

THE ROLE OF A MINISTER-4

A Sermon—Or An Opinion?

By Rev. R. T. DUNCANSON

If you sleep regularly in the sermons in your church you're part of a vicious circle.

The duller the sermon, the more disinterested the people are; the more disinterested, the drowsier they are; the drowsier they are, the less interested the minister becomes; the less interested he is; the duller the sermons.

But back to what a sermon should be and what the minister hopes his sermons will be.

A sermon is the Word of

God. That may sound rather presumptuous but this is what a sermon should be, really, to be a sermon. Otherwise it is simply a talk, address or oration.

As a preacher, you see, he believes — and the church believes — that when he speaks from the pulpit, he speaks because God has told him to, and speaks what God wants him to. So in effect, this makes him a spokesman for God within the church.

This means that perhaps your attitude to the sermon ought to change. If, indeed, the sermon is the Word of God, and not merely the opinion of the preacher, then it is something really worth listening to more carefully and thoughtfully.

I think we ought at this point to differentiate between opinion and experience. An opinion is just that. It is an idea that is arrived at through any one of dozens of ways (reason, feeling, prejudice, and so on.)

Opinions vary very much. Much theological disagreement, and varieties of interpretation are opinion.

Experience on the other hand is extremely personal. It is verifiable only in a subjective manner.

But experience is also different in that it is something that happens to a per-

son from the outside, brought on by another person or by circumstances.

Ideally, each sermon should arise from the experience of the preacher that he has had with God. I say ideally because the enforced regimen of one or two each week for 11 months may not fit the experiential life of the man.

Some sermons are just opinion, or the bringing to life of old, long-past experience. Most of them should arise from his life-of-experience with God.

But for it to remain as simply that one man's experience, it would die. The idea of the sermon is to communicate that experience, not just so that others can know he had it, but so that others may share this same experience.

Now experience is something that you can feel and know with more than just your mind. It is something which involves your body, your mind, your emotions, your decisions. This experience with God that the preacher tries to communicate through the sermon is just such an event, one that involves the whole person. Listen to him; that's what he's trying to get across to you.

(To be continued)



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ERINDALE  
What's Going On

Visiting Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Ballantine, Flanagan cres. this month were Mr. and Mrs. J. Cowan, of London, England, and Mr. Ballantine's aunt, Mrs. A. Bright, of Lancashire. Mrs. Ballantine and her son Stephen were visiting in Vancouver for part of the month.

★ ★ ★  
Janis and Barbara Greene, daughters of Mr. and Mrs. H. Murray Greene, Credit Heights dr. left last week to spend a month at Camp Tawingo, Lake Vernon, near Huntsville. Their son Stephen will be leaving this week to spend the month of August at Camp Kifcoo, near Minden.

★ ★ ★  
Recent guests at the home of Mr. and Mrs. T. Buckley, Credit Heights dr., were Mrs. Buckley's sister-in-law, Mrs. P. Kolisnyk and her children, Beth and Peter, of Cobourg.

★ ★ ★  
Mrs. Orvel Newman and her children Debbie and Bill, Dundas Highway, spent 10 days at their cottage at Tea Lake earlier this month.

★ ★ ★  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Pearson and their children Nancy, Lisa, Stephen, and Richard, of Belfast cres. have returned from a camping trip in the States. They left the day after school closed, and travelled out through the western states to California, where they enjoyed a tour of Disneyland.

★ ★ ★  
Mr. and Mrs. F. G. Wilkinson, Winston Churchill Boulevard, had a three-week trip with their children, Stephen, Randy and Laura, to Vancouver, where they visited their married daughter Linda.

★ ★ ★  
Mr. and Mrs. G. McIntosh and their children Paul, Wendy and Derek returned last week after spending several days at Lake Simcoe.

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Suzanne McDougall, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jack McDougall, who recently moved from Fifth Line to a farm in Oakville, left this week for a trip to Europe with her grandmother, Mrs. S. H. Dellow, of Clarkson.

Residents on Misener cres. have welcomed a number of new neighbors this month; Mr. and Mrs. William Blake have come to this district from London, Ontario, and from Scarborough Mr. and Mrs. Boyd and Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson.

Mr. and Mrs. Oswald have come here from western Canada, while Mr. and Mrs. Mills formerly lived in Oakville. Others who have moved into their new homes are Mr. and Mrs. John Shand, Mr. and Mrs. William Jewett, and Mr. and Mrs. George Wolfe.

★ ★ ★  
Mr. and Mrs. Ross Hamlin and family, Fifth Line, left last week for a ten-day holiday at Lake Wanapitei, near Sudbury. While they are on vacation they will celebrate two birthdays; Brian, will be a year old, and Kevin, will be five.

★ ★ ★  
At a recent meeting held to plan the "fifth annual, Fifth Line Carnival," it was decided that The Moonstones, a musical group formed by Roddy Henderson, would be an added attraction this year. The carnival, which is scheduled to be held Wednesday, August 10, will also feature White Elephants, refreshments, and fortune-telling.

To Hold Joint Scout Meet Yearly

COOKSVILLE — A meeting of Peel County scout officials was held recently at 3240 Mavis Rd. Among those present were the presidents of the three districts involved, Mr. D. Brown North Peel, Mr. B. Fleming, Central Peel and Mr. S. Hill, South Peel.

Various aspects of scouting were discussed during the evening. They included clothing drives, a display during recreation week, the Jamboree-on-the-air, Green Acres regional leaders conference and Christmas gift co-ordination.

Plans were suggested for the celebration of 50 years of cubbing and how best the Centennial year can be recognized by the scouts in Peel County.

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