

# T. E. A. C. H.

September, October, November

Provided by the General Christian Education Dept.

Volume 4 Number 2

## KEEPING THE FIRE BURNING

Dan Harrison  
C.E. Chairman

There are many obstacles and difficulties in life that threaten to douse our fire. It takes a great deal of effort to keep the fire burning brightly on the altar of our heart and life. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges we will face in living for the Lord is keeping our heart hot for Him and allowing that fire to warm those we come into contact with.

I want to share a wonderful story about the experience of a public school teacher that could just as well have been the experience of a Sunday School teacher. It may be convicting for some but I hope beyond that it will be a challenge for each of us.

Teddy Stallard didn't have much going for himself. He was dirty, he wore wrinkled clothes; his hair was never combed; he always had a deadpan expression on his face; and he never paid attention in class. When his teacher, Miss Thompson, spoke to Teddy he always answered in monosyllables. Unattractive, unmotivated, and distant, he was just plain hard to like.

Even though his teacher said she loved all her students, down inside she wasn't completely truthful. Whenever she marked Teddy's papers, she got a certain perverse pleasure out of putting Xs next to the wrong answers, and when she put the Fs at the top of the papers, she always did it with a flair. She should have known better; she had Teddy's records and she knew more about him than she wanted to admit. The record read:

*1st Grade: Teddy shows promise with his work and attitude but poor home situation.*

*2nd Grade: Teddy could do better. Mother is seriously ill.*

*He receives little help at home.*

*3rd Grade: Teddy is a good boy but too serious. He is a slow learner. His mother died last year.*

*4th Grade: Teddy is very slow, but well-behaved. His father shows no interest.*

Christmas came and the boys and girls in Miss Thompson's class brought her Christmas presents. They piled their presents on her desk and crowded around to

watch her open them. Among the presents there was one from Teddy Stallard. She was surprised that he had brought her a gift, but he had. Teddy's gift was wrapped in brown paper and was held together with Scotch tape. On the paper were written the simple words, "For Miss Thompson from Teddy." When she opened Teddy's present, out fell a gaudy rhinestone bracelet, with half the stones missing, and a bottle of cheap perfume.

The other boys and girls began to giggle and smirk over Teddy's gifts, but Miss Thompson at least had enough sense to silence them by immediately putting on the bracelet and putting some of the perfume on her wrist. Holding her wrist up for the other children to smell, she said, "Doesn't it smell lovely?" And the children, taking their cues from the teacher, readily agreed with "oohs" and "aahs."

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At the end of the day, when school was over the other children had left, Teddy lingered behind. He slowly came over to her desk and said softly, "Miss Thompson...Miss Thompson, you smell just like my mother...and her bracelet looks real pretty on you, too. I'm glad you liked my presents." When Teddy left, Miss Thompson got down on her knees and asked God to forgive her.

The next day when the children came to school, they were welcomed by a new teacher. Miss Thompson had become a different person. She was no longer just a teacher; she had become an agent of God. She was now a person committed to loving her children and doing things for them that would live on after her. She helped all the children, but especially the slow ones, and especially Teddy Stallard. By the end of the school year, Teddy showed dramatic improvement. He had caught up with most of the students and was even ahead of some.

She didn't hear from Teddy for a long time. Then one day, she received a note that read:

*Dear Miss Thompson:  
I wanted you to be the first to know. I will be  
graduating second in my class.  
Love, Teddy Stallard*

Four years later, another note came:

*Dear Miss Thompson:  
They just told me I will be graduating first in  
my class. I wanted you to be the first to know.  
The university has not been easy, but I like it.  
Love, Teddy Stallard*

And four years later:

*Dear Miss Thompson:  
As of today, I am Theodore Stallard, M.D.  
How about that? I wanted you to be the first  
to know I am getting married next month, the  
27th to be exact. I wanted you to come and  
sit where my mother would sit if she were alive.  
You are the only family I have now;  
Dad died last year.  
Love, Teddy Stallard.*

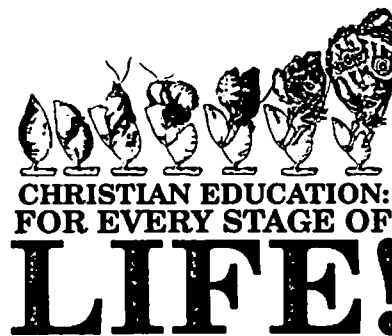
Miss Thompson went to that wedding and sat where Teddy's mother would have sat.

