



page 5

PLAINLY SPEAKING:
Floyd E. Odom talks about "The Spiritual Cure for Social Ills" in an exclusive interview.



page 11

GUEST PULPIT
Kenneth Bow presents a selected sermon and outline: "The Voice of the Blood."

also in this issue:

Cover Story	1
Nathan Hurst "Revival Climate"	1
Opinions: "Holiness: Are We Losing Our Commitment?"	2
Plainly Speaking: Floyd Odom	5
Q & A Forum	6
World News	7
News You Can Use	9
Guest Pulpit: Kenneth Bow	11
New AIS Files	12
Smiles	13
Pentecostal Market	15

Indiana Bible College Perspectives

Apostolic Information Service

Vol. 6, No.11

Pastor Nathan Hurst • Landmark Pentecostal Church • Texarkana, Texas

Revival Climate



Above: Pastor Nathan Hurst of Landmark Pentecostal Church, Texarkana, TX

By Richard C. Brown

The climate in the Texarkana, TX area is warm, not hot, and almost a winter-vacationer's paradise. It's one of those areas where the winter is seldom too cold, although summer is frequently quite hot. And only very specialized kind of vegetation grows, mostly that which thrives in warm-weather climates.

But Nathan Hurst, pastor of Texarkana's Landmark Pentecostal Church, isn't too concerned about the

weather. Creating the right climate is his specialty. For 14 years, Brother Hurst has been striving to create an atmosphere in Landmark's church services that draws people to the church.

"The atmosphere you create in your services is so important," Hurst said. "You have to have good church, because good church services produce revival."

And having taken the congregation from a size of 80 to well over 200, it seems the Landmark congregation does indeed know how to have "good church."

Adjusting to the Climate

All his life, Brother Hurst, now 37, has been involved in services where there was a revival atmosphere. His father, Billy Joe Hurst, was and is, pastor in Kennewick, WA.

The younger Hurst first received the Holy Ghost five days before his 16th birthday. "After I prayed through, I had no other ambitions but to preach the Gospel. I was extremely focused for a young person," he recalled.

Focused might be an understatement in Hurst's case. During that first year, the teen spent days praying and studying the Bible. "I remember that for days on end, I would literally stay in the church, where I was at the altar for hours at a time." It was a climate that Brother Hurst said caused his desire to be used of God to grow even deeper than before.

In 1977, Nathan Hurst married his wife,

Ronda. The two of them then began their ministry in earnest, evangelizing full-time. For five years following, Brother Hurst preached wherever he had the opportunity.

During those early years, men whom Hurst came to respect counseled him frequently.

"I was so young and impressionable," he said, "and the thing that affected me most were certain men of God who took time and interest in the developing of my ministry. These men, like Johnny Harrell, Wayne McClain, Vaughn Morton, and others, modeled for me the kind of preacher I wanted to be and the kind of church I wanted to build. They had a revival climate in their churches, and it was something I knew I wanted to have

(Continued on page three)

Below: Brother Hurst preaches during a Sunday night service at Landmark.



Opinions

OUR NEXT OPINIONS TOPIC: "Dealing With Anger, Stress & Frustration in the Ministry"

If you have an opinion on this topic, send it along with a photograph of yourself (with your name, address and phone number) to: AIS, P.O. Box 47917, Indianapolis, IN 46247. Or call (800) 8000-AIS.

Opinions Interviews by Aaron Adkins



Daniel Mena
Pastor
Edmonton, AB, Canada

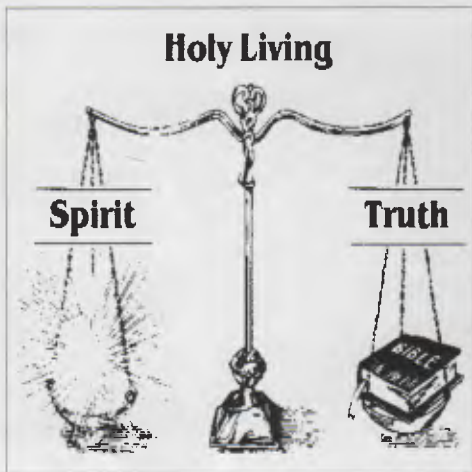
As a movement, I feel the United Pentecostal Church has drifted far from where it once was. Like the parable of the 10 virgins, we are going to wake up to find that many have allowed their lamp to go out. We need to get on our faces and fast and weep and humble ourselves before God, because only by the Spirit will

true holiness and separation make sense.

For example, the UPC has lost the battle against television. TV has gone rampant among us. Also, Video, Internet and CD-ROM have merged into one technology and all pose basically the same sort of danger -- yet we do nothing.

And then, there is the jewelry problem. Jewelry is either all right or it's all wrong. Our attitude seems to be that if a preacher takes off his wedding ring and hangs it from his wife's ear, it becomes jewelry and is wrong; but if it's on the finger, it's okay. But according to the Bible, jewelry is jewelry. Today, our women wear jewelry in their hair and brooches on their dresses, and we are seemingly blind to these things.

We must understand that our holiness standards will never be relevant to this world; we should stop trying to make them so. A person who says, "I don't see what's wrong with this," is simply using carnal logic.



**Holiness:
Are We Losing
Our Commitment?**

AIS VIEW: *Certain standards of holiness may legitimately change over time, depending on changes within our society and culture. However, our commitment to true scriptural modesty, separation from the world, and abstaining from ungodly entertainment must never weaken. As a movement we must not hesitate to raise up a standard against wickedness. The watchman must be continually vigilant of any enemy that might destroy us. The question, "Are We Slipping" is something we must regularly ask ourselves as individuals, as well as a movement.*

Some churches in the United Pentecostal Church have lost some of their commitment to holiness standards, and there are some who have pulled away from us. But as a whole, I think the UPCI has maintained its commitment to holiness.

I say this because of what I know personally. In the church I pastor, we don't have a different standard than 30 years ago. In fact, hopefully I am doing a better job of communicating it now. In the district of which I am a part, there is a uniformly good standard of holiness. A good barometer of what we believe as an organization is found in our manual and articles of faith, and these have not been tampered with.

What we do have today is a greater challenge before us. For instance, there's the challenge of technological progress. We're at a point that our holiness teaching must focus more on personal integrity and commitment to standards and not just on the do's and don'ts themselves. With the advent of computer networking technology, for example, it is no longer enough to tell people to throw out the TV. Personal discipline must be taught. Our commitment to holiness has not changed as an organization; we just need to keep selling it.



