

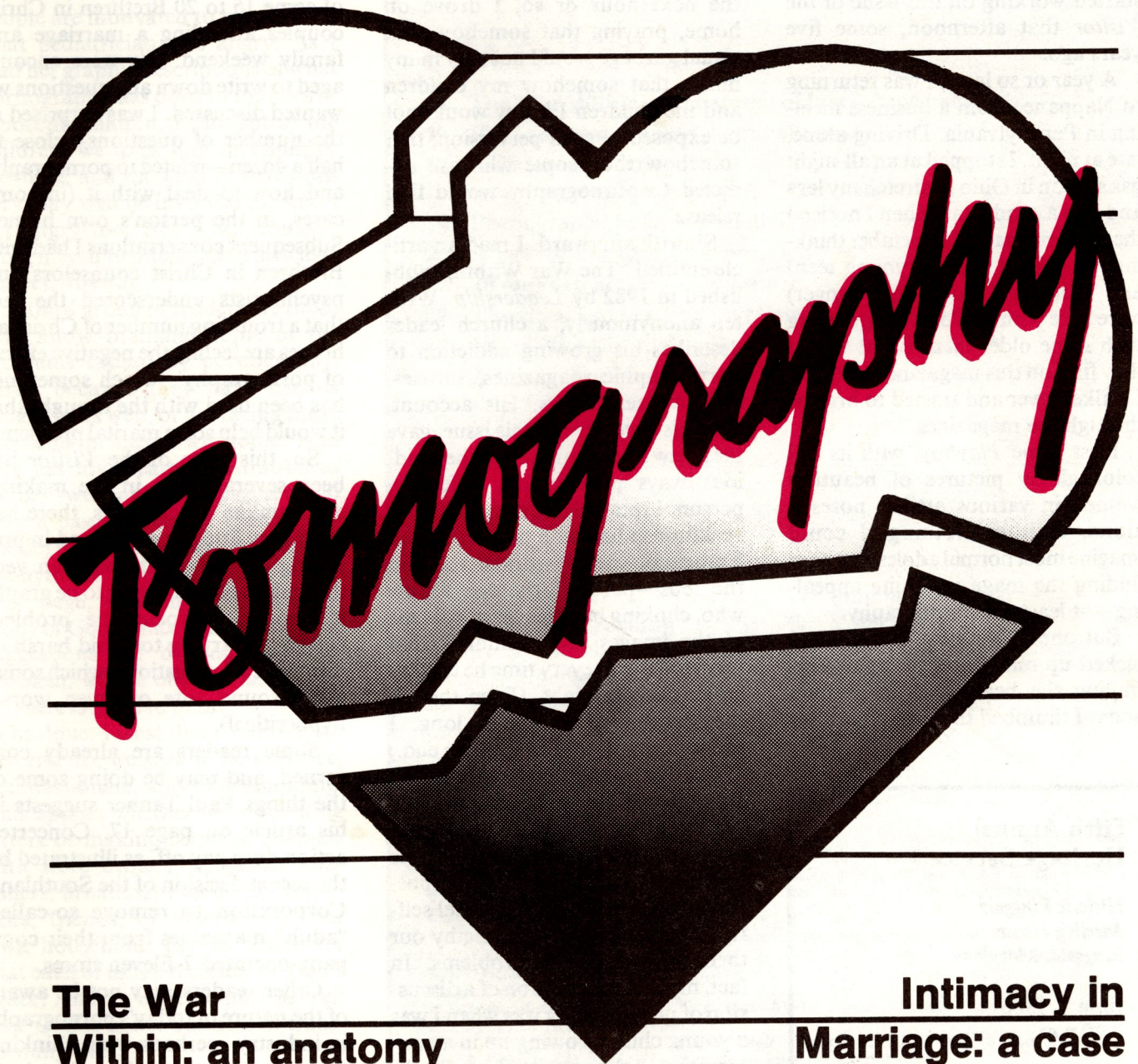
evangelical

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# VISITOR

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May 1986



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**The War  
Within: an anatomy  
of lust**

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**Intimacy in  
Marriage: a case  
against pornography**

# Editorial

Susan was about six, and had come home from playing with two sisters—friends she had made at school. “What did you do this afternoon?” we asked. “Well, we were looking at their dad’s copies of *Playboy*,” she answered. In a sense, I started working on this issue of the *Visitor* that afternoon, some five years ago.

A year or so later, I was returning to Nappanee from a business meeting in Pennsylvania. Driving alone, late at night, I stopped at an all-night gas station in Ohio to stretch my legs and buy a candy bar. Then I noticed the magazine rack. I remember thinking, “If David (then a young teen) and Douglas (two years younger) were here with me, or were traveling with some older teens, what would they find on this magazine rack?” So I walked over and started to browse through the magazines.

First came *Playboy*, with its full color glossy pictures of beautiful women in various artistic poses—alone, without clothing. I could imagine most normal adolescent boys finding the magazine quite appealing—at least the photography.

But one of the next magazines I picked up made no pretext of portraying the beauty of the human body. I thumbed through page after

page of stark black and white photographs depicting homosexual encounters, lesbian affairs, group sex, human intercourse with animals. . . . I put the magazine back on the rack—wishing I could burn it instead—and left the store. And for the next hour or so, I drove on home, praying that somehow that visual garbage would not stay in my mind; that somehow my children and the children I know would not be exposed to such perversion; that somehow the people who are addicted to pornography would find release.

Shortly afterward, I read an article entitled “The War Within,” published in 1982 by *Leadership*. Written anonymously, a church leader describes his growing addiction to pornographic magazines, movies, and live sex shows. His account, which is excerpted in this issue, gave me a new understanding of the insidious ways pornography affects a person. I recalled, for example, conversations I had with persons in San Francisco when I worked there in the '60s—particularly one fellow who, choking back his tears, told me of the images and memories that tormented him every time he tried to go to sleep at night. (Even though the *Leadership* article is long, I encourage you to read it to the end.)

But that anonymous writer wasn't a member of an evangelical church, you might argue. Certainly he wasn't a leader in a holiness church like the Brethren in Christ. That is quite possibly true. But we dare not feel self-righteous, rendered immune by our theology from such problems. In fact, my first recollection of a discussion of pornography was when I was a young child, growing up in a conservative, holiness-preaching Brethren in Christ congregation in Iowa. Two ladies in cape dresses and coverings were discussing what the one sister should do—she had found “certain magazines” in her son's bed-

room. She was a Sunday school teacher, and she was talking to my mother. Then, as a boy of perhaps 7 or 8, I couldn't figure out why they were so distressed; now, as a parent, I understand.

Just a few years ago, we were one of some 15 to 20 Brethren in Christ couples attending a marriage and family weekend. We were encouraged to write down any questions we wanted discussed. I was surprised at the number of questions—close to half a dozen—related to pornography and how to deal with it (in some cases, in the person's own home). Subsequent conversations I had with Brethren in Christ counselors and psychiatrists underscored the fact that a troubling number of Christian homes are feeling the negative effects of pornography—which sometimes has been used with the thought that it would help solve marital problems.

So, this issue of the *Visitor* has been several years in the making. And, unlike other issues, there has been very little joy connected in preparing it. In fact, it has been very difficult to edit: wanting to be graphic enough to focus the problem clearly, yet trying to avoid harsh or unsupported allegations (which sometimes sound trite or, even worse, hypocritical).

Some readers are already concerned, and may be doing some of the things Paul Tanner suggests in his article on page 17. Concerted action does pay off, as illustrated by the recent decision of the Southland Corporation to remove so-called “adult” magazines from their company-operated 7-Eleven stores.

Other readers may not be aware of the nature of today's pornographic industry, perhaps even thinking that pornography really isn't so bad. I would like to expose those readers to just a little bit of the shocking, offensive material which is spreading throughout our neighborhoods and into our homes. One article

## Fifth Annual Heritage Service

*Historic Ringgold Meeting House, Ringgold, Maryland*

June 1, 1986  
3:00 p.m.

Martin Schrag will preach, Dwight Thomas will lead the singing. The order of service will reflect the mode of worship during the early years of the brotherhood.

which I considered publishing is by a pediatrician who describes children she has treated. Some were raped by their own brother, father, or other relatives or friends who had been stimulated by pornography. Other children were victims of the kiddie porn industry—forced to be videotaped having sexual encounters with other children, with men, with women, with animals. Perhaps it takes that kind of first-hand exposure to the problem before some people are motivated to take action. That pediatrician was angry. As I read her graphic descriptions of what pornography has done to the lives of innocent children, I thought of the children we pick up on Sunday morning, and the kind of situations they may well be involved in. And I got angry too. But I just couldn't bring myself to publish that article—not yet, anyway.

A third group of readers are those who know firsthand some of the problems caused by pornography, either because they have friends caught in its web, or are facing those problems in their own home. And here lies my greatest frustration as editor—wishing this magazine could have a pastoral (rather than a prophetic) ministry. My hope is that the anonymous article beginning on the next page, with the writer's testimony of God's grace and his practical suggestions for dealing with the problem, will be of some help.

There is more to be said, and more to be done. I trust that in all that we say and do, we seek to be sensitive, compassionate, and understanding. This applies whether we are writing letters or making personal contacts with store owners, magazine publishers, broadcast executives, neighbors, friends, or members of our own household. Let us remember that each of us is a recipient of God's grace. And let us remember as well that God is in the business of transforming lives. G

*Note: over 1,500 extra copies of this issue have been ordered in advance of publication by congregations for distribution in their local communities.*

# evangelical VISITOR

The official publication of the Brethren in Christ Church

May 1986

Vol. 99, No. 5

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EVANGELICAL VISITOR (ISSN 0745-0486) is published monthly by Evangel Press, 301 N. Elm Street (P.O. Box 166), Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Telephone (219) 773-3164. Member of Evangelical Press Association and Meetinghouse, a Mennonite and Brethren in Christ editors' group. Biblical quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are from the New International Version.

Editor: Glen A. Pierce

**Mailing Information:** All correspondence, manuscripts and subscriptions should be addressed to the Editor, Evangelical Visitor, P.O. Box 166, Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Changes of address should include both the old and new addresses.

**Single Copy Price:** \$1.00 U.S.

**U.S. Subscriptions:** 1 year—\$8.50; 2 years—\$15.00; 3 years—\$21.00; 5 years—\$33.00. New and Gift: \$7.00. Lifetime: \$130.00.

**Canadian Subscriptions** (in Canadian funds): 1 year—\$10.00; 2 years—\$18.00; 3 years—\$26.50; 5 years—\$41.00. New and Gift: \$8.50. Lifetime: \$160.00.

**Overseas airmail rates** available upon request.

Second-class postage paid at Nappanee, IN 46550-0166. Printed in U.S.A.

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# The War Within

an anatomy of lust



*The following article was written by a man in full-time Christian ministry. It has been shortened, and some of the more graphic descriptions of his encounters with lust omitted. Excerpted by permission of Leadership Journal, © 1982.*

**I** am writing this article anonymously because I am embarrassed. Embarrassed for my wife and children, yes, but embarrassed most for myself. I will tell of my personal battle with lust, and if I believed I were the only one who fought in that war, I would not waste emotional

energy dredging up stained and painful memories. But I believe my experience is not uncommon, is perhaps even typical. No one talks about it. No one writes about it. But it's there, like an unacknowledged cancer that metastasizes best when no one goes for x-rays or feels for lumps.

I know I am not alone, because of the few times I have opened up and shared my struggles with Christian friends, they have replied with stories of exactly the same stages of awakening, obsession, possession. Years from now, when socio-historians sift through the documents describing our times, they will undoubtedly come up with

elegant explanations of why men who grew up in church homes are oversexed and vulnerable to attacks of lust and obsession, and why women who grew up in those same environments emerged uptight and somewhat disinterested in sex. But I leave that to the future analysts.

I remember vividly the night I first experienced lust. Real lust—not the high school and college variety. Of course as an adolescent I had drooled through *Playboy* and sneaked off to my uncle's room for a heart-thumping first look at hard-core pornography. I date my lust awakening, though, to the adult onslaught of mature, willful commitment to lust.

It hit on one of my first trips away from home. My job required me to travel at that time, and as I sat in a dingy motel room and flipped through the city guide of what to do in Rochester, New York, I kept coming back to one haunting photo of an exotic dancer, a former Miss Peach Bowl winner, the ad said. She looked fresh and inviting: the enchanting kind of Southern girl you see on TV commercials for fried chicken—only this one had no clothes on.

When I first saw the ad, I instinctively ruled her show out of bounds for me. But as I settled down to watch an inane TV show, her body kept looming before my mind with the simple question, "Why not?"

I began to think. Indeed, why not? To be an effective Christian, I had to experience all of life, right? Didn't Jesus himself hang around with prostitutes and sinners? I could go simply as an observer, in the world but not of the world. Within ten minutes I was bundled in the back seat of a taxi headed toward the seamy side of Rochester.

I got the driver to let me off a few blocks away, just for safety's sake, and I kept glancing over my shoulder expecting to see someone I knew. Or perhaps God would step in, efface my desires, and change my mind about the wisdom of the act. I even asked him about that, meekly. No answer.

I walked into the bar between acts and was then faced with the new experience of ordering a drink. My forehead sweating, I scanned my memory of Westerns for an appropriate drink to order. Finally I decided on whiskey.

Bolstered by my first fiery sips of whiskey, which I tried to stretch out so as not to have to order another, I sat with my eyes glued to the stage.

Miss Peach Bowl was everything the ad had promised. With a figure worthy of a Wonder Woman costume, she danced superbly and was something of an acrobat. She started fully clothed and teased us with slow removals of each sequined article of clothing. She grinned invitingly. I stared in disbelief.

The flush of excitement created by my first whiskey, drunk too fast in spite of myself, the eye-popping spectacle of this gorgeous woman baring all and jiggling it in front of me, and the boisterous spirit of the all-male audience combined to overpower me. I walked out of the bar two hours later feeling strangely warmed, intensely excited, and surprised that nothing had actually happened to me. I suppose it's the same feeling that washes in after a big event like marriage, or graduation. In just a

few hours you realize that although in one sense everything has changed, in another sense nothing has changed. You are the same person.

Lust shares with sins like envy and pride the distinction of being invisible, slippery, hard to pin down. Was what happened that night a sin? I denied it to myself on the way home. To really rate as lust, I told myself, you must look on a woman so as to desire sexual intercourse with her. Isn't that what Jesus said? Whatever happened that night, I certainly couldn't recall desiring intercourse with Miss Peach Bowl. It was more private and distant than that. What happened, happened quickly, was gone, and left no scars. Or so I thought at the time.

\* \* \*

Ten years have passed since that awakening in wintry Rochester, ten years spent never far from the presence of lust. The guilt caught up with me, and back in my motel room that very evening, I was already praying slobbery prayers for forgiveness. For a while that guilt kept me out of live shows and limited my voyeurism to magazines and movies, but only for a while. For ten years I have fought unremitting guerrilla warfare.

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**The great lie of *Playboy*, TV commercials, and racy movies is that the physical ideal of beauty is attainable and oh, so close.**

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Being the reflective sort, I have often pondered the phenomenon of lust. It is unlike anything else in my experience. Most thrills—scary roller coasters, trips in airplanes, visits to waterfalls—lose a certain edge of excitement once I have experienced them and figured them out. I enjoy them and will duplicate the experiences if given the chance, but after a few tries, they no longer hold such a powerful gravitational attraction.

Sex is utterly different. There is only so much to "figure out." Every person who endures high school biology, let alone a sniggering sex education class, knows the basic shapes, colors, and sizes of the sexual organs. Anyone who has been to an art museum knows about women's breasts. Anyone who has hauled down a gynecology book in a public library knows about genitalia. Somehow, no amount of knowledge reduces the appeal—the forces may, in fact, work concordantly. What strange power is it that allows a male gynecologist to clinically examine female sexual organs all day long—there is nothing left for him to "learn"—and yet return home and find himself quickly aroused by his wife?

"An ape that gibbers in my loins," wrote novelist Frederick Buechner about lust, and no experience comes with such a feral force. And yet, maybe by labeling it an "animal drive" we have missed the main point of lust. No animal I have heard of spends its life fixating on sex.

Females in most species invite attention only a few times a year or less; the rest of the time males obediently plod through the mundane routine of phylogeny, apparently never giving sex another thought.

Humans are different. We have the freedom to center our lives inordinately in this one drive, without the harmony enforced by nature. Our females are biologically receptive the vast majority of the time, and no instinct inhibits us from focusing all our thoughts, behavior, and energy on sex.

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**I tell my struggles because they are real, but also to demonstrate that hope exists, that God is alive, and his grace can interrupt the terrible cycles of lust and despair. My primary message is one of hope.**

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Some of you know what it is like to walk with your eyes at breast level, to flip eagerly through every new issue of *Time* searching for a rare sexy picture, to yearn for chains on the outside of your motel room to keep you in—unless it comes with that most perverse of all modern inventions, the in-room porno movie. And you also know what it is like to wallow in the guilt of that obsession, and to cry and pray with whatever faith you can muster, to plead with God to release you, to mutate you, to castrate you like Origen—whatever it takes to deliver you. And even as you pray, luscious, bewitching images crowd into your mind.

