



Shadows of Eternity

Advent Study

Introduction

Read: Hebrew 11:1-16

Donald M. Hultstrand has been the writer of many commentaries for *The Journey* over the years. He has also held prominent positions in the Church, including serving as director of an international prayer organization and as a bishop. As a result, he has had an opportunity to walk with giants of the Christian faith in the course of his life. These are people not so unlike those mentioned in our reading for today. In view of these circumstances, we have asked Don Hultstrand to relate stories of these people as they exemplify the teachings of Scripture they have so clearly followed. During this Advent Season, as we prepare once again for the incarnation of Christ, this series gives us an opportunity to consider some people who incarnated Christ in their own lives.

Hultstrand put it this way: “Over the years, God in His grace has allowed people of consequence to cross my path, and, by doing so, penetrated my soul with their Christian witness. I’m including in this series short stories of a number of them, though much lengthier ones could be written. My prayer is that they may brighten your spiritual journey as they have brightened mine.

“We are calling this series ‘Shadows of Eternity’ because the eternal Christ has cast his light upon these people and left an image, a shadow that becomes a silhouette of our Lord himself.”

Each day in this series we will be looking at a passage of Scripture and then at one of Hultstrand’s stories that illustrates that passage. Our reading today is about “heroes of the faith” in Old Testament times; and that’s what these present-day people can be to us as we hear their stories of faith as told by Don Hultstrand.

R&D Take a few moments to reflect on those who have been “heroes of the faith” to you. Give the Lord thanks for them.

Prayer: May those who come behind us find us faithful.

Lesson 1

Read: 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

Millard Fuller

What a great way to begin this series! Paul uses the Macedonians as an example of generosity in order to motivate the Corinthians to do likewise.

I first became acquainted with Millard Fuller when I was rector of St. Mark’s Church in Canton, Ohio. This was in the 1960s and he was just beginning the great work that would be known as Habitat for Humanity. He came to Canton to speak at a Faith at Work Conference. His story touched me deeply as he told of the spiritual crisis and conviction that changed his life. That change, in turn, has changed the lives of an untold number of people in our nation and throughout the world.

Fuller told how, even as a young man in college, he became enamored with the hunger to make as much money as he could. After he made his first million he didn't slow down, hungering to make his next million. His young wife began to suffer from neglect as making money became more important to him than his marriage. Eventually she decided to get a divorce. This crisis touched the soul of Fuller, and he fell on his knees with the realization that he had put both God and his wife in the background. His marriage was reconciled; and, in gratitude, Fuller promised God he would use his money to help the poor.

Habitat for Humanity has built homes for the poor in every part of the world. Additionally, it has provided an inspiring outlet for Christian volunteers to give of themselves for the Lord. Just as the generosity of the Macedonians challenged the Corinthians to be generous themselves, Millard Fuller's life challenges us to meet the needs of those around us in these difficult times.

R&D What crisis or turning point in your own life, or in the life of someone you know, has led to abandoning worldliness and, instead, serving the Lord?

Prayer: Thank You, Father God, for the life and work of Millard Fuller. Grant that we may be reminded day by day to seek first Your Kingdom and righteousness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lesson 2

Read: Matthew 5:43-48

Festo Kivengere

When Jesus told his followers to love their enemies, it must have seemed an impossible task. But what better way to overcome evil with good? Festo Kivengere was one who put that teaching into practice.

Kivengere and his wife came to our home in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, shortly after their escape from Idi Amin, the dictator of Uganda. Festo was a bishop who, along with a great number of Ugandans, was persecuted simply because he was an ardent Christian. The Kivengeres' escape through the mountains was like a storyline for a motion picture. Festo had not left simply to save his own life, but to raise up help in this country for the suffering people of Uganda. The effort became known as African Enterprise.

Following supper in our home, we went to a local church, packed with people, to hear Festo. He was an anointed preacher and evangelist. In his sermon, he astounded the congregation by revealing that the title of his new book was *I Love Idi Amin*. Jesus had told Festo, through prayer, that he must love his enemies just as Jesus had done when he cried from the cross, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Therefore, Kivengere said, he had no choice but to love Amin. To this day, one of the major efforts in Africa, where killings have taken place between opposing tribes, is the promotion of forgiveness instead of bitterness.

I had first met Kivengere at an Anglican Fellowship of Prayer conference in Pittsburgh years earlier, when he was a layman studying for the ordained ministry. Because his life was so centered in Christ through prayer, he became a great servant of the Lord and a witness to the world.

R&D How have you handled situations in which people offended you or treated you cruelly?

Prayer: As Festo Kivengere carried the spirit of forgiveness, help us to remember, as he did, Your desire that we forgive others even as we have been forgiven, in Christ's name we pray.

