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ONLY THE MESSENGER:  
DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE'S ILLUSTRATIVE PREACHING  
AS A COMMITMENT TO BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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A Dissertation  
Presented to  
the Faculty of  
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy

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by  
Kevin David Koslowsky  
December 2019

**APPROVAL SHEET**

ONLY THE MESSENGER:

DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE'S ILLUSTRATIVE PREACHING

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To Laura, my constant encourager,  
And to David, Leah, and Samuel,  
Our blessings from God.

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## PREFACE

My love for preaching was nurtured in my childhood church and through the example of my father, Jack Koslowsky, announcing good news in our community. Since my teenage years, I have felt the internal call to preach and still marvel at the great joy and privilege of preaching. The opportunity to dive more deeply into homiletical research has fostered my love for preaching and strengthened my call to continued gospel proclamation.

Southern Seminary has been gracious in welcoming a northern Presbyterian into their community of scholars. I am grateful for the insight and encouragement from my advisor, Dr. Hershael York, and his model of a pastor-scholar. His knowledge of Barnhouse contributed greatly to this dissertation, and he is a dead-ringer in his impersonation of Barnhouse's voice. I am also thankful for Dr. Robert Vogel, who opened the door to my research through his insights into the history of American preaching. My classmates spurred me on in discussion and provided a meaningful source of encouragement. I am particularly thankful for Todd Fisher's questions about Presbyterian history and Tenth Presbyterian Church, which sparked my interest in Barnhouse, and his excellent dissertation on James Montgomery Boice, which helps establish the importance of further research into Barnhouse. I am also thankful for Jake Hovis and his constant encouragement as we pressed to the finish of this PhD journey.

I want to express my gratitude to the people of Faith Presbyterian Church, who have loved and supported me through this PhD process. My mentor, Pastor Jim Brown, has been a persistent encourager, which at times was an essential role to help me persevere. The church has been generous in providing resources and time to make this

degree possible. My fellow pastors have carried extra burdens to give me time to study and write. It is a great privilege to stand in Faith's pulpit and proclaim gospel hope. Thank you, Faith, for your love and support.

Many have provided support in my research. Tom and Jacqueline Sturwold generously supplied housing for my weeks in Louisville and were understanding of my schedule and exhaustion level. Missio Seminary donated decades of Barnhouse's magazines to me to aid my research. The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals offered access to their archives and provided discounted recordings of Barnhouse's vast library of audio sermons. My sister, Kristine Boyes, spent hours helping fix my grammar and the flow of the argument. The blame for any remaining errors rests with me.

The greatest thanks are reserved for my family at home. Our children, David, Leah, and Samuel, have endured the busyness of research and the distractions that come from looming deadlines. Thank you for your love and encouragement. Most of all, I give thanks to God for the love and support of my wife, Laura. She has unceasingly encouraged me in this process. She has carved out time for my work and carried additional family and ministry burdens to help us reach the end. Thank you, my love. I could not have completed this dissertation without you.

My prayer is that this dissertation will be a benefit to the church as it roots itself in the power and authority of the Word of God. I hope preachers will find encouragement in their task even in the face of great difficulties. I pray they will see the great joy of bringing truth to bear in the lives of their listeners through illustration.

Kevin Koslowsky

Wilmington, Delaware

December 2019

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Donald Grey Barnhouse (1895-1960) occupied the prominent pulpit of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia for thirty-three years, his sermons echoed across national radio stations, and he preached around the globe through conferences and missions. He followed an expository method in his preaching with lively illustrations to provide energy and urgency to his messages. Barnhouse is among the prominent American preachers of the twentieth century. The editors of *Preaching* magazine list him in the top twenty most influential preachers of the century.<sup>1</sup>

Barnhouse's firm commitment to the authority of Scripture developed through his childhood faith, his early theological training, and ministry opportunities in Europe. His commitment to the authority of the Bible did not wane in his later years despite his openness to strategic partnerships within his increasingly liberal denomination. His exegetical strategy was rooted in his recognition of biblical authority and saw him proceed systematically through books of the Bible. His preaching depended upon the individual passage but used each biblical passage as a window to the theological message of the whole Bible. Barnhouse repeatedly returned to the central doctrines of God's sovereignty, man's depravity, and the person and work of Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

Barnhouse's submission to the authority of the Bible and his use of sermon illustrations served his goal of expounding the text to impact the lives of his listeners.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Duduit, "The Ten Greatest Preachers of the Twentieth Century," *Preaching*, November 1, 1999, accessed August 27, 2016, <http://www.preaching.com/resources/articles/11565635/>.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Thomas Sexton, "A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse" (ThD thesis, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 72.