The night in Rochester was my first experience with adult lust, but by no means my last. Strip joints are too handy these days. The drug store down the street sells *Hustler*, *High Society*, *Jugs*, anything you want. I have been to maybe fifteen truly pornographic movies, including the few classics like *Deep Throat* and *Behind the Green Door*. They scare me, perhaps because it seems so deliberate and volitional to stand in line (always glancing around furtively), to pay out money and to sit in the dark for an hour or two. The crowd is unlike any other crowd I mix with—they remind me I don't belong. And the movies, technically, aesthetically, and even erotically, are vapid and boring. But still, when a local paper advertises one more *Emmanuelle* sequel, I drool.

I learned quickly that lust, like physical sex, points in only one direction. You cannot go back to a lower level and stay satisfied. Always you want more. A magazine excites, a movie thrills, a live show really makes the blood run. I never got as far as body tattooing, personal photograph sessions, and massages, let alone outright prostitution, but I've experienced enough of the unquenchable nature of sex to frighten me for good. Lust does not satisfy; it stirs up. I no longer wonder how deviants can get into child molesting, masochism, and other abnormalities. Although such acts are incomprehensible to me,

I remember well that where I ended up was also incomprehensible to me when I started.

A cousin of mine subscribes to at least fifteen of the raunchiest magazines I have ever seen. Books I have peeked at for just a few seconds in airport newstands litter his house. He has told me that, even surrounded by vivid depictions of every sex act, every size and shape of woman he can imagine, he still wants more. He still devours the new issues. He and his wife are experimenting with orgies now, and numerous other variations I won't mention. It is not enough. The thrill will fade before long, and he will want more.

Psychologists use the term *obsession* to label what I have been describing, and they may say that I have more innate obsession than the average male. They would trace its genesis back to my repressive upbringing, and they are undoubtedly right. That is why I am writing to others of you in the Christian world. If you have not fought such obsession yourself, every Sunday you will speak to many who have, although you could hardly read it in their blank, freshly scrubbed faces. Lust is indeed an invisible sin.

Don't let me give the wrong impression. My entire life did not revolve around lust. I would go days without fixating on sex, and sometimes a month or two without seeking out a pornographic magazine or movie. And many, many times I would cry out to God, imploring him to take away the desire. Why were my prayers not answered? Why did God continue to curse me with freedom, even when that freedom led me away from him?

I read numerous articles and books on temptation but found little help. If you boiled down all the verbiage and the ten-point lists of practical advice for coping with temptation, basically all they said was "Just stop doing it." That was easy to say. I knew some of those authors, and knew that they too struggled and failed, as I did. In fact, I too had preached many a sermon on handling temptation, but look at me. Practical "how-to" articles proved hopelessly inadequate, as if they said "Stop being hungry" to a starving man. Intellectually I might agree with their theology and their advice, but my glands would still secrete. What insight can change glands?

"Jesus was tempted in all points as you are," some of the articles and books would say, as if that would cheer me up. It did not help. In the first place, none of the authors could conceivably describe how Jesus experienced sexual temptation, because he never talked about it, and no one else has ever been perfect and lived to tell about it. Such well-meaning comments reminded me of telling a ghetto dweller in East Bronx, "Oh, President Reagan used to be poor too. He knows how you feel." Try telling that to a poor person, and prepare to duck.

I felt a similar reaction when I read accounts of people who had overcome lust. Usually, they wrote or talked in a condescending, unctuous tone. Or, like Jesus, they seemed too far removed from my own spiritual quagmire to comfort me.

Most of the time I hated sex. I could not imagine it existing in any sort of balance in my life. Of course I knew

its pleasure—that was the gravitational attraction—but those short bursts of pleasure were horribly counterbalanced by days of guilt and anguish. I could not reconcile my technicolor fantasy life with my more mundane experience of sex in marriage. I began to view sex as another of God's mistakes, like tornadoes and earthquakes. In the final analysis, it only caused misery. Without it, I could conceive of becoming pure and godly and all those other things the Bible exhorted me toward. With sex, any spiritual development seemed hopelessly unattainable. Maybe Origen had the right idea after all.

I have described my slide in some detail not to feed any prurient interests in the reader and certainly not to nourish your own despair if you too are floundering—God forbid. I tell my struggles because they are real, but also to demonstrate that hope exists, that God is alive, and his grace can interrupt the terrible cycle of lust and despair. My primary message is one of hope, although until healing did occur, I had no faith that it ever would.

Scores, maybe hundreds of times I had prayed for deliverance, with no response. The theologians would find some fault in my prayers, or in the faith with which I prayed them. But can any person assume the awful right to judge the prayers of another who writhes in mental torment and an agony of helpless unspirituality? I would certainly never assume the right, not after a decade-long war against lust.

I have not mentioned the effect of lust on my marriage. It did not destroy my marriage, did not push me out to find more sexual excitation in an adulterous affair, or with prostitutes, did not even impel me to place unrealistic demands on my wife's sexual performance. The effect was far more subtle. Mainly, I think, it cumulatively caused me to devalue my wife as a sexual being. The great lie promulgated by *Playboy*, television commercials, and racy movies is that the physical ideal of beauty is attainable and oh, so close. I stare at a *Playboy* centerfold. Miss October has such a warm, inviting smile. She is with me alone, in my living room. She removes her clothes, just for me, and lets me see all of her. She tells me about her favorite books and what she likes in a man.

The truth is, of course, that if I sat next to Miss October on an airplane, she would not give me the time of day, let alone take off her clothes for me. If I tried to strike up a conversation, she would brush me off. And yet, because I have gone over every inch of Miss October as well as the throng of beauties that Madison Avenue and Hollywood recruit to tantalize the masses, I start to view my own wife in that light. I expect her to have Farrah's smile, Cheryl's voluptuousness, Angie's legs, Miss October's flaming red hair and sparkling eyes. Envy and greed join hands with lust. I begin to focus on my wife's minor flaws. I lose sight of the fact that she is a charming, warm, attractive woman and that I am fortunate to have found her.

Beyond that, lust affected my marriage in an even more subtle and pernicious way. Over time, I began to

view sex schizophrenically. Sex in marriage was one thing. We performed OK, though not as often as I liked, and accompanied by typical misunderstandings. But passion, ah, that was something different. Passion I never felt in my marriage.

If anything, sex within marriage served as an overflow valve, an outlet for the passion that mounted inside me, fed by sources kept hidden from my wife. We never talked about this, yet I am sure she sensed it. I think she began to view herself as a sex object—not in the feminist sense of being the object of a husband's selfish greed, but in the deprived sense of being only the object of my physical necessity and not of romance and passion.

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**Why weren't we made more like the animals who, except for specified periods, go through their daily routine with hardly a thought of sex. I could handle lust better if I knew it would only strike me in October and May. It's the not knowing, the ceaseless vulnerability, that drives me crazy.**

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Yet the sexual schizophrenia pales in comparison to the schizophrenia of my spiritual life. Can you imagine the inner rupture when I would lead a spiritual retreat for a weekend, winning sighs of admiration and tears of commitment from my devoted listeners, only to return to my room and pore over the latest copy of *Oui*? Paradoxically, I seemed most vulnerable to temptation when speaking or otherwise performing some spiritual service. Those who see Satan as personally manipulating all such temptation to sin would not be surprised by that observation.

Lust became the one corner of my life that God could not enter. I welcomed him into the area of personal finance, which he revolutionized as I awakened to world needs. He cleaned up many of my personal relationships. He gave stirrings of life to the devotional area and my sense of personal communion with him. But lust was sealed off, a forbidden room. How can I reconcile that statement with my earlier protestations that I often cried out for deliverance? I do not know. I felt both sensations: an overwhelming desire to be cleansed and an overwhelming desire to cling to the exotic pleasures of lust. This must be what Paul meant in some of those strange statements in Romans 7 (a passage that gave me some comfort). But where was Romans 8 in my life?

Even when I had lust under control, when I successfully limited it to brief, orderly perusals through *Playboy* at the local newsstand, I still felt this sense of retaining a secret corner God could not enter. Often I would get bogged down in sermon preparation. For motivation to



keep going, I would promise myself a trip to the newsstand if I could finish the sermon in an hour and a half. Can you sense the schizophrenia?

\* \* \*

Just as I can remember graphically the precise incident in Rochester when adult lust moved in, I can remember the first flutterings of a commitment to healing. They also came on a trip out of town, when I was speaking at a spiritual-life conference. The conference was scheduled for a resort hotel in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, near my favorite part of the country. Nothing affects me like the long drive up the rocky coastline of Maine. It is an invigorating, almost religious experience. Some people find deserts affect them like that, some wheat fields, and some mountains. For me, the magnificence of creation unwinds with each curve on the road up Maine's coast. I made plans to fly into Boston, rent a car, and spend three days cruising the coast just to refresh myself before the conference.

My mistake was spending the first night in Boston. I was then practicing a fairly rigid regimen of "controlled lust." But sure enough, that night I found myself stalking the streets of the seedy areas looking for lust. I did not have to look far. Like many cities, Boston offers strip shows, porno movies—a veritable menu of lust. I usually avoided porno movies because they had proved so unsatisfying. But, Boston also features live nude girls on a revolving platform that you can watch for twenty-five cents. I went in one of those booths.

The mechanics are simple. Twenty curtained booths encircle a revolving platform. Each booth has a glass

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**Marriage does not remedy lust. If anything, it complicates the problem by introducing a new set of problems . . . . I could not reconcile my technicolor fantasy life with my more mundane experience of sex in marriage.**

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window covered by a piece of plywood. When you insert a quarter, a mechanical arm somewhat like a toll gate lowers the piece of plywood and lets you see the nude girls revolving on the platform. Then, about three minutes later the toll gate goes up, and you have to drop in another quarter to continue. This is lust at its most unadorned.

The girls employed by such places are not beautiful. Imagine for yourself what kind of women would willingly settle for such employment. You lie under bright lights, revolving like a piece of roast beef at a buffet table. Around you, leering, furtive stares of men appear for three minutes, then disappear, then appear again, their glasses reflecting your pale shape, none of them looking at your face.

For fifty cents you could go to a private booth, and one of the girls would entertain you personally. A glass wall still separated you from the girl, but you could, if you wished, pick up the receiver and talk to the girl. Maybe you could talk her into doing something special for you. I went into the booth, but something restrained me from picking up the telephone. I could not make that human an act—it would expose me for what I was. I merely stood, silent, and stared.

Guilt and shame washed over me in waves that night, as usual. Again I had a stark picture of how low I was groveling. Did this animal lust have any relation to the romance that had inspired the *Symphonie Fantastique*, Elizabeth Barret Browning's *Sonnets*, and the Song of Solomon? Certainly each of those works contained traces of glandular desire, but this that I had experienced was devoid of all beauty. It was too naked, and shameful.

I had felt all that remorse before. What shocked me more was my trip up the coast the next two days. I followed my usual practice of staying in homey inns with big fireplaces, and of eating by the waterfront and watching the sailboats bob in the shimmering sea, of taking long solitary walks on the rocky promontories where huge waves crashed with thunder, of closing my eyes and letting salt spray splash across my face, of stopping at roadside stands for fresh lobster and crab. There was a difference this time: I felt no pleasure. None. My emotional reaction was the same as if I had been at home, yawning, reading the newspaper. All romance had drained out, desiccated.

The realization disturbed me profoundly. By all counts, those wonderful, sensuous experiences rated far higher than the cheap thrill of watching a fat, pock-marked body rotate on plywood. And yet, to my utter disbelief, my mind kept roaming back to that grimy booth in Boston. Was I going crazy? Would I lose every worthwhile sensation in life? Was my soul leaking away? Was I becoming possessed?

I limped through the conference, and everyone warmly applauded each talk. They were all blessed. Alone in my room at night, I did not pore over pornography. I pored over what had been happening inside me for ten years. I did not like it.

*Three days later, the author visited a good friend who pastored a large church in the South. For the first time he shared with another person these struggles and fears. His friend began to sob, then poured out his own story of lust taken to some of its logical consequences: prostitution, bi-sexualism, orgies, venereal disease, divorce litigation, contemplated suicide.*

I could not sit in judgment of this man, because he had simply ended up where my own obsession would likely take me. Jesus brought together lust and adultery, hatred and murder, in the Sermon on the Mount, not to devalue adultery and murder but rather to point to the awesome truth about hatred and lust. There is a connection.

For some weeks I lived under a cloud that combined the feelings of doom and terror. Had I crossed some invisible line so that my soul was stained forever? Would I too, like my trusted friend, march inexorably toward the systematic destruction of my body and my soul? Was there no escape for him—for me?

My wife could sense the inner tension, but in fifteen years of marriage she had learned not to force a premature explanation. I had not learned to share tension while it was occurring, only afterward, when it fit into a logical sequence, with some sort of resolution. This time, I wondered whether this particular problem would ever have such a resolution.

A month after my conversation with my friend, I began reading a brief and simple book of memoirs, *What I Believe*, by Francois Mauriac. I had read only one novel by the Nobel prize-winning author, *Viper's Tangle*, but that novel clearly showed that Mauriac fully understood the lust I had experienced, and more. A great artist, he had captured the depths of human depravity. I would not get pious answers from him.

Mauriac's book includes one chapter on purity. He describes the power of sexuality—"the sexual act has no resemblance to any other act: its demands are frenzied and participate in infinity. It is a tidal wave"—and his struggles with it throughout a strict Catholic upbringing. He also discounts common evangelical perspectives on lust and sex. The experience of lust and immorality, he admits, is fully pleasurable and desirable; it is no good trying to pretend that sin contains distasteful seeds that

inevitably grow into repulsion. Sin has its own compelling rewards. Even marriage, Christian marriage, he claims, does not remedy lust. If anything, marriage complicates the problem by introducing a new set of difficulties. Lust continues to seek the attraction of unknown creatures and the taste for adventure and chance meetings.

After brazenly denying the most common reasons I have heard against succumbing to a life filled with lust, Mauriac concludes that there is only one reason to seek purity. It is the reason Christ proposed in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Purity, says Mauriac, is the condition for a higher love—for a possession superior to all possessions: God himself.

Mauriac goes on to describe how most of our arguments for purity are negative arguments: Be pure, or you will feel guilty, or your marriage will fail, or you will be punished. But the Beatitudes clearly indicate a positive argument that fits neatly with the Bible's pattern in describing sins. Sins are not a list of petty irritations drawn up for the sake of a jealous God. They are, rather, a description of the impediments to spiritual growth. We are the ones who suffer if we sin, by forfeiting the development of character and Christlikeness that would have resulted if we had not sinned.

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**Here was a description of what I was missing by continuing to harbor lust: I was limiting my own intimacy with God. Could he, in fact, substitute another thirst and another hunger for the one I had never filled? Would Living Water somehow quench lust? That was the gamble of faith.**

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The thought hit me like a bell rung in a dark, silent hall. So far, none of the scary, negative arguments against lust had succeeded in keeping me from it. Fear and guilt simply did not give me resolve; they added self-hatred to my problems. But here was a description of what I was missing by continuing to harbor lust: I was limiting my own intimacy with God. The love he offers is so transcendent and possessing that it requires our faculties to be purified and cleansed before we can possibly contain it. Could he, in fact, substitute another thirst and another hunger for the one I had never filled? Would Living Water somehow quench lust? That was the gamble of faith.

The combination of grave fear struck in me by my pastor friend's grievous story and the glimmer of hope that a quest for purity could somehow transform the hunger I had lived with unabated for a decade prepared me to try once again to approach God in confession and in faith. I knew pain would come. Could God this time give me assurance that, in Pascal's words, pain was the "loving and legitimate violence" necessary to procure my liberty?

I cannot tell you why a prayer that has been prayed for

ten years is answered on the 1,000th request when God has met the first 999 with silence. I cannot tell you why I had to endure ten years of near-possession before being ready for deliverance.

But what I can tell you, especially those of you who have hung on every turn of my own pilgrimage because it so closely corresponds to yours, is that God did come through for me. The phrase may sound heretical, but to me, after so many years of failure, it felt as if he had suddenly decided to be there after a long absence. I prayed, hiding nothing (hide from God?), and he heard me.

There was one painful but necessary step of repentance. Repentance, says C. S. Lewis, "is not something God demands of you before He will take you back and which He could let you off if He chose; it is simply a description of what going back is like." Going back for me had to include a very long talk with my wife, who had suffered in silence and often in nescience for a decade. It was she I had wronged and sinned against, as well as God. Perhaps my impurity had kept our own love from growing in the same way it had blocked the love I could experience with God. We lay side by side on our bed one steamy summer evening. I talked about nothing, in a nervous, halting voice, for an hour or so, trying to break the barrier that held me back, and finally about midnight I began.

