pastor or shepherd for a confirming word. The result in many cases was a bureaucratic system which squashed spontaneity and removed the joy of seeing God work.

As leaders we must become secure enough in our people to allow them to make mistakes in learning to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. Also, discretionary authority can be practiced as a balancing factor. There are certain realms where I am secure in knowing the leading of the Holy Spirit.

In other areas, however, I may need confirmation or adjustment concerning my leadings. This is especially true where others may be affected significantly by my actions. It is one thing to prophesy, 'The Lord loves you. . .'; it is something different to say, 'Behold, it is my will for Sam and Mary to get married.' Discretionary authority gives me the freedom to learn the leading of the Holy Spirit in areas where mistakes will not cause harm, while still providing help in areas in which I am not yet fully confident. In the degree people's lives are affected, spontaneity must be subject to order.

SELECTIVE V. MASS COMMUNICATION

We cannot tell everything to everyone all the time. There are differences in communication to those under our care, to other Christians, and to the world at large.

Failure to make distinctions in communication has caused problems in the realm of discipleship, authority, and submission. Some who did not have a shepherd's heart, picked up the shepherding principle and built little kingdoms, dominating and using the people of God.

How many of us have taught openly from the pulpit, 'Wives, submit to your husbands,' only to have an immature or insecure husband use this truth in a wrong way.

We cannot mass-produce disciples with mass communication. Princi-

ples can be presented openly, but they must be applied individually by the impartation of the Spirit of truth as well as the concept.

Jesus was careful what he communicated, and to whom. He never gave too much truth, and even hid what he was doing from those who would not understand. Even within the ranks of the twelve, there were levels of communication.

We do belong to the whole Body of Christ, and the Spirit of God is crying for unity. But we must not use this as an excuse to indiscriminately communicate what God is doing in our own lives when he may be doing something entirely different in others. In regard to those outside our groups, we need to be wary of slang, 'buzz words', cure-alls, and even practical truth when it is not applicable.

OBEDIENCE V. APPEAL

Without question, there have been situations where leaders have 'played Holy Spirit' to believers under their care, requiring a type of allegiance that only the Lord has the right to demand. The Biblical principle of leadership is hierarchical in that there are classes or levels of authority. Subordination to that authority, while real and necessary, is not the subordination of a slave. Nor does it contain compulsion or fear. While the subordination of the wife to the husband is 'in everything' it can be absolute in nothing.

The goal of leadership is not the production of mindless robots. Rather it is to build believers who are capable of taking responsibility for themselves, their families and each other. We are to lead people away from dependence upon our leadership and toward personal responsibility.

Real authority is never taken, it is given. No leader should ever take more authority in the life of one of his charges than he is given by that believer.

No leader should require anything that is unscriptural, immoral, illegal, or against the dictates of the individual believer's conscience.

In striking a balance between obedience to authority and the free-

dom to appeal we must realize that we are striving to produce an attitude of obedience, not mechanical responses to commands. A desire to obey the Lord may be the motivation for a believer questioning what he is told. It is our extreme challenge to exercise the 'obedience muscle' of those under our care by touching attitudes of selfwill, rebellion and stubbornness without having to continually explain and justify. There are situations where a leader must require things to be done without taking the time to allow for discussion on the part of those following.

ABSOLUTES V. VARIABLES

Derek Prince once pointed out that we have a tendency to make absolutes out of principles in which the Bible allows variation. For instance, the structure of church government and certain matters of conscience. There are things we must require if a group is to maintain unity of purpose, such as the need to hold our meetings at a particular time and place. But the Bible does not speak of these areas as absolutes and we have no right to make them such. There are things which I understand to be Biblical absolutes, for instance, the inerrancy of the scripture, the deity of Christ, salvation by grace, etc. There are also certain moral absolutes, i.e. adultery, abortion, theft, etc.