Lesson 3

Read: Matthew 4:18-22

Samuel M. Shoemaker

In our reading for today Jesus begins his ministry by calling the first disciples and by promising that he will make them fishers of men. Few have so truly exemplified this principle in their own lives as Samuel M. Shoemaker.

Dr. Sam was recognized as one of the great preachers of his time, and he had a profound influence on me. He promoted evangelism, lay ministry, and prayer groups long before other mainline church leaders. He was instrumental in founding Faith at Word and the Pittsburgh Experiment, and was the spiritual father of the Twelve Step Program of Alcoholics Anonymous.

One occasion when I was with him exemplifies his strong ministry. He spoke at a clergy conference at Shattuck School in Minnesota. He contended that everything you preach about needs to be illustrated by personal experiences. “Don’t speak in the abstract but in the concrete. If it can’t be shown as an experience of real life, primarily your own, it will not be understood.” Then, as he spoke, everything had a real-life story attached to it. He was a learned man but used the most simple language.

On this, as on every occasion, he had brought with him lay people to give their personal testimonies about what Christ had done to change their lives. And when people would come to Shoemaker with a problem, he would say, “Let’s ask God about it,” and then he and the person would pray in expectancy for God’s guidance.

R&D What does it mean to you to speak of your faith concretely rather than in the abstract?

Prayer: Show us, Lord, how to become fishers of men by casting the bait of Christ’s life-changing love before them.

Lesson 4

Read: Mark 1:29-31

Helen Smith Shoemaker

Jesus’ healing of Peter’s mother-in-law is a perfect prelude to looking at the life of Helen Shoemaker because she fervently believed in and practiced healing prayer. Helen and Sam Shoemaker were a dynamic duo. My first exposure to Helen happened at an Anglican Fellowship of Prayer conference at Calvary Church in Pittsburgh where Sam was rector. She had known me no more than three minutes when she asked me to lead one of the small groups at the conference (and Festo Kivengere assisted me). This was typical of Helen; she would find people and immediately put them to work for the Lord. She had learned leadership from her father who had been a U.S. Senator.

Helen was one of the founders of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, a worldwide organization. She was a pioneer in prayer groups and wrote a number of excellent books on prayer. Little did I know when I first met her that I would one day succeed her as Director of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer.

I came to a renewal conference in North Carolina in great pain. While doing some repair work on the roof of our home in Illinois I slipped and fell onto the pavement from the second story level, cracking several ribs. Nonetheless, I flew to North Carolina although I could barely move without severe pain. As soon as Helen Shoemaker heard this, she clapped her hands to get the attention of several people she called her “prayer warriors” and said, “Let’s pray for Don

immediately.” They all laid hands on me and prayed. When they were through every bit of pain had left me and did not return. I had been healed by the Lord through the prayers of Helen and her prayer warriors.

R&D *What has been your experience of healing through prayer?*

Prayer: *We thank You, Father God, for the witness of Helen Shoemaker. Grant that we may live lives of constant communication with You so that we may be faithful witnesses too, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Lesson 5

Read: Luke 4:16-21

Hubert Humphrey

As our passage for today illustrates, Jesus, from the first, showed that he had a heart for the poor and those in need; and that, in reaching out to them, he was fulfilling the Father’s purpose for his ministry and life. Hubert Humphrey viewed politics as a way of serving mankind in response to God.

I was a senior in high school visiting friends in Minneapolis. We were playing catch in the back yard when a friendly face appeared over the fence and gave us a hearty greeting. It was Humphrey, who lived next door. He was then mayor of Minneapolis. Little did I know that our paths would cross many times over the years.

Humphrey, who was a devout Christian, had the gift of remembering people, not only by face but also by name. I saw more of him when, as a U.S. Senator, he came to Macalester College in St. Paul. His special interest there was to meet with my friend Walter Mondale, whom he was grooming for a political career. Humphrey always knew my name, and he had an ebullient and enthusiastic personality.

Later, when I was ordained and serving at Worthington, Minnesota, he gave me a call. Would I give the prayer at a rally for presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson the next night? I agreed. Having seen Governor Stevenson alight from a plane, I followed the motorcade to a large tent that had been set up near Lake Okabena. After I had given my prayer, the first person to thank me (and heartily) was Hubert Humphrey. He would go on to become our Vice President and, later, a candidate for the presidency.

R&D *Reflect on the fact that caring for others includes remembering their faces and names.*

Prayer: *We pray, O Lord, that You will raise up public servants who will dedicate themselves to the benefit of Your people, not for personal gain but for Your glory.*

Lesson 6

Read: Genesis 12:1-9

Chandu Ray

God spoke to Abram (later, Abraham) and said, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go the land I will show you.” As our reading for today tells us, Abram did as he was told. So did Chandu Ray.