I told her nearly everything, knowing I was laying on her a burden she might not be able to carry. I have wondered why God let me struggle for a decade before deliverance: maybe I will one day find out my wife required just that much time to mature and prepare for

the one talk we had that night. Far smaller things had fractured our marriage for months. Somehow, she incarnated the grace of God for me.

I hurt her—only she could tell how much I hurt her. It was not adultery—there was no other woman for her to beam her resentment toward, but perhaps that made it even harder for her. For ten years she had watched an invisible fog steal inside me, make me act strange, pull me away from her. Now she heard what she had often suspected, and to her it must have sounded like rejection: You were not enough for me sexually, I had to go elsewhere.

But still, in spite of that pain and the vortex of emotions that must have swirled around inside her, she gave to me forgiveness and love. She took on my enemy as her enemy too. She took on my thirst for purity as her thirst too. She loved me, and as I type this even now, tears streak my face because that love, that awesome love is so incomprehensible to me, and so undeserved. But it was there.

A year has passed since the late-night talk with my wife. During that time, a miracle has occurred. The war within me has fallen away. Only a few snipers remain. Once I failed, just a month later, when I was walking the streets of San Francisco. I felt myself pulled—it felt exactly like that—into another of the twenty-five cent peep shows to watch an undulating girl on a revolving table for three minutes. Not ten seconds had passed when I felt a sense of horror. My head was pounding. Evil was taking over. I had to get out of there, immediately.

I ran, literally ran, as fast as I could out of the North Beach district. I felt safe only when I got out of there. It

## Battle strategy: some practical advice

In the account of my personal pilgrimage, I resisted giving "practical advice" on lust. There are no ten easy steps to overcome temptation. At times the power of obsession overwhelms all reason or common sense. And yet, I did learn some valuable strategy, which I will add in hopes of preventing needless scars.

1. Recognize and name the problem. If it's lust, call it lust. You must admit your condition before it can be treated.
2. Stop feeding lust. Killing fantasies is like trying not to think of a pink elephant. But cutting off desires through diversion, not dwelling on them when they begin, and trying to eliminate some of the mystery can help in the early stages of lust. The farther down the road you travel through books, magazines, films, and personal contacts, the more steps you must one day retrace.
3. Demythologize it. Sexual stimulations promise a lie. Cheryl Tiegs is not going to bed with you—in fact, photo sessions that create sexy photos are tiresome

and mechanical, not at all erotic. Recognize that *Playboy* centerfolds are touched up in the miracle of dye transfer printing, that they represent an unrealizable ideal of sexuality that does not include feelings of impotence, awkwardness, monthly menstrual periods, and many other reminders of humanity. Life is far different from what soft porn portrays it to be.

4. Confess its real price. I learned the ultimate price just in time, by watching my pastor friend who went beyond the point of no return and is today as miserable a man as I have ever met. All the time lust was demanding its tribute from me, in the form of irritation with my wife and in the subtle and progressive loss of intimacy with my wife and with God. My own self-respect was gradually deteriorating also.
5. Trace its history. Professional counselors have proven very helpful in pointing out the root causes of my obsession that began in my sexually repressed childhood. For some people, lust comes from trying to win back the love of a distant parent, or earning ven-

struck me then how much had changed: previously I had felt safe when I had given in to lust, because the war inside died down for a moment, but now I felt safe away from the temptation. I prayed for strength and walked away.

Other than that encounter, I have been free of the compulsion. The gravitational force has disappeared when I pass in front of newsstands. For twelve months I have walked by them and not picked up a magazine. I have not entered a porno theater.

I feel a sense of loss, yes. I enjoyed the beautiful women, both the art and the lust of it. It was pleasurable; I cannot deny that. But now I have gained a kind of inner gyroscope that is balanced correctly and alerts me when I am straying off course. After ten years I finally have a reservoir of strength to draw on as well as conscience. I have found it necessary to keep open and honest communication with God and my wife on every little temptation toward lust.

Two totally new experiences have happened to me that, I must admit, offset by far my sense of loss at the experiences of lust I miss.

First, God has kept his part of the bargain. In a way I had never known before, I have come to see God. At times (not so often, maybe once every couple of months), I have had an experience with God that has stunned me with its depth and intimacy, an experience of an order I did not even know existed before. Some of these moments have come during prayer and Bible reading, some during deep conversations with other people, and one, the most memorable of all because of my occupation, while I was speaking at a Christian conference. At such moments I have felt possessed, but this time joyfully

so (demonic possession is a poor parody of the filling of the Spirit). They have left me shaken and humbled, renewed and cleansed. I had not known that level of mystical experience, had not, in fact, even sought it except in the general way of seeking purity. God has revealed himself to me.

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**I cannot tell you why a prayer that has been prayed for ten years is answered on the 1,000th request when God has met the first 999 with silence. But God did come through for me. I prayed, hiding nothing, and he heard me.**

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And another thing has happened, again something I did not even ask God for. The passion is coming back into my marriage. My wife is again becoming an object of romance. *Her* body, no one else's, is gradually gaining the gravitational pull that used to be scattered in the universe of sexes. The act of sex, as often a source of irritation and trauma for me as an experience of pleasure, is beginning to take on the form of mystery and transcendence and inexpressible delight that its original design must have called for.

These two events occurring in such short sequence have shown me why the mystics, including biblical writers, tend to employ the experience of sexual intimacy as a metaphor of spiritual ecstasy. Sometimes, lingering remnants of grace in the city of man bear a striking resemblance to what awaits us in the City of God. ■

geance against a disappointing God, or overcoming feelings of physical inadequacy by feeding myths. Friends and sometimes professional counselors can help you identify the cycle of lust by exploring its history with you.

6. Study sex in perspective. The church has unwittingly caused many of the problems with sexuality by elevating it to a singular status as heinous sin. A general term, *immorality*, comes to focus on merely one sin, sexual sin. From God's perspective sex is a powerful dimension of humanity, but it was never meant to preoccupy or gain dominion over the creation. Getting an idea of what God had in mind won't tame the obsession but can be a picture to remember when the obsession flares, a counterpoint, a balance leading to alignment.
7. Build fantasies on God's ideal. As you become creative and loving and healthful [with your spouse] when thinking about sex, the obsession lessens. When a fantasy pops into mind, try to direct it and control it.
8. Work on some positive addictions. Tennis, maybe, or scuba diving or hang-gliding. I've found that even video games like Pac-Man preoccupy me for a time, especially when I am traveling. When I'm tempted to go to a sexually explicit movie, now I seek out a safe,

constructive film to occupy my evening. The obsession fades, at least temporarily.

9. Recognize the humanity of your victims. A friend of mine told me that he had regularly picked up *Playboy* and *Penthouse* until his daughter turned eighteen. Then for the first time he realized those "Girls from Kokomo" or "Girls from the Southwest Conference" were real human beings, daughters of parents like himself. Who can know what subtle destruction occurred inside them as they were coaxed to use their bodies to entice male America?  
As long as the obsession can make you blind enough to care about satisfying only your needs, you will continue. But once you realize what you are doing to others, including the objects of your lust and your own family, obsession becomes more difficult.
10. Obsession comes out of a legitimate set of anxieties; follow them to their authentic source. I need God. I need a father. I need female friendship. I need to be hugged. I need to be loved, and to love. I need to feel worthwhile, attractive to someone. Those are my real needs, not the three-minute rush of voyeurism inside a twenty-five cent booth. Let these real needs be met when the obsession arises, and the sexually based substitute may lose its grip.

# Intimacy in marriage:

## a case against pornography

by Jake Thiessen

*"If it is true that a misuse of the language of intimacy can result in the endangering of intimacy itself, then we should deplore the way in which the most intimate phases of human life are subjected to over-publicity."<sup>1</sup>*

It is with this attitude that we are going to approach the issue of pornography. The question before us is not so much whether that magazine or this film is pornographic, or to what extent Brethren in Christ people are involved in pornography. We will assume that pornography ranges from the portrayal of "plastic" women in *Playboy* to the raunchy exposé of sado-masochism in *Hustler*, and that probably more Brethren in Christ are involved than we would think. Rather, the question is: does regular exposure to pornography dim the flickering light of intimacy between male and female? There are few things more precious, more sought-after, than a truly intimate relationship with another human being. If pornography hinders our achieving that relationship, then it is on these grounds that the battle against pornography should be fought.

Not everyone, by any means, assumes that pornography damages intimacy. Many stand in complete

opposition to this position, saying the portrayal of male and female bodies for the express purpose of sexual arousal can only promote intimacy. Some would say that pornographic materials may, in certain instances, have a place as a physically, if not legally, safe aphrodisiac. Brooks Walker gives a case history in which one couple, after having exhausted their taste for newsstand pornography, filmed themselves having intercourse and used this as a stimulus in later love making. Both spouses thought of their use of pornography as instrumental in bringing them closer together.<sup>2</sup> This may be people's thinking in more instances than one would like to admit. After all, some would say, there is surely nothing wrong with people using pornography to stimulate themselves to be a better lover for their spouses. However, Walker shows his true position later when he discusses this case; he states that the experience of "enjoying" pornography serves as a kind of fantasy substitute for reality. Here is where the problem lies—pornography is a substitute for reality, a way of escaping the demands of a vital, dynamic, and intimate relationship.

To a lesser degree, the argument for the educational value of pornography attempts to strike another blow for sexual intimacy. Those taking this position assume a positive correlation between an individual's knowledge of anatomy and his or her ability to relate intimately. Some

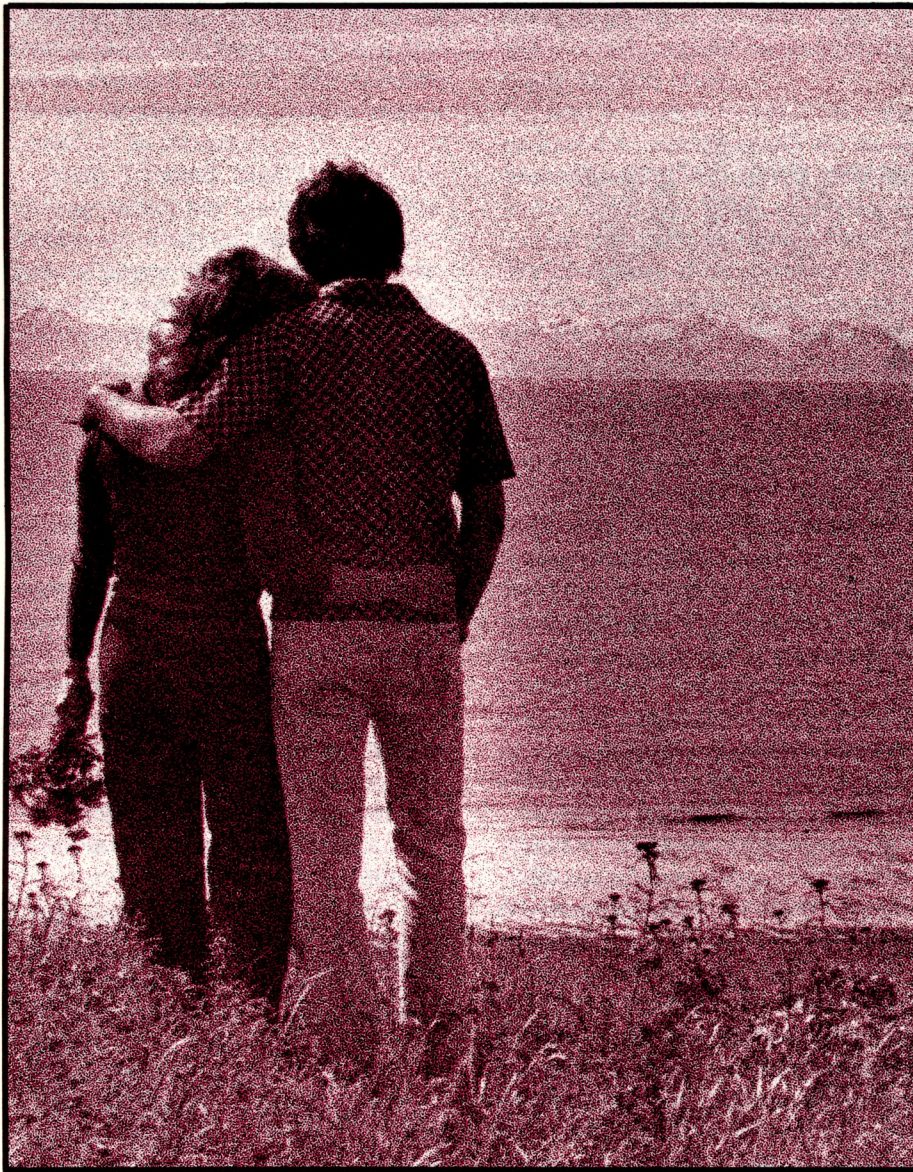
have said that, by and large, the influence of sexually explicit magazines in the task of "freeing" America is analogous to the influence of books. Through such magazines, it is argued, our children will have a much better visual-aided education in the anatomy of the other sex than previous generations had. The implication is that previous generations were "hung-up" and therefore unable to relate well on an intimate level. The new generation, brought up in the expanding definition of freedom of the press, will, of course, be less "hung-up," more educated, and thus better equipped to find intimacy.

Granted, there may be a grain of truth in these two positions. Christians may indeed be enjoying a certain liberation coming as a spill-over from publishers' efforts to push freedom of expression to its outer limits. It may in fact be true that the rather startling sexual freedom of the present day has in some strange way actually led to putting the sexual aspect of marriage into a perspective that allows the deep, interpersonal communion between husband and wife to be seen as the heart of marriage. Though this may be the case, it seems obvious that the lengths to which pornography is extending itself can only be detrimental to efforts at achieving abiding intimacy.

If we contend that pornography seriously limits one's ability to be intimate, the basic premise must stand on the unreality of sex as portrayed in pornography. Pornography

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**What pornography does is portray sexual behavior in a way that has little connection with authentic, loving human interaction.**

claims to offer the consumer a pre-paid ticket to fulfillment of every fantasy imaginable. But, the route is a distorted one. With a "pin-up" concept of sex, the individual is bound to be at a loss when he or she is confronted with a real body—a body that loves rather than seduces. In pornography, the focus is on the perfect, blemishless sex partner and away from the partner who has more than sexual needs that require fulfillment. If emotions are displayed, and they rarely are, they are only those emotions expressed in a prone position. The artificiality of pornography is epitomized by presentations of women who "fold in two places and wear staples in their navels."

Like the early American seekers

of Utopia, those who find their sexual excitation in pornography are chasing a mirage. The unreality of pornographic sex nourishes the fantasy that the perfect, undemanding lover exists. It appeals to precisely those people who most need a loving and intimate relationship—those people who find it difficult or impossible to relate meaningfully to one another and who seek refuge in the substitute of fantasy.

Pornography can be one of the worst kinds of escape from the will of God for man and woman. God wills for man an intimate relationship with woman. This relationship should be characterized by an openness and love that allows for honesty, communication, and creativity between the sexes. Intimacy is the key

word, for it is only within the context of intimacy that one can be truly open and loving. Pornography is, at its core, totally opposed to intimacy. Rather than nurturing the heterosexual relationship, it fosters a "homosexual" situation. Here consumers find themselves in a situation where there is no possibility of growth, no avenue of interaction, and no means of real satisfaction. What pornography does is portray sexual behavior in a way that has little connection with authentic, loving human interaction. Consumers of pornography are caught in a trap that arrests development by giving nothing more to interact with than a two-dimensional impression of the perfect body.

The crux of the problem with pornography is its complete inability to fulfill the need for intimacy. Pornography can only add to a problem characteristic of recent decades—personal emptiness. It is my view that pornography adds to this emptiness by exposing to public view intimate and personal experiences of life for the sole purpose of arousing lust and inducing shock. In the face of pornography's detrimental effect on intimacy, it should be our task to uphold and extol human sexuality in its authentic fullness and condemn cheap substitutes. ■

<sup>1</sup>Harvey Cox, "Sexuality and Responsibility: A New Phase," *Sexual Ethics and Christian Responsibility*, Association Press, 1970.

<sup>2</sup>Brooks Walker, *The New Morality*, Doubleday and Co., 1968.

# Pornography in Japan

by Ruth Zook

Women in Japan are seen as being subservient and are degraded and repressed by the Japanese patriarchal society. Many men view women as mere sex objects. In this climate it is not surprising that pornography in Japan is extremely permissive and very prevalent, and even includes child pornography. Most of it is not simple erotica but demeans and degrades females and is often sadistic, with much depiction of women in bondage and being raped, hurt and humiliated. The message given is that of power of men over women. Pornography depicts women being kept in bondage by men and liking it. In pornography women are robbed of their humanity and are exploited as objects instead of being respected as people of worth.