Balance in this realm seems to be in allowing other brethren to walk in the dictates of their own relationship with the Lord without feeling that we have a higher way or have heard more from God than they have.

PRINCIPLE V. PEOPLE

Our pastoral goal is to develop a people who will live by the principles of the New Testament regardless of personal feelings. We have been wallowing in a sea of subjectivity, and it is time to train a people who are covenantally bound in obedience to God's work without regard for personal blessing.

In our striving toward this goal, however, we are liable to forget that the Lord is more concerned with the person than with the principle. There is something in our makeup that uses the Bible against people rather than for them. Men who have given their lives in the apprehension of truth and have suffered for it, have had a difficult time not pressing their principles on people 'for their own good'.

Somehow we expect our people to overcome in six weeks weaknesses which may have taken us six years to grow out of. We need to be sensitive to what I call 'masterful inactivity'. We must learn to wait until we know we are following the initiative of the Holy Spirit before we touch a man's life. After Lazarus died, Jesus was not overly anxious to raise him—he waited two days. He wanted to be sure the issues were clear and only after he had the whole matter settled with his Father did he go to him.

Christ-like leadership has as much to do with how we get people to the desired goal as it does with getting them there. An over-emphasis on principles puts people in boxes and treats them all alike. Jesus dealt with each situation individually. When he encountered the woman taken in adultery he knew that she must stop sinning. The Pharisees would stone her; that would cure the problem insofar as it satisfied the law. Jesus, however, chose to deal with her as a person and in so doing accomplished the same end.

It is our weighty challenge, as those who have been given watch over the people of God, to maintain an uncompromising scriptural standard of life, fellowship and conduct, without destroying people in the process of saving them.

The new wine is ageing, yet I trust, without the quality of the vintage being compromised. There are many men who have been watching all that is happening to see if our harvest will mellow, or if it will sour and be cast aside. There is already abundant evidence that many who have waited to see whether the principles we have held would find biblical balance and be sufficiently mellowed, are now embracing and receiving these principles with joy.

A version of this article appeared in *Pastoral Renewal*, PO Box 8617, Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48107. Copyright 1980 used by permission.

In a word (werd) prep./adj./n. (colloq.) Regular feature (not all Gk.) in printed publication, lucid, free of obscurity, radical (of the roots), concise, enlightened, particular, source of which can be traced from original Jn. (abbr.) MacLauchlan.

IN A WORD

In the article on *rhema* in the last issue of *Fulness*, I emphasised God's word as event. It should not surprise us, therefore, that the word *rhema* is used not only of word, but also of concrete event. Thus in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the OT, whose title is abbreviated as LXX), 'the book of the acts of Solomon' (1 Kings 11:41) is literally 'the book of the words (*rhematon*) of Solomon', although the reference is to the concrete events of his life. Similarly, 'after these things' in Gen 15:1 is literally 'after these words (*rhemata*)'. The OT Hebrew word for 'word', *dabar*, in the plural often means 'history' or 'events'. Similarly, the historical events of Jesus' life, death and resurrection are referred to as 'the having become word (*rhema*)' or 'the word which has happened' in Acts 10:37, and 'these words (*rhematon*)' in Acts 5:32. Indeed the birth of Jesus, which resulted from Mary's reception of Gabriel's word, is called 'this word (*rhema*) which has happened' in Luke 2:15.

All this emphasises word as dynamic event, not mental information, and takes us on to a new aspect, the triumph of God's word. If God speaks, and his word 'happens', the result is victory, triumph. In 2 Thes 3:1, Paul exhorts the Thessalonians to pray that 'the word (*logos*) of the Lord may speed on and triumph'

as he speaks and works elsewhere, and he reminds the Thessalonians of their own experience of the speedy, victorious word released amongst them. God's word is active and produces victorious results; when God speaks things change. So, in growth and development of the church, it is the word of God which is growing and becoming strong in the earth (Acts 6:7; 12:24; 19:20).