Jesse Williams
Asst. Gen. Superintendent
Fayetteville, NC



Ray Brown
Pastor
Avondale, AZ

There has been some deterioration in the holiness stand that has been a traditional part of our Apostolic heritage. For instance, many people are now watching on video what they used to watch on television. The encroachment of Hollywood is the greatest threat on the church's spirituality that I've seen in my lifetime.



Dorsey Burk
Foreign Missions, UPCI
Hazelwood, MO

I would say there has been no loss of commitment to holiness by our movement. As a child, I was taught standards and not holiness. There is a difference. Holiness is a condition of an inward heart, trying to be like God, whereas standards can sometimes be just an outward form. So I think we have matured in our understanding of true holiness.



Tom Foster
Pastor
Dallas, TX

The commitment to holiness is still there, and it needs to be. If we lose it, how will we indicate any difference with the unbeliever? Fortunately, the churches that are growing are the ones that are committed to holiness. When I say holiness, I don't just mean standards. I mean attitudes and the way we conduct ourselves as Christians.



Larry Sims
Pastor
Tallahassee, FL

I think commitment is a big problem for this generation in all areas, including holiness and even in supporting the church. Usually, if you can get a commitment to help and to support the church in its various ministries, holiness is not a problem. People will usually line up with standards of holiness if they're actively involved in the church program.



Bobby McCool, Sr.
Pastor
West Memphis, AR

I think it's partially true we've lost some commitment to holiness. For instance, some of our young ladies and men do go too much with the styles of the world. In order to maintain our holiness stand, but still be relevant today, we need to preach holiness with love and understanding. Today, we need to explain why certain things are wrong.



Curtis Spears
Pastor
Shreveport, LA

Some of the standards that existed 30 years ago were not the same standards that existed 30 years before that, so I don't think that the fact that our standards are different represents a lesser commitment to holiness. For instance, I remember some ministers who used to preach against drinking coffee, but I don't know of anyone who does today.

NATHAN HURST: Revival Climate

(Continued from page one)

when I pastored.”

Eventually, God did start impressing on the Hursts a desire to pastor. At the end of a two-month period while Brother Hurst was preaching a revival in Stockton, CA, for Pastor Kenneth Haney, the church at Texarkana called and asked him to be their pastor. When Hurst went to preach in Texarkana in consideration of assuming the pastorate, the Lord spoke to him in a very definite way, giving him a promise that He would produce a great church in the city. “That promise from the Lord has been a mainstay, motivating me for the last 14 years,” said Hurst. And so it was that in August, 1982, Brother Hurst preached his first message as pastor of Landmark Pentecostal Church.

A Pleasant Climate

The building that houses Landmark Pentecostal Church is the same as when Brother Hurst first got there, albeit with extensive modi-

Hurst's Philosophy of Ministry

“You have to have a climate in your church services conducive to worship. I know it sounds a little simplistic, but when people get happy about God, they gossip about God. You don't have to tell them to talk about the Lord; they already want to. People talk about things that make them happy, so when you start having good services on a consistent basis, people are going to be blessed.”

--Nathan Hurst



ABOVE: The Landmark choir sings just prior to the preaching of Pastor Nathan Hurst.

and thus go from a full house to an empty house. “This tends to be a negative psychological thing. But we'll be half full when we go over there.”

Climate Changes

Brother Hurst readily admits that during his early years, he was not the perfect pastor. Creating the right atmosphere for growth was

not always an automatic thing.

“My people skills were not the greatest at first; I was a young man, and the way I handled people then compared with how I handle them now are two different things. As an example, if I needed to rebuke somebody, I just did it. Then I learned that there's a time and place for rebuke. Most of the time it involves pulling the person into the office so others don't start feeling sorry for them. Now, I keep confrontation to a minimum, whereas at first, if I felt there was a need, I didn't hesitate to be confrontational.”

This was not the only “climate change” Hurst made. He saw early on that he would have to change the way Landmark “had church.”

Said Hurst: “Our first service was on a Sunday night. And during that service, it dawned on me: They didn't know how to have church like I felt it should be. Therefore, I knew that I would have to teach them how to bring in the right atmosphere through worship and prayer. I was determined we'd have a climate for revival.

“If you have a consistent move of God, with good worship, singing and preaching, people

will want to come to church; they'll be eager to bring friends to church and 'gossip the Gospel.' The rest will take care of itself.”

Specifically, Hurst cites several things that need to be put in top shape before the start of every service. The sermon, for instance, cannot be done in a “slipshod” fashion but should be well-prepared.

“Also make sure the musicians and singers are ready to go. If the ushering staff is inefficient, fix it before church; don't let it go on month after month as a hindrance to the services. And if the P.A. system is not working, fix it before church; don't try to fiddle with it during the service. Each service is critical, and anything that would help to facilitate having a good service should be taken into consideration beforehand.”

Climate of Growth

As critical as it is to have the right atmosphere in the church service, there also remains the challenge of getting people to the building. It's a challenge that Hurst and the Landmark congregation take seriously.

“We have tried everything that has come down the pike, but the most consistent thing that we do is have good church and gossip the Gospel. We have four main areas of organized outreach: bus ministry, home Bible study, a radio broadcast and visitor follow-up.”

Indeed, if there's one area of outreach that Landmark emphasizes, it's visitor follow-up. Brother Hurst believes it's critical to keep the atmosphere that they encountered at Landmark before the visitor's eyes. “There's a reason that follow-up is my number one priority. It's because

(Continued on page 14)



ABOVE: Exterior view of the facilities of Landmark Pentecostal Church in Texarkana, Texas

fications. Hurst has always considered it important to keep these facilities a pleasant place to visit: “I have made it a priority to keep the church looking new, nice, and neat,” he said. “I'm not one to let things fall apart. The church ought to look clean and fresh. Someone should be able to drive up and find it a nice place to visit.”

The current facility houses 225 comfortably; the problem is that Landmark is over 80 percent full. Hurst said that he thought since this was a Pentecostal church, “we could surely break the invisible barrier that comes when you are 80 percent full, but we found out that Pentecostals like their space also. The last four years, we have averaged over 60 people a year praying through. If you average keeping one out of four, you will gain about 15 new people a year.”

Because of this, Landmark is now in the preliminary stages of its first building program since Brother Hurst became pastor. “In the first stage, the bottom floor of the new sanctuary will hold about 500. In the second stage, when we open up the balcony, we'll be able to seat 700.