It takes a great deal of effort to keep your heart in shape but stories like this one help. It is tough to stay tender when the world you live in is so callused. It is a challenge to stay compassionate and concerned when the masses are so uncaring. It takes effort to keep believing in yourself and what you are doing when a nagging voice keeps saying, "Give up and quit it isn't making any difference anyway."

God has given each of us a unique place in this world. We dare not lose heart and let our fire go out; if we don't fill the gap intended for us to fill who will? If we don't open our hearts and lives to those who need it most who will? If we fail to realize the incredible package God has placed in those we minister to who will?

Don't let your fire go out and don't keep the fire to yourself. When you stop and think about how much the Lord had to overlook to love and accept you it should be easy to do the same for those He brings into your life.

- God made the world round so that each of us would be equally close to him.
- It's a funny thing about life; if you refuse to accept anything but the best, you very often get it.  
—Somerset Maugham



**THE 1996 CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CONVENTION  
IS DRAWING NEAR!**

**Equipping for Effectiveness** is the theme for this year's convention. The anticipated enrollment is 400-500 people, including pastors, teachers, children's workers, youth workers, etc.

**DATE:** Saturday, September 21, 1996

**LOCATION:** Chillicothe Brookside Church  
2215 Egypt Pike  
Chillicothe, OH 45601  
(614) 775-2884

## A CURRENT OF PRAYER

After playing stints with the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Detroit Tigers, Reds center fielder Eric Davis has come home to enjoy some of the success from the mid-80's. The power hitting outfielder was on the verge of ending his career but has found new life with his old team. Each year baseball awards a "Comeback Player of the Year" award to an athlete that has bounced back from an injury or has turned away speculation that his major league glory is fading. Eric will be one of those considered at the end of this season.

Recently, from the pile of discarded notions in the church is the old-fashioned belief that prayer changes things. It seems that new mood is beginning to sweep through our churches concerning intercession. A recent book identified nine surprising trends that are impacting the church today. At the top of the list was a strong prayer movement across our land.

Four years ago a study showed that 71% of churches breaking out of stagnation reported an increase emphasis on prayer. New approaches to praying are being reported. One such movement involves prayer walks. People are working the streets of their neighborhood claiming the communities for Christ. That's putting legs to your prayers!

God is helping churches around the world to realize that Kingdom advancement will come not by human ingenuity not of force but by dependence on his Spirit. Leonard Sweet has stated, "A prayer revival is the most powerful, least documented development within modern American religion today. "Why is it least documented? Prayer is the most obvious and least sensational activity. The sin of the church is its inability to believe something as simple as prayer can really straighten out a complex world.

The current growth in our church today can be attributed to praying people. People are praying alone, in pairs, and in groups. They are praying intentionally and spontaneously. The top priority at Dover Hill is to become a great house of prayer. There is too much at risk to discard the most valuable practice of a healthy church.

This year I witnessed some mighty manifestations through praying people. I saw over 40,000 pastors revived by prayer and fasting, church leadership united and focused when prayer was put at the top of the agenda, people resistant to the Gospel were surrendering to the Savior as they were blanketed with prayer. There are many examples each of us could recall over the past year. It is prayer that will keep the church fires burning brightly. There is no substitute for it.

Mark Otero  
Dover Hill Church

Young Boy: "I'm drawing a picture of God."

Teacher: "But you can't do that. Nobody knows what God looks like."

Boy: "They will when I get this picture done!"

Henry Boye, (c)MMI

## THAT CHURCH LOVED ME

Mike Lawson

*"You grew up in Oklahoma City! Hey, so did I." I was comparing notes with another pastor. "What church did you go to?" This is the story my pastor friend told:*

I went to the church that loved me. My parents were alcoholics. I'm not sure that they cared if I lived or died. I know they didn't care where I was or whether there was food in the house.

A neighbor sensed there was something wrong in my house. She said, "Every night at 6:30 there will be an empty chair and a place for you at our dinner table. Come any night you wish. You are part of our family.

At the same time, she invited me to attend Sunday school. I went and found Jesus Christ. Through my high school years, people from that church bought me jeans and shoes. After graduation a group of men told me that if I wanted to go to college they would pay my expenses. After college I knew God wanted me to become a pastor. Again those men offered to pay my way through seminary.

Let me sing the praises of the Christians at that church. As a child, as a teen, they were the only people who every loved me.

Mike Lawson is a Christian Education professor at Dallas Seminary, Dallas, Texas.