The word is always spoken of as active, accomplishing results. In Eph 6:17, it is the *spirit* which is the word (*rhema*) of God (the Greek relative pronoun 'which' agrees with 'spirit' and not with 'sword'), and the force of the earlier part of the verse is to equate 'sword' and 'spirit'. So we may say that 'sword' equals 'spirit' equals 'word'. In the Septuagint version of Isa 11:4 we read, 'he shall smite the earth with the word (*logos*) of his mouth, and with the breath (spirit) of his lips shall he destroy the ungodly one', whereas the Hebrew reads 'rod of his mouth'. So we may enlarge our equation to read: 'sword' equals 'spirit' (or breath) equals 'word' equals 'rod'. Just as Jesus emphasised that his words were 'spirit and life', so it is here. God's word is a weapon (sword), active and able to pierce and penetrate to the heart of matters (Heb 4:12) and to overthrow the

enemy. It is spirit, not mind, knowledge or information, and communicates itself to our spirits (cf John 6:63). It is rod, active in judgement, and as the instrument of rule. Just as in Isaiah 11:4, so 2 Thes 2:8 says the Lord will destroy the 'lawless one' 'by the breath (spirit) of his mouth'.

We are so to experience God's word that our lives are transformed and energised. God's word is his self-expression, and man, created as God's shape and appearance (Gen 1:26), is the highest form of that self-expression in the material creation. From the start, our experience of God's word is to include experience of the Holy Spirit, and of the powers of the age to come (Heb 6:4,5). By this means we become God's sword or arrow, the embodiment and expression of his glory, accomplishing his purpose in the earth (Isa 49:1-4).

We are to hear God's word in an altogether higher way than Israel at Sinai, for we are now ushered into the reality they beheld in terror from afar (Heb 12:18-24).

As we respond to God's voice now, he will shake to destruction all that can be shaken, giving us a security and wholeness in himself that will make us able to express his kingdom rule throughout all his domain.

I.D.

Bernard Cope puts a face to the name of David Matthews

It has not been easy collaring David Matthews; and it has precious little to do with his living on the wrong side of the Irish Sea.

Early in 1979, for instance, he brought his whole family for one of those holidays with a difference in sunny Collier Row. I really thought opportunity could knock no louder. But every time I asked him about a couple of hours' pleasant but pointed conversation, I always got a blank face—pleasant, but pointed. Finally putting two and two together, I came up with an undisputed four: if I wanted to interview David Matthews, I had to go to Belfast.

Frankly, I already knew enough about him to waffle my way

through a couple of pages of biographical notes, but I had to admit they would bear more authenticity if I were to observe him in his natural habitat. So, as the mountain was resolutely opposed to coming to Mohammed, I climbed aboard a Cromwell tank, and headed for Northern Ireland.

The tank, can I quickly explain, was to fend off the famous Matthews bear hugs that might greet my arrival. But luckily he was preoccupied with demonstrating good karate moves to his 4-year-old son Ian at the time. I should think Ian would go a good ten rounds with anyone you care to name. And to be strictly accurate, the tank did have 'British Airways' on the side.