Hurst said a lot of people want to build big,

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The Spiritual Cure for Social Ills

**Exclusive AIS Interview
With Floyd E. Odom**



Editor's note: Brother Floyd E. Odom has for several years served as pastor of Pentecostal Tabernacle in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. However, in addition to his pastoral experience, Brother Odom is known as a minister with great wisdom in areas pertaining to the ministry. Recently, AIS spoke with Brother Odom about the challenges that contemporary society pose for the church. Portions of the interview are published below:

.....
Brother Odom, as you evaluate society today, what challenges do you see for the church?

There are many big challenges facing us as a nation that have implications for the church. There has, for instance, been a loss of respect and confidence for the church. Politically, there is less tolerance of the church. However, I want to go on record as saying that this is still the best and even the most unprejudicial system that we could live under.

Anything else?

There are problems and various social ills. For instance, if we're talking about social challenges, then we have to talk about the peer pressure problem. And there are also the preconceived notions that cause us to believe that we could not possibly reach certain people who are in trouble socially. For instance, sometimes we seem to have already decided we can't reach people who have problems with chemical addiction, drinking, or domestic violence.

How do we meet these challenges?

Some people would tend to place the thing I've mentioned under the category of politics or social problems, but they are challenges for the church. I don't believe the political and social problems can be rectified by legislation or new public policy. Scripturally, it's been proven over and over again that this is not true. For example, when Israel would experience political and social complications, in order to rectify this, they prayed and God brought a revival to the land.

And this is the answer for us?

Most definitely. I have long maintained that the answer for our social and political problems cannot be found in the White House, the state house or the court house; the answer can only

be found in the church house. And as basic as it sounds, the church's answer lies in I Chronicles 7:14: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

For the problems we're facing politically and socially, the answer is always in prayer. God can handle the wickedness of society through His grace. I'm of the opinion that we're living in one of the most wicked times in history. But a writer who also lived in a time of great wickedness, where sin abounded, said, "Where sin doeth abound, grace doeth much more abound."

Is there a place for our Bible colleges in meeting these contemporary challenges?

First of all, let me say that I support the Bible college system of the United Pentecostal Church. I'm a product of a Bible college. I was very fortunate to have a wise pastor who put his hand of guidance upon me in directing me the way I should go. He saw that I had a calling on my life and suggested that I go to Bible college. So yes, Bible colleges can be a great assistance to bringing revival to America.

What can the colleges do to improve?

First of all, I think there should be a greater commitment to the core curriculum. And that core should be Bible-centered. I'm perfectly aware that there is some temptation to offer more general subjects addressing social needs, but more than electives, we must continue to emphasize the Biblical core. From that core, we must then stress practical application. We should emphasize a personal commitment to God, to His ways, and to prayer.

Could you expand on what you mean about courses that focus on social concerns?

I think the wrong path to take would be to start making our Bible school programs more general and oriented toward socialized programs. We must never lessen the importance of the Biblical core. The temptation is to say that our students will face more social complications in their ministries, and therefore we need more of an emphasis in these social areas. The truth is, if we will emphasize the Biblical core curriculum, and thus get students committed to the Word, they will know how to relate to these new social challenges. As I already said, if we attempt to deal socially with

social problems, we'll become a socialized movement. It's through the Word of God and the Spirit of God that we deal with these problems.

Do you have any advice on skills that a young pastor should strive to master?

His personal commitment to God is, of course, foremost. If he can live a life according to Biblical teaching, the other will usually flow from that.

However, I do think we need to work on our efforts to deal with people who are not of our faith. We need to learn to deal with them through genuine expressions of love. Our inability to understand their religions or social backgrounds sometimes hinders our ability to reach them. We need to correct this, for as the Scripture says, with all of our getting, we need to get understanding.

Do you have any last words on promoting growth and revival in our churches?

The word "grow" has different meanings. Some churches that are not growing physically are nevertheless growing spiritually. So I would first urge a church to strive for spiritual growth. If you would first grow in the Spirit and lead your congregation to grow in the Spirit, you've grown in the most important way.

Peer pressure among us says that numerical growth is the most important thing for us to strive towards. While that's very important, the bible says that one plants, another waters, but God gives the increase. Therefore our first commitment is to strive to grow in prayer and in our commitment to Biblical teaching. God will then honor this and will give the increases.

.....
Brother Odom was interviewed by AIS correspondent Linda Massengale.

IF YOU HAVE A QUESTION...

for any of these columnists, please address it to AIS Managing Editor, P.O. Box 47917, Indianapolis, IN 46247. Or call (800)800-AIS.



Paul D. Mooney

■ **Ministry**

We have a large group of visitors attending church now, and I'm struggling to balance the difference between the needs of the sinners and new members with the needs of the long-time members. Do you have any suggestions on how to resolve this?

When revival comes to a church, pastors are often caught between the two worlds that you mentioned. Consequently, in spite of what one may think, it is unfortunately true that the old membership of a church can actually become jealous or feel threatened. This is particularly true when you have a sudden influx of new people.

It is wise to be conscious of this phenomenon. You can't just ignore it and hope it goes away. The secret lies in the leader's ability to help the church to stay focused on the purpose. This is best done by allowing the older members to share in the responsibility of reaching out to the lost and training new converts.

By delegating responsibility and asking for help, the pastor increases the possibility of retaining a larger percentage of the new people, while making the older members feel they are part of the new growth, which in fact they are.

Belittling or criticizing the long-time members is non-productive and will only broaden the gap. The pastor must recognize that he himself may have contributed to an atmosphere of selfishness by many years of non-evangelism. Therefore, as your question suggests, he must learn to bring everyone into a new vision of outreach and growth. This, I think, will require training, delegation and the placing of people into the mix of responsibility as soon as possible.



T. W. Massengale

■ **Outreach**

We haven't been getting many home Bible studies with our visitors. Do you have any suggestions on how we can increase our number of studies?

Sure! Several ideas come to mind that you might try. Consider the following:

1) *Ask the visitors at church.* Assign someone with an outgoing personality to greet each visitor before or after service and ask them if they would like a study. And, of course, all who go to the altar are encouraged to take a study.

2) *Ask the person who invited the visitor.*



T.R. O'Daniel

■ **Theology**

Is it better not to partake of communion to make sure that you do not bring damnation upon yourself by doing so unworthily?