Along with pornography has come an increase in prostitution and sexually oriented massage parlors and bath houses. Japanese businessmen have become known for their "sex tours" to South East Asian countries. This is explained by the rather universal failing of men seeing women of another culture as being sexually looser than one's own culture.

Of special concern to foreign residents in Japan is the fact that Western women are often depicted in the pornographic magazines as being sexually promiscuous. Men read these magazines on the trains and then frequently grope or obscenely touch women, especially foreigners.

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*Marlin and Ruth Zook have been missionaries in Japan since 1963.*

*Foreign women, in describing their harassment, generally cite three underlying causes: (1) the traditional dominance Japanese men feel toward women in general; (2) the special portrayal of foreign women as accessible sex objects in mass media advertising; (3) the widespread availability of Japanese pornography, much of which depicts Western females as willing recipients of aggressive sexual advances. (Japan Times, Nov. 21, 1982)*

If I had remained in the U.S. I probably would not have learned how it feels to be discriminated against in this way because it is usually women of darker color who experience this.

I have felt degraded when I have ridden on the crowded trains in Tokyo and had to stand close to men who were reading their pornographic comic books and "magazines for men." I have felt angry at Japanese men and disappointed at Japanese women who remain passive about pornography and take an "It can't be helped" attitude toward it. As my children have become teenagers, I have become increasingly concerned about their emotional and psychosexual adjustment as they are surrounded by the pornography in this society. When I see the pornography, I have a feeling of shame and want to shield my children from the fleshy come-ons that are so blatantly displayed everywhere here.

The dehumanizing pornography is seen in advertising along streets

and near train stations, in magazines, sports newspapers, comic books and video shops. The magazines are sold everywhere in bookstores and even in sidewalk vending machines which are easily accessible to teenagers. In fact, there is such a glut of material aimed at the teenage market that even the politicians are becoming concerned enough to debate about what should be done to stop it.

*The ruling party, which gives priority to educational reform, is responding to popular outcries for legislation that would protect children from a deluge of smut magazines and other kinds of prurient publications. . . . this law has as its prime purpose the control of all types of business exploiting sex—including both prostitution and the excitement of lust. (Japan Times, Feb. 1984)*

I was surprised to see a secular newspaper write about controlling things that bring "excitement of lust." This reminds me of what the Bible says and the high standard that Jesus taught us. ". . . the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes . . . is not of the Father, but is of the world" (1 John 2:16, KJV). And Jesus said, "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart" (Matt. 5:28, KJV). With this teaching in the Bible, Christians should be on the forefront of the battle against pornography.

As I worked through the issue of

*Evangelical Visitor*

pornography in Japan, I came to see that it involved three areas: my personal feelings about it, my concern for my teenagers and, finally, what I could do in society.

First, I found that I had to be willing to face my feelings. I made a deliberate effort to identify my feelings of anger, fear, disgust, insecurity and also feelings of being demeaned and degraded. After fully accepting these feelings, they faded in intensity. Where I first felt anger and fear about pornography, I found that the more I studied about the problem, the more my fear turned to a feeling of sadness and pity. Through lectures and reading, I learned that men who use pornography are really insecure in their sexuality. They feel inferior and this leads them to degrade women and treat them as subservient sex objects. Many Japanese men are tied to their mothers, which keeps them from functioning in sexually mature ways. They need to use pornography to masturbate. They are immature sexually which leads them to seek gratification just for their own pleasure. They are unable or unwilling to choose mature mutual sexual relations with a woman and thus remain stuck in their immature behavior pattern.

Even though I personally came to be more objective about the problem, I still had to face my feelings when friends and family were harassed on the trains or exposed to pornography in public places. I had a real concern for my teenagers' emotional and sexual adjustment as they grew up surrounded by the unwholesome attitude toward women that we experience here in Japan. I wanted my daughter and two sons to have a positive image of themselves in spite of the difficult environment. This I did by openly talking about the issue of pornography, sharing feelings, giving education on facts, and planning for positive psychosexual development. I wanted to help my daughter avoid falling into the trap of feeling that women are sex objects and I wanted to help my sons see the need to treat girls and women as persons of worth. I believe that as they come to accept them-

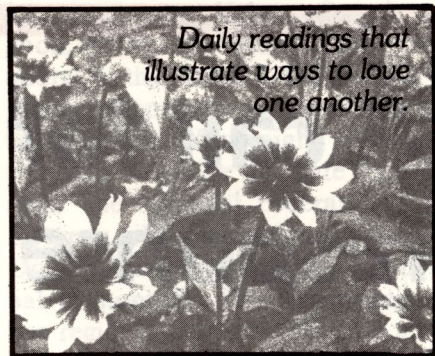
selves as persons of worth also, they will not be tempted by the pornography around them.

I had a more difficult time trying to find out what I could do in the broader society of Japan. At first I had a feeling of helplessness in the face of such a big problem and felt like giving up. But then I decided to make a start and do what I could in my daily life. I brought up the subject of pornography in my women's English classes. We did have good discussions with some of the women, but I was disappointed to find that most of them seemed rather apathetic and preferred to pretend that the problem did not exist. This same attitude seems to be present in missionaries and the Christian church here. Unfortunately, the church has absorbed this society's model of male dominance and the needs and views of women have not been adequately considered.

Another positive step that I took was the letter I wrote to the *Japan Times* newspaper. In my letter, after expressing concern for pornography and the degradation of women in Japanese society, I ended by saying that we are created in God's image and both male and female have equal human dignity. We can be positive catalysts in our own sphere of influence to encourage dignity and self worth in both men and women.

A number of women expressed appreciation for my letter and thanked me for being willing to write openly about the issue. Ironically, I received the most affirmation and positive feedback from an American man who is seeking truth in Eastern religion. The contrast between his concern and the apathy of the Christian church was painful.

After writing the letter I felt I gained a sense of control over the feeling of devaluation of my womanhood that I had experienced because of pornography and being sexually harassed on the trains. The letter gave me the reassurance that I *could* do something to make my voice heard, and it also showed me the importance of encouraging one another as we try to be agents of change in society. ■



Daily readings that illustrate ways to love one another.

## "Love One Another"

|                                  |                          | MAY            |   |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|---|
| Day                              |                          | Book & Chapter |   |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1              | 2 Corinthians 12:14-21                          |
| F                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2              | 1 Peter 3:7; Titus 2:4,5                        |
| B. Putting Others First          |                          |                |   |
| 1. Commands to put others first  |                          |                |   |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3              | John 13:31-35                                   |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4              | 1 Corinthians 10:24-31                          |
| M                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5              | Philippians 2:1-11                              |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6              | Matthew 5:38-48                                 |
| W                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7              | Luke 6:46-49                                    |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8              | Romans 8:1-11                                   |
| 2. Actions that put others first |                          |                |   |
| F                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9              | Proverbs 17:9                                   |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10             | 1 Corinthians 9:19-27                           |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11             | 1 Timothy 6:11-19                               |
| M                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12             | Hebrews 13:1-6                                  |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13             | James 1:21-27                                   |
| W                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14             | 2 Corinthians 6:1-10                            |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 15             | Luke 7:1-10                                     |
| F                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 16             | Luke 7:25-37                                    |
| C. Serving Others                |                          |                |   |
| 1. Jesus' teachings on serving   |                          |                |   |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 17             | Matthew 20:20-28                                |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 18             | John 13:1-17                                    |
| M                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 19             | Luke 9:46-48; 22:24-30                          |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 20             | Luke 17:5-10                                    |
| W                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 21             | Luke 25:14-27                                   |
| 2. The role of a servant         |                          |                |   |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 22             | Ephesians 6:1-9                                 |
| F                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 23             | Genesis 24:1-27                                 |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 24             | Genesis 24:28-52                                |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 25             | Genesis 24:53-67                                |
| M                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 26             | Colossians 3:22-24; 1 Peter 2:18; Luke 16:10-13 |
| 3. The action of serving         |                          |                |   |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 27             | Galatians 5:13-23                               |
| W                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 28             | Galatians 6:1-10                                |
| T                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 29             | 2 Corinthians 4:1-5                             |
| D. Humility Before Others        |                          |                |   |
| 1. Defining humility             |                          |                |   |
| F                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 30             | Psalms 69:29-33; 131:1-3                        |
| S                                | <input type="checkbox"/> | 31             | Matthew 18:1-4                                  |

|                           |                          | JUNE           |                         |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Day                       |                          | Book & Chapter |                         |
| S                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1              | Ephesians 4:1-6         |
| M                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2              | Philippians 2:1-4; 5-11 |
| T                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 3              | John 2:13-17; 8:12-14   |
| W                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4              | Colossians 2:13-19      |
| 2. Humility before God    |                          |                |                         |
| T                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5              | Micah 6:8-8             |
| 3. Humility before people |                          |                |                         |
| F                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6              | Matthew 6:1-4           |
| S                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 7              | Luke 14:7-14            |
| S                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8              | Galatians 5:19-26       |
| M                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9              | 2 Kings 5:1-16          |
| E. Learning from Others   |                          |                |                         |
| 1. Receiving instruction  |                          |                |                         |
| T                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10             | Proverbs 1:1-7          |
| W                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11             | Philippians 4:8-14      |
| T                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12             | Acts 17:1-11            |
| F                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13             | Matthew 10:11-15        |
| S                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14             | Proverbs 24:30-34       |

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**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
EVANGELICALS**

P.O. BOX 28, WHEATON, ILLINOIS 60189

# A call for a response to pornography

by Eber Dourte

By way of definition, a simple starting point is that pornography is the portrayal of the human body or of sexual activity for erotic purposes. For some of us, our first exposure to pornography was the girlie calendar at the local garage or service station. There were those who thought there was no reason to get too concerned about such things, believing that interest in this type of material was some kind of stage people went through and that they eventually grew up and got over it. But in the past several decades we have seen the pornography business expand into big business—very lucrative business—much of which is directed by underworld interests.

Pornography is not simply a high school biology lesson which has gone astray. It now utilizes many, many means to portray that which is sensual and erotic, and indecent. Pornography is captivating and demeaning. For us males, it is demeaning to be portrayed as an aggressive animal whose main goal in life is sexual conquest. It is demeaning to women because they are portrayed as sex objects: bunnies, chicks, prostitutes. Currently, child pornography is on the increase. Children are both portrayed and used as sexual objects. Young boys and girls are kidnapped, taken captive into lives of sexual slavery. They are subjected to sexual perversions which are too revolting to describe here.

Chastity, love and harmony can-

not live in the same house with pornography. Nor can a biblical understanding of the wonder of human sexuality be retained in the same mind (brain) with the moral mire of pornography. Pornography is addictive. Its crippling effect on the mind is just as hazardous as the addictive effects of drugs and alcohol. It is sobering to realize that cleaning a polluted mind is more difficult than healing an addicted body. Studies have shown that those experiences we have which are charged with strong emotional content are imprinted deeply on the mind. This is why cleaning a corrupted mind is so difficult.

In Romans 1:24-27 Paul describes what our society is also experiencing today. "God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. . . . God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another . . . and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversions." This description Paul gives of homosexual orgies and their consequences are happening today. Similar heterosexual orgies and perversions are rampant as well, stimulated and perpetuated by pornography.

What can we do about this evil among us?

## **Begin to deal with pornography at home**

Dad and Mother cannot influence the family unless they first of all have a wholesome understanding of

human sexuality. Influencing others positively begins with holy living ourselves. If we have pornographic materials "hidden" around the house, or view sensuous movies on TV programs, we need to give them up by a forthright decision—by an act of the will, and prayer. If we cannot free ourselves to do this, then find a Christian counselor or pastor to help you with the problem. None of us is safe from the damaging effects of pornography if we expose ourselves to their addictive influence. We need to resist exposure to it. Now this is difficult to do. Even so-called family TV programs often have scenes or innuendoes not in keeping with wholesome Christian attitudes on sexuality.

Then too, the street language or peers' influence on your children at school or in your community need to be addressed. Don't just tell your children that sensuous, dirty language is bad. Keep the door open for the opportunity to discuss meanings of the words, as well as the consequences of exposure to whatever is erotic or indecent. Take time to explore curiosities and explain the difference between that which is sensuous and what is "marvelous and wondrously made."

Since in the home, TV and videos are perhaps the greatest offenders, all the family needs to exercise discipline in its use. Parents need to know what children are seeing. We need to prepare our children to understand that being Christian separates us from the corrupt world around us. We must act against these destructive forces. All the family should be creating a climate of wholesome, loving, trusting relationships. Paul,

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in Ephesians 5 and the first part of chapter 6, outlines family member roles. Also in Philippians 4:8 he tells us “. . . whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

### Dealing with pornography through the church

Pornography is anti-Christian and has far-reaching, damaging effects, both to the family and to individuals. Therefore all facets of the teaching ministry of the church should address the issue. The pulpit ministry must lead the way in this. The prophet of God must cry out against the sins which are intended to disrupt and destroy his flock. This must be done with knowledge and compassion. Be informed of what is going on in the world of your parish. Attend seminars, read books and articles addressing the issue. Keep the pulpit ministry relevant to the battles fought by the people in the pew.

In our congregational Christian education, we need to balance the

sex education taught in the public schools with an understanding of moral responsibility, and sensitivity to emotional needs. Christian education leaders and teachers should have an understanding of the seriousness of the problem and its long-range damaging effects on adults and youth. It is addictive and damaging to the psyche. It is difficult to clean up the mind when it is corrupted by pornography. We need to curb the notion that sees sexual experience as recreation or conquest. We must call for a return to the understanding that all sexual activity must be limited to the commitment of marriage; that it is valid only as an expression of love in marriage. Furthermore, we need to explain that those who view or express sexual activity in other ways jeopardize the possibility of their ever experiencing a wholesome commitment relationship.

Your church library should have helpful magazines and books. A recent book by Dr. Jerry Kirk, founder of the Coalition Against Pornography, entitled *The Mind Pol-*

*luters* (Thomas Nelson Co.) is a good, informative volume. The book addresses the problem, but also suggests appropriate courses of action to oppose it. You might want to receive a magazine to create awareness. The National Federation for Decency, whose executive director is Donald Wildman, publishes a journal bi-monthly. This organization has regional chapters. Mailing address for NFD is P.O. Drawer 2440, Tupelo, MS 38803. Some readers may find the NFD approach to the problem of pornography rather forthright at times. They are a member organization of the Coalition Against Pornography, and are doing something about the problem.

The rocking chair approach to this problem will not subdue the enemy. We do need to be informed. Your own course of action must be within the framework of your gifts and your community or church situation. It is high time that we act against this destructive effort of Satan to undermine the family and corrupt the minds of people of all ages. ■

# 10 steps to action

by Paul Tanner

## Action Step 1: You Can Pray

This is a spiritual battle. We are no match to attack this gigantic evil with our own strength. But with God, our little sling can penetrate the giant's armor and win the battle. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high

places" (Ephesians 6:12). Begin with serious and continuous prayer.

1. Pray for the pornographers. To stand in a prayer circle and hear Father Morton Hill, founder of "Morality in Media," pray for Larry Flynt by name, is an unforgettable experience. My outrage at what he publishes is so strong that it had not occurred to me to pray for him. Then I remembered how Jesus taught us to "pray for those who despitefully use you." "Forgive your enemies." We must learn to hate their sin, but love them. It was while we were yet sinners that Christ died for us.

2. Pray for all the organizations that God is raising up to expose and turn back the tide of this evil. All have a single purpose and, in spite of theologi-

cal differences, we must unite as one massive force. The names of some of these organizations are listed under Action Step 8. We really do need one another.

3. Pray for young men and women who pose and perform in these lewd, lust-laden pictures. Whatever the reasons, pray that whatever causes them to do it will be removed.

4. Pray for the victims of sexual abuse, especially little children who are used by incestuous parents. Pray for persons who have been violated by rapists. Pray for children who have fallen into the hands of greedy pimps and walk the streets tonight as prostitutes.

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*Paul Tanner is the executive secretary of the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana). This article was taken from pages 18-26 of "A Call to Righteousness," a booklet published by Warner Press, Inc. Anderson, Indiana. Copyright © 1984. All rights reserved. Used with permission.*

5. Pray for young people who have no models or morals in the home to serve as a bulwark against these sins in our society.

6. Pray for the church. Your congregation. Your communion. The whole body of Christ. Pray that we may have boldness to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them" (Ephesians 5:11).

7. Encourage the formation of prayer groups to pray for a return of our nation to a high standard of morality and a renewal of the body of Christ.

### Action Step 2: You Can Read

1. Read once again what the Bible says about morality, purity, and holiness. In your daily devotions become alert to and make note of those verses that apply to this issue. Refer to them often. Be strengthened by them. But most of all be obedient to them. Read especially Leviticus chapters 18 through 20. Read Paul's writings in Romans 1:18-32; Romans 13:8-10; I Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:8-21.