## KEYS TO GROWTH

- ☞ REPENTANCE
- ☞ FAITH
- ☞ BIBLE STUDY
- ☞ PRAYER
- ☞ DAILY TIME WITH GOD
- ☞ CHURCH ATTENDANCE
- ☞ OBEDIENCE
- ☞ SERVICE

## FUEL FOR THE FIRE

As I look back over my last fifteen years of ministry, many thoughts come to mind. I was fortunate to have grown up in a home with two parents who placed the love of their Savior Jesus Christ at the center of their lives. Both Dad and Mom set lifelong examples of integrity in serving Christ, raising a family and most of all, being there for anyone who needed them. These are qualities that are sorely lacking in our society today.

To say the least, life has been very challenging. In the fall of 1974 at Mt. Holy C.C.C.U., I came to know Jesus Christ as my personal Savior. I was 19 years old. My wife Penny was saved six weeks later. Little did I know, that several years down the road, God would call me to preach the gospel.

In 1978 my sister Cathy Mar Hoover, with whom I'd shared my childhood years and loved very dearly, died at 22 years of age. Until that time in my life, I had never experienced such pain and heartache as came upon me at that time. I was comforted though, with the fact that Cathy had received Jesus Christ on her death bed and that thought comforted me. Little did I know that God, through the loss of my sister, was teaching this country boy a great lesson in the art of compassion for those that have lost a loved one.

The year 1981 rolled around, and in a fall revival at Mt. Holy C.C.C.U., the face of Jesus appeared to me at 8:30 p.m. above the evangelist that was preaching. He placed a call upon my life to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Two days later, on a Monday morning, we were blessed with the birth of a beautiful baby girl, but she died at birth. The sun that had been on the horizon suddenly became very dark. A period of questioning God followed, "Why call me to preach and then take our little baby girl?" The scripture found in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are called according to his purpose" kept coming to my mind. I just couldn't see how any good was going to come out of this. After experiencing the refiner's fire for the second time in my life, the thought that my sister, whom we had lost a few years before, was carrying our little girl around in heaven helped my wife and me to have a renewed determination to carry on with God's calling. The sun had risen again. Little did I know that God, through the death of my sister and now our little baby girl was molding me to be a pastor of God's people. Malachi 3:3 tells us that the Lord is a refiner and a purifier. God knows what it takes to mold us individually into His image. I'm convinced if God allowed us to see what is coming down the road we would take matters in our own hands and leave Him out.

In 1992, my fourth year of pastoring at Ewington C.C.C.U. God blessed us with the saving of 48 new souls,

and addition to our church and a new roof. You would say, coming from a pastor's point of view everything was going great. But during that time our piano player, Cathy developed cancer. As she was being treated for this terrible disease, her prayer became, "Lord, please allow me to be around long enough to raise my two small children." Cathy's cancer spread and her prognosis for recovery was very bleak. My heart ached for her husband and their children. One night God came to me in a dream and allowed me to see a blood vessel flowing with pure clean blood that was cancer free. God assured me that this was Cathy's blood. One evening as Penny and I were visiting Cathy at the hospital, the door was opened, and we were able to share this dream with her and her husband. Over the course of the next several months, Cathy started to improve and to this date has been cancer free.

June 1994, my Dad, that great man of integrity I talked about earlier, developed cancer. The most difficult time of my life was about to come upon me and my family. Dad's greatest desire in life had been to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, which he had been doing for 42 years. He had pastored 11 churches. Cancer had stopped dad's preaching after all those years. He passed away in April 1995. I had lost not only my father, but my best friend.

The vision that I so desperately wanted to see of my dad's blood stream flowing with pure cancer free blood never materialized.

Allow me to say in closing, there are many of you that are reading this article who could write similar stories. What I have come to learn and understand is the omniscience of God Isaiah 55:8 says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." The utmost desire to see souls saved and sanctified, along with seeing those I love, whom have gone on before us truly does add Fuel for the Fire.

David P. Mar Hoover, Pastor  
Ewington C.C.C.U.

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### Jesus in a "distressing disguise"

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Mother Teresa says this is how we co-create with God to bring good out of evil:

"Loving as he loves, helping as he helps, giving as he gives, serving as he serves, rescuing as he rescues, being with him for 24 hours, touching him in his distressing disguise."

When Mother Teresa meets someone who is particularly obnoxious or hateful or mean or disturbed, she says only that he or she is Jesus in a "distressing disguise," and on that basis, she reaches out to touch that person.