No, the better thing to do is "let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup" (I Corinthians 11:28). The purpose of Paul's warning in I Corinthians 11:29 concerning damnation for those who eat or drink unworthily was not to stop people from partaking in communion, but rather to stop them from doing so in an unworthy manner. "Unworthily" is an adverb relating to the way the action takes place and not an adjective referring to the one performing the action. Some, due to partaking in an unworthy manner, were sickly as a result of the chastening of the Lord. Others had fallen spiritually asleep, and it is implied that some had actually died (possibly as a result of participating in the Lord's Supper as an act of mockery) of the diseases God had let come upon them (v. 30). However this may refer to spiritual sickness and death rather than physical. Their guilt for their callous observance was so severe as to equate them with those who had crucified the Lord.

The problem in the Corinthian church concerning the Lord's Supper was that they had turned it into a "love feast," where everyone brought their own food. Instead of fellowshiping together in communion, the prosperous feasted, while the poor went home hungry and humiliated. Paul rebukes the Corinthians for overlooking the God-given purpose of the Lord's Supper.

Participation in communion should be accompanied by a time of consideration of our attitude and commitment to Jesus Christ. Our attitude should be one of reverence, humility, thanksgiving, and respect for others, rather than one of revelry.



O. C. Marler

■ **Family**

Our son has been dating a girl for about six months. They are welcome in my home, but lately they have been spending their time at her house. Normally this would be fine, but her parents are awfully much of the time. I trust my son, but I think this situation could become dangerous. Do you have any suggestions?

I agree that this situation could become dangerous. With the promotion of "free love" in today's society, all parents should be very concerned for their children.

First, it is important that you do not put pressure on your son. Putting pressure on your son could alter the situation, but will probably not change it. It may even make it worse. Your son must know that you trust him to make the right decisions, yet you are concerned. You may ask him if there is a reason that he no longer brings his girlfriend to your home. Perhaps he feels that he does not have enough privacy to talk and share with his girlfriend without interference. It may be a simple problem that could be easily resolved between the two of you.

You may also want to speak with the girl's parents. They might not even be aware that their daughter and your son have been spending time at their house alone. Either way, chances are they would willingly join in with you to find a workable solution to this problem.

Last, the best way to prevent your son from falling into sin is to inform him of the risk of placing himself into temptation's path. You need to find a time to sit down with your son to discuss dating and marriage relationships with him. Remind him of the importance of virtue in view of the Word of God. There are inevitable consequences to sin if we disobey God's basic laws. This is as true in dating situations as anywhere else.

your secretary follow up with a phone call.

5) *Be innovative.* Perhaps the most unique approach I've seen is by a church that informs each visitor that they have been automatically entered into a drawing that is held at the church each month. First prize is a free family Bible. Second prize is a free home Bible study. Only one Bible is given away each month, but dozens of names are drawn (all visitors) for the free "Bible Survey Course -- Genesis to Revelation -- Taught in the Privacy of Your Own Home By a Trained Bible Teacher."

Many people accept this second prize, and at the completion of the study, they also receive a family Bible and a certificate of completion.

All of these ideas have merit. Why not give some of them a try?



COMPUTERS & TECHNOLOGY

Cyberspace Invaded by Pedophiles

Month-by-month, the stories come in: stories of the darker side of the Internet. For instance:

- In October, the FBI indicated it may be close to making an arrest in the case of a child pornography ad sent to computers around the world through Internet e-mail. The messages, originating from the America Online computer service, urged people to buy porn photos, tapes and games from "Child Fun."

- Also in recent months, U.S. Customs agents have arrested school teachers Robert Green and Richard Russell from south Florida, who used their computers to lure children to an isolated area where they would molest them.

- Following an exchange of sexual-oriented e-mail, Donald Matthew Deterage was arrested for his actions involving a 14-year-old boy. According to The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families, Deterage met the boy, then shackled, tortured and molested him.

Authorities say that new information technologies have made life easier for the pedophile. He now has instant access to children across the country and right next door. "It's definitely a problem that faces parents all over the world," U.S. Customs Agent John Sullivan told recently told CNN. "It gets disgusting."

Part of what makes online pedophiles dangerous, authorities say, is that they tend to be well-educated and cunning. Nancy McBride of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children noted, "They're of average or above-average intelligence, and I think that's what makes them so insidious."

Christian and family advocacy groups have begun strongly recommending that parents obtain software that controls children's access to potential danger spots. "Cyber Patrol," for instance blocks access to spots that are likely pornographic or obscene, and may be obtained from Apostolic Information Service. Download file CPIN01.ZIP from the COMMIBM library.

MEDICINE

Abortion - Cancer Link Confirmed

Last year, AIS reported on a study that suggested a link between abortion and breast cancer. A study released in October confirmed this connection.

Dr. Joel Brind, a professor of endocrinology at New York City's Baruch College has released results of his study that shows that women who have abortions are 30 percent more likely to develop breast cancer later in their lives. Researchers from Penn State joined Brind in his study, and together have blamed abortion for around 5,000 instances of breast cancer each year, according to Focus on the Family.

According to the researchers, an abortion causes certain excess cells to remain undeveloped and more prone to become cancerous. "The increased risk is seen in studies from around the world," Dr. Brind said.

MORALITY

Gambling Doesn't Satisfy the Soul

While proponents of legalized gambling consider placing bets an innocent pastime, recent studies lend credence to the idea that gambling causes addiction and leaves a void in a person's life. Some recent numbers:

- The National Council on Compulsive Gambling found in a recent study that three to five percent of the nation's population suffers from pathological gambling.

- Americans now spend \$500 billion a year on casinos and state lotteries.

- The attempted suicide rate in the United States is 200 times higher among gamblers than it is among the general populace. Fred Hyde of Spirit of Freedom ministries noted: "Gambling, drugs, alcohol, crime go hand in hand. Fear, emptiness and despair are always the results."

In a related development, the U.S. Congress has established a nine-member commission to investigate the impact that gambling has on society. According to Focus on the Family, though, the commission may be weighted heavily in favor of pro-gambling interests:

"[President] Clinton is expected to appoint several gambling backers," Focus on the Family noted in the October 11 *Pastor's Weekly Briefing*. Plus, "informed sources believe Clinton or Senate Minority Leader Tom Daschle... will also nominate a Native American to represent Indian gambling interests."

"Likewise, [House Speaker Newt] Gingrich reportedly has doled out two of his three appointments to congressmen sympathetic to gambling."

Government projections are that this study will cost at least four million tax dollars. Tom Minnery, vice president of public policy for Focus noted, "If the commission is stacked with members financially tied to the gambling industry, the truth about gambling's ill effects on society may never be fully known."