The first time I saw Chandu Ray was at a clergy conference at Oberlin College in Ohio. He spoke calmly and simply of the extraordinary life he had led in Pakistan. Early on he had tried to

be a Hindu, but did not find God to be accessible through that religion. Then he tried to be a Muslim, but, to him, it was a religion of rules and legal transactions; and, again, he did not find God to be accessible. He then read the New Testament, but did not know what to make of it until an encounter with a young Christian missionary.

When the missionary confided to him that he was losing his sight, Chandu Ray asked him, “Why aren’t you obedient? Jesus says that if you ask anything in his name, he will do it.” The missionary then asked him if he would pray with him to be healed and Chandu Ray did so. Within a day the missionary’s eyesight had been restored and Chandu Ray became a Christian. The theme of his life became “submissive listening”...pray and obey.

In the course of time, Chandu Ray became the Bishop of Pakistan. God then asked him to translate the New Testament into the Tibetan language and deliver it to the people in the Himalayas. Although he did not know how it was to be done, he said, “Yes, Lord.” God sent him a translator and the New Testament was written in Tibetan. Single-handedly he climbed the Himalayas and, through many dangers, delivered it to the Tibetans. Years later I saw him at the Lambeth Conference in England where he received a citation from the World Bible Society for this act of submissive listening.

R&D What has been your experience of submissive listening?

Prayer: Dear Lord, keep our ears attuned that we may hear Your voice and, seeking Your way, may say “Yes” to You with a glad heart.

Lesson 7

Read: Psalm 150

Kathleen Thomerson

Our reading for today is a great psalm of praise. Music and song were an integral part of Old Testament worship, and this psalm is a hymn of praise. Kathleen Thomerson is exemplary of composers of wonderful praise music.

When I was Bishop of Springfield, an area of 32,000 miles covering the southern two-thirds of Illinois, Thomerson was one of my parishioners. She was a world-renowned concert organist and composer. One of her hymns has become such a well-known composition many people probably think that it was written generations ago though it is relatively new: “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light.”

Thomerson had been a part of that powerful ministry at Church of the Redeemer in Houston, Texas, out of which many of the songs of the renewal movement originated. Then she moved to Illinois and became active in the churches across the river from St. Louis. She became an important part of my spiritual life when I became her bishop.

I had promised that prayer would be at the heart of our life together. Each month a small group of people from every corner of the diocese would gather with me at the diocesan center for prayer, and Kathleen was one of them. Her prayers reflected a person who was Spirit-led and Spirit-filled. As the great classical musicians have proved through the ages, exalted music comes from a heavenly connection. As one symphony conductor said of Mozart, “Without God there is no explanation for such music.” Kathleen Thomerson stands in that exalted line.

R&D What hymn (or hymns) has meant a great deal to you in your spiritual journey?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, as the angels sang at your coming, put a song in our hearts that we may praise you all the day long.*

Lesson 8

Read: Acts 1:6-8

Cuthbert Bardsley

“You will be my witnesses,” said the Lord. Those of us who call ourselves Christians *are* witnesses to our Lord, either good ones or bad, depending on how faithful we are in following Jesus Christ as his disciples. Cuthbert Bardsley was a great witness to the Lord; and, in the story I now recall about him, he helped many realize the extent to which many are challenged to be witnesses.

Bardsley was the Bishop of Coventry, England. His international fame centered around the manner in which he inspired the rebuilding of his cathedral following its destruction by Nazi bombs in World War II. It became a powerful symbol of reconciliation and peace. But he was also an outstanding preacher and one heard regularly on BBC radio. I had many experiences with him because he was on the board of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer during my years as executive director.

One especially memorable occasion took place in Detroit, Michigan, where we were holding one of our international conferences. On the closing day Bardsley challenged those attending the conference to go out into the streets of Detroit and invite people to come to the closing service of the conference. Many of the people attending the conference came from the swanky northern suburbs of the city and would never have thought of doing such a thing. Nevertheless, Bardsley’s power of persuasion was such that, going in twos, they decided to give it a try.

When they returned to the conference to report on their experience, there was great excitement because the Holy Spirit had given them the power to speak to total strangers about Christ and the invitation to come to worship. Not only was the service packed with new people, but those who had ventured out now knew they could do a new thing: become verbal witnesses to Christ back in their own neighborhoods.

R&D What holds people back from becoming involved in personal witnessing to the power and presence of God in their lives? What can be done about that?

Prayer: *Grant, O Lord, that we may not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified and risen, and that we may boldly proclaim him as we are moved by the Spirit.*

Lesson 9

Read: Luke 18:9-14

Princess Ileana of Romania

Our reading for today is a parable of contrasts. The Pharisee celebrates himself before God while the tax collector humbly begs for mercy. One would think that we could more likely compare the royal Princess Ileana of Romania with the Pharisee; but, in fact, she taught me about the prayer of the tax collector.