2. Read books that speak to the seriousness of the problem: *How to Stop the Porno Plague* by Neil Gallagher (Bethany House Publishers, Minneapolis); *The Death of Innocence* by Sam Janus (William Morrow and Company, Inc., New York).

3. Read some of the porno magazines at least once. Do it with another adult who understands fully and shares in your purpose for becoming informed. If you doubt your motives, DON'T!"

You say you don't want to. I'm glad. You want to keep yourself pure. So did I. That's why I didn't begin fighting it sooner. You don't have to inspect now. Your children will. They can't help it. It's everywhere, even in your junior high school. It wasn't until I saw adults committing ugly sex acts with six-month-old babies that I began to fight it. Pornographers don't want you to inspect it. They would like to exploit your ignorance.

When you have seen it, it will make you sick. It's like a surgeon inspecting a cancer. And you must hate it as God hates it and as a physician hates cancer.

4. Read the newspapers in your community to become aware of needs and opportunities for action. Read the news section as well as the entertainment pages.

5. Subscribe to and read the publications issued by the professional groups listed in Action Step 8.

### Action Step 3: You Can Gather Data

What is the situation in the city or county in which you live? You will never know until you survey the community and gather essential data for review and study. Be sure of your facts.

1. Survey and make a detailed listing of the places in your community where the adult bookstores, the X-rated movie theaters, the massage parlors, and the live shows that present obscenity and indecency are located.

2. Survey and record all of the outlets in your community that handle the so-called soft-core books and magazines. Be sure to look in supermarkets, newsstands, convenience stores, gas stations or truck stops, drugstores, motel lobbies, and airports.

3. Inspect and list all video stores in your community that rent or sell tapes containing obscene or pornographic material. This is one of the fastest-growing and vilest areas of promotion.

4. Learn about all TV cable channels that are now operating in your community and keep abreast of proposed channels. It is often easier to keep these off the air than to get them off once they are in operation.

### Action Step 4: You Can Know the Law

1. Research and learn what the anti-obscenity and display laws are for your state, county, and city. These are often available through the public library, the state legislature, and the office of the city clerk. They can at least direct you where to get this information.

2. After becoming acquainted with the laws, discover which ones are actually being enforced. It may be that the only thing necessary for the enforcement of the law is for one person to notify the responsible law enforcement agency.

3. Learn what laws are enacted in other states and cities that are not on the books in your state or community. Guidance on present laws is available from "Citizens for Decency through Law," Phoenix, Arizona (address in Action Step 8).

4. If adequate laws do not exist that conform to the U.S. Supreme Court "Miller/Paris Theater" decision, it would be appropriate to take the necessary steps for the enactment of such laws.

5. List the names and addresses of all officials in your community who are in a position either to enact or enforce laws. This will include such officers as the

mayor, the city/county attorney or prosecuting attorney, the U.S. District Attorney in your jurisdiction, and the U.S. Postal Inspector.

6. Make a similar list of names and addresses of the proper legal and governmental officials for your state and for the U.S. government.

### Action Step 5: You Can Speak

1. Neil Gallagher suggests that "if every Christian, every time he or she enters every store, would praise or complain to the management (as is appropriate) about the sale of pornography, it would soon disappear."

2. Begin with an olive branch. Kindly go to the manager and in your own words tell him or her how you feel about the store's sale of materials that are so destructive to the moral climate of our country and community. Sometimes that is all that is needed. Save your threats not to purchase for later. Don't argue.

3. Speak to your friends. Tell them what you have learned and what you are doing. Loan your books. Ask them to join you in speaking to these purveyors of pornography.

4. When you become aware that laws are being broken, speak to the proper law enforcement officials and issue a complaint. Be specific and ask for an investigation and a report of the results.

5. Use your telephone. Take advantage of call-in radio or TV shows to raise the subject and alert the community.

### Action Step 6: You Can Write

Benjamin Franklin once said, "Give me twenty-six lead soldiers and I can conquer the world." Of course, he was referring to the twenty-six letters of the alphabet. Personal letters and letter campaigns make a tremendous difference. To whom should you write?

1. Write to local store owners or managers. Follow up personal visits and phone calls with a personal letter. This reinforces the contact. Be sure to thank local businesses for any positive action they take.

2. Write letters to the editor of your daily paper. This is a good way to get public audience with the whole community at no expense to you. I know one individual who had more than three hundred Letters to the Editor printed over a period of a few years. Write concerning both positive and negative activities.

3. Write TV sponsors. Letters of ap-

The photograph intended for this space shows a video cassette rack in a family-oriented business—easily accessible to children.

In addition to Donald Duck movies and Walt Disney's "Winnie the Pooh and Friends," the rack displays such VCR tapes as "Hollywood Hot Tub," "Squeeze Play," "Stuck on You," "Bachelor Party," and "Can I DO IT til I need glasses?"

Because of the pictures on the tape jackets, we decided not to offend some readers by publishing the photo at this time. But remember—every child in town has access to these tapes.—Editor.

proval as well as disapproval are appropriate. Send a copy to the National Communications Commission, 1919 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20054.

4. Write to local TV stations as well as the networks, especially if it is a locally produced program.

5. Write to local, state, and national law enforcement officials, either about laws that need enforcing or enacting.

6. Use your influence to get other persons to write. Several personally written letters will be more effective than one.

### Action Step 7: You Can Mobilize

A mighty movement is taking place at this time within the body of Christ to counter the corrupting influence of pornography in American society. This movement is bringing congregations together within communities as well as bringing denominational leaders together to speak with a united voice. This focal point of interest is energizing Christ's church with a new sense of renewal. How do we go about mobilizing?

1. Gather together interested persons in the local congregation to study, pray, and plan. Where two or three are gathered together, Christ is in their midst.

2. Find other existing groups in the community and get together to share your findings and concerns. See if you can form a local chapter in your community of one of the national organizations listed in the next action step.

3. Expand your local church organization to include occasional meetings

with civic leaders in the community for two-way communication.

4. Encourage state and national leaders in your fellowship to mobilize all the churches for a united effort.

### Action Step 8: You Can Join Forces

The following organizations exist to serve you. Most of them have regular periodicals which provide excellent information on how to become involved in positive action. For a modest fee you can receive their publications and be kept current with the latest information.

1. **National Consultation Pornography, Inc.**, Dr. Jerry R. Kirk, Executive Director, 5743 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45224.

2. **National Federation for Decency**, Rev. Donald E. Wildmon, Executive Director, P.O. Box 1398, Tupelo, Mississippi 38803.

3. **Morality in Media**, Rev. Morton H. Hill, President, 475 Riverside Dr., New York, NY 10115.

4. **Citizens for Decency through Law, Inc.**, Mr. Bruce Taylor, Vice President, 2331 West Royal Palm Rd., Suite 105, Phoenix, Arizona 85021.

5. **National Christian Association**, Mr. Brad Curl, Director, P.O. Box 40945, Washington, D.C. 20016.

### Action Step 9: You Can Model Your Message

If we do not model our message, the validity of the message must be in question. To believe literally means "by-life," or "by-my-life," or even "I'll bet my life." The history of the early church was not

written in a book called "I Believe" but rather "The Acts." The emphasis was on doing. Your action can make a difference.

1. Cancel at once any subscription to any magazine or cable network or video service that caters to the obscene, indecent, or pornographic. A city-wide rally with two hundred cancellations the next morning to a questionable TV channel would communicate a powerful message to the media.

2. Lift up a standard by what you read, by what you watch on TV, by how you talk, and by what you value. Your friends will quickly note the difference.

3. Witness to your children, grandchildren, and friends about your Christian values and your interest in the New Testament purity of life.

### Action Step 10: You Can Unite in Sponsored Projects

There is great value in cooperation with thousands of others from all across the nation to create a massive impact. The agencies listed in Action Step 8 offer projects in which you can cooperate with thousands of concerned friends.

A single voice counts, but when that voice is multiplied by one thousand it becomes ten thousand times as strong.

A little girl once bitterly complained to her mother that her older brother built some traps in the backyard in which to catch rabbits. No amount of pleading would change his mind. She brooded all day over the situation.

To her mother's surprise, the little girl became very calm and composed as bedtime neared. Mother inquired about the change in her attitude.

The little girl responded, "Well, Mom, I prayed and prayed and prayed that no little rabbits would get caught in those traps."

Mother praised her for her faith.

Then the truth came out. "After that," the little girl said, "I went out into the backyard and kicked those traps all to pieces."

We began our action steps with prayer. It is a prayer concern. Now God is calling us to go out into the community and kick the traps of pornography all to pieces. I will rest more calmly when the X-rated movies are gone, the adult bookstores closed, the lewd magazines off the shelves, and the abusers of children off the street.

Go now, in the name of Him who said, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8). ■

# The Brethren in Christ in Miami

by Ann Marie Shaw



**Eduardo Llanes and his wife, Jill, church planting team in Miami—a ministry subsidized through Brethren in Christ Co-operative Ministries.**

Elijah was asked at Mount Horeb, "What are you doing here?" The Board for Evangelism and Church Planting has heard the same question about the Brethren in Christ church planting effort in Miami. And the answer rings back as soundly as Elijah's answer, "I am filled with jealous zeal for my God."

Miami . . . "the world" wrapped up in one city! Miami . . . a trans-cultural setting in southern Florida. It boasts many fascinating customs and a profusion of natives of diverse national origin. It is one of many American cities which are increasingly bursting with countless disenfranchised people. The startling blend of obvious wealth and desolation, pulsating life and forlorn expres-

sion, fortune and misfortune make Miami unapproachable to the average middle-class American Christian.

For many, flight has come to an end here as natives from many other countries have pursued their dreams for an easier lifestyle. Driving through the busy streets of the city, I noted the evidence of the 1982 street riots when 18 million dollars of property damage resulted as blacks protested the release of a policeman who, while on duty, had shot and killed a black man. Then, on down into the congested community of "Little Havana" and past the graves of Carlos Prío Socarrás, former president of Cuba (overthrown by Batista, who was later overthrown by Castro), and Somosa, former prime

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*Ann is office administrator for the Board for Evangelism and Church Planting. She and her husband Dale and two sons live in Sarasota, Fla.*



(Left to right) Juli Llanes, Darren Shaw, and Racquel Llanes enjoy "Cuban cuisine" of fried plantains, rice and black beans at a Cuban restaurant in the Coral Gables community.

minister of Nicaragua who was exiled by the Sandinista government.

My spirit became increasingly subdued. For many, this place represented their last attempt to carve out a reasonably sufficient existence. Though better than ever before, the trauma of loneliness, desperation, fear, and abandonment clutches at the very heart of their being. The more I saw, the deeper became my concern that these people come to know that "God can be home."

The high level of immigration into Miami, both legal and non-legal, arises from the area's easy accessibility to Central and South American countries plus the existing large foreign population that welcomes family and friends. The major cultural segments of this cosmopolitan city include (a) the French, (b) the second largest Jewish population in the United States, (c) the Spanish, (d) the Haitians, and (e) the Cubans.

It is in the Cuban community that the Brethren in Christ has launched a church planting effort under the pastoral leadership of Eduardo and Jill Llanes and their daughters Raquel, a high school senior, and Juli, a junior.

Eduardo was born in Havana, Cuba, to Emma and Eduardo Llanes. He was converted through the min-

istry of the Brethren in Christ Church in that country. When he was 21 years old, he went to Kingston, Jamaica, to work with Howard and Pearl Wolgemuth. Eduardo decided to continue his education and enrolled at Messiah College in the special student program.

From Messiah College, he continued his schooling at Circleville Bible College and graduated with his B.A. from Malone College in Canton, Ohio, in 1967. Eduardo married Jill Magert and taught school in Springfield, Ohio, at the same time he pastored a community church. In 1975, after graduating with a masters degree from Olivet University in Kankakee, Ill., Eduardo and Jill went to Costa Rica under the direction of the Nazarene Missions Program. After one year the Church of the Nazarene called him to teach at the Hispanic Nazarene College in Texas. From Texas Eduardo relocated to Atlanta to earn his second masters degree from Emory University. He continued his teaching career at Mercer University and at the Georgia Bible Institute, preparing black ministers for pastoral service with the Nazarene Church.

In July 1985, Eduardo relocated with his family to Miami to serve as church planting pastor with the Breth-

ren in Christ. In December of the same year, 17 people joined together for the first worship service in the Llanes home. Now, midweek attendance is eight. Jill, a nurse, has found employment at the Miami Baptist Hospital not far from their home. This has opened doors to a chaplaincy ministry for Eduardo. They estimate their ministry community to be at least 50 people at this time.

The Brethren in Christ Church is found in the Coral Gables area of Dade County (Miami). The community is predominantly second generation Cubans—that is, Cubans born in America or who came to America before they were 10 years old. They are bicultural and some are bilingual. They have become very American through the influence of friends and peers, but are caught between two cultural demands: loyalty to family heritage, and the new life. Their god is Mammon—wealth. After "feeling" the struggles of their parents' poverty and hard work, they strive to remove themselves from such a lifestyle. The children of these families (third generation) are now school age and tend to be 100 percent American and rather impatient with tradition. These families have a great respect for education and represent a professional middle to upper class community.

The Board for Evangelism and Church Planting reflects on this Cuban ministry as "a beginning" in the great city of Miami, anticipating that leadership will emerge from this congregation to form a core group for other plantings. The timely availability of the Llanes family for ministry in Miami is a direct result of our world mission program.

In North America the Brethren in Christ face unprecedented opportunity for sensitive and Spirit-enabled ministry. With a total of one million immigrants (500,000 illegal aliens and 500,000 legal aliens) moving into the United States each year and 100,000 into Canada each year, our North American mission program and our world mission program will be mutually supportive of each other in providing leadership personnel for home and abroad. ■

# Islam—the Church's greatest challenge

by Jay Smith

Let me introduce you to Ismail, a young man in his 20s who represents the resurgence in Islam around the world. Ismail is a Turk studying political science in Berlin. He belongs to the Islamic Federation there, a group bent on evangelizing all Europe for Islam with the goal of installing the *Shariah* (Koranic Law).

I met Ismail in one of my French classes in Paris, and we struck up a close friendship. We carried on congenial discussions on theology and politics, invariably coming to loggerheads on such issues as the divinity, death and resurrection of Christ, and the inspiration of the Koran.

Ismail had no interest in anything our Scriptures said; to him they were corrupted and inferior to the Koran. His sole authority was the Koran, which promises victory and power to the followers of Allah. As proof he pointed to the state of the Protestant Church in Europe, which has slipped into third place behind Islam in many countries. Muslim businessmen are buying churches to convert into Koranic schools for their children.

He believed God's will is to augment his kingdom with all people in obedience to his will, whether they wish to be or not. Thus one's relationship to God is to be that of fear and obedience demonstrated by strict adherence to the five pillars of Islam: repeating the *Bismillah* ("There is no God but Allah, and Muhammad is

his prophet"); praying five times daily face down towards Mecca; observing the annual month-long fast of Ramadan; paying 2.5 percent of one's income to the poor; and fulfilling the *Haj* (pilgrimage to Mecca) at least once in one's lifetime.

I was impressed with Ismail's zeal to see Muslims take over positions of authority in Europe. I went to pray with him in his mosque, and he came in turn to our church and small house group. He used these times to list the growing number of celebrities who have converted to Islam—such as Jacques Cousteau, Cat Stevens, and Neil Armstrong. These conversions of distinguished people to a foreign god helped convince Ismail that Allah is indeed showing favor to his people.

Ismail has returned to Berlin to resume his studies. He has left behind a glimpse of the resurgence sweeping Islam: a religion in search of an earthly kingdom. It is a kingdom based on rules from the seventh century Arab world, yet functioning in the eclectic foment of the twentieth century. It reduces all issues to black and white. It gives every statement and action in the authority of the name of Allah and the Koran. Statistics reveal that Islam is growing stronger every day, snatching up entire populations, while the church concentrates on easier fields and fails to see its greatest challenge.

Although there are moderate Muslims, Islam inherently moves towards complete supremacy. Many Islamic scholars believe that this movement requires the *jihad* (holy war), which allows Islam to seek military solutions in the name of God. All Islamic believers must "exert themselves to the utmost to disseminate the Word of God and to make it

supreme, removing all impediments in the way of Islam, be that through the tongue, the pen, or the sword."<sup>1</sup>

This attitude can be seen in countries that have adopted the *Shariah* since 1960 (such as Libya, Algeria, Iran, Pakistan, Somalia, Mauritania, Tunisia, and the Arabian Peninsula). They have closed their borders to Christian missionary activity. In 1974 the Muslim World League urged all Muslim governments to impose Islamic Law and take over all existing Christian institutional work.<sup>2</sup>

The *Shariah*, a 1,300-year-old legal code, regulates nearly every human activity. In its harshest form, it calls for punishments such as flogging and the amputation of hands for crimes such as adultery and stealing.<sup>3</sup> Christians living under the *Shariah* can suffer severely; the problems faced ranged from communal—having to send their children to Koranic schools, to individual—imprisonment. Some observers feel that only world opinion prevents such governments from outlawing Christianity altogether.<sup>4</sup>

Some might ask if this picture is blown out of proportion. Is not this a small group of radicals who capture the world's attention? I believe the answer is no. The state of Islam is not just an insignificant group trying to catch our attention. Let us look at some figures about Islam and about the church's response.