STRANGE WORLD

Chinese 'Belly Up' To Oxygen Bars

Not everything that comes under the heading of "weird news" is necessarily sinful from a Christian perspective. Some things are just -- well, strange. For instance:

- In Beijing, China, not everybody heads over to the bar after work for a beer. Some who are less alcohol-inclined and more concerned about health head over to the oxygen bar. According to Tyndale House's newsletter, *Have a Good Day*, a big trend in Beijing during the past couple of years has been the opening of oxygen bars. For a few dollars an hour, businessmen sit in a closed booth and breathe air that is up to 50 percent pure oxygen. Chinese entrepreneurs say the at-

traction of the oxygen bars is that they provide relief from the most polluted areas of the city. For a bit more, you can have your oxygen scented with special herbs and spices.

- From *Forbes* magazine comes more reason to believe that television insults the intelligence. A Nike TV commercial was shot in Kenya using Samburu tribesmen. As the man speaks, the Nike slogan, "Just do it" appears on the screen. Lee Cronk, an anthropologist at the University of Cincinnati, says the Kenyan is really saying, "I don't want these. Give me big shoes." Says Nike's Elizabeth Dolan, "We thought nobody in America would know what he said."

News In Brief...

- ◆ The U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear a case concerning the Religious Freedom Restoration Act passed last year. The act states that only when the State has a "compelling interest" can it interfere in religious practices, even if those practices are deemed harmful to the person engaging in them.

- ◆ An employee of the California state Department of Education has been threatened with suspension for titling a computer file "SOTLJC" (which stands for "Servant of the Lord Jesus Christ."). The department said this was illegal religious advocacy.

Christian Freedom Foundation: Apostolic Fights for Prisoners' Right to Worship

CURRENT EVENTS



Owen Taylor

Even Paul and Silas' jailers allowed their prisoners to worship God according to their convictions. Such is often not the case in prisons around the country, a situation Apostolic attorney Owen Taylor hopes to correct.

Brother Taylor, director of Maryland's Christian Freedom Foundation (and pastor in Bethesda, MD) has during the past few years taken on a number of cases to fight for prisoners' rights to have Apostolic church services conducted in the prison for them. "It's sprung up in a number of jurisdictions," said Brother Taylor. "The first time I had a case like this was in Memphis, TN. I represented an Apostolic believer there who knew Brother Nathaniel Urshan. He

contacted Brother Urshan, who contacted me."

This prisoner, Taylor said, had local pastors willing to conduct services, but pressure from denominational clergy caused prison officials to forbid it. "They raised the issue that we hear constantly, that there are other Christian services available."

Brother Taylor said the Memphis case was interesting because the gentleman concerned had been transferred from two previous prisons. In each case, it was because the institutions had allowed Apostolic services, and the success of those services (with numerous people receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost) angered Trinitarian ministers.

That case was settled successfully out of court, through "political pressure" brought by state officials. "We currently have a lawsuit pending in southern Ohio," Taylor said, "and we're getting

ready to file another one in Michigan. Plus I just received a letter from Maryland about a prison where there are three or four who want to be baptized. These cases generally are successful when you get them into court."

One of the biggest obstacles in winning the prisoners' rights cases has been finances. "These kinds of cases are enormously expensive. It's already run far above our budget fighting for these prisoners." Brother Taylor said the best way other Apostolics can help in the fight is through financial assistance. To help with the project or to make a monthly pledge to CFF, write them at 1304 Harmony Lane, Annapolis, MD 21401.

Kosmos: Modest Apparel

APOSTOLICS TODAY

Following her conversion in 1990, Sister Gwen Vercher discovered a universal problem for Pentecostals: that athletic events such as skiing are difficult for women to accomplish modestly. There on the ski slopes, God began to give her the vision for Kosmos Apparel, a ministry which has grown into a full line of "modest concepts" in women's clothing designs.

"I was new in the church," recalled Sister Vercher, who attends Brother Barry King's church, "and we were skiing, all bundled from head to toe. I had on a thigh-length jacket and ski pants, and when the ski lift operator looked at me puzzled and asked, 'are you a man

or a woman?' I was convicted and knew I would have to do something to continue skiing."



Gwen Vercher

The following year during a pregnancy, Sister Vercher pondered the situation and began developing ideas for a line of women's sports clothes. "I had some doors opened to me, and was able to take my ideas and designs into someone for development and production. I started off with a ski jacket

and snow skirt. Then two years ago, I did a small brochure and took it to General Conference."

Since that time, she has added a denim sport skirt, water sport skirt and "career skirts with kick pleats, to avoid the slits."

Sister Vercher creates her own designs for Kosmos and has her manufacturing provided by professional seamstresses within the church. The newest garment for Kosmos is the Sport Skirt, similar to culottes.

"The culotte effect is hidden underneath the main part of the skirt and is not seen or noticed unless you absolutely get upside-down or find yourself in a very compromising position," she said. (Continued on pg. 14)

AIS Needs Your Support for *Perspectives!*

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITORS

Five years ago, Brother Tim Massengale and Pastor Paul Mooney brought to the Apostolic scene a magazine unlike anything produced before. Not a magazine of doctrinal articles, but a true news magazine, showing the Apostolic church meeting the challenges of the 20th century. It would utilize a true journalistic approach, featuring news, interviews and practical advice for the pastor and church leader. And it would concentrate on the practical: how ministers can overcome obstacles and meet ethical dilemmas. In short, it would be a magazine ministers could use.

Thus *Perspectives* was born. As one whose calling is in the area of Christian journalism, I came on board the team three years ago, and have considered it an honor to be associated with the project. Since its inception, thousands of church leaders have benefited from this vision. Currently, the IBC *Perspectives* is sent to about 6,000 pastors and church leaders, including all the pastors in five different organizations: UPCI, PAW, ALJC, ABC and the UACJC. And the mailing list is growing every month.

Unfortunately, few receiving the magazine have shared in the vision by making a financial contribution. This has put an incredible financial strain on our parent organization, Indiana Bible College. Simply put: We need your help.

Do you consider the mission of *Perspectives* unique enough among Apostolic magazines to warrant its continued existence? Do you read and enjoy the publication? If so, please support this ministry by making an annual financial contribution. We are asking each reader to send in a once a year gift of \$15 to \$20 or more. Your gift will ensure that, if nothing else, you will continue receiving it. Please help us keep alive this ministry to promote revival and unity among those of the Apostolic faith. Use the self-addressed card in the center of this magazine and send your gift to: AIS, P.O. Box 47917, Indianapolis, IN 46247. Or call: (800) 8000-AIS. Help us continue the vision. Thanks in advance.



Richard Brown.

