



PAGE
MINISTRIES

4233 Edgemont Street
Vadnais Heights, MN
55127-7946

The PAGE Proclaimer

September 2003

Volume 1 Issue 1

Welcome to The *PAGE Proclaimer*!

Welcome to this first issue of *The PAGE Proclaimer*! We are excited to have you with us as we launch this, our newest venture.

The purpose of *The PAGE Proclaimer* reflects the function of PAGE Ministries. That function is to help equip the saints for making disciples of our Savior and Lord, Jesus Christ. While we hope this quarterly newsletter will accomplish that purpose among all readers, our primary focus will be on helping equipping evangelists to be more effective in leading the disciple-making efforts of their churches.

There are also many churches that have not yet identified and set apart an equipping evangelist. For these, we want to help and encourage pastors and all believers who desire to lead the way in furthering the evangelism of nonbelievers and the ongoing discipleship of believers.

So read, enjoy and respond! Yes, we would love to hear from you. We hope in future issues to include much material that comes from you: testimonies of what God is doing through your equipping ministry, helpful tips and principles that you have learned, and book reviews of profitable works with reference to making disciples of Jesus Christ. We would also like to feature pictures and ministry information of various equipping evangelists ministering in local church. So give us your feedback and information!

Inside This Issue . . .

Proclaiming All God's Excellencies	2
Equipping Evangelist?	2
The Glory of God is Our Purpose	3
The Mission of PAGE Ministries	7
Book Review: <i>Tell the Truth</i>	9
PAGE Ministries Conferences	10
Sharing in God's Kingdom Work	13

Proclaiming All God's Excellencies

"Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." With these words the heavenly beings provide an ongoing concert of praise in the presence of God (Revelation 4:8). No wonder, for the word *holy* is the one description of God that encompasses all that He is.

Holy means *set apart*. So what is it that sets God apart from all His creation? It is not just that He is omnipotent. Nor is it only that He is all-knowing. It is not that He is infinitely wise. Nor is it that He overflows with lovingkindness. God is holy because of all these things and more. He is holy because He is all that He is, and there is none other like Him.

God is holy because He is all that He is, and there is none other like Him.

There is no better word to sum up the wonder of who God is than *holy*. It is His holiness, the sum of everything He is that sets Him apart from everyone and everything else, that gives us cause and compulsion to proclaim His name to all the earth.

Equipping Evangelist?

Already you have come across the phrase "equipping evangelist" several times in this newsletter. Perhaps you are wondering what is meant by that title.

Ephesians 4:11-12 is what we have in mind when we use this term. It is our belief, based on this passage, that Jesus Christ gave to His church the gift of those who are specially enabled by Him to equip His church for effective disciple-making.

We see the Biblical role of evangelists as being two-fold: taking the gospel to unreached peoples and equipping the saints to make disciples of Jesus Christ in their own communities.

It is also our belief that Christ's gift of the evangelist is as valid and important today as ever in church history. This is in contrast to a number of respected writers and preachers who believe that the evangelist's role passed out of existence with the apostles.

Much more will be written about this subject in forthcoming publications.

Core Value #1: The Glory of God is Our Purpose



James A. Odens
President, PAGE Ministries

Note: PAGE Ministries has a set of core values that we believe are crucial for God-honoring, effective ministry. These core values will be the topics of our main article in the first seven issues of *The PAGE Proclaimer*. The following article begins this series.

The purpose for the creature is derived from the purpose of the Creator. When the Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Standards asks, “What is the chief end of man?” the answer provided is derived from the goal and activity of God Himself. As John Piper (*The Pleasures of God*) has developed so well, God’s primary eternal activity is enjoying Himself, and His ultimate goal in His relationship to all creation is to glorify Himself. His words to the warring nations of the earth reflect accurately God’s objective for all of creation and all of history: “I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth” (Psa. 46:10).

The Spirit Realm

We see this fleshed out as we investigate God’s intention for the various elements of creation. For example, God glorifies Himself fully through the spirit realm He created. If we understand the morning stars of Job 38:7 to be spirit beings, they were present to rejoice in God’s initial steps of creating the material universe, glorifying Him together in song. Throughout history, a major activity of the spirit world is that of glorifying God through worship (Psa. 103:20-21; 148:2; Isa. 6:1-3; Luke 2:13-14; Heb. 1:6). They will do the same throughout time (Rev. 4:8-11; 5:11-14; 7:11-12).
The Glory of God (continued)

The Material Realm

The physical world exists to glorify God. Psalms 8:1-9 and 19:1-6 are familiar passages bearing out this truth, to which Psa.