There are roughly 817 million Muslims worldwide, about one-fifth of all people on earth.<sup>5</sup> Yet less than two percent of the 55,000 Protestant missionaries in the world are working with Muslims: about one missionary to a million Muslims.<sup>6</sup> There are more missionaries for the 400,000 Alaskan natives than for the entire Muslim world.<sup>7</sup>

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Jay and Judy Smith are planning to go to Senegal around May 1986 with the International Christian Fellowship. They hold membership in the Perkiomen Valley Brethren in Christ Church and in the 10th Presbyterian Church (Presbyterian Church of America) in Philadelphia. Their son, Eli Joseph, was born January 31, 1986.

front door. That awesome contrast vividly portrays how inadequately the church has responded to the task. If the same situation existed for all the people in North America, we would have eight churches with 150 full-time workers to choose from.<sup>8</sup>

Such statistics were the impetus behind Judy's and my decision to change direction in my last year of seminary and head towards Muslim evangelism. We had intended to go to one of the Brethren in Christ's traditional fields. I was born and raised in India; my parents still work with the Brethren in Christ Church there. Judy grew up on the mission field as well, in Tanzania and Kenya. Our common vision for missions first brought us together. Fortunately, we also fell in love.

At first we felt pulled to Asia, but the dearth of Christian witness in the Muslim world compelled us to change course. It has taken four years of church planting in London, Islamic studies at Fuller, and learning French in Paris to prepare us to go. In those four years Islam has grown by 95 million, whereas Protestants have gained only 12 million.<sup>9</sup> Who knows how many more nations Islam will close to the gospel with the weight of numbers by the end of this century?

In John 9:4 Jesus speaks of the need to work while it is still day, because night is coming. He is referring to the work of beginning his kingdom while he was on earth. I think of this verse when I consider the spread of Islam and the deepening twilight which settles over those countries where it has a majority.

The darkening Koranic Curtain stifles the witness of national Christians and deprives them of the nurture from expatriate Christians.<sup>10</sup> Even as I write, countries like the Sudan and Egypt are planning to implement the *Shariah* on their populations. Now is the time to enter these countries while we can.

Judy and I were granted our wish to work with Muslims when the International Christian Fellowship answered our mission board's request for a couple to work with them. They had three countries for us to choose from: Bangladesh, the south-

ern Philippines, and Senegal. My preference was for one of the first two, both closer to where I grew up than is the third.

Senegal was the country I least wanted to go to as I knew so little about it. I had never felt particularly called to Africa, yet we chose to go to Senegal for much the same reason that we had entered Muslim work—the need there was greatest.

Senegal lies on the furthest point west in Africa directly under the Sahara Desert. It was the first black African nation Islam met on its initial march south in the eleventh century. One tribe there, the Wolofs, refused to become Muslims; they remained staunch animists until just over 100 years ago when they converted in mass to Islam to ward off the "Christian" French colonists.<sup>11</sup>

Today they are the dominant tribe of Senegal, numbering two million in a country of six million. They control much of the government and hold most of the power within the three Islamic brotherhoods which dominate the religious climate.<sup>12</sup> At Independence in 1960, 50 percent of the nation was Muslim. Today it stands at 92 percent and is rising.<sup>13</sup>

The Wolof tribe itself is 98 percent Islamic, and the International Christian Fellowship has targeted these people specifically for evangelism. Since only 10 to 15 of the 160 missionaries in Senegal work full-time with the Muslims, much needs to be done.

Since Senegal retains a secular constitution modeled on that of the French, we will be able to go as missionaries without needing to depend on a tentmaking ministry. This will free us to spend more time in language learning (Wolof is spoken by two-thirds of all Senegalese) and in getting close to the people.

The religious climate is more relaxed than in most Muslim nations because of the attitudes of the people and religious tolerance. This tolerance is seen vividly in the fact that a Roman Catholic, Leopold Senghor, ruled the country for 20 years before voluntarily handing it over in 1981 to his Muslim successor, Abdou Diouf. This excites us as we wait

eagerly to join the other two couples who have preceded us there.

We do not know if a viable church will begin among the Wolofs, or if the *Shariah* will be instated, forcing us to leave. We pray that the Lord will raise up indigenous leadership to continue the work for his kingdom if we must leave. Within the past year the Lord has given all three couples a special gift—a child each—which we take as a sign that he will give us fruit in Senegal.

The week before Ismail returned to Berlin, he took me to a meeting of leaders from the various Islamic groups in France. I was impressed with their determination to take France for Islam. Some of them referred to Islam as the third superpower. I came to the conclusion that the primary concern for Muslims is the need to build an empire: God gets lost in the shuffle.

As Christians, we have no need for empires or earthly kingdoms; such endeavors draw us away from God. Our primary concern is to come into relationship with God and to bring others to him as well, regardless of the political system they live under.

Yet how ready are we to go into the enemy's camp and present the God of love and forgiveness (two concepts of God completely missing in the Koran)? How willing is the Brethren in Christ Church to go into battle against the religion that I believe will be our greatest challenge in the years ahead?

Phil Parshall talks about a picture which hangs in his home. It portrays the temporary calm of a wide ocean as the storm prepares to break. Soon the seas will churn wildly with crashing waves and howling winds. In the distance one can barely identify the small outline of a ship. The profoundly simple inscription on the picture states: "A ship in harbor is safe, but that is not what ships are built for."<sup>14</sup>

As Christians we can easily try to preserve our faith by anchoring ourselves in a safe harbor. Yet the mandate of Christ to preach the gospel to all peoples compels us to put forth our spiritual ships into the storms of

# God at work in our world

## 68 miles to Newcomb

*Ben Stoner, Navajo Mission*

December 5, 1985, saw the beginning of a new Theological Education by Extension (TEE) group at Newcomb, N.M. It is still in the developing stages.

In 1970 Wilford and Maebell Yazzie had three of their children, Dennis, Lorraina, and Geneva, enrolled in our mission school. We learned to know them while they were living in Shiprock. About three years ago Wilford was called by their congregation at the Newcomb church to be their pastor. Two years ago I first suggested TEE to them. A year ago Roy Larvingo and I showed them some books again. During the spring of 1985, Maebell talked about their interest to Wennie Eaton of the Carson House of Prayer TEE group. We made some more contacts in late summer and fall, but changes at their church made it difficult to start then.

At the end of October my surprise visit found them ready. Two weeks earlier they would have said they were not yet ready. After discussing it with their church they decided to meet Thursday evenings. Part of God's leading was that the Nageezi group had changed a few weeks earlier from meeting Thursday evening to Friday daytime.

This TEE group will be different from any others up to now. It is 68 miles one way on mostly dirt roads. The Navajo

language is the first language of everyone there. Raymond John, pastor of his family's church, and part of the TEE group at Gospel Victory Church, has volunteered to go with me to Newcomb. Almost all of the discussion is done in Navajo. I can do some, but Raymond holds everything together.

Only a few people can read well in Navajo. I have met two. A few more can read slowly in English; maybe three can read well. They asked for a Navajo reading class along with TEE; so every evening begins with a Navajo reading lesson. Two men and about seven ladies attend regularly. Some who cannot read either language are coming for the Navajo reading, and are participating in the TEE discussion.

At our first discussion, someone asked, "Does God speak through animals?" They know other spirits do, and we decided that God can, too. Remember Balaam and the donkey?

Only God knows who will be completing the TEE lessons. The birthing and growing processes take time, but Raymond and I are having a great time. Everyone seems very involved in learning. They come from at least three different churches. Maebell Yazzie, who with her husband Wilford first invited us, has said to me at least three times now, "I really like this study. I can hardly put it down. It's really helping us!" God is at work as always!

## Snowballing

*Susie Gilmore, Venezuela*

One Sunday morning Soleded Moreno came to church for the first time as a result of our bookstore ministry. After attending for a few weeks, Soleded invited her friend Eunice de Brito, a guidance counselor and mother of six grown children, to join her church. Eunice, in turn, has brought four of her six children and her future daughter-in-law. Last Sunday Eunice's husband, a medical doctor, came to the church with her for the first time.

Soleded also invited Julianna, an elderly grandmother, rich in experience and still full of life. She in turn has brought 10 different friends and family members to our services at different times. That's effectiveness in spreading the gospel!

One of the things that makes this new work so exciting here in Montalban, Venezuela, is that Soleded's story is true not only in her life, but in the life of many others. They are taking their newfound faith in Christ seriously and have the desire to share it with their family, friends, neighbors, companions at work, and . . .

It is a humbling and fulfilling experience to be a part of this arm of God's kingdom.

## Islam, cont.

To make sense of such large numbers I will use an illustration a friend suggested to me. If you take one penny for each Muslim in the world and lay those pennies side by side in a line, that line would stretch from the front door of a house in Philadelphia, across the Atlantic and Mediterranean oceans, through most of Asia and stop 9,671 miles later, in the middle of the Gobi Desert, about 180 miles from Peking.

Now, if you use one penny for each missionary working with those Muslims, the line would stop at the end of the driveway, 51 feet from the

life. Let us go where the enemy can be found. The Holy Spirit can use us, as we are yielded to him, to meet the needs of our Muslim brothers and sisters.

### Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Donald McCurry, "Why Muslims Are So Militant," *Christianity Today*, March 21, 1980, pages 24-27.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Marilyn Achiron, "The Debate Over Islamic Law," *Newsweek*, April 8, 1985, page 27.

<sup>4</sup>Kerry Lovering, "Islam on the March," *Africa Now*, June 1979, page 8.

<sup>5</sup>David B. Barrett, ed., *The World Christian Encyclopedia*, Global Tab 4.

<sup>6</sup>The Glen Eyrie Report: Muslim Evangelization, *Lausanne Occasional Papers*, page 4.

<sup>7</sup>Bryan Bishop, "The Muslim World," *World Christian*, July/August 1984, page 18.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Barrett.

<sup>10</sup>Lovering, page 3.

<sup>11</sup>David Bamble, "Wolof," *Muslim Peoples* (Two volumes), 1984, pages 858-59.

<sup>12</sup>George Thomas Kurian, "Senegal," *Encyclopedia of the Third World*, 1982, Vol. III, page 1543.

<sup>13</sup>Susan McDonald, "Islam on the March," *West Africa*, August 6, 1984, page 1569.

<sup>14</sup>Phil Parshall, "Applied Spirituality in Ministry Among Muslims," *Missiology*, October 1983, pages 446-47.

# Church News

## Allegheny Conference

The **Air Hill** congregation, Chambersburg, Pa., held spiritual renewal services with the **Wes McCallum** family, April 13-16 • The **Big Valley** church also held revival services from April 3-13 with evangelist **Marvin O. Potteiger** of **Elliottsburg, Pa.** The two congregations also participated in a 50th wedding anniversary celebration for **Rev. Barton and Mildred Starr** on April 13. • **Ray Sider**, representing the **Timber Bay Children's Home**, presented a challenging message to the **Cedar Heights** congregation, Mill Hall, Pa., February 25.

March was family emphasis month at the **Clarence Center, N.Y.**, church. **Will Schrock**, lay minister, gave special five-minute talks on the family each Sunday morning. The congregation also hosted **Rev. Eugene Heidler** for special meetings. • In March and April, the **Dillsburg, Pa.**, congregation viewed the **Dobson** film series, "Turn Your Heart Toward Home." • On March 30, 20 persons identified with Jesus through baptism and church membership at the **Fairview Avenue** congregation, **Waynesboro, Pa.**

**Dr. John Z. Martin**, ordained pastor and past president of **Upland College**, spoke in Holy Week services at the **Five Forks** congregation, **Waynesboro, Pa.** • March 9 was **Spiritual Life Day** at the **Grantham, Pa.**, church. **Roy Sider** preached and there were afternoon activities for youth, children, and adults. **Dr. and Mrs. Robert Ives** have accepted the invitation of the church to serve another term as senior pastoral couple.

The **Martinsburg, Pa.**, congregation hosted **The Jubilators** in an evening service in March. • **Rev. Luke Keefer, Sr.** was guest speaker for Holy Week services at the **Messiah Village** church, **Mechanicsburg, Pa.** • Recently the **Montgomery** congregation, **Upton, Pa.**, enjoyed speakers **Howard and Lois Kipe**, former staff members at **Timber Bay Children's Home, Sask.**, and **Edith Miller**, missionary to Africa. On March 2, **The Living Miracles**, a choir of young people, presented a program under the direction of **Greg Garman**.

The **Morning Hour Chapel** choir, **East Berlin, Pa.**, presented "Alleluia! A Praise Gathering for Believers" on Palm Sunday evening. • At the **Mt. Rock** church, **Shippensburg, Pa.**, a 30-voice choir presented the sixth annual "Living Cross" program March 28, 29, 30. Many have expressed renewed commitment after previous presentations. The congregation has also approved plans to open a day care center next fall. One hundred seventy books were read by the **Mt. Rock** congregation during a six-week library book reading contest recently.

**Rev. John Stoner**, executive secretary of **MCC U.S. Peace Section** and member of the **Lancaster, Pa.**, congregation, spoke recently to the **New Guilford** church, **Chambersburg, Pa.** • Beginning in March, the morning worship services of the **Van Lear** congregation, **Williamsport, Md.**, are being broadcast over radio station **WYII, Williamsport.** • The **West Shore** congregation, **Enola, Pa.**, had the privilege of hearing **Hyam and Diane Cohen**, representing **Jews for Jesus**, on March 9. They explained **Jewish Passover** items and related them to the redemption story.

## Atlantic Conference

The **Cross Roads** congregation, **Mt. Joy, Pa.**, planned a retreat for April 18-20 at **Kenbrook** on the theme "The Family of God." • Pastors **Dale Allison** and **Verle Brubaker** of the **Elizabethtown, Pa.**, congregation attended a church growth seminar recently in **Marion, Ind.** • The **Lancaster, Pa.**, congregation recently planned an all-church roller skating party. On March 16 in the evening, they also had a program, "Responses to Suffering in Central America: A Discussion," to observe March 16-23 as national **Central America Week.**

The **Manheim, Pa.**, congregation church board members and spouses held a one-day retreat on March 1 to project growth goals and long-range plans. Fifteen small groups of the church also met until Easter to study such topics as marriage enrichment, diet, and the Bible. • The preschool and primary departments of the **Manor** church, **Mountville, Pa.**, held their Easter parties on March 21. The junior highs enjoyed an ice skating party on March 22. • The **Palmyra, Pa.**, congregation enjoyed the music ministry of **Randy and Dawn Marks** on Palm Sunday evening. Both are public school music teachers who have ministered in churches for 14 years. On March 9 the youth presented the play "The First Church of Pete's Garage."

The ladies of the **Pequea** church, **Lancaster, Pa.**, held a "Project Night" in March to sew and contribute items for the **Navajo Mission, N.M.** • The **Silverdale, Pa.**, congregation recently hosted **Lester Zook** who discussed the work of the **Long Range Planning Committee** of the **Atlantic Conference.** Pastor **King** brought a short message, "Why Plant New Churches?" • **Ken Letner** preached recently in a morning service at the **Skyline View** church, **Harrisburg, Pa.**, and led a teachers' workshop in the afternoon.

**Al Long**, who teaches **New Testament** at **Messiah College**, recently presented a study of the book of **James** to the **Speedwell Heights** congregation, **Lititz, Pa.**, in four days of special meetings. They also joined the **Masterstown** congregation for a service on Palm Sunday. • The senior choir of the **Souderton, Pa.**, congregation sang excerpts from **Peterson's cantata, "Hallelujah for the Cross,"** in the morning worship on Easter Sunday.

## Canadian Conference

The **Bridlewood** congregation, **Agincourt, Ont.**, held a fellowship meal March 23 in appreciation of retiring deacon **Elaine Cassel.** • The ladies of the **Cheapside** congregation, **Nanticoke, Ont.**, recently hosted an all-day quilting bee. • The **Cross Roads Memorial** church, **Guelph, Ont.**, recently sponsored a "bean bin collection" with all receipts of canned beans donated to the **House of Friendship, Kitchener, Ont.** • The **Ladies Coffee Hour** at the **Falls View** church, **Niagara Falls, Ont.**, recently featured **Linda Heise**, former worker with **MCC** in **India.**

Friends and relatives met at an open house February 22 in the **Fordwick** church to honor **John and Coletta (Beswitherick) Reichard** who were married 60 years on February 26. They live



on the farm purchased by his grandfather (the late **Bishop John Reichard**) in 1875. **John** is the son of the late elder **Jacob Reichard.** He served as deacon from 1931 to 1972. **John and Coletta** have three children.