His preaching goal was to offer the meaning of the text in the most direct and lively manner. Barnhouse likened himself to a telegram messenger boy: “If you disagree with what I am teaching, just remember I didn't write it. I am only the messenger boy delivering the telegram.”<sup>3</sup> The messenger cannot choose which messages might be palatable to him or the recipients. He cannot ask for only “messages which announced weddings births, and advances in the stock market.”<sup>4</sup> The telegram messenger boy must “take all messages to the person to whom they are addressed, by the shortest route and in the quickest time.”<sup>5</sup>

The image runs through all of Barnhouse’s preaching. The minister is “a telegraph boy responsible only for delivering the message.”<sup>6</sup> The preacher submits to the authority of the text and uses the resource of illustrations to bring the message to the listener. Barnhouse frequently repeated the analogy: “I simply know where the telegram came from and I say, ‘Here it is.’ I didn’t write the message, but I am commanded to deliver it.”<sup>7</sup> Barnhouse claimed, “I am only the messenger.” This vision for preaching captured his doctrinal commitment to the authority of the text, his apologetic strategy of defending the text by demanding submission to God’s authority, and his illustrative strategy of helping his listeners understand the text.

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<sup>3</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, “What Was He Really Like?” *Eternity*, March 1961, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Life by the Son: Practical Lessons in Experimental Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 10.

<sup>5</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 215.

<sup>6</sup> Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse,” 141, quoting a Barnhouse sermon entitled “When God Hears Prayers.”

<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Mark: The Servant Gospel*, ed. Susan T. Lutz (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1988), 90.

## The Preaching Ministry of Donald Grey Barnhouse

Barnhouse was recognized during his lifetime as one of the country's most important preachers. From the height of his ministry through the decades after his death, he influenced English speaking evangelicals. Bigalke summarizes Barnhouse's impact: "From the early 1930s until the 1980s, he was arguably one of the most widely known and commended American expositors."<sup>8</sup> Barnhouse was "the best-known and most widely followed American Bible teacher during the early middle decades" of the twentieth century.<sup>9</sup>

Barnhouse's contemporaries heaped praise upon him. From the platform of his ministry at Tenth Presbyterian Church beginning in 1927, he continued to grow in fame through his radio ministry, magazine publishing, and conference preaching. His ministry received enthusiastic affirmation. As early as 1929 Barnhouse was called "a leading exponent of the teaching ministry."<sup>10</sup> His importance grew through the decades reaching a peak in the 1950s, the last decade of his life. Professor Wilbur Smith of Fuller Seminary offered words of congratulations for Barnhouse's twenty-fifth anniversary at Tenth Presbyterian Church in 1952: "Probably beyond the work of any other one pastor of this generation now living, Dr. Barnhouse has stirred up interest in, and exalted the Word of God, with his rich knowledge of the Scriptures, and powerful and dramatic way of presenting divine truth."<sup>11</sup> In thanks for his ministry in their chapel service in 1955,

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<sup>8</sup> Ron J. Bigalke, Jr., "Barnhouse, Donald Grey (1895–1960)," in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization*, ed. George Thomas Kurian (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 1: 210.

<sup>9</sup> W. C. Ringenberg, "Barnhouse, Donald Grey (1895-1960)," in *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Walter Elwell, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 142.

<sup>10</sup> H. R. Whitcraft, "Bible School Lesson Prepared by Expert," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, January 26, 1929, Box 15, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>11</sup> Wilbur M. Smith to Leon Herron, September 30, 1952, Box 1, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

the staff of Eastern Baptist College acknowledged Barnhouse as “the greatest living Bible expositor in the world.”<sup>12</sup>

“Beyond the work of any other.” “The greatest.” Superlatives were added to capture the importance of Barnhouse’s ministry and his stature within evangelicalism. Clarence Foster, who partnered with Barnhouse during his years preaching at the Keswick Convention, described him: “Donald Grey Barnhouse was a genius. His knowledge in many fields was prodigious, so much so that his friends often referred to him as the ‘walking encyclopedia.’ Few men could have excelled him in intimacy with the Word of God.” Foster concluded that all who worked closely with him in ministry “admitted that he was undoubtedly America’s foremost Bible teacher.”<sup>13</sup> Walter Martin, who worked with Barnhouse on their assessment of Seventh-Day Adventists, also adds his endorsement of Barnhouse as “brilliant.”<sup>14</sup> Harold Laird, who departed from Barnhouse’s denomination, still considered him “the most gifted Bible teacher of his day.”<sup>15</sup>

