

Home Bible Studies: Look for openings through normal contacts with friends and relatives. In some home Bible studies there are special readings for children from a book such as *Pilgrim's Progress*. Bible studies should be geared to adults. If children are present, they could be included by having them read from a children's edition of the Bible. Family Bible studies should be with one family only.

A limited study of four to six periods was suggested as an initial effort.

Family social events: In some areas, family picnics are popular where non-Christian families are invited for recreation, fellowship and discussion of spiritual issues. Another suggestion was to have family dinners in a Christian home and invite non-Christian families to share a film or family devotions.

Weddings: In some areas a new form of weddings is being used. These involve the Christian bridal party and Christian parents verbalizing their faith and values regarding the marriage relationship with their friends and guests.

Fractured family evangelization

Preventative: Christians should be counseled regarding the biblical teaching concerning marrying only Christians (cf. II Cor. 6:14-18; I Cor. 7:39). In some countries, such as India, a Christian who marries a non-Christian is excommunicated. However, the biblical authority for this was not stated and it was pointed out that this would only drive the believer farther away.

Education: The church has an educational responsibility to teach new Christians how to relate to non-Christian members of their family.

Counseling: Christian husbands or wives who have or have had non-Christian mates can counsel the new Christian regarding the biblical teaching on reaching their mate for Christ (cf. I Peter 3:1-7; I Cor. 7:12-16).

These statements reflect the current practices of various churches around the world. Also included are some yet untried suggested by group participants.

The group did not see a need for an organization for this purpose, but did stress that whole family evangelization should be a high priority item in the total field of evangelization.

REPORT ON WOMEN'S SESSIONS

Several strategy groups were arranged spontaneously by participants at the Congress. This report is from one of those groups.

In terms of numbers, women were very much in the minority at the International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne '74, but the challenge which was given to them was great. The sessions were organized and chaired by Mrs. Nell Maxwell of Barrie, Ontario, Canada, the Director of Women Alive. The underlying theme of the three consecutive sessions was "Relevancy and Effectiveness in Our Witness Where God Has Placed Us."

The first session was directed primarily to pastors' wives since most of the women at the Congress fit in this category. Mrs. Jill Briscoe, wife of Rev. Stuart Briscoe, of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, addressed herself to some of the basic problems which confront a pastor's wife if she purposes to have an effective ministry.

Mrs. Briscoe presented some startling questions when she asked, "Does God consider women second grade material?" "Has a woman the right to teach or speak?" The answer would seem obvious she said, but "unfortunately, the answer lies greatly in the cultural and denominational background." These factors somehow are often influenced by misguided people and yet are so important in a particular dimension of women's lives. The fact that they are misguided very often produces a negative situation without any regard to the biblical position. She went on to say that many men firmly state that because a woman must be submissive it is neither her right nor privilege to speak in or on behalf of the church. She further observed that contrary to this concept if a woman is indeed invited by the ruling body of the church or organization to exercise her gift of speaking, under their headship, she is not usurping authority but is rather being submissive and obedient.

A woman must not repress gifts given to her because of someone else's opinion, but must search and find God's will for her life. When a woman finds her true spiritual gift and exercises it, it is charming. She noted that no one can resist a ministry truly expressed in obedience to the Lord.

Mrs. Briscoe challenged the women to examine their lives and see if they had deliberately buried gifts which God had given to them for specific service. She then noted that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to cut us down to size and not build us up. It is at that point that true liberation is found in Jesus Christ and real peace when one is obedient to the will of God for her life.

The importance and relevance of sharing Jesus Christ with people where they are was heavily stressed throughout this presentation with the interspersion of stories from personal experiences.

The diversification of ministries was evident as women from different cultures attempted to interject questions to stimulate discussion on ordination of women, formulation of worldwide women's evangelical organizations and other such topics.

Mrs. Briscoe emphasized that women must never be satisfied with the status quo but rather should open themselves to the will of God that his creativity could work through them.

Organization of time was discussed since it was felt that it was a priority. The importance of this facet of women's lives was stressed as women can be so busy in Christian work that they can develop masks to cover the foulest thoughts and resentments. There is no relevant or significant witness to our peers until we have first learned that the study of the Word of God and meaningful prayer is a prerequisite in order to know the mind of God in these situations.

Honesty in relationships, ability to accept ourselves and hence others were also emphasized as important issues in the whole area of communication. She strongly emphasized the importance of the positive concept in every facet of life. The relationship which we have with the Lord through the study and knowledge of God's Word and prayer will be the determining factor which will decide how we address ourselves to every situation. On pastors' wives she said that many ministries are destroyed because women are not willing to let the Word of God speak to them. However, a pastor's wife would be a freak if she attempted to satisfy the expectation of every person's demands. Hence the necessity to exercise the spiritual gifts bestowed on her by the Lord releasing her to do what the Lord demands and not what the church expects.

In the second session Corrie ten Boom spoke from her vast experiences of the relevancy of a personal and intimate prayer life with Jesus Christ. She told of how the Lord had personally communed with her in times of deep distress. Prayer was meaningful to her in the difficult times, not so much in the area of being delivered from a situation, but rather that the Lord stood with her in the midst of those times.

Ellen de Kroon affirmed what the Lord has taught, and is teaching, in being able to trust the Lord once having committed herself in prayer to him. The relevancy and intimacy of prayer was again emphasized as a very essential factor in the arena of life where one needs new spiritual strength daily.

Millie Dienert, the International Prayer Chairman of the Congress and a member of the Planning Committee, introduced the third session stating that she learned the importance of prayer early in life by the example set by her mother. Methods of ministry may differ worldwide but prayer is common ground. She noted that 1,600,000 people around the world prayed daily for the Congress and that its success would be attributed to the faithfulness of those who prayed.