Ileana was the daughter of King Carol of Romania and the great-granddaughter of Queen Victoria of England. I met her during her later years when she was a Romanian Orthodox abbess living in the United States. The place was “Burnside,” the Maryland home of Sam and Helen

Shoemaker. Over the fireplace was a yoke of an ox to remind us that we are to take up Christ's yoke for his yoke is easy and his burden is light, allowing us to find rest for our souls (Matthew 11:28-30).

As the mother superior of a religious order Ileana was sitting with me wearing her habit. Under the circumstances, it is no coincidence that we were talking about prayer. She asked me, "Have you done the prayer of breath?" I didn't know what she meant, so she described to me what is called the "Jesus Prayer." With the intake of your breath you pray, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God." With the output of your breath, you pray, "Have mercy on me a sinner." You say it over and over again until Jesus becomes a part of your every breath. The word *pneuma* has special meaning in the Greek language. It can be translated as "breath," "life," or "spirit." The Holy Spirit is the *pneuma hagion*.

From then on this became a part of my prayer life. Sometimes I simply say "Jesus" with the intake of my breath and with the output of my breath I say whatever does not belong to him: fear, doubt, sin, anxiety, problems. Finally, it is just "Jesus" that is part of your every breath. He promised to be with us always, and this is one way in which many have found it helpful to remain conscious of his presence.

R&D *What prayer methods, or other ways, do you rely upon to remind yourself of Jesus' presence with you?*

Prayer: *Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.*

Lesson 10

Read: Colossians 1:1-14

Robert Runcie

These opening verses of Paul's Letter to the Colossians are a glorious prayer of thanksgiving and faith in those to whom it was addressed. Robert Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was a man of prayer and was essential to the adoption of what became known as the Lambeth Call to Prayer. Here is how it happened.

Runcie was presiding over a worldwide gathering of Anglican bishops that happens once every ten years. It is called the Lambeth Conference and the year was 1998. Many resolutions come before the conference to guide the Church through the next ten years. One of them was the Lambeth Call to Prayer that I had submitted. Two weeks went by without the resolution coming up. With one day to go before the conference ended, I thought it a shame if we adjourned without saying anything about prayer.

I went to the agenda committee late in the day and they said they would bring this concern before Archbishop Runcie that night. His response was, "Of course we must do this. It is terribly important." The next day the resolution appeared on the desks of all of the bishops and was greeted with happy smiles and conversation. However, as the day wore on and the archbishop announced that it was time to adjourn, the Call to Prayer had not been brought up.

It was then that bishops from all over the world began rushing up to the archbishop, waving the resolution in his face. He called for order and said, "What is this? A riot over prayer! I haven't forgotten it. It is so important that I am bringing it up tomorrow when I preach at the closing service in Canterbury Cathedral." And so the next morning in the middle of his sermon he called for a vote on it. After the service, he thanked me for my part in the matter; and, on my retirement as a bishop, he wrote me a letter in recollection of it.

R&D *How important is the “call to prayer” in your own life?*

Prayer: *(From the Lambeth Call to Prayer) Grant, O Lord, that prayer groups, congregations, and individuals from around the world may re-dedicate themselves to the work of prayer and that the Church’s leaders may call all members to invoke the Lord to reveal His will for the Church and empower us for His holy mission, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Lesson 11

Read: Acts 2:42-47

Ann B. Davis

The infant church was composed of people who lived in community. They devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayers. They shared their possessions with one another as well. Although it is hoped that all Christians live by these same principles today, there are few whose community life is similar to those early Christians. But Ann B. Davis, the popular actress of “The Brady Bunch” and other shows, is one who lives in this type of community.

When I met Ann, she was living with Bill and Barbara Frey in Denver, Frey being the Bishop of Colorado at the time. As I sat with her and her dog as she was knitting, we talked about the Frey household of which she had become a permanent part. Several others were included in the community, each person taking turns at cooking, shopping, cleaning, and leading prayer and Bible study.

From time to time, Ann would leave to do television work to bring financial support back to the family. She could have lived a typical Hollywood life, but she found her true home in Christian fellowship.

When I became Bishop of Springfield, I invited her to come speak at a conference of our women held at a church in Alton, Illinois. What a wonderful sight this was! The church was packed. Young people were let out of school to be there to see Alice of “The Brady Bunch.” Ann spoke with humor and directness about her conversion and daily life with Jesus. I thank God for the life and witness of Ann B. Davis.

R&D *To what extent is your congregation a community of people living closely together in Christian fellowship? To what extent is your family such a community?*

Prayer: *Thanks be to You, O Lord, for the fellowship of the Holy Spirit where You may constantly be accessible to us and fill us with Your life.*

Lesson 12

Read: Acts 4:32-37

Harvey Firestone, Jr.

Similar to our last reading, this section of Acts tells of the generosity of the early Christian fellowship as sacrifices were made to meet the needs of the people. Barnabas was hardly in the same financial bracket as Harvey Firestone, Jr., but generosity by the wealthy is generosity nonetheless.