--Richard C. Brown, Managing Editor

- Author tells the traits common to most growing Pentecostal churches.
- Church growth often depends on "marketing" the church's ministry.
- Most Americans are concerned about moral problems in the country.

PREACHER'S PICKS

Here are some more books that certain prominent Apostolic ministers feel would make valuable contributions to your library:

- Gary Morgans (Pastor, Liberty, MO): "A book that has helped me down through the years with home Bible studies is *Explosive Church Growth Through Home Bible Studies*, by Ron Wilhoite
- Thomas Craft (Pastor, Jackson, MS): "I would recommend two books, both by a man named Graham Clark. One is *I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes*, and the other one is *God Reached*."

Church Law

By Owen Taylor

Should a church seek its own tax exemption recognition letter from the IRS? I don't usually make any standard recommendation concerning this matter. The decision is based on too many variables to be the same for every church. The IRS tax guide correctly notes that a church is not required to apply for and obtain recognition of tax-exempt status, assuming the church meets all requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the Code. However, the guide makes the following statements:

"Notwithstanding the fact that there is no requirement to do so, many churches seek recognition of exempt status from the IRS because such recognition provides certain benefits. An organization may find it useful to establish to the IRS that it is a church, integrated auxiliary or convention or association of churches so that the leaders of the church, as well as the parishioners and contributors, are certain that the church is eligible for exemption and the many tax-preferred provisions that Congress has created for such organizations."

The guide clarifies that a church or other organization with a parent organization may wish to contact the parent to see if the parent has a group exemption letter. The United Pentecostal Church International has such a letter and a tax-exempt number of 1411.

Additionally, a local church must have language in its charter and organizational documents that confirm there will be no private inurement or private benefit nor operated for the benefit of designated individuals or the persons who created them. The church must not attempt to influence legislation, lobby, or to propagandize to influence legislation, and it must not publicly support any candidate.



■ **growth characteristics of the Pentecostal movement**

In his recent book on the Pentecostal movement, *Fire From Heaven*, Harvard scholar Harvey Cox showed that Pentecostalism is the fastest-growing force in the Christian world. But what causes this growth? Church growth expert Peter Wagner has listed some traits of growing Pentecostal churches. Factors he cites: 1) Holding purity high. "I do not see much change as yet in biblical authority or doctrine [among non-Pentecostal churches], but I do detect some watering down of the Christian life-style as distinctly separated from the world around. Keep strict and God will bless." 2) Depending on prayer and fasting as your spiritual core. "Keep channels open for intimacy with God through tongues and prophecies." 3) Asking God to show His power through signs and wonders. "Publicize testimonies of those who have been blessed through miracles." 4) Maintaining a passion for souls. "Keep witnessing and outreach in the forefront of all church programs." 5) Maintaining a balance between education and spiritual gifts. "Never allow educational requirements to substitute for spiritual gifts as the basis for ordaining new ministers." 6) Planting new churches.

■ **book review**

As Iron Sharpens Iron, by Howard & William Hendricks, 1996 *The Hendricks Group*, 272 pages, hardcover, \$16.99.

One of the more welcome trends within Christian churches in the 1990s is the trend toward establishing mentorships. In *As Iron Sharpens Iron*, Howard and William Hendricks show that men training other men in godly values is a Biblical practice. The authors help you identify the kind of mentor you need as well as help you influence others as you replicate the mentoring process.

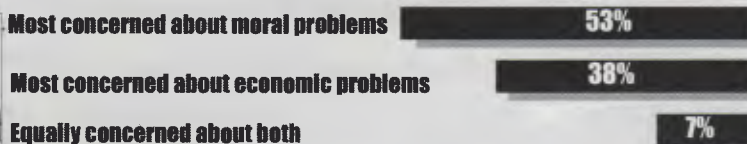
Although the book focuses more on theory than on practical examples, this is still a good resource for helping pastors and ministers develop mentoring relationships.

■ **marketing the church**

The Pastor's Weekly Briefing reports that since only 35 percent of Americans were classified as "religious," pastors are now turning to demographics and other marketing information to find new souls. These churches are using a well-developed array of methods rooted not only in Scripture, but also in commercial marketing. "Increasingly, we see awareness of demographics as a hallmark of growing churches," noted church growth expert John N. Vaughn of Southwest Baptist University. Elements that can determine success or failure in marketing include music, reaching new homes in the area, parking, advertising, and adequate signage, according to Vaughn.

■ **American Pulse: Concern for Moral Values**

Are moral values a major concern to most Americans? Or are they more concerned about economics? A recent poll showed these findings:



Source: Gallup Survey for USA Today and CNN

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--Vaughn Morton,
Fresno, CA

"I don't use a computer, yet I belong to AIS. Why? Because my computer-literate staff *does* use the AIS Computer Network. And me, I look forward to the timely magazine, *Perspectives*."

--Larry Arrowood, Pastor
Seymour, IN

"AIS has been very interesting and informative to me. The magazine is always full of inspirational material, and the "Idea Sheets" are always full of good information as well. I also enjoy the monthly cassette tape. I wholeheartedly recommend this ministry to preachers in the United Pentecostal Church."

--Ron Libby, Pastor
Gaithersburg, MD

"The ministry of AIS will keep ministers on the cutting edge of revival and growth with the constant flow of ideas and helps available."

--Jesse F. Williams
Assistant General Superintendent

The Voice of the Blood

Selected Sermon Outline by Kenneth Bow

TEXT: Genesis 4:10. "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me."



Kenneth Bow is pastor of Faith Tabernacle in Madera, California.

OUTLINE

- I. Introduction - God requires death of those who shed innocent blood.
- II. Examples of blood crying to God
 - A. Genesis 4 (Cain & Abel)
 - B. Deuteronomy 19:10 (God's command to Israel)
 - C. I Samuel 19:5 (Pleas with Saul not to shed David's innocent blood)
- III. Other Examples
 - A. Psalm 106:37-38
 - B. Proverbs 6:16-17
 - C. Isaiah 59:7
- IV. The Ultimate "Innocent Blood" in Jesus.
 - A. This is why God hates shedding innocent blood
 - B. This blood cries out "Innocent" on our behalf
- V. Conclusion: Jesus' blood covering declares us innocent.

Many times, I have read in the Bible where the Lord instructed someone to kill somebody else. One of the most notable times was when the Lord told Saul to completely annihilate Amalek. He said, "I want them all dead. If it breathes, kill it." But then there were other times when it appears that God could not rest when an innocent person's blood was shed. Innocent blood seems to bother God as much as sin itself; moreover, God always requires the destruction of those who shed innocent blood.