Mrs. Dienert addressed herself to the factors that affect life's basic relationships and how we cope with problems. It is at this level that our prayer life becomes real. Negative reactions, negative thoughts, criticism and inability to accept others inhibit our spiritual growth unless we experience a meaningful prayer life.

A solid prayer life makes a life truly represent Jesus Christ and not a structure set by man. Prayer falls into three important facets, (i) controlling, (ii) conquering, (iii) cleansing. Mrs. Dienert cautioned that a person's life needs controls and this can only be accomplished by the Holy Spirit. Consequently time spent with the Lord is important but the process of working it out is even more important. The controlling pro-

cess must begin on our knees, if an honest communication with God is to continue all day.

A strong note was sounded in the area of the ego problem. Women are forever molding the lives of others and have rejected the concept "Not my will but Thine be done." The ever present problem amongst Christians was exposed in that we constantly categorize others in the same way that we make molds. When someone refuses to fit that mold, relationships disintegrate. We cannot accept others mainly because of obstruction caused by our own ego. It is in this stage that the conquering phase of prayer becomes operative, where we are ever reminded that the Lord has the perfect mold. The warning was given with clarity that it is imperative to say genuinely, "Lord, you take over." Prayer of this nature is essentially dangerous because there must, of necessity, be honesty and obedience as God uses others and his Holy Spirit to remove the edges.

The third stage, the cleansing process, was declared to be of utmost importance, for it is at this level that one must honestly ask, "Why am I doing what I am doing in relation to God?" Total commitment demands that we allow the Spirit of God to move in while we move out. There will be no doubt in our minds when God wants us to move.

A prevailing note sounded repeatedly throughout the conference was that the Gospel is not cultural, human needs are not cultural, there are basics, and as Christians we all grapple with the same problems and need.

Mrs. Dienert culminated her remarks with a recurring note, "Prayer is not the hours spent in it, but the continuing process of it through the moments of the day whether sleeping, resting or working — whatever state you find yourself."

Jean Goddard, prayer chairman of South Africa, in expressing her personal experiences in the development of prayer circles for the Congress observed that prayer opens doors and hearts hitherto unopened, drawing together into a fellowship those who were otherwise strangers to each other, yet within the body of Christ.

Jean Reddon, Director of Christian Women's Conventions of Australia, spoke briefly of prayer as a driving force in the personal spiritual growth of the Christian woman, the supportive nature of personal prayer for the ministry of others, the growth experienced as a result of an ongoing prayer relationship with God, and the effectiveness of bridging the gap in the area of relationships within the Christian community.

Miss Reddon expressed strongly that in her opinion God made man and woman to be together. However if it has not been a woman's privilege to be married, she must not drown in the slough of self-pity. She challenged singles to recognize the fact that God does indeed have a plan for their lives; that God has indeed given gifts to all and they must be used.

Bonnie Barrows, Director of Women's Work for Billy Graham Crusades, spoke of the need of creativity in prayer. She exhorted women to plan prayer groups because of the great need for small groups to pray together. She stressed that, "If we fail to plan we most assuredly will plan to fail." A call to learn to pray specifically, to open homes for prayer, to

recognize that prayer builds bridges and helps to communicate with others, was sounded to the women.

Joyce Danforth, prayer chairman for Sri Lanka, spoke of what God had done personally through prayer in her life. She declared emphatically that, contrary to women's liberationists, women do not need to take over but rather are to work side by side with men. This can only happen as we learn to sacrificially spend time with the Lord.

In the final analysis it is evident that there is no final limit to what God can do through a woman totally submitted to the will of God. God is on the move and he is most surely using women.

MEDICAL MISSIONS GROUP REPORT

Secretary: Morgan Derham

Several strategy groups were arranged spontaneously by participants at the Congress. This report is from one of those groups.

The group met on Monday and Tuesday afternoons, July 22 and 23. Those who attended included doctors, nurses and paramedical staff from Angola, Bahrein, Berlin, Egypt, Gambia, India, Indonesia, Italy, Kuwait, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sudan, Thailand, USA, and Yugoslavia.

Most of the first session was taken up with participants introducing themselves, describing their work, and stating their special concerns. Topics for further discussion were suggested. At the second session, Mr. Ray Knighton, of M.A.P., introduced the subject chosen for discussion: The role of medical ministries in relation to government health schemes. His impression was that many Christian hospitals had yet to take this matter seriously. He described different patterns of relationship — (a) Total separation; (b) Mission hospitals receiving government support; (c) Mission hospitals recognized by governments; (d) Those taken over by government but retaining staff. He expressed his own beliefs that in general:

- i. Christian institutions should have closer relationships with governments.
- ii. Medical ministries should increasingly develop community and rural health schemes.

Relationships with churches were often unsatisfactory; he commended the Indian Emmanuel Hospitals Association, the Inter-church activities in rural health programs, and the international, inter-agency concept as illustrated by the United Mission to Nepal, and ACROSS.

Subsequent discussion mainly emphasized the same points, and included a report of an evangelical hospital run by a group of churches in Naples, Italy.

The meeting then commissioned its chairman and secretary to detail its findings in the form of a statement as follows: This meeting of participants involved in medical ministries wishes to emphasize the following points:

1. Medical ministries are a legitimate part of the communication of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:35). They are not to be regarded merely as a means to an end, since they are in their own right a manifestation of the love of God.
2. Not only is there a continuing place for medical ministries, but new areas of opportunity are opening up.
3. Community health schemes, reaching out from existing institutions, are to be encouraged by all means; medical ministries should give a lead in these matters to other authorities, and in training paramedical and similar workers.