29:1-9 adds its weight. However, an oft-overlooked text setting forth this truth is perhaps among the most powerful. Consider Psa. 104:1-35, where the psalmist describes creation at length (1-30), declares the purpose for creation (31-32) and offers the response of a God-centered heart (33-35).

The Human Race

As the capstone of the material creation, the human race exists to glorify its Creator. God has so designed life on this earth that He will be glorified through human existence. This is true with reference to the godly lives of those who trust Him (Mat. 5:16; Rom. 15:5-6; 1 Cor. 6:20; 1 Pet. 2:12). His glory is also His design in the deaths of His people (Jn. 21:19). Furthermore, God's glory is furthered even in His judgment on those who never trust Him nor yield to His will (Rev. 5:9-14 in relationship to the 7 seal judgments; Rev. 11:15-18 in relationship to the seventh trumpet judgment; Rev. 15:3-4 in relationship to the seven plagues).

Jesus Christ

The earthly purpose of God the Son incarnate was the glory of God. His prayer at the beginning of His passion was that the Father be glorified, a request that God had already accomplished and would continue to fulfill. Even the glory for which the Son longed had its ultimate goal in the glory of the Father (Jn. 17:1). This should not surprise anyone, for the Bible is clear that the glory of God is the climax of history. The words of Paul in 1 Cor. 15:22-28 evidence this, when Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords to whom all is subjected, in turn subjects Himself to the Father, "that God may be all in all."

The glory
of God is
the climax
of history!

Harvesting Worshipers

While His glory is God's ultimate goal, a primary immediate objective toward that goal is to harvest worshipers who acknowledge and reflect His glory in this life (Jn. 4:23). He seeks people who will live in light of who He is. In fact, He seeks them with the intensity of a shepherd searching for a lost sheep (Luke 15:1-7), a woman looking for her lost coin (Luke 15:8-10) and a father

longing for the return of a prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

Of course, God does not find “ready-made” worshipers. The ravages of sin, which blinded and hardened and killed the human race, made that an impossibility (Rom. 1:19-25; 3:10-18). Therefore, the worshipers God finds are those whom He has turned into worshipers by His gracious plan of redemption, in which He transforms sin-blinded and sin-hardened enemies into true, spiritually alive worshipers who acknowledge and reflect His glory. This He accomplishes through the finished work of Jesus Christ.

Why did God carry out His redemptive plan? His immediate purpose was to “seek and save the lost” (Luke 19:10), delivering people from the penalty, power and presence of sin. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that this immediate goal was for the ultimate end of glorifying Himself through these trophies of His grace. In fact, *God’s primary purpose in delivering His people has always been His glory*, whether we are considering physical deliverance (Psa. 106:8; Isa. 48:9-11) or spiritual salvation (Isaiah 43:25; Eze. 36:22-27; Rom. 15:8-9; Eph. 1:3-14; 2:4-7; Phil. 2:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:9).

God’s primary purpose in delivering His people has always been His glory.

Sending Workers

We have seen how God creates worshipers out of enemies. However, we have yet to investigate how He seeks those worshipers in this age. When Jesus Christ walked this earth in the flesh, He and those commissioned by Him were clearly God’s agents for this “search” (Luke 19:10; 10:1-24). That plan has not changed: God still uses people as His tools for seeking the lost. His plan for seeking worshipers clearly involves those who are already worshipping Him to be heralds of His good news (Rom. 10:8-15). “God has chosen human instruments to accomplish His task in human hearts within a human society surrounded by human environment” (G. W. Peters, *A Biblical Theology of Missions*, p. 163).

The Lord’s commission to His worshipers is clear. It is based upon His exaltation as Lord (Mat. 28:18; Phil. 2:9-11). It is accompanied by the encouragement of His promised presence (Mat. 28:20). It consists of testifying of the crucified, buried, risen Sav-

ior (Acts 1:8) and discipling those who trust Christ in response to the proclamation of the gospel (Mat. 28:19-20).