NUMBERS 35:33 gives us a little insight as to God's thinking on the matter of blood: "So shall ye not pollute the land wherein ye are, for blood, it defileth the land. And the land cannot be cleansed of the blood that is shed therein, but by the hand, or by the blood of him that shed it." This is a bit difficult for us to comprehend, but God was saying that if a man was killed and his blood shed, the only way to purge that from the land was for the one who shed the blood to also die. The mixture of the guilty blood with the innocent somehow had the ability to cleanse the land.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE of this is from our text. God told Cain in Genesis 4, "Your brother's blood crieth unto me." There was an innocent man whose blood had been shed, and that blood began to cry out to God. And because there was a larger message God wanted to communicate about innocent blood, He dealt severely with Cain.

Let's look at some other Scriptures concerning innocent blood. Deuteronomy 19:10 says that "innocent blood shall not be shed in thy land which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance, and so the blood be upon thee." God was emphatic with Israel that they were not to shed innocent blood.

I Samuel 19:5 then tells us of the friends of David trying desperately to convince Saul not to take David's life. It says, "for he did put his life in his hand and slay the Philistine and the Lord brought a great salvation for all Israel. Thou sawest it, and didst rejoice,

wherefore then will thou sin against innocent blood to slay David without a cause?"

AND THERE ARE many other references. Psalm 106:37 and 38 says, "Yea, they sacrifice their sons and daughters unto the devils and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan. And the land was polluted with blood."

Proverbs 6:16 and 17 lists the thing that God hates: "These things doeth the Lord hate, yea seven are an abomination unto him. A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood. . ."

Isaiah wrote "their feet run to do

"The beautiful thing about the blood of Christ is that it does not just forgive us ... His blood cries to God on our behalf."

evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood" (Isaiah 59:7).

HERE IS THE STRANGE POINT: It seems that if there was a need and a person was being killed for a wrong, then God was able to accept that. But if one person who was innocent was killed, it was like that one person's innocent blood had the ability to raise its voice to God and to touch His very heart. What is it about innocent blood that reaches God in this way, so that He would demand immediate justice?

The critical point is in Matthew 27:14. Here, Scripture tells us something important about Judas. Judas, speaking of his betrayal of Jesus Christ said, "I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."

There's an interesting thing about the passage back in Genesis 4, "thy brother's blood crieth unto me." In the original Hebrew, it is plural: "thy brother's *bloods*." It appears that God

was looking at Cain and saying his brother's blood, his heritage and his children, all the way down to the ultimate Innocent Blood, were crying out for justice. You see, Judas said Jesus was *the* innocent blood. He was the innocent Lamb led to slaughter. He did no sin, and when His blood was shed, it was innocent blood. The reason God hates for innocent blood to be shed is because He knew there was going to come a day when the one who did no sin was put to death, and his blood was shed.

THERE IS AN APPLICATION of this fact to our own lives in Hebrews 12:22. The writer says, "but ye are come unto Mount Zion unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect. And to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel." The Innocent Blood that cries out to God has been sprinkled over each of us, crying out to God, innocent, innocent, innocent!

I don't know if Satan can hear the voice of blood or not, but I'm almost persuaded he can. I almost believe he could hear Abel's blood cry out, "Innocent, innocent." And I believe he can hear it when a child of God is washed in the blood of Jesus Christ, when that blood declares us innocent of our past sins.

The beautiful thing about the blood of Christ is that it does not just forgive us. His blood covers us; His blood cries to God on our behalf. His blood declares us innocent. **AMS**

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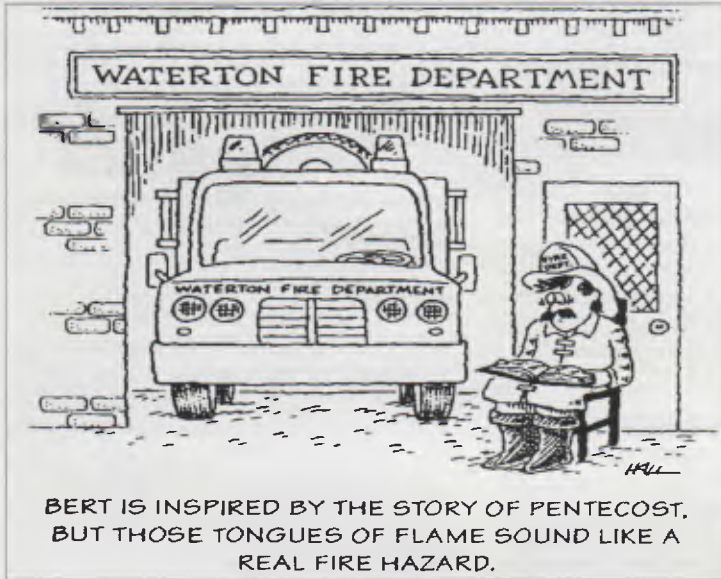
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WORD TO THE WISE:

"The highest reward for man's toil is not what he gets for it, but what he becomes by it."

—John Ruskin

Smiles



BERT IS INSPIRED BY THE STORY OF PENTECOST, BUT THOSE TONGUES OF FLAME SOUND LIKE A REAL FIRE HAZARD.

The Richardsons' cat was run over by a car one day, and the mother disposed of the remains quickly so that her five-year-old son, Tommy would not find out about it. However, after a few days, Tommy finally asked about the cat.

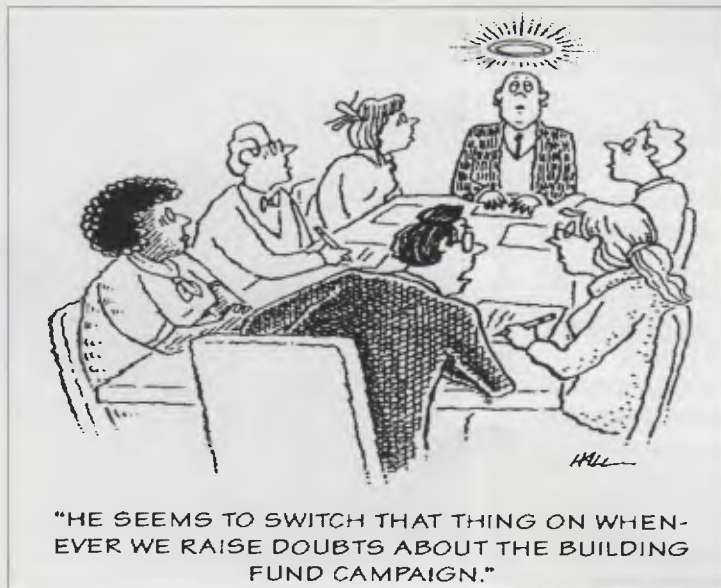
"Tommy, the cat died," the mother said softly. "But it's okay, because He's up in heaven with God now."