The **Heise Hill** congregation, **Gormley, Ont.**, enjoyed an evening concert by the **Abbott** family in early March. • **Henry A. Ginder** spoke in the morning worship recently at the **Houghton** church, **Langton, Ont.** • **Niagara Christian College** held an open house on March 31 for those interested in attending classes, viewing displays, and talking with faculty and students. • **Don McNiven**, president of **Niagara Christian College**, ministered in music in the morning service, March 2, at the **Ridgemount** church, **Hamilton, Ont.** • The **Rosebank** congregation, **Petersburg, Ont.**, sponsored a music talent night in March.

**Angela Ruegg**, 16, of the **Sherkston, Ont.**, congregation, has been accepted to serve this summer on a work/witness team in **Paraguay**, sponsored by **Missions Outreach, Inc.** She will serve on a team of 20 young people and 4 adults. • The **Wainfleet, Ont.**, church observed spiritual renewal week March 2-9 with **Rev. John R. Sider**, speaker.

## Central Conference

The **Amherst Community** congregation, **Massillon, Ohio**, pledged over \$10,000 in their recent "Give Me This Mountain" building fund campaign. **Dale Shaw** spoke on "A Vision to Live By" during the **Palm Sunday** morning service. • The **Beulah Chapel** Sunday school department recently initiated a "66% in '86" campaign to raise Sunday school attendance from an average of 59 to 100. The congregation held a reception of appreciation for **Rev. Baublitz** and family. **Rev. Terry Priest** was installed April 9 as the new pastor by **Bishop Alderfer.**

The **Bloomington** congregation, **Columbia, Ky.**, recently installed **Dennis Roberts** as deacon. The **Women's Missionary Prayer Service** held an organizational and long-range planning meeting in early March. • The **Christian Union** congregation, **Garrett, Ind.**, recently viewed the **World Missionary Press** film, "Escape from Darkness," which shows the impact **God's Word** is having on people in **Uganda, the Philippines, and mainland China.** The church also hosted the **Michiana Ladies Retreat** with speaker **Joy Gerig** on the theme "Learning from the Master."

The **Highland** congregation, **West Milton, Ohio**, enjoyed the choral presentation "No Other Lamb" on **Palm Sunday.** • The youth and sponsors of the **Nappanee, Ind.**, congregation hosted an Easter breakfast with over 60 in attendance. Proceeds go to their upcoming trip to "Creation '86" in **Pennsylvania** in June. • **Donald Shafer** brought the morning message on March 2 at the **Pleasant Hill, Ohio**, church. On March 16, **Joseph Miller** and **Bert Hensel** shared slides and information about their medical mission trip to the **Dominican Republic.**

On March 9 the **Rolling Acres** church, **McMinnville, Tenn.**, heard from **Ken Gibson** of **Spring-**

field, Ohio, who set the direction for Church Growth Awareness Week. Thirty-eight people had perfect Sunday school attendance in February. • A fellowship meal at the **Sippo Valley** church, Massillon, Ohio, followed the March 16 service at which Fred and Grace Holland were guests. The congregation also hosted a 7:00 a.m. Easter sunrise service and breakfast. • The **Union Grove** congregation, New Paris, Ind., participated in community Good Friday services. County jail chaplain Mike Kupke was the speaker.

## Midwest Conference

The **Cedar Hill** Texas, pastor, Robert Douglass, and Garland Whittington, pastor of the **Mountain View** congregation, Colorado Springs, Colo., attended the Board for Ministry and Doctrine core course in Saskatoon, March 31-April 5. • The **Palm Valley** congregation, Pharr, Texas, had a special outreach series with evening services and visitation teams. Pastor Ron Bowell of **Zion** Abilene, Ks., and Pastor Robert Bushnell of **Wichita**, Ks., with a group of lay people, helped with this five-day project.

The **Red Starr** congregation, Leedy, Okla., hosted Bishop Charlie Byers with a visual presentation about the Gospel Tide Hour March 5. Dr. Henry Ginder spoke at spiritual growth meetings March 9-14. • Several **Rosebank**, Ks., members and Pastor Dourte participated in rehearsal with the 300-plus Kansas Mennonite Men's Chorus to present a spring concert at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Ks., on April 20. The Rosebank congregation received first place recognition for their banner—one of seven from the Midwest churches at the regional conference.

The **Zion** congregation, Abilene, Ks., celebrated Lent with a Lenten soup luncheon each Sunday noon.

## Pacific Conference

Bishop Wenger and Kevin Ryan planned a Charlie Byers Open Golf Tournament in Chino, Calif., on March 20. • Life Line Ministries of San Francisco is planning to build a 5,000 square foot, three-story apartment complex as a shelter for battered and abused women and their children. The shelter will open with 10 beds with the possibility of expanding to 20.

Lloyd and Edna Hostetter were installed March 23 as pastoral couple at the **Labish**, Ore., church. • The **Riverside**, Calif., congregation has been sponsoring monthly children's ballgames in an attempt to build relationships and encourage children and their families to come to know Christ and the Riverside people.

The Golden Age Fellowship of the **Upland**, Calif., church recently featured a potluck dinner and "A Visit to Our African Missions" led by Frances Harmon and Ethel Climenhaga. On March 23 in the evening, Rev. Charlie Byers spoke to the congregation. The Chancel Choir presented "Lamb of Glory" on Easter Sunday.

# For the Record

## Births

**Balmer:** Kimberly Noel, December 2; Dave and Lynn Balmer, Manheim congregation, Pa.

**Beaston:** Shannon Marie, February 19; Rich-

ard and Terri Beaston, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Dourte:** Reuben Nathaniel, September 14; Nevin and Doneen Dourte, Manheim congregation, Pa.

**Eisele:** Jutta Gene, March 3; Randy and Martha Eisele, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Good:** Monica Rene, February 17; Tony and Sue Good, Manheim congregation, Pa.

**Herr:** Alexis Mae, February 14; Stephen and Robin (Shopf) Herr, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Johnson:** Jordan Michael, March 7; Steve and Stacey Johnson, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Kentie:** David Daniel, March 11; Bob and Irma Kentie, Sherston congregation, Ont.

**Kopp:** Nathaniel David, March 7; David and Anna Lee Kopp, Antrim congregation, Pa.

**Kratz:** Laura Jane, February 21; Harold and Jane Kratz, Souderton congregation, Pa.

**Leach:** Donna Marie, February 27; Steve and Debbie Leach, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Mast:** Brittney Janelle, February 14; Ron and Waneta Mast, Cedar Grove congregation, Pa.

**Meyers:** Ashley Noelle, February 28; Allen and Kendra Meyers, Antrim congregation, Pa.

**Nafziger:** Julie Marie and Janice Rene, March 10; Bob and Evelyn Nafziger, Manor congregation, Pa.

**Reiff:** Janna Elizabeth, December 17; Dennis and Anna Mary (Byers) Reiff, Lansdale, Pa.

**Sellers:** Brett Allen, February 13; Chris and Beverly Sellers, Antrim congregation, Pa.

**Shenk:** Amy Lynn, October 24; Ron and Sandy Shenk, Manheim congregation, Pa.

**Sider:** Victoria Lynn, February 21; Craig and Laura (Day) Sider, Upper Oaks congregation, Ont.

## Weddings

**Bott-Drury:** Karen Elizabeth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George Drury of Orangeville, Ont., and R. Stephen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Bott, Gorrie, Ont., February 15 at the Fordwich Brethren in Christ Church with Pastor Jesse Bawel officiating.

**Clouser-Stoner:** Carolyn Sue, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Edgar Stoner, Fayetteville, Pa., and James Kevin, son of Clyde Clouser, Chambersburg, Pa., and Julia Tabor, Florida, February 15 at the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Maurice Bender officiating.

**Colangelo-Hock:** Beth Renee, daughter of Elwyn and Meredyth Hock, Nappanee, Ind., and Stephen Anthony, son of Nicola and Noma Colangelo, Winthrop Harbor, Ill., March 1 in the Nappanee Missionary Church with Rev. Dave Engbrecht and Rev. Jay Sisco officiating.

**Fritz-Musser:** Cindy R., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale Musser, Chambersburg, Pa., and Roger L., son of Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Fritz, Chambersburg, March 15 in the Chambersburg Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Roger Witter officiating.

**Gorham-Fernberg:** Nadine, daughter of Harry and Evelyn Fernberg, Salona, Pa., and James, son of Mary Yocum, Erie, Pa., and Raymond and Rosemarie A. Gorham, Lock Haven, Pa., March 22 at the Cedar Heights Brethren in Christ Church with Pastor John L. Bundy officiating.

**Hess-Caufman:** Jean Louise, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Caufman, Fayetteville, Pa., and Dean Lance, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harold Hess, Mercersburg, Pa., October 27 in the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Maurice Bender and Rev. Lorne Lichty officiating.

**Robinson-Keller:** Michelle Eileen, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Keller, Chambersburg, Pa., and Delon Alfred, son of Mr. and Mrs. Delon Robinson, Sr., Greencastle, Pa., November 30 in the New Guilford Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Terry Hoke officiating.

**Ruppe-Drusen:** Christine Anne, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Drusen, Englewood, Ohio, and Steven, son of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Ruppe, Greenville, Ohio, February 7 in the Fairview (Ohio) Brethren in Christ Church.

**Sellers-Kershner:** Teresa, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Kershner, Greencastle, Pa., and Troy, son of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Sellers, February 8 in the Antrim Brethren in Christ Church with Pastor Wilbur W. Benner officiating.

## Obituaries

**Asper:** Sarah Asper, born November 23, 1903, in Harrisburg, Pa., died March 1, 1986, in Upland, Calif. Her husband preceded her in death six weeks before. Sarah was a member of the Upland Brethren in Christ Church. She is survived by a son, Kenneth, of Crescent City, Calif., and two daughters, Ruth Gullo of Duarte, Calif., and Ardys Lundeed of West Covina, Calif. Services were conducted by Pastor John Snook and Rev. Alvin C. Burkholder. Entombment was in Bellevue Mausoleum.

**Beets:** Betty Beets of Blue Ash, Ohio, born March 13, 1925, died March 3, 1986. Mrs. Beets was survived by her mother, Lida Beets. The funeral was held at Stawser Funeral Home with Pastor Paul Hess of the Western Hills Brethren in Christ delivering the message. Interment was at Arlington Cemetery in Mt. Healthy, Ohio.

**Cober:** Earl Howard Cober, born December 21, 1908, died in Ontario, Canada, February 23, 1986, in his 78th year. On December 18, 1935, he married Viola May Winger, eldest daughter of the late Bishop Alvin Winger of Gormley, Ont. She preceded him in death February 8, 1957. To this union were born seven children: Ellen (Mrs. Bruce Kennedy), Peter, Clayton, Glen, Lloyd, Ruth (Mrs. Bruce Hoover) and Phyllis (Mrs. Doug Barfoot). On July 15, 1961, he married L. Anne Wyld. To this union were born three children; Jim and Arlene are at home, Roy died in 1981. Earl had 18 grandchildren and 5 great-grandchildren. One brother Albert predeceased him. He is survived by two brothers and two sisters: Harvey, Harold, Rhoda Forsyth, and Luella Klink. Funeral services were conducted by Rev. Kenneth Smith and Rev. Jesse Bawel. Spring interment will be in Maple Grove Cemetery.

**Goodling:** Rev. Paul W. Goodling, born July 14, 1886, died December 17 at the age of 99. He is survived by a daughter, Edna Garman; two sons, Clyde and Reuben; and a sister, Emma Kauffman. For 55 years he was a minister of the Brethren in Christ Church, serving the longest period of time at the Cedar Grove Church, Mifflintown, Pa. Services were conducted at the Garman Funeral Home, Mount Pleasant Mills, Pa., with Rev. Paul E. Kirkman officiating. Burial was in the St. Thomas Cemetery, Liverpool, Pa.

*continued on next page*

*Evangelical Visitor*

# A Congregational Life Festival

by Ruth Anderson

Celebration was the focus of the Congregational Life Festival in the Pacific Conference on February 16, 1986. Sharing in the festival were the members and spouses of the General Conference Board for Congregational Life, which had a board meeting in the area that weekend.

Ken Letner, executive director of the board welcomed the 300 people from the Pacific Regional Conference who gathered together in the sanctuary of the Upland Brethren in Christ Church. In addition to the gathering of adults and youth, the Upland Christian education staff provided a significant program of ministry for over 40 children.

Dr. Ron Miller led the congregation in heartwarming singing, introducing some new hymns, and singing together some well loved favorites.

The Chino Brethren in Christ Church sanctuary choir set the tone for celebration with the musical number, "Ye Shall Go Out With Joy." The choir was directed by Dr. Ron Miller with Sandra Musser at the piano.

A short time of brainstorming in response to some pertinent questions presented by the Board for Congregational Life gave the audience the opportunity to evaluate the life and ministry of their own local church. The questions stimulating this discussion time were:

1). What aspects of your congregational programming do you value? What aspects need strengthening?

2). What issues or problems do you see not being addressed or which need further attention in the life of your local congregation or our brotherhood?

Many new ideas were born as possibilities for further ministry in local churches.

Pastor Rod and Gwen White, leading an innovative new ministry in Riverside, Calif., shared of their excitement in their growing church. Practicing "community" in the true biblical sense of Acts 2, this pastoral team is reaching out to the needs of hurting people in their city.

Delighting the congregation with their versatility, the Upland Brethren in Christ



Church men's chorus presented the rousing number, "I'm On the Battlefield For My Lord," then quieting to the inspiring "Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing." The chorus was directed by Dr. Don Grant.

Pastor Kevin Longenecker introduced three members of the Open Bible Community Church in Sunnymead, California. They spoke of reaching out to the people in their community through the vital ministries of Pioneer Girls and Boy's Brigade Clubs. Gail Ryan and Ellen Robley, of the Chino Hills Community Church, shared the classical duet, "Bless Thou the Lord" by Handel.

After introducing the members and spouses of the General Conference Board for Congregational Life in a formal manner, Frank Fimiano introduced several of them using the concept of psychodrama. Owen Alderfer played the part of a tremulous church board

member who wanted change, but did not want to speak out; Don McNiven had become one of the youth group; Sandi Fretz was comfortable in her own little pew saying, "This is the way we've always done it"; and John Reitz was a shy church member. Diane Fimiano played the part of an extremely vocal feminist, advocating a stronger role for women in the church. The psychodrama effectively displayed attitudes that can stifle congregational life and church growth, while giving us a glimpse of the feelings of loneliness, shyness, and sensitivity "behind the person."

Closing with a time of fellowship and refreshments, the first-ever Festival of Congregational Life was a celebration of praise of the Lord.

*Ruth Anderson is the wife of Herb Anderson, pastor of the Chino Brethren in Christ Church.*

## FOR THE RECORD...

**Hutchinson:** William J. Hutchinson, 46, of Locust Grove Retirement Village, Mifflin, Pa., died March 18 at Lewistown Hospital. Born June 15, 1939, he was a son of the late William and Florence Reynolds Hutchinson. Surviving are three brothers: Merle, Paul, and Charles; three sisters: Meda Nipple, Janet Beasom, and Linda Myers. Services were held at the Cedar Grove Brethren in Christ Church with Rev. Eugene Heidler officiating. Interment was in the Cedar Grove Cemetery.

**McGaha:** Feyline McGaha, Park Hills, Ky., born February 8, 1911, died March 9, 1986. She is survived by her husband, Loren McGaha. Funeral services were held in Columbia, Ky., on March 11 with Rev. Bluford Davis, Rev. Elam Dohner, and Rev. Paul Hess officiating. Memorial services were held March 16 at Western Hills Brethren in Christ Church. The message was delivered by Rev. Paul Hess. Interment was at Haven Hill Cemetery.

**Nigh:** Alma E. Nigh, Stevensville, Ont., born June 4, 1889, died March 11, 1986 at age 96. She was the first Brethren in Christ woman to teach school in Canada. After teaching for three years, she married Joram Nigh and moved to Kindersley, Sask. There, her husband became a minister

and five children were born. Her husband predeceased her in 1942. Her youngest son was killed in 1944 (Joseph). She is survived by four children: Daniel, Jennie (Mrs. Levi Byer), Mayme Gingrich, and Abigail (Mrs. Jesse Sider); and one sister, Anna Pearl Winger. She is also survived by 13 grandchildren, 33 great-grandchildren, and 10 great-great-grandchildren. Rev. Greg Funk co-conducted the funeral service. Rev. John Zook brought the message. Her daughter Abigail gave a tribute in rhyme; her granddaughter Betty brought "Memories of Grandma"; and her grandson, Rev. Charles Byer, conducted the graveside service. Interment was in the Bertie Cemetery.