-Davis Street United Methodist Church  
Burlington, NC

## PASTOR TO STAY UNTIL THE BOSS CALLS

This was a recent article in a Columbus newspaper about Raymond McDaniel, pastor of East Columbus Church of Christ in Christian Union.

Even though Raymond McDaniel is nearing 30 years in the same job at the same location, he has no plans for slowing down for at least another decade, if his boss is willing.

The minister recently celebrated 29 years of service to East Columbus Church of Christ in Christian Union, during a church-wide observance June 9.

His assignment to the former Idlewild Chapel in 1967 was McDaniel's first posting as a minister, following his ordination through the Circleville Bible College.

The Jeffersonville, Ohio native was 25 when he moved to Reynoldsburg with his wife Shirley, and assumed leadership of the little chapel. A new building, settled in the midst of farmland, was constructed in 1976.

"In those days, aside from a couple of houses, the church was the only other building in the area. We were always asked why we moved out so far," McDaniel reminisced.

"Now, you can't even see the steeple because of all the other things. We never dreamed that the city would eventually come out to meet us," he added.

The biggest change affecting the church today is the increase in mobility and its influence on families and stability, McDaniel said.

"People used to be born, get married, work and die in the same town. It's not the same anymore. Being a long time pastor, you see the transition. In other churches, the pastor may only be there for five years and become part of the transition," McDaniel observed.

According to McDaniel, establishing the trust and confidence of a congregation are two advantages of being at the same church for an extended period of time. He added that people take serious note of a long-term minister, and are comforted in knowing that the minister won't be leaving soon.

Aside from the explosive growth of Reynoldsburg and the changing patterns of society, McDaniel said one thing has remained constant for him.

"The preaching message hasn't changed," McDaniel said. "But the method changes with society, I've really had to spread my wings on thinking as an older person.

He said that young people seeking out a home church today are looking for someone who has been steady in their faith and will be honest with them.

About 60 percent of McDaniel congregation is under 40. "You can have the special programs and curriculum, but if

their basic needs are not met, then their wants change, they still won't have a sound foundation to build upon, McDaniel said.

Involvement with outreach programs has gathered community-wide recognition for McDaniel.

The clergyman performs two volunteer services a month at the Echo Manor care center, and was honored as their Volunteer of the Year in 1995. He received a Columbus Mayor's Award in 1994 for community service.

Since 1988, McDaniel has also served as a volunteer clergyman for the hospice program operated by the Franklin County Health Department.

On Sundays, visitors will find McDaniel preaching to the 85-member congregation, assisted by members of his family.

The church's musical director is daughter, Cheryl Isaacs, and the singing is led by son, Scott. Along with sister Robin Smith, the three McDaniel siblings have just completed their second professional recording of a collection of southern gospel and light contemporary music.

McDaniel hopes to set a record for tenure in the Church of Christ in Christian Union denomination. He thinks the longest a minister has served at one church is 33 years.

"My goal is 40 years. I want to be a pastor at the church for 40 years, unless I'm taken by the Rapture," McDaniel said.

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### Enough already!

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A magazine publisher installed a new program that was designed to notify magazine subscribers by mail when it was time to renew their subscriptions. One day it went sour, and before anyone realized the miscue, a farmer in Montana received 11,834 letters telling him his subscriptions had expired. The local postmaster had to hire a special truck to deliver all the letters. After the farmer had read about 200 of them, all exactly alike, he sat down and wrote out a check renewing his subscription. Attached to the check was a note which read, "I give up. My check is enclosed."

God sends expressions of love to us every day of our lives, but our continued deafness and muteness to these repeated messages keep us from giving up our self-absorbed isolation and self-defeating attitudes.

—Leonard Sweet

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## WHAT'S NEW IN THE CE RESOURCE LIBRARY

### *HOW TO BUILD A PRAYING CHURCH*

*Tom Lovorn  
Church Growth Institute*

This is a guide to help pastors implement Prayer Ministries in their churches. This resource packet will assist the pastor and church leaders in step-by-step planning and implementation of the program as it offers a calendar and practical, detailed instructions for setting up an effective prayer ministry in a local church.

### *JOSHUA'S MEN*

*Dr. Dan Reiland*

*Injoy*

This is a 12-month journey for men who want to develop strong relationships, grow as fathers, husbands and spiritual leaders. Once a month a small group of men gather for 1 year for a personal and spiritual development program. The results of that process have been incredible. Men have blossomed, their families grow closer and stronger, and the church benefit from the development of many strong spiritual leaders.