Barnhouse helped make expository preaching a standard model within evangelical preaching.<sup>16</sup> Kaiser lists Barnhouse, along with John Stott, as an influential modern example of an expository preacher.<sup>17</sup> Barnhouse was among the “contemporary

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<sup>12</sup> John A. Baird, Jr., to Donald Grey Barnhouse, April 14, 1955, 1, Box 3, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>13</sup> C. H. M. Foster, “Homecall of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse: A Tribute,” *The Life of Faith*, November 10, 1960, 886, Box 14, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>14</sup> Walter Martin et al., *The Kingdom of the Occult* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2008), 8.

<sup>15</sup> Harold S. Laird to Paul Hopkins, December 29, 1960, 1, Box 15, Folder 14, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>16</sup> John Bombaro, “Is There a Text in This Sermon? A Lutheran Survey of Contemporary Preaching Methods,” in *Feasting in a Famine of the Word: Lutheran Preaching in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Mark W. Birkholz, Jacob Corzine, and Jonathan Mumme (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), 12.

<sup>17</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, *Preaching and Teaching from the Old Testament: A Guide for the Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 50. See also Turnbull, who lists Barnhouse as an example of expository preaching. Ralph G. Turnbull, *A History of Preaching: From the Close of the Nineteenth Century to the Middle of the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1974), 3: 247.

masters of the expository method.”<sup>18</sup> Stitzinger includes Barnhouse among the outstanding Bible expositors of the twentieth century.<sup>19</sup> Merida calls Barnhouse an “exemplary expositor.”<sup>20</sup> MacArthur considers him “one of the leading Bible teachers in the twentieth century.”<sup>21</sup> Streett agrees, calling Barnhouse “one of this century’s foremost Bible teachers.”<sup>22</sup> His powerful ministry earned him a place in the pantheon of twentieth century preaching.

Barnhouse shaped generations of preachers and theologians. His ministry influenced Haddon Robinson, the prominent homiletics instructor.<sup>23</sup> Theologian John Frame credits Barnhouse’s radio ministry with shaping him theologically, as Barnhouse spoke in “vivid language and persuasive argument.”<sup>24</sup> Barnhouse was the most significant preaching influence on James Boice, who would follow him in the pulpit of Tenth Presbyterian Church.<sup>25</sup> Boice, in turn, had a substantial impact in maintaining Barnhouse’s legacy within evangelicalism through the remainder of the twentieth century as he pastored Tenth from 1968-2000. Fisher’s analysis indicates Boice quoted

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<sup>18</sup> James Earl Massey, *Designing the Sermon: Order and Movement in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), 52.

<sup>19</sup> James F. Stitzinger, “The History of Expository Preaching,” *The Master’s Seminary Journal* 3, no. 1 (1992): 27.

<sup>20</sup> Tony Merida, *Faithful Preaching: Declaring Scripture with Responsibility, Passion, and Authenticity* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 213.

<sup>21</sup> John MacArthur, *Why Believe the Bible?* (Grand Rapids: Regal, 2008), 43. See also John MacArthur, foreword to *Discovering Romans: Spiritual Revival for the Soul*, by S. Lewis Johnson and Mike Abendroth (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 9.

<sup>22</sup> R. Alan Streett, *The Effective Invitation: A Practical Guide for the Pastor* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 1984), 50.

<sup>23</sup> Chris Rappazini, “Great People Build Great Preaching,” *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 17, no. 2 (September 1, 2017): 13n8.

<sup>24</sup> John M. Frame, “Backgrounds to My Thought,” in *Speaking the Truth in Love: The Theology of John M. Frame*, ed. John J. Hughes (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2009), 10.

<sup>25</sup> Evan Todd Fisher, “Strengthen What Remains: The Rhetorical Situation of James Montgomery Boice” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 94.

Barnhouse “in a staggering 32 percent” of his sermons.<sup>26</sup> Barnhouse remained an important figure in evangelicalism, through his ongoing radio broadcasts and through the preaching of Boice, to the end of the twentieth century.