The imperative of Christ's commission is unquestioned. The need for its fulfillment is obvious. But sometimes these are mistaken for primary motives in carrying out the mission of evangelism and discipleship. For example, G. Michael Cocoris leaves his position perfectly clear when he states, "We are to evangelize not because we want to or because we like to, nor because we choose to, but because we are told to" (*Evangelism: A Biblical Approach*, p. 47).

Obedience and compassion for the lost are certainly valid motives for fulfilling the great commission. However, they must be considered secondary to the supreme motive that moved God to design salvation in the first place: His glory.

Joe Aldrich said it well, "Evangelism is a way of revealing the universals of God's character through the particulars of everyday living" (*Gentle Persuasion*, p. 30). Later on he writes, "Do you know why you get involved with evangelism? You get involved because Jesus is a pearl so precious that a man would sell everything he owned in order to get it.... You get involved because Jesus is the King of kings and Lord of lords, the Rose of Sharon, the Lamb of God, the Prince of Peace, and our great treasure. My friend, once you fall in love with this Jesus, you will do everything in your power to introduce others to him" (pp. 236-237).

"You get involved because Jesus is ... our great treasure."

What It Means for Us

We fall in line with God's primary eternal activity and redemptive purpose when we embrace Him as the Treasure of treasures and go through life as we will spend eternity—proclaiming all His manifold, infinite excellencies in which we have found our delight and satisfaction.

The Mission of PAGE Ministries

The mission of PAGE Ministries is the equipping of believers to proclaim all God's excellencies among all peoples for their joy.

The need for the evangelical church to be equipped for such God-centered disciple-making is grounded in four facts: 1) the excellencies of our glorious God, 2) the commission of our wonderful Lord, 3) the condition of our pagan culture, and 4) the apathy of the self-centered church.

The glories of our God are infinitely great, and as such they must be proclaimed. In fact, the reason He saved us is for the very purpose that we might make known His excellencies (1 Pet. 2:9). Thus, the equipping of believers to do so is a foundational ministry that is crucial to fulfilling her reason for existence.

Our crucified, buried, risen and exalted Lord left us with the responsibility of making disciples for Him as the One to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth (Mat. 28:16-20). If believers are not primarily and effectively involved in this aspect of ministry, they are ignoring the marching orders of their Commander-in-Chief.

Almost one-third of all American adults are completely unchurched.¹ Of those who claim "Christian" church affiliation, 28% of Roman Catholics and 20% of Protestant and non-Catholics are in church on any given Sunday.² Of those who profess to be born-again Christians only 32% of adults and only 9% of teenagers believe in moral absolutes.³ Such statistics make it clear that our culture, both within and outside the church, is desperately in need of equipping for disciple-making. They also help to explain why church leaders consider evangelism and discipling of believers to be among the weaker aspects of church ministry!

Not only is the church-at-large tragically weak in disciple-making, but also it is sinfully apathetic about it. Fewer than one in ten believers have ever purposefully developed a friendship with a non-believer for the purpose of sharing the gospel of God.⁴ This underscores the great need of properly motivating believers to make known His glories and make disciples of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

The mission of PAGE Ministries is clearly governed by Biblical truth and by real need. The Biblical truth is that our Lord is worthy of having His glories made known (Eph. 1:3-14; Rev. 4:11; 5:9-10, 12-14). The Biblical truth is also that our Lord has given us the mission of making disciples for Him (Mat. 28:16-20; Luke 24:45-47). The desperate need is for God’s excellencies to be proclaimed in a godless and Biblically ignorant world with the purpose of making disciples for Jesus Christ.

¹ George Barna, “One Out of Three Adults is Now Unchurched” (www.barna.org), February 25, 1999.

² C. Kirk Hadaway, Penny Long Marler and Mark Chaves, “What the Polls Don’t Show: A Closer Look at U.S. Church Attendance,” American Sociological Review, December 1993, pp. 741-752.

³ George Barna, “Americans Are Most Likely to Base Truth on Feelings” (www.barna.org), February 12, 2002.

⁴ George Barna, “Discipleship,” Barna Seminar 2001.

Subscribe Me!