When I was at Bexley Hall Seminary, the divinity school of Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, I was in dire financial straits. There we were, my wife and I with two children, living in a

World War II barracks that leaked when it rained and was infested with rats. We couldn't afford a Christmas tree, so I gathered up some loose evergreen branches that had been trimmed from trees on the campus and tied them together to look like a tree. Food was scarce, but ground beef was cheap; and you could make something that tasted like apple pie using crushed cracker crumbs for the crust. On top of that, my wife was hospitalized five times.

Harvey Firestone, Jr. was moved by the Lord to inquire of the dean if there was someone at the seminary he could help. He wanted to extend aid to someone who had a good scholarship record along with practical needs. I was chosen.

At the Kenyon College graduation exercise I was called forward for Firestone to present the scholarship to me. The expenses of the next two years at the seminary were covered by this generosity. I think of the hymn "O God our help in ages past, our hope of years to come." Firestone would have liked to have known that, 40 years later, as Bishop of Springfield, I had oversight of St. John's Church in Decatur, Illinois, where he had been married.

R&D Reflect on a person of wealth who has been generous in support of your congregation or other need. Give thanks to God for this person.

Prayer: We thank You, Lord, for people like Harvey Firestone, Jr. who are moved to share what they have with those in need.

Lesson 13

Read: 1 Chronicles 15:25-29

Edward Vilella

The reading about David and the Ark of the Covenant is like a scene from a classic ballet, full of drama, music, and dancing. My experience with Edward Vilella of the New York City Ballet has connections that go far beyond my first encounter with him. Vilella was the most celebrated ballet artist of his day, famous for his athletic and masculine style of dancing. It was his faith, however, that made its greatest impact on me.

When Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated I was located in Kansas City. In response to that tragedy, huge riots broke out throughout the city. So violent and destructive were these outbreaks that martial law was declared. There was no movement or traffic in the streets, with everyone staying at home. The silence both day and night was eerie. Imagine a large city totally quiet.

When martial law was lifted, churches and organizations began to think of ways to improve race relations. The New York City Ballet was to perform in Kansas City and I was asked to come to the auditorium to offer a prayer before the performance for God's help in bringing peace and love between the races. It was Edward Vilella who had asked for this prayer to be given. After the ballet we had dinner together and he shared his faith with me around the table.

In the following weeks the churches of the area that were predominantly of one race or the other began exchanging pulpits, and I had the privilege of preaching in a large Black church. It was an experience to always be remembered, filled with the spirit of worship and the warmth of devotion to the Lord. It was especially inspiring to have the sermon punctuated with "praise the Lord" coming forth from the congregation.

R&D What place has music or art had in your life of faith or worship?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, you sang hymns before you went out to the Garden of Gethsemane and the greatest challenge of your life. Lift up our hearts that we may sing with you and join the angels in praising God.*

Lesson 14

Read: Matthew 28:16-20

E. Stanley Jones

By way of what we know as Christ's Great Commission, Jesus called all of us to go and make disciples of all nations. He expects us to do that in a great variety of ways, based on the gifts God gives us and the situations in which He places us. E. Stanley Jones was one who followed this call as a missionary to India.

A day with Jones was worth a lifetime. When I met him he was in his 80s but still full of vigor and enthusiasm. I listened in awe while he spoke of his life of service to Christ. He was ready to go back to India once again. When someone asked him how he could keep going he replied, "I'm like those signs you see along the highway that say, 'Stop only for repairs.'"

When Jones first went to India he was full of youthful optimism that he would have a successful ministry in converting people to Christ. Yet, after a year he had converted no one. He had tried so hard that he was exhausted and discouraged. It seemed time to return home as a failure. In his despondency, he was lying under a fruit tree when the Lord spoke to him: "Stanley, look at this tree; it bears fruit effortlessly." He understood the message. He must be rooted in Christ, and Christ would bring forth the fruit. There are no fruits without roots. Almost immediately his missionary work began to flourish, particularly among the Brahman caste.

Jones gave me this great concept: do not think that you can argue people into the Kingdom. Simply present Jesus Christ to them. Live the Christ-centered life and they will see Christ in you. The saints are depicted in stained glass because the light of Christ shines through them. That light certainly shined through E. Stanley Jones.

R&D *How do we become rooted and grounded in Christ?*

Prayer: *Help me, Lord Jesus, to put down deeper roots in you and to begin more and more to bring forth the fruit of the Spirit.*

Lesson 15

Read: Matthew 18:15-20

George Gallup, Jr.

This teaching about believers who sin illustrates how seriously the Early Church took the matter of confrontation with those who had gone astray. There was accountability between Christians, and Jesus outlines the specific way to deal with those situations. In our day, this type of accountability can best happen in small groups of believers who come to know one another intimately, pray for each other regularly, and both confront and support each other as necessary. And, as verse 20 notes, "Where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."