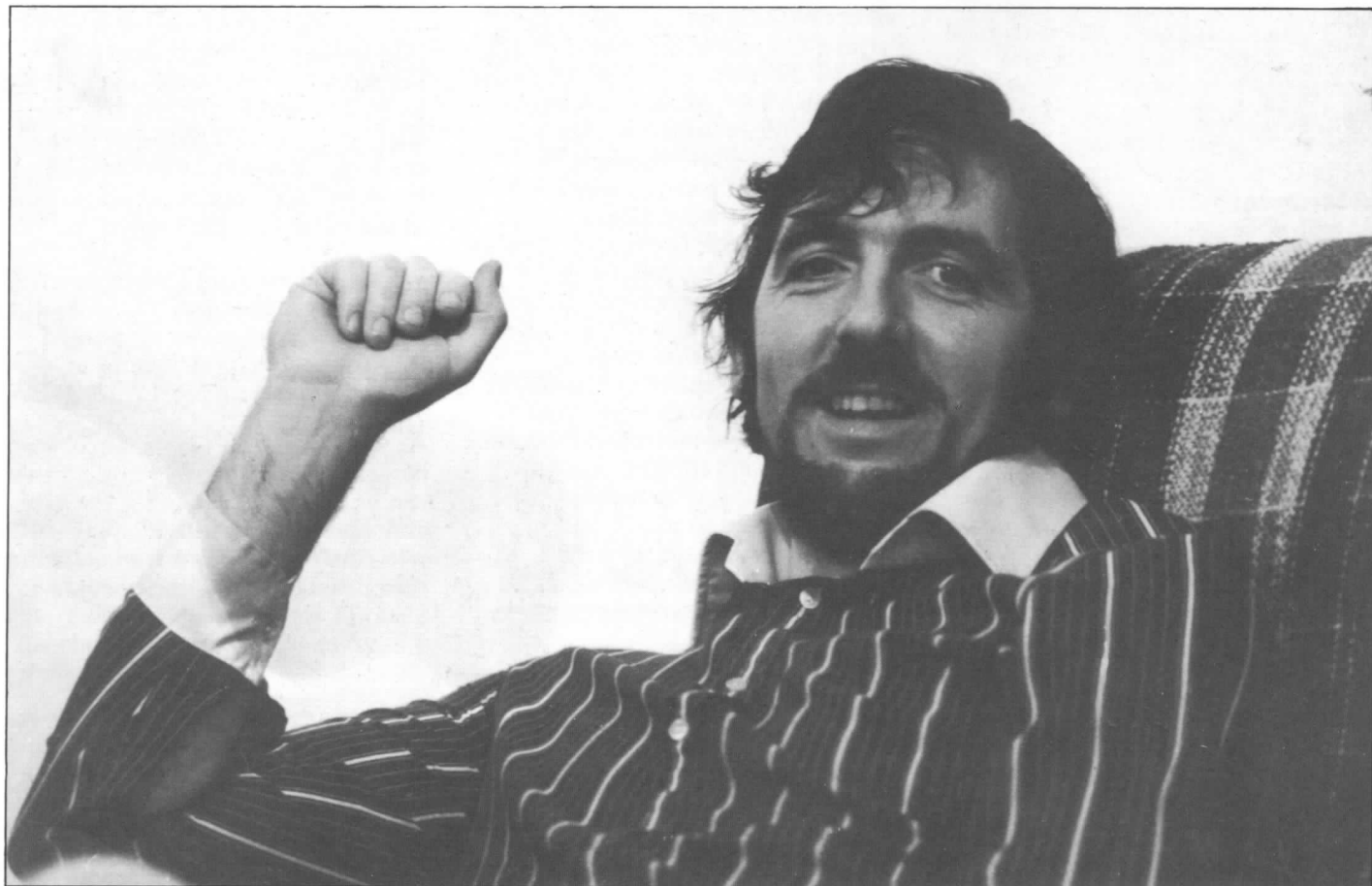
Now that I am back home and able to reflect on the trip, I'm glad that Dave was so insistent that I interview him in Belfast. To have written about him without seeing at least a little of the situation in which he lives, would have been totally inadequate.

Belfast is hardly short of publicity; and whilst the publicity doesn't paint the whole picture, most of it seems to be true. Nevertheless the people of the city have, of necessity, learnt how to go about their daily lives in spite of 'the troubles'. And

provided they play safe, by keeping out of areas where they would be distinctly unwelcome, they should be alright. But there are no guarantees. Sectarian murders are commonplace. Soldiers and guns, bomb scares, armoured police cars, road checks and 'peace lines'—fenced barricades that section off Protestant and Catholic communities to check riots—are always there to remind you of what might happen, and sometimes does.