Please add my name to *The PAGE Proclaimer* mailing list. I prefer receiving *The PAGE Proclaimer* in the following format (circle one):

Email (Adobe PDF)

Printed

Name _____

Position _____

Church _____

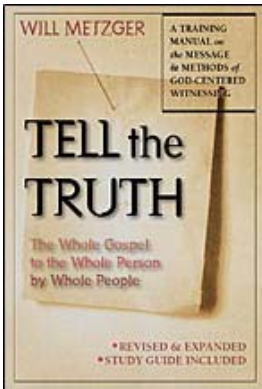
Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Zip/Postal Code _____ Phone (____) _____

Email Address _____

You may also subscribe by emailing the above information to page@tcbs.org



Book Review

Will Metzger. *Tell the Truth: The Whole Gospel to the Whole Person by Whole People*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002 Third Edition. Softcover: 272 pages. \$15.00 Retail.

Reviewed by James A. Odens

Will Metzger writes this book with insight gained from doctrinal clarity and wisdom gained from years of hands-on experience in evangelism. In *Tell the Truth* he does some things that few modern authors on the subject of evangelism have been able to accomplish: hold my interest, share my passion and gain my hearty recommendation.

In harmony with the philosophy of PAGE Ministries, Metzger sees that the Biblical role of an evangelist includes equipping the saints for evangelism (p. 21). He emphasizes the importance of instructing unbelievers in the whole counsel of God (p. 34), and stresses the necessity of a God-centered message (ch. 2-3). He points out the need for clarifying the terms we use as we talk to nonbelievers (p. 55) and the importance of going back to creation to help people understand who God is (p. 57).

Tell the Truth leaves no doubt that the ultimate motive for evangelism is making known the glory of God as those who delight in Him (p. 177). It perceives the importance of ministering intentionally through relationships (pp. 182-86). With all these points in common, it is hard not to get excited reading this book!

There are weaknesses. I felt that Metzger could have given more emphasis to the law of God as the revelation of His character in addition to being the rule of life (ch. 3).

The Come Home method of explaining the gospel that he presents does not give enough background to who God is and what He has done in history, especially in light of the Biblically ignorant society of today. However, at least it starts and ends with God, which is more than can be said for most evangelistic approaches used today!

PAGE Ministries Conferences

PAGE Ministries conducts Conferences on Evangelism and Conferences on Discipleship in churches for the purpose of helping equip believers to make disciples effectively. These conferences reflect and promote the following core values:

- The glory of God is our purpose
- The sufficiency of God is our delight
- The truth of God is our nourishment
- The gospel of God is our message
- The Spirit of God is our power
- The principles of God are our strategy
- The ministry of God is relational

The conferences are led by James Odens, President of PAGE Ministries and Equipping Evangelist of Sovereign Joy Fellowship in Minneapolis, Minnesota. His ministry has taken him throughout North America, in addition to many other countries around the world.

Each conference involves five sessions. The usual schedule for a conference starts with the Sunday morning message as the first session. The next four sessions then follow on Sunday through Wednesday evenings.

Another possible schedule is for a conference to start with two sessions on Friday evening, the remaining three sessions being held during the day on Saturday. If requested, Jim is often available to preach on Sundays following a weekend conference.

The sessions in our Conference on Evangelism range from 40 minutes (session 1) to 90 minutes in length. The messages for each session are titled as follows:

- Our Motive for Evangelism
- Our Mission in Evangelism
- Understanding Our Post-Christian Generation
- Adopting Effective Ministry Principles
- Conducting Evangelistic Chronological Bible Studies

The Conference on Discipleship sessions are similar in length.

While the Conference on Evangelism is focused on the first step in the process of making disciples, the Conference on Discipleship gives an overview of the entire process. Session titles for the Conference on Discipleship are:

- The Key to Discipleship
- Discipleship: The Christian Ministry
- Discipleship: God’s Work
- The Goal, Product and Process of Discipleship
- Jesus’ Pattern of Discipleship

More information about these conferences can be obtained from our web site (www.pageministries.org) or by calling us at (612) 414-7029. If you are interested in scheduling a conference, you can contact us from our web site and by phone, or you can send the form below to:

PAGE Ministries
4233 Edgemont Street
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127-7946.

Let’s Schedule a PAGE Ministries Conference!

I am interested in having Jim Odens come for a Conference on Evangelism/Conference on Discipleship (circle desired one). Please contact me soon to discuss the details.