George Gallup, Jr., the well-known pollster, once did a study of growing churches. He wanted to find out what they had in common. He learned that in every growing church there were small groups for prayer and study. Within these small groups a healthy intimacy developed through which people ministered to one another in ways that the larger congregation could never do. They cared for one another's daily life with the love of Christ and in the fellowship of prayer.

When Gallup and I served together on a Christian radio and television foundation, he became acquainted with a teaching tape I had done for the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer on how to start prayer groups. He began to promote it in every church he came into touch with all over the country. In the meantime, he found the small group in his own congregation essential to his spiritual life.

Gallup went on to become a major Christian influence on many people throughout the Church and throughout the world. His name recognition opened the door for this important ministry. But it was Gallup himself and the Christ-centered life he radiated that changed lives.

R&D What has been your most significant experience in a small group?

Prayer: Remind us constantly, Dear Lord, that the Church is the fellowship of the Holy Spirit wherein we may know one another in the deepest reflections of Your loving presence.

Lesson 16

Read: John 4:7-30

Gertrude Behanna

There is definitely a parallel between the story of Jesus and the Samaritan woman, and the life of Gert Behanna. Both had had several husbands. Both had come upon troubled times; the Samaritan woman was an outcast among her own people and Gert was an alcoholic and drug addict. Jesus reached out to both of them, and each became an evangelist in her own way. You've now read about the Samaritan woman; here is Gert's story.

Behanna had lived the life of a spoiled rich girl, never knowing God. She worked her way through several marriages—one to a man who was a household name in our country—and squandered her money on luxuries. After becoming a hopeless addict, she attempted to commit suicide...and even failed in that. When she woke up in the hospital, she was moved to slide out of bed and fall on her knees where she prayed this uncertain prayer: "Sir, I don't know who you are, but if you can help this wreck of a woman, please do so." The Lord honors even simple prayers.

God immediately came into Behanna's life, and the first thing she did was to order a Bible from the bookstore. In time, she became a popular speaker before large groups of people, telling of her conversion in a winsome way. She gave her money to the poor and lived a simple and holy life.

I met her when she came to my study in Canton, Ohio. We immediately hit it off and became good friends. When I moved to Duluth, Minnesota, I asked her to come and speak at St. Paul's where I was rector. It was a weeknight, and I assumed that only a handful of the faithful would be scattered among the pews in the large church. To my amazement, the church was packed. When she spoke, the people were enthralled with her message as the Holy Spirit shined through her in a special way. When her son once said, "You always tell the same story," she replied, "So do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John."

R&D Think of a story of radical conversion from your past. Why was it so effective?

Prayer: You taught us that we should always pray, Lord Jesus, and never lose heart. It delights us to know that even the simplest prayer can be life-changing. We praise your holy name.

Lesson 17

Read: 2 Timothy 1:3-7

Marilyn Johnson

In our reading for today, Paul commends Lois and Eunice, two godly women who profoundly affected young Timothy, Paul's protégé. We know that Timothy went on to become one of the leaders of the young Christian church. Godly women have been the inspiration of generations of Christian leaders down through the centuries.

Marilyn Johnson is such a woman. When I met her she was in her Episcopal nun's habit as a member of the Community of the Transfiguration. Sister Marilyn had an interesting background. She had been a motion picture and television star. She still had the looks of a movie actress, but years before she had given up all of that to serve Christ in a vow of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Sister Marilyn came to speak at a women's meeting at St. Mark's, but while she was in town she visited a prayer group (one of many in the parish) that met in a home. She had never been in such a group before. She was so astounded by the power, love, and obvious presence of the Lord that, when she began to deliver her address, she put it aside and shared, instead, the experience she had had with the prayer group. What humility from one who lived a life of daily piety!

We kept in touch through the years. More than once I led retreats for the Community of the Transfiguration, a fellowship that would always shape my spiritual life. I became an associate of that community, and Sister Marilyn came to Illinois after I became bishop there to lead a retreat for the clergy of the diocese.

R&D Reflect on anyone you may have known who gave up a life of celebrity status to devote themselves to the Lord.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, you have taught us that if we give everything up and follow you we will have treasures in heaven. Lead us more and more into a life of complete surrender to you.

Lesson 18

Read: James 5:13-16

Emily Gardiner Neal

God wants His people to pray prayers of healing, and James tells us how to do it. Emily Gardiner Neal introduced herself to the world by writing a book entitled *A Reporter Finds God through Spiritual Healing*. As a writer for leading magazines, she was assigned to investigate the healing ministries of churches in the Pittsburgh area. She went as an unbeliever and became a believer as healings took place before her eyes.