So 'playing safe' is not always easy. For Dave, his family, and the folk around him in fellowship, it's more or less out of the question; because the group of nearly one hundred into which Dave puts most of his time and energy includes a number of Catholics from a Catholic stronghold across the city in Andersonstown. Their Sunday morning family meeting, incidentally, is a riot of a different kind.

David and Mary Matthews live with their four children Avril, Joanne, Ian and baby Sarah, in the south east part of Belfast. Just a hundred yards from the house where Dave produces his own wine, breeds a tropical fish or two, and makes far too much noise shouting at rugby matches on television, stands the now infamous Castlereagh police station. Another hundred further



on is the barracks of a UDR regiment; and just to rub it in, there's a fire station in the immediate neighbourhood too. None of it seems to affect the Matthews one bit, but if I say it's a fairly quiet part of town, you will understand that I am speaking in relative terms.

Dave was born in Belfast in 1946, and grew up in a working class Protestant neighbourhood. Like so many other children around him he was sent to Sunday school although his parents had little time for the church—Grandmother was the strong christian influence. Unemployment was high and his father was in and out of work throughout Dave's childhood, so money was never too abundant. On my guided tour of the city, Dave took me past the house where he had lived, and pointed out the site of Joe's corner shop. Whenever you went in for groceries, Joe would ask if your dad had a job. If he didn't your bill went on the slate. Joe didn't make much money.

During our drive round Belfast, Dave said that although he wasn't quite sure when, it was some time during his childhood that he first came to the Lord. And people's hearts were turned to God by his preaching, which he began at the age of twelve. Amongst them was his mother. But as a sixteen-year-old he gave his heart to the Lord in an adult way, at a youth camp on the Isle of Man—his first trip outside Ireland. Dave saw quite clearly that if Jesus was to be Lord at all, he must be Lord of all. There was no middle road to take.

In time, seeing the evidence of Jesus as Lord of all in Dave's life, his Free Methodist pastor told him that he felt sure the Lord wanted Dave 'in the ministry'. And Dave later spent three years at Bible College in Birkenhead. But he feels he learnt far more in the period before Bible College when he used to spend Saturday mornings at the pastor's house, chatting and doing odd jobs. The pastor, then in his seventies, had a wealth of experience and testimony to share with him.

Dave had met Mary before going to Birkenhead, and when they found they were as keen as ever about each other even after three years spent mostly apart, they had to take their relationship seriously! They were married in early 1969, when Dave was 22 and Mary a couple of years younger. Dave began as pastor of a Free Methodist church, which

in those days had no building to meet in. He took me past the new premises recently built in the manse front garden, and nodded towards the houses across the street, where lived his earliest converts.

But the Matthews were not long in the situation before they had to leave. One Sunday evening he prayed for a woman in his congregation to be freed from demonic oppression. Such was her release that she burst into speaking in tongues before Dave could get a hymn going to cover it up. (Dithering is one of his faults, I was later told by a close friend.)

That did it. The superintendent told him that if he didn't stop preaching the Baptism in the Spirit he would have to go. And Mary told him that if she ever thought he was preaching something he didn't believe, she would walk out of the meeting.

So, with a young wife and baby, no money and the prospect of nowhere to go, they left—without ever explaining to their congregation why. Dave knew that an explanation would cause a split, which he quite simply would not have been able to handle.

They were shortly to find themselves living in a large house just outside Belfast that could sleep about fifty. From there Dave and Mary ran a sort of Bible school together with a brother from the Pentecostal church called Keith Gerner. At the same time, Dave was lecturing and preaching, travelling throughout Northern Ireland, averaging two thousand miles a month in old cars that couldn't stand the pace. And usually it was just to speak to small groups of people who really weren't going anywhere with God. This went on for about a year, and was frankly disillusioning.