Name _____

Church _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Phone () _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Email Address _____

I am interested in the following dates:

Month _____ Year _____

Month _____ Year _____

Jim Odens
September-October 2003 Speaking Schedule

(Check our web site for meeting times)

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| September 4-7 | Conference on Evangelism
Grace of God Fellowship
415 E. Dover Street, Easton, MD
Pastor John Leger
410-763-6558 |
| September 14-17 | Conference on Evangelism
Rockport Baptist Church
3761 Telegraph Road, Arnold, MO
Pastor Scott Lee
636-464-1460 |
| September 19-21 | Conference on Evangelism
Temple Baptist Church
5214 47th Avenue, Kenosha, WI
Pastor Matthew Henry
262-654-6611 |
| September 26-28 | Conference on Evangelism
Calvary Baptist Church
7 Scrapetown Road, Pemberton, NJ
Pastor Guy Glass
609-894-8260 |
| October 3 | Presentation of PAGE Ministries
Mid-South Regional Founders Conference
South Woods Baptist Church
3175 Germantown Road S., Memphis, TN |
| October 10-11 | Minnesota Church Ministries Convention
1710 West Highway 96
Arden Hills, MN |
| October 19-22 | Conference on Evangelism
New Zion Baptist Church
1179 Highway 177A, Bonifay, FL
Pastor Ryan Helms
(850) 547-4310 |

Sharing in God's Kingdom Work

PAGE Ministries helps equip believers to proclaim all God's excellencies among all peoples for their joy through three primary means: a) helping to raise up and train equipping evangelists in and for churches, b) conducting conferences on evangelism and discipleship in churches, and c) providing resources for disciple-makers. Each of these aspects of PAGE Ministries provides unique opportunities for you to share in this Kingdom work of God.

Training Equipping Evangelists

By far the most effective long-term strategy is the identification and training of resident equipping evangelists for local churches. In this way we help provide constant, ongoing equipping of believers in the churches for fulfilling Christ's mandate to make disciples.

For this reason, the encouragement and training of local church equipping evangelists is the primary long-term strategic goal of PAGE Ministries. *The PAGE Proclaimer* is only the beginning means by which we will seek to accomplish this goal. In the future we expect to have a book published that will provide a Biblical basis for the evangelist and set forth a Biblical model of preparing evangelists for ministry, based on Paul's mentoring of Timothy.

A major aspect of this venture is providing comprehensive, ongoing training for equipping evangelists and for equipping-evangelists-to-be. Another key element is connecting those who serve as equipping evangelists with one another. While this connection is being made to some degree through *The PAGE Proclaimer*, we desire to facilitate an even more direct connection that enables ongoing discussion among equipping evangelists across the nation and around the world.

Funding is clearly needed to accomplish all this, and if God leads you to help in that way, we will thank Him. However, another great help would be someone who could serve as our webmaster, setting up an on-line chat room that will enable the interaction we desire to provide for local church equipping evangelists.

(Continued on page 14)

Sharing in God's Kingdom Work (continued from page 13)

Conferences on Evangelism

The vast majority of churches do not have equipping evangelists ministering in their midst. Little, if anything, is being done to give them a Biblical direction in fulfilling Jesus' commission to make disciples. For this reason, PAGE Ministries holds Conferences on Evangelism and Conferences on Discipleship in churches in order to help motivate, equip and mobilize the believers for heralding the gospel.

Many churches who desire these conferences the most are small and financially weak, especially those in rural areas and those in third world countries. They want to grow through disciple-making, but feel like they are not equipped to do so. At the same time, they struggle to make room in their budget for having special conferences that would provide such equipping.

Your gracious giving can be used to sponsor "scholarships" for such churches. Through your generosity those churches that show a demonstrated need for financial assistance will be able to be equipped to reach their communities with the gospel more effectively.

Providing Resources

You are probably familiar with the vital resources and tools provided through PAGE Ministries: *Lighting The Way To God*, *Discovering God* and *Following Jesus*. Did you know that *Discovering God* is being translated into Spanish right now?

We desire to translate all our current resources into Spanish, as well as a number of other languages. More than that, we see the need to provide these materials at below-cost prices for churches and ministries in poverty-ridden countries.

Your tax-deductible support of PAGE Ministries will be used by God in the accomplishment of these goals. Prayerfully consider giving to PAGE Ministries and also recommending PAGE Ministries to those you know who desire to help fund worthy organizations doing Kingdom work.



PAGE
MINISTRIES

*4233 Edgemont Street
Vadnais Heights, MN 55127-7946*

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
ST. PAUL, MN
PERMIT NO. 90