I met Neal in Canton, Ohio. She asked me to take part in a healing service at a local church. The church was filled to capacity, and it took a long time for people to come to the altar rail for the laying on of hands. Neal had a chronic back condition that made it difficult for her to bend over to lay her hands on the people for whom she prayed. Later, she told us that the pain had almost become unbearable until we came up to support her. We looked at each other in amazement because none of us had touched her. God held her up, giving strength in her weakness.

One time she came to our house and laid hands on my wife Marj who had had a crippling condition since her youth. Marj was immediately healed. This signaled the beginning of a healing ministry at my church. People now realized that Christ was present, working the same miracles that he had done on the shores of Galilee.

Neal and I stayed in constant contact through the years; and, when she died, I conducted the burial service for her at an Episcopal convent in the Ohio area where she had been serving as a deacon. Then, as she had taught me, she had come to the ultimate healing...to be in the heavenly presence of Jesus, the divine healer.

R&D *What healing experiences (body, mind or spirit) have you had?*

Prayer: *O Holy Jesus, we come to you for complete healing for this life and the life to come, knowing that it is your desire that we should be made whole.*

Lesson 19

Read: Acts 2:17-21

David du Plessis

Peter, in quoting Joel's prophecy on Pentecost, speaks of the promised Holy Spirit. South African David du Plessis became a sort of worldwide ambassador for the Holy Spirit and was nicknamed "Mr. Pentecost." I came to know him through ecumenical gatherings such as "Key 73" and a series of spiritual renewal conferences. He had suffered persecution in South Africa but he expressed Christian love and forgiveness to his persecutors rather than bitterness. The so-called "charismatic movement" in mainline churches became very interested in his ministry. This interest was in contrast to the former attitude people had that such people were "holy rollers" and religious fanatics.

David du Plessis was highly respected for his Christian witness and intelligent teaching. When I was at St. Andrew's Church in Kansas City, I found that he was available to preach in our parish. I had learned that for a long time he had been an "Anglophile," one who admired the Anglican form of worship he found in Africa and America.

I will always remember what he said at that time: "You Anglicans have everything that is necessary to present the full Gospel of Jesus Christ. The only problem is that you have it in the deep freeze. What you need to do is to take it out of the deep freeze and put under it the fire of the Holy Spirit. When it begins cooking it will send off a delicious odor, and people will flock to eat of it." This he said in 1968. At that point, the renewal movement became a Spirit-driven force that brought life and power to many previously spiritually dead churches. That power is still among us waiting for us to be filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

R&D *How do we know that we are being led by the Holy Spirit?*

Prayer: *Come, Holy Spirit, come. Come as fire and burn. Come as the wind and cleanse. Come as the light and reveal. Convict, convert, consecrate until we are holy thine.*

Prayer: *Gladden our hearts, dear Lord, with the joyful memory of your coming among us, for all you have done for us do for us day by day.*

Lesson 20

Read: Matthew 22:15-22

Walter Mondale

Our reading for today is a good backdrop to the life of Walter Mondale. He and I were classmates at Macalester College in St. Paul, Minnesota. In fact we lived next door to one another

in Kirk Hall dormitory. Once a day at a minimum, Fritz (as everyone called him) would flop down on my bed and begin a conversation. Sometimes he talked about his own upbringing as a P.K. (preacher's kid), his father being a Methodist minister in rural Minnesota. Other times we talked about politics, campus news, or our Christian faith.

Mondale would go on to become a U.S. Senator and then Vice President during the presidency of Jimmy Carter. Party politics aside, no one ever accused Mondale of unethical behavior. His wife, another classmate of ours, was also a P.K., the daughter of a Presbyterian minister who was my Old Testament professor at the college.

When Mondale became Vice President I wrote him a congratulatory message and offered my prayers for him. I received a grateful reply. Later, when I became a bishop, I got a gracious letter from him.

Perhaps he was a rare breed of politician (as was Republican Mark Hatfield, whom I also slightly knew), one who believed that service as an elected official ought to reflect his faith and the values of the Bible. What a blessing it is to have people in government who are there to serve people rather than gain personal advantage.

R&D What does the Bible teach us about citizenship? How does government serve God?

Prayer: Lord God, we ask Your blessings on those who serve in government that they may honor You in their decisions and that their lives may be exemplary to the people they serve, we pray in Christ's name.

Lesson 21

Read: 1 Timothy 2:1-7

George Carey

Paul's prayer is for those in authority around the world so that their organizations will be responsive to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury, is one who did that in his official position, but also did it before and has done it after his years of service in that leadership capacity.

When I was on sabbatical in England years ago, Carey invited me to take part in the great Glastonbury Festival. He was Bishop of Bath and Wells in southwest England at the time. Thousands of people come to the festival to worship in the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey. They would come by foot as pilgrims from great distances and camp in the area. I was to be the celebrant at this service, but I had to inform Carey that I had not brought my vestments with me. He lent me his own cope and mitre. When we sat together at lunch, we talked about prayer. He said, "I have an idea. Next year I would like you to come over and lead a prayer conference in advance of the festival."