Puzzled, the boy asked, "Why on earth would God want a dead cat?"

"Preacher, do you believe in everlasting torment?" one saint asked the pastor.

"Yes, especially since the Supreme Court blocked term limits for Congress."

From a Pennsylvania church bulletin comes this appropriate typo: "Wanted: Someone to change the nursery sheets and wash the dirty ones each wee."



"HE SEEMS TO SWITCH THAT THING ON WHENEVER WE RAISE DOUBTS ABOUT THE BUILDING FUND CAMPAIGN."

The Dieter's Psalm: "My weight is my shepherd; I shall not want low calorie foods. It maketh me to munch on potato chips and bean dip.

It leadeth me into 31 Flavors. It restoreth my soul food. It leadeth me in the paths of cream puffs in bakeries.

Yea, though I waddle through the valley of weight watchers, I will fear no skimmed milk.; for my appetite is with me. My Hostess "Twinkies" and "Ding Dongs," they comfort me. They anointeth my body with calories; my scale tippeth over!

Surely chubbiness and contentment shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of Little Debbie Pies... forever!

A little boy's mom gave him two quarters - one for the offering plate at church and one to buy an ice cream cone on his way home from church. As he was walking to church, he dropped one of the quarters, and it rolled into the gutter, out of his reach. The boy said, "Whoops, there went the Lord's quarter!"

It's said that Adam told Eve that he was the one to wear the "plants" in the family.



After a serlous operation, a lady was still in a coma. Her pastor was worried and stood at the foot of her bed.

"Well," said the nurse reassuringly, "at least age is on her side."

"She's not so young," the pastor said. "She's forty-five."

At this point, the patient moved slightly and quietly but firmly murmured: "Forty-four."

Pastor during marriage counseling: "Do you both try to bolster each other's self confidence?"

Wife: "Of course! I keep telling him that anyobdy with his brains and ability can fix his own breakfast. And he tells me that anybody - even a mechanical moron like me - can change a fuse."

As a visiting preacher, D.L. Moody was warned that some of the congregation usually left before the end of the sermon. When he began his sermon, he announced, "I am going to speak to two classes of people this morning; first to the sinners, then to the saints." He proceeded to address the "sinners" for a while, and then said they could leave. For once, every member of the congregation stayed to the end of the sermon.

Indiana Bible College
Perspectives

Page 14

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Nathan Hurst • Landmark Pentecostal Church • Texarkana, TX
REVIVAL CLIMATE

(Continued from page three)

when somebody comes to church, they're obviously interested. And so, for whatever reason they came, there needs to be a follow-up before the next week." Consequently, during that week, Brother Hurst sends a personal letter to the visitor, plus somebody from the congregation visits. "It's usually somebody who would be considered a peer," he said. "If it's a couple, they'll be visited by another couple. If it's a single person, he or she will be visited by a couple of single people, usually of the same gender. And we try to keep them around the same age range." The typical visitor follow-up meeting has the saint finding out what the visitor is looking for in a church as well as trying to get the person into a home Bible study. "We find out if they have kids, if their kids would like to be picked up for Sunday school, all that kind of thing. Then we try to make a connection with what it is they're looking for," Hurst said.

Pastor Hurst does a lot of follow-up also on his new converts and move-ins. In this case, it's to be sure that everybody is involved in the church in some ministry. "My concept is that everybody needs to be involved in something. And I'd say that 90 percent of our congregation are involved. It's just expected of them, because the key to a solid church is for everybody to be working."

Brother Hurst insists that new converts

and move-ins go through a six-week Christian Development Class. And he stresses that it's as important for the move-ins as it is the new converts. "You'd be surprised at how many Apostolic beliefs there are," he chuckled. "Everybody needs to believe the same doctrine and holiness standard to have a church, otherwise you just have a crowd."

Philosophy of Creating a Revival Climate

Several other factors contribute to creating a revival climate, according to Brother Hurst. Most revolve around having the right attitude.

"First, a pastor needs an attitude of expectation," he said. "For instance, I expect people to pray through in every service. Even if I do a Bible study, if there are sinners there, I give an altar call, expecting people to get saved."

And, said Hurst, pastors should not pastor according to their own mood swings:

"A young man has to keep his frustration to a minimum. If a preacher preaches according to his mood, he's going to have an unhealthy congregation. Everybody is going to have good days and bad days, but when you get in the pulpit, it's time to have church."

After all, winning souls depends on having good church services. And having "good church," as Hurst puts it, depends on the climate working in the service. For Landmark, the climate seems just right - right for revival and for continued church growth.

Feedback

To the editor:

I'd like to thank you for not forgetting the small churches in your magazine. A small church has its own identity and shouldn't try to imitate the big church. It must find its own successful ways to evangelize the community. Outreach programs that work for a metro area may not work in a rural community.

Ultimately, we are all "fishers of men," and must cast our nets into the water. A smaller church may not have an ocean to launch out into, yet even a lake or small pond can bring in a great catch, one that will fill the boat to overflowing.

An area you might want to stress for smaller churches: They may not have big finances, but they must nevertheless rise to the challenge of giving to missions and other programs in order to help spread the Gospel. Big or small, no church can outgive the Lord.

-Randol Easton
Winchester, IN


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Include name, address and phone number. Letters may be edited for space. If you prefer, initials may be used instead of your name. You can also reach us via FAX at (317)781-7711.

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(Continued from page eight)

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--Brett Healey, Sophomore



I came to Indiana Bible College after being introduced to it on a trip to Indianapolis. I had been praying that God would give me direction, and He began dealing with me about going. After I came, everything just started working out for me. What I've found that's really affected me has been the friendly and exciting atmosphere at IBC. This college has the right personality for me.
--Rob Beckwith, Junior



Our daughter Melissa Schnitzer, we firmly believe, is in the will of God in attending IBC. There are processes taking place in her life that cannot be measured in academic equivalents alone. To hear her stories about various outreach trips and chorale tour stops is always a great joy. IBC was the right choice for us.
--Art Schnitzer, father of
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Alumni, Russia Missionaries

Interviews by Rick McGee & Joel Richardson

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