Then they moved to Carrickfergus, where they could rent a house, even with their limited means. He says they lived, 'or rather died', by faith there for two and a half poverty stricken years. In the nick of time rent money would appear mysteriously through the letter box; but in all the time they spent in the house, they could never afford to decorate it. More significantly a group of about twelve people gathered regularly in their home, and some lasting relationships had their origins there.

Taking a realistic attitude to the family finances Dave found a job

which he described to me as 'glorified parcel opener' for a drugs firm, and then another as a wages clerk in a local factory. Employment lasted a year; then the men closest to him encouraged Dave to return to full time ministry again.

What's more, their shared vision for the church was turning their thoughts back to Belfast. If God was going to do anything, it would surely be there—troubles or no troubles.

It took a while for the conviction to grow, and Dave spent six months wondering and wandering round the streets of Belfast, looking for a suitable house. When a house was finally found, it wasn't before he was desperate to move back to the city again.

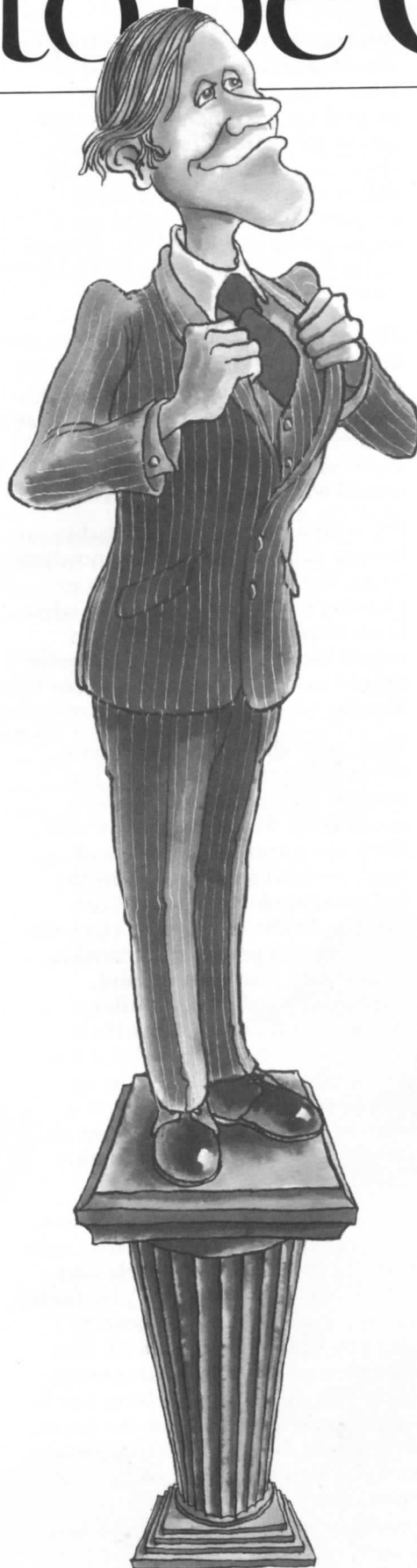
Not for three months did they discover old friends living just up the road, wanting fellowship. They were sheep without a shepherd and were ready and willing to team up with Dave, a shepherd without sheep! By ones and twos the group grew, from an original half-dozen to the present one hundred.

Dave has always steered clear of labels—I think he even dislikes them; but he just has to live with the fact that he is now recognised as one of the charismatic leaders in Belfast. Four years ago he was invited to join an interdenominational committee concerned with charismatic renewal in the city. The series of monthly meetings that were to be organised in the city centre attracted regular crowds of three or four hundred—Protestant and Catholic alike.

Dave's involvement with Des, leader of the group from Andersonstown, traces from those committee meetings where they first met. Dave's prominence in the leadership of the meetings has also led to invitations further afield. Recently, for example, he was a speaker at a conference for 8000 Catholics in Dallas.