That event never happened because in the next year Carey had become the Archbishop of Canterbury and was no longer at Bath and Wells. There was no suspicion at the time I was there that he would be moving into such a high office of worldwide significance. In addition to his suggesting the prayer conference, he invited me to dinner with him and his wife in the castle residence. Carey was down to earth and did not have the usual aristocratic background of those usually chosen to be Archbishop of Canterbury. I discovered his love of Jesus, his life of prayer, and his zeal for evangelism and missionary work.

More recently we were together when he came to lead a mission at Christ Church, Greenville, South Carolina, where I am Bishop in Residence. The people of the area were inspired

by this man of God who, though knighted by the Queen of England, is totally humble and cares only to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

R&D When you think about people who rise to exalted positions, what characteristics do you look for in them? Why?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, we give you all glory, for you alone are the King of kings and Lord of lords. Thank you for allowing us the privilege of being children of the King.

Lesson 22

Read: Acts 4:23-31

David Wilkerson

Our reading for today is known as the “Believers’ Prayer.” It tells of that body of believers who formed the infant Christian church praying boldly for God to empower them to be His effective witnesses. All these centuries later, Dave Wilkerson was one of them.

Wilkerson was a country youth from the South who was led by the Holy Spirit to New York City to bring the good news of Jesus Christ to young people in the toughest part of the city. He had no money or financial support and so he lived and slept in his car. He went into the streets in the midst of gangs and began bringing these seemingly hardened people to Christ. It was the beginning of an amazing movement called Teen Challenge. His book about the early days of his ministry, *The Cross and the Switchblade*, became an instant bestseller.

When Wilkerson came to speak at the auditorium in Canton, Ohio, I went, along with our daughter Kathy, to hear him. With him were young people from the streets of New York who gave their witness about their transformation by the Holy Spirit. The auditorium was filled with thousands of people. Imagine how God was using this simple man to glorify Him!

After the service was over, Kathy and I went forward to see, if by chance, we could meet Wilkerson. With hundreds of people trying to do the same thing, it didn’t look very likely. But when we got there, we found him by himself. He welcomed us and we began conversing. Then, at one point, he turned to Kathy, who was still a teenager at the time, looked at her very intensely and said, “You are a musician.” (How could he have known that without being told?). “You must dedicate your talent to the glory of God.”

Kathy later became a professional pianist with the help of Laura Jane Musser and Van Cliburn. She never forgot the challenge from Wilkerson. She accepts her ability as a gift from God rather than a personal achievement. Most of her career has been in church music. To this day she goes to nursing homes to play for people, knowing that music touches their souls.

R&D What thoughts have you on how God picks unlikely people to do great things for Him?

Prayer: Lord, give us the boldness to proclaim You in a world that often seems strange and threatening to us, knowing that by the power of the Holy Spirit we can do what You call us to do.

Lesson 23

Read: 1 Timothy 3:1-13

John Maury Allin

Our reading for today lays out the Apostle Paul’s rather stringent standards for being a Christian overseer, what most of us would call a bishop. Jack Allin was an exemplary bishop. It

was under him as Presiding Bishop that I was consecrated a bishop. I had met him previously at an Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Conference. From that moment I knew him to be a man of strong faith and an eloquent preacher in the soft tones of his southern accent.

Allin never lost an opportunity to be an evangelist. Being a visiting “celebrity” in Springfield, Illinois, several reporters came to interview him in my study, which was located near the state capitol. As each reporter came, he asked them about their faith. If they professed to be Christians, he wanted to know if they were regular worshippers in their church. I’m sure the reporters had never been challenged like that before!

Our one-on-one conversations have helped me all through the years of serving as a bishop. What he taught me is that it is important to distinguish between what is essential and what is non-essential in church life. If it promotes the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is essential; if it does not, it is non-essential. His attitude was that we shouldn’t make too much of a fuss about things that are more form than substance. And we shouldn’t spend our time arguing with those who disagree with us. People’s spiritualities differ, and we should be tolerant of those who place more emphasis than we do on some things without imposing those things on others.

Allin taught me to walk a straight path with the Lord, and my ministry would be blessed by doing so. What he said was not only applicable to personal life but also the governing life of individual churches. A vestry or church council should decide what is essential for the gospel for that parish and do it. If it isn’t essential, don’t waste God’s holy time on it.

R&D Have you had experience in the governing life of a church? Was evangelism promoted? Why or why not?

Prayer: Lord of our total life, grant us the vision, courage, and willingness to see and do those things that would spread the Good News of Your Kingdom in the power of the Holy Spirit.

by Donald M. Hultstrand

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