**Sherk:** Laura Candace Sherk, born June 26, 1892, died February 17, 1986. She was a homemaker and member of the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church. The daughter of the late George and Sarah Wintemute, she was predeceased by her husband, John Sherk, and a daughter, Ardys Bell. Surviving are her son, George, and his wife Gert; a brother Irvin Wintemute; and a sister, Hazel Sherk. Also surviving are six granddaughters and four great-grandchildren. Pastors John Day and Phil Keefer officiated the funeral service in the Sherkston Brethren in Christ Church. Interment was in Bertie Brethren in Christ Church Cemetery.

# A Collage of Life Change

## **Giving Totals**

*Total giving in Canada and the U.S. in 1985 was \$14,033,473.00. That is an increase of 10.68 percent over 1984. The increase in the past five years is 52.11 percent. During the same five years, total membership in North America increased from 15,880 in 1980 to 18,223 in 1985, a growth of 14.76 percent.*

The abundant life Jesus spoke of is available to those who are a part of his Kingdom. In this "Collage of Life Change," I'd like to share with you several capsule testimonies. They are gathered from a sampling of persons who have experienced life change as a result of the ministries of the Board for Congregational Life on both General and Regional levels.

In 1978 the first "Let Youth" convention took place in French Lick, Indiana. Since then two other conventions have come and gone. In these three conventions more than 1200 youth have been touched and challenged to walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

From the most recent "Let Youth Reach" one youth writes: "My life has been enriched because of the contact I had with other youth seeking a life commitment to Christ." Another young person writes: "I realize that Jesus loves me more than I thought, and no matter what, He will continue to do so." Another, "I understand and appreciate my parents more." Hundreds more such testimonies could be shared.

The Brethren in Christ have traditionally been concerned about marriage and family life. Enjoy a few typical expressions of those who experienced enrichment in their marriages by taking part in another program supported by Cooperative Ministries. One wife comments, "It's the first time in my life I have felt worthwhile." Another couple experiencing a marriage seminar expressed desire to each other, as well as those present, to begin a joint devotional life.

Think of the area of teaching, training, and leadership development. As part of our responsibility to support local congregations in ". . . preparing God's people for work of service . . ." (Eph. 4:12), this area is of great concern to the Board for Congregational Life. More than 40 percent of the directors' time is given to direct field services. Listen to some of the dividends from their investment:

From a youth leader experiencing a training session—"What a learning experience! It helped me grow to the point that I feel I can help deal with my frustrations in youth work and maybe, just maybe, love these kids for who they are, without having to deal with my own inhibitions first."

From a Sunday school superintendent—"I feel the sharing of ideas was very helpful. It makes us all more aware and gives us more insight into particular areas of Christian development. I prospered greatly from the discussion time, and I feel I got many good ideas. I look forward to more seminars such as this one."

From a pastor—" . . . a personal word from me is that I especially enjoyed the workshop on administration. Having had no training in the area, I soak up all the input I can get."

From another youth leader—"I learned a great deal. This was a good way to start my first year in youth work."

The Board for Congregational Life is certainly offering qualitative life change experiences along with stimulating quantitative growth in the congregations. Truly this human touch element is needed in the highly technological world in which we are called to live as light and salt.

Invest in the Brethren in Christ through Cooperative Ministries—your dollar goes a long way!!

Ken Letner  
Executive Director, Board for Congregational Life

# Annual Brethren in Christ sports tourney

The action was fast and furious for the churches that fielded teams for the annual Brethren in Christ Sports Tournament at Messiah College in Grantham, PA, held this year from March 7 through March 15. Competition was held in four sports: basketball, volleyball, bowling and ping-pong.

The first weekend, players and spectators alike checked out the new Hitchcock Arena in the Sollenberger Sports Center, which was opened at Messiah last October (see photo above.)

The team from Dayton, OH captured the "A" League basketball championship, while Souderton won the "B" League and Grantham took the "C" circuit.

In volleyball, Chambersburg was "A" League champs and Antrim was "B" League champs. The bowling champions were from Clarence Center, NY, while the winning pair in ping-pong was from Manor.



Winners in the ping-pong competition were the Manor I team of Dennis Funk and Glenn Fisher.



The championship trophy for the bowling competition will be kept all-in-the-family by the Clarence Center, NY team of Lee, Dick, Ron, and Lyle Martin.



The winning "A" League basketball team, from Dayton, OH, included Pastor Chafin, Jim Harr, Gary Wells, Matthew Thomas, Greg Kerns, Fred Haney, Paul Floyd, and Henry Chafin III.



The "A" League volleyball champions, from Chambersburg, were Nancy Black, Linda Martin, Tracy Davis, Patti Reath, Lisa Rife, and Natalie Heck.

This is the month for Mother's Day. What used to be a fairly low-key celebration of motherhood has become a multi-million dollar affair. One of the results of all this hype has been to lay unrealistic expectations on mothers and their families. On the one hand, mothers can easily begin to feel that they have to live up to all those idealized images of perfect mothering. That's an impossible task for anyone. On the other hand, their families can feel pressure to show their love and appreciation in increasingly extravagant ways.

Thinking about the way the culture has tried to take over our Mother's Day celebrations reminds me of a documentary film I recently saw on advertising's image of women. While slides of dozens of print ads were shown, the speaker commented on the ideas about women that these ads promote. According to the ads, women must be young, thin, with no wrinkles, no age spots, no extra bulges, full-bodied hair, dressed in the latest fashions, and made up in perfectly applied cosmetics. How many women can measure up to such standards? Why should they have to? Women are also often shown as sex objects—either using their bodies to sell unrelated products (hardware, cars, alcohol, furniture), or

being dismembered into red lips, slender thighs, sultry eyes, or long flowing hair.

In some ads, women are shown having to compete with each other for the attention of men, and in others, they are shown in the shadow of or clinging to men rather than as equal partners with them. When women are not being told to make over their bodies to conform to some ideal image of womanhood, being used as sex objects, competing with each other, or clinging to men, they are likely being shown as dowdy and stupid housewives with a fetish for cleanliness.

As I viewed the film, I was aware of becoming angrier and angrier. I'm angry at a system which perpetuates these ideas. I'm angry at a culture and at people who judge me by how well I measure up to their artificial standards of acceptability. I'm angry at myself for succumbing to the pressure, for allowing my self-worth to be defined in part by a culture, by other people.

My anger, however, is tempered by the realization that not *all* ads portray women in demeaning and offensive ways or make assumptions about what constitutes acceptability. I also remind myself that although I don't want to be an unwitting or even a conscious pawn of the advertising industry, I don't have to

reject *everything* it promotes. I do want to look good, to dress attractively, to take care of my body. I know as well that self-esteem is often linked to how we feel about our physical appearance, and that what we look like often affects the way other people relate to us. Maybe it shouldn't be that way, but it is. Besides, I don't think that wanting to be attractive is necessarily bad or wrong. In this as in everything else in life, there needs to be balance between extremes—in this case the extreme of separating ourselves from cultural pressures or standards and the extreme of wholeheartedly buying into and becoming a slave to the system.

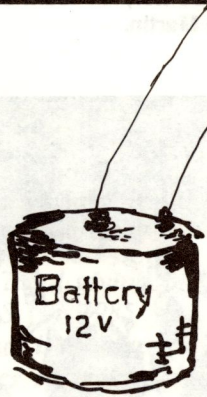
Of course, the choice of separation is one which the Brethren in Christ historically made, and one which is more than just suggested by Paul's words in Romans 12:2: "Do not conform outwardly to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly" (TEV). As we've become increasingly acculturated, however, nonconformity to the world's standards has been harder to maintain and harder to define. What does it really mean not to be conformed? Is nonconformity determined by the type of clothes we wear or don't wear, whether or not we wear make-up or jewelry, our choice of entertainment, our inner attitude, or something else? If it's our attitude, how does that affect the way we live? If God has transformed us inwardly, does that mean that we shouldn't care about our appearance?

Those questions seem a long way from Mother's Day, and yet maybe they're not so far after all. The original intent of a day set aside for mothers was to recognize and celebrate their importance to the family—a worthy goal even now, in spite of all the excesses of the culture. Certainly it's possible to participate in a cultural event which at its best does something good, without allowing ourselves to be consumed with the need to live up to all societal expectations.

Achieving that balance is hard. Sometimes it would be easier to opt out entirely, but I'm not at all sure that's appropriate either. I keep thinking of how Jesus told his disciples to be "in the world but not of it," and I wonder if the secret to balance isn't found somewhere in that idea.

Phoebe

Evangelical Visitor



**YOUTH ACTIVITIES**

**"Charged Up to Charge Out"**

at  
**General Conference**  
**July 5-10, 1986**  
**McMaster University**  
**Hamilton, Ont.**

- "Electrifying" events including: Battery Recharge (late night music and munchies), Videos, Concert, Volleyball Tournament, Pool Party, New Friendships, Challenging Speakers, and much, much more.
- Registration fee: \$25.00 (Canadian funds)
- Directors: Brian Lofthouse and Dean Seldon

Dear Paul,

It is easy to think of biblical writers as sheltered and untainted. In fact, I guess we often think of all those who speak and write for God, even our pastors, as somehow out of the reach of life's moral contaminants. Sure, we know that Jesus was "tempted in all points like we are," but it is easy to think that it happened in ways which are somehow unreal or mystical (40 days of visions and onslaughts in the wilderness and then it was over—no sexually explicit ads to face, no lottery tickets to buy, no seductive secretary or compromising boss to work with, no income tax to cheat on, no pornographic magazines on the newsstand, no Playboy channel on TV).

I find myself thinking differently about you, Paul. And that's strange, because you certainly are at the top of the list of those who spoke and wrote for God. It is just that, as a champion for godliness, your platform was the streets and cities. As a tradesman in Corinth, a traveler in the Mediterranean, a prisoner in Rome, a philosopher in Athens, you rubbed shoulders with the moral contaminants of the first century.

So I feel at liberty to write to you about something very unpleasant and troublesome. You see, our society seems to be losing all appropriate restraints regarding sex. And one of the most frightening aspects of the situation is the booming pornography business. It is hard to comprehend the size and influence of this growing menace. But if one familiar convenience store chain refuses to discontinue selling pornographic magazines because it is making an estimated \$30,000,000 annually just through those retail sales, imagine what staggering profits there must be in the production end of this plague.

I don't know how much you want to hear, Paul, but I need someone to talk to. Our society does have laws that restrict the sale of pornography to minors. So, even if we assume that only adults are buying it, the very fact that newsstand and video rental stores all across the land are so profusely stocked with this filth gives some indication of the extent of our problem. But unfortunately, adults buying this pornographic material is just the tip of the iceberg.

It is estimated that 70% of the adult

pornographic magazines sold end up in the hands of minors. It is impossible to comprehend what impact that volume of filth is having on the thoughts and actions of impressionable youth. Even though it is difficult to find substantiation that will stand up in court (against the clever lawyers of the porno industry), it seems evident to any thinking person that such influences dramatically increase the incidents of child abuse, rape, and other sexual deviation.

As if the picture isn't dark enough, I still haven't mentioned the horrors of child pornography: children abducted and brutalized, photographed to give people with warped minds some kind of sexual turn-on. It really is sick, Paul. And it is such a massive sickness, we hardly know what to do. Oh, there are some efforts, like concerned people approaching store managers with information and a friendly complaint. Some are writing letters and refusing to shop where pornography is sold. Others are joining pickets—but it all seems so feeble.

Anyone who has any awareness of the massive dimensions of this problem must be wondering, as I am, what the best response would be. I got to thinking about your two years in Corinth, Paul. I am sure the situation was radically different, separated as we are by 2,000 years. But then again, I suspect the differences are relatively insignificant. As I heard your Corinth setting described, it occurs to me that that was no Sunday school picnic either. What a city! A fast-paced commercial center with minimal traditional moorings to either Rome or Greece. A worldly place that was a temporary stop-over for sailors and Empire merchants. A heartland for materialism and hedonism. And then there was the temple of Aphrodite with its priests and priestesses, who were prostitutes accentuating sexual intercourse as part of the regular worship ritual, and participating in the night life of your city when they were not in the temple. Yes, that was *your* city, wasn't it? The place where you worked and worshipped, preached and prayed.

I wonder what you did to cope with your first century pornography, your Corinthian debauchery? I read again in

Acts 18 the story of your stay in Corinth and your two letters to the Christians there after you left. Frankly, I didn't notice any reference to pickets in front of the temple gate, or of boycotts of the markets which sold the meat that had been offered in the temple. (In fact, you didn't seem to come down against "eating meat" as hard as one might expect in light of the boycott potential.)

I could wish that Luke had written more than 19 verses about those two years in Corinth. He speaks of your trade and of your somewhat unproductive efforts with the Jews. And then in a brief comment about your ongoing ministry among the Gentiles, he opens wide the possibility of many redemptive conversations with the people who worshipped or served in the pagan temples.

Knowing the essence of your message, Paul, makes it easy to surmise that people caught in the emptiness and ugliness of that pagan religion would have listened gladly to your witness. You would affirm each human as a gem to be polished by divine forgiveness and regeneration. You would declare boldly the power of God to save and transform. You would stir up their imaginations with the possibilities of joining the *big* league and becoming workers together with God. Your approach seems to have focused on individual encounters.

For myself, I will keep on using the technique of deliberate boycott. I think it is a fitting approach to our 20th century version of human debauchery. But I believe the most effective impact will be made if we follow you in preaching the power of the gospel to those who are empty and searching. People caught in the self-destroying web of hedonistic pursuits need to know that we believe in them and that there is a personal God, who not only believes in them, but has the where-with-all to bring them to wholeness and deliverance.

Thanks, Paul, for modeling the Corinth approach. We need that!

Continuing the battle,  
Your friend, Onesimus

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Homer  
PO Box 17  
Grantham  
USA

7-90  
Kraybill  
PA  
17027



## General Conference Information

The deadline for registration is soon—June 1. The January issue of the *Evangelical Visitor* had a registration form. Ask your pastor for extra copies or make photo copies.

Those who need transportation to or from the Toronto Airport should be sure to fill out and send in FORM C to Airways Transit in Hamilton, Ontario. If you need other transportation assistance, write to John R. Sider, R.R. 5, Langton, Ont. N0E 1G0. His phone: 519-875-4573.

Each of the three forms should be sent to a different place. Send FORM A to Paul Hostetler. Send FORM B to McMaster University. A check should accompany both forms. Many people have been sending both these forms to the same place.

Registration at Conference will be on Friday evening, July 4, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., and on Saturday, July 5, from 8:00 to 12:00 noon. In order to register on time, you will need to arrive by 10:00 a.m. on Saturday. Earlier is even better.

The first Conference session will be at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday. Some very important items of business will be considered in that opening session, and all members of Conference are expected to be present.

You will be able to check into your room upon arrival. Those arriving at unusual hours should be sure McMaster University is prepared to receive them. When you move into your room, check carefully for broken or missing furnishings and report such immediately to the Assistant Convention Director, Karen Cassel.

If you do not already have General Conference programs, they should be in your hands soon.

If you find it necessary to cancel a paid reservation, full refunds will be made until July 1. No refunds after that date except in emergencies. After June 15, all cancellations should be made by phone; the mails are slow.

The ministries for children are free, but a modest charge will be made for field trips. There will be a registration charge for the youth program, for ages 12 and up. The Board for Congregational Life is providing more information on these activities in the *Evangelical Visitor* and in the printed program. The field trips are optional, but parents will need to supervise children who do not go.

All persons 18 and over, attending day sessions, should pay the registration fee. However, *all* children, men, and women should fill out and send FORM A to Paul Hostetler. The only exceptions are those attending evening sessions only.

The final Conference session is scheduled to conclude by Thursday noon, but an afternoon session may be needed.

Please fill in the registration forms carefully. The computer gets confused with question marks or unfilled blanks. *Do not miss* the blanks relating to the Sunday morning convocation in Kitchener. An exact count is needed for reserved seats and to provide transportation.

*Change:* Table rental for exhibit areas needs to be increased to \$15 per 8-foot table because of increased rental charges. Those who wish to have a cloth table covering, 54" by 120", will need to pay an additional \$4. Be sure to indicate the need of an electrical outlet. If you have already sent Paul Hostetler \$10 to reserve an exhibit table, kindly send him \$5 more at your convenience. Thank you.

Charter buses will be going to Conference from Pennsylvania, leaving on Friday morning and returning on Thursday afternoon. If your pastor does not have information, check with Paul Hostetler.

Permanent seating will be assigned for all voting members of General Conference in the Saturday afternoon session. You may wish to arrive early enough on Saturday morning to mark the seat you wish to sit in throughout the Conference.

Almost 70 banners have been entered into the banner contest and will be in the processional on Sunday afternoon as well as being on display during the Conference. Only banners which have been displayed at a regional Conference are eligible.

Refer to earlier issues of the *Evangelical Visitor* if you need more information. Or contact Paul Hostetler, Convention Director, Grantham, PA 17027. Or call (0) 717-697-2634, or (H) 717-766-2621.

**See page 30 for Information on Youth Activities at General Conference.**