But building the group at home in Belfast, with the men who joined him back in Carrickfergus, the folk from Andersonstown, and all who came in along the way, is what really excites him. They are dedicated to what must seem like anathema to some people in Belfast; they are committed to the vision of coming together as one. And judging by what I saw on my brief visit, they're not going to be disappointed.

Dare to be Great



There can be very few people who have not at one time or another in their life had the desire, or at least the dream, of getting to the top. To one, the fantasy may be of being a top athlete. To another, reaching the highest levels of business. The sphere will vary from person to person, yet most will agree that the dream has been there. But how few ever make it!

This failure rate is often due simply to a lack of ability. However, many of those who have got to the top are not the most able or gifted. Others of greater talent are often left by the wayside, falling short of their potential, failing to fulfil their early promise. The reason for this is that in any realm, reaching the top requires more than ability. It requires discipline and dedication, hard work and a driving ambition to succeed, responsibility and probably not a little unpopularity. The higher one goes, the more it costs. All too few are willing to pay the price.

In the church, the position is no different. Apathy, and the desire for a nice quiet undisturbed life are found everywhere. Anyone who seeks to take responsibility or looks for leadership is often frowned upon as being pushy or proud. Indeed, the lack of ambition, and desire to be a 'nobody' have so often been confused with humility that they have become sought-after qualities.

As for the likes of James and John, asking to be numbers two and three in the kingdom when Jesus is made number one! That really

is unthinkable. Such arrogance and self seeking must never be tolerated. Such people must be cut down to size and heavily sat upon!

Yet that is exactly what Jesus does not do. He, of all men, realised that they had got it wrong. Their vision was limited to the natural scene. They still thought of Jesus' kingdom as merely of this world. Yet he in no way condemns their ambition. Rather, he encourages it. True, he reminds them of the cost. There is a cup to drink, and a baptism to be experienced. Only at the cost of great suffering can position be attained. 'But if you wish to be great,' says Jesus, 'that is good!' Once again, by the yardstick of modern christian thought, Jesus has got it wrong. Surely one should not wish to be great. Is it not unchristian to aim high? Yet Jesus is clearly saying that the desire to be great is not wrong. Indeed, he wants his followers to have that desire. He would have us to be great, not as men count greatness. Not outstanding in the eyes of men, but longing to be great in the kingdom of God.

That kingdom is not taken by weakness, or by a watery, self-effacing niceness. The kingdom of God is taken by storm, by eager men who will stop at nothing to press into it. God is longing today, as Jesus was then, to have men, who care not what the world thinks of them, but will stop at nothing to take the kingdom, to be great in the heavenly realm.

'Rejoice that your names are written in heaven,' said Jesus on

by Ian Farr

another occasion, as the seventy returned, and with thrill and excitement told of their kingdom-spreading mission. What did he mean? He was certainly not telling them just to be happy that they were saved, and to calm down a little bit. For he himself went away and leaped for joy as he praised and thanked his Father for what had happened. Rather he was saying that they were great in the spiritual realm. Their names were known. They were famous where it really counted.

Yet, who were these seventy? We know something of Peter, of John, of Paul. Of the twelve, we at least know their names, and men presumed to honour them in various ways through christian history. Of the seventy, we know nothing. Not even their names are recorded for us. Most people are unaware that they ever existed. In man's history they count for nothing. Lost in the mists of time. Not so with God! For though the world has never owned them, in the heavenly realm their names were written. Before them demons feared and fled. Authority was given to them, and they did not shrink from the responsibility that went with it.

Eagerly they pressed in and advanced the mission of Jesus, causing Satan to be hurled out of areas where he had previously ruled.

There must be almost as many people in the church today who dream about moving in power, casting out demons and healing the sick, as there are schoolboys who fantasise about running out on the Wembley turf in an England shirt. The proportion of those who make it is about the same too. The idea sounds great and glamorous, but most miss the way. The cost is too great.

'Whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all.' It is a sad, but nonetheless true observation, that among christian groups as a rule, if there is a job that needs doing well, you look for the busiest people and ask them to do it. Those who are doing little have never got time! Somehow the glamour fades when the way opens up. Do you wish to be great? That is good. Then give yourself to others. Serve those who serve the church, minister to those who are already leading and functioning.

Do not covet the position of a leader, but rather encourage him, serve him. Elisha learned far more from being with Elijah as his servant, than he would ever have done from attending regular lectures at the school of the prophets. He not only learned facts, but he caught his master's vision. More than that, he received a double portion of Elijah's spirit. From that position of service, at the right time he was promoted, and all could see that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha.

'Run the race,' says Paul, 'in such a way that you might win.' Too many christians are satisfied with 'just qualifying', or feel that there is merit in politely smiling and waving others by with a nice, 'After you.' The church in every generation, and certainly no less today, needs men and women who would be winners for Christ's sake, willing at any cost to give themselves to service, discipline and training in godliness; not trying to appear humble, but in reality humbling themselves under God's hand, and leaving it with him to exalt them in his time. This he will do. They will be great in the kingdom of God.



Learning to be me: Roselle Collins

I wonder if you have ever realised how important you are in the Kingdom of God. For my part, I have never really believed that I am at all important. Certainly, my mind has understood that 'the body does not consist of one member but many', but the relevance of that simple statement to my life has not until now permeated my whole being. For me this realisation did not come as the result of a dramatic vision from God, nor did an audible voice speak out of the darkness as I

lay in bed (as I have often secretly wished it would—life would be so much easier!) But I suddenly found that God was, in fact, speaking very clearly to me, not simply through gifted preachers, but to me as an individual through all the ordinary events that happened as I relaxed at home, went to work or visited my friends.

For the past year I have been very blessed in sharing a flat with a close friend. I was able to share with her all the things that I enjoyed and all the problems that I faced, and gradually, as I grew to trust her more and more, I found that I was able to talk about things that I would have been ashamed to share with other people. Relaxing in this security, I suddenly found that my friend enjoyed some of the things that I had brought into the way we lived and that, although we were two individuals, we complemented each other. Comments I made as we chatted opened up aspects which she hadn't thought of, and suddenly I became aware that I had a contribution. It was just being myself. What a relief!

As time has gone by, I have had an

increasing desire to have some input into the local fellowship. I have no great vision for my role in the church. I am not a gifted singer or dancer, nor have I any recognised ministry, but I do know that God is still speaking to me and that it doesn't matter how small or ordinary the things that I have to offer may seem. It is part of myself that I want to bring. Of course, I do aspire to greater things. I want to mature and move on as God directs. But unless I put one foot in front of the other and launch out I will be standing on the same spot for ever.

I am constantly reminded of a line in a song written by a friend about the coming of God's Kingdom on earth: 'There's a shout in the camp as we answer the call. Hail the King! Hail the Lord of Lords!' A response is required from the smallest as well as the greatest. I hope that I will always respond to the call.

Roselle Collins works as a secretary and lives in Romford where, for the last few years, she has been closely involved with a growing christian community.

All the best.

John Menlove



John Menlove plays 14 well known songs of praise and worship.

For many years John has been the musical leader of large praise gatherings, both at home and abroad. From the Albert Hall to local church meetings he has consistently caused people to respond to God in praise and worship, not only with his competent piano technique but through his own flow with God. He has featured prominently on the *Fruit Salad* recordings but now, after much persuasion has produced a music-only record of popular choruses played in his own distinctive style. John has gathered

together a few musicians and recorded an album of tunes including *Abba Father, Come and praise him, Jesus take me as I am* and *Ain't Jesus good*. The album would make an excellent present.

Records or tapes are available from Flex records and tapes, price £3.99 plus 30p post and packing or from your local christian bookshop. Please make cheques/ PO's payable to Flex records and tapes and send your order to 20 Faircross Avenue, Chase Cross, Romford, Essex.