### **Significance of Illustrations in Barnhouse’s Preaching**

Barnhouse was committed to explaining the text. He was the messenger bringing the text to the listener. Significant in his arsenal were illustrations. The most prominent feature mentioned of his exegetical preaching were illustrations. Those who heard him preach remember him as “a master of the use of illustrations.”<sup>27</sup>

Larsen captures the strength of Barnhouse’s illustrative prowess: “A large and gravelly-voiced man, Barnhouse combined high-density exposition of the text with the most remarkable illustrations and a blunt, almost overbearing manner with a most delightful sense of humor.”<sup>28</sup> Elsewhere Larsen affirms Barnhouse’s ability to tell a story with “vividness and power.”<sup>29</sup> Barnhouse’s pulpit presence pointed to the authority of the text, and illustrations served his goals.

Editors gathered notes of remembrance after Barnhouse’s death, and numerous friends and preachers noted Barnhouse’s powerful illustrations. Carnell, of Fuller Seminary, reminisced, “I remember Dr. Barnhouse as a gifted biblical expositor, and especially in the use of supporting illustrations.”<sup>30</sup> C. Everett Koop, a member of

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<sup>26</sup> Fisher, “Strengthen What Remains,” 95.

<sup>27</sup> Leslie B. Flynn, *Come Alive with Illustrations: How to Find, Use, and File Good Stories for Sermons and Speeches* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 17.

<sup>28</sup> David L. Larsen, *The Company of the Preachers: A History of Biblical Preaching from the Old Testament to the Modern Era* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 2: 824. Barnhouse listed himself as six feet two inches tall and two hundred pounds, which he said was eight inches taller than his short father. Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits* (Philadelphia: Revelation, 1949), 149. Earlier he described himself as “more than 210 pounds” and about seventy-five inches tall, which is six feet three inches. Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 42.

<sup>29</sup> David L. Larsen, *Telling the Old, Old Story: The Art of Narrative Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 1997), 87.

<sup>30</sup> Edward John Carnell, “What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 10.

Barnhouse's church and prominent surgeon, described Barnhouse's ability to find an illustration:

Being saturated with the Scriptures, he never failed to find a poignant illustration in any circumstance. After he recovered from the serious operation in his chest, I was chatting with him about it and told him I had taken the opportunity during his surgery to hold his heart in my hand. He immediately replied, 'And you found it deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.'<sup>31</sup>

Koop remembered his first encounter with Barnhouse in 1948, when Koop's wife invited Koop to join her at church: "I heard teaching from one of the most learned men I ever knew, a true scholar who also possessed a gift of illustrating the complexity—and simplicity—of Christian doctrine."<sup>32</sup> Another medical doctor in the congregation concurred after he heard Barnhouse take a complicated explanation of a medical procedure and apply it with powerful simplicity to a spiritual lesson:

This ability of Dr. Barnhouse's to illustrate and clarify great spiritual principles was one of his many outstanding attributes. Throughout his life he always affirmed his belief that there is nothing in our environment which cannot teach us a spiritual lesson, if only we have the eyes to see it.<sup>33</sup>

Barnhouse's illustrations served his exegetical purpose of bringing the text to his hearers in the most direct path possible. His listeners remembered his ability to make the complex understandable through the strategic placement of illustrations and analogies. His vivid illustrations and startling statements captured listeners' attention and confronted them with the truth of the biblical text. As a prominent pulpiteer of the mid-twentieth century, his illustrations capture the heart of his homiletical strategy: confronting listeners with the truth of the Word.

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<sup>31</sup> C. Everett Koop, "What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me," *Eternity*, March 1961, 7.

<sup>32</sup> C. Everett Koop, *Koop: The Memoirs of America's Family Doctor* (New York: Random House, 1991), 85.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Durant, "What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me," *Eternity*, March 1961, 8.

## Thesis

The purpose of this dissertation is to answer the question of how Donald Grey Barnhouse's sermon illustrations served his homiletical commitment to the authority of the Bible. Illustrations allowed Barnhouse to communicate truth "by the shortest route and in the quickest time" because illustrations make the truth of the biblical text clear for the sermon listeners. Illustrations illuminate the exegesis of the text and connect with the hearts and minds of hearers. Therefore, this dissertation will examine Barnhouse's homiletical strategy to show his commitment to exegetical preaching and how illustrations serve his purpose. Barnhouse is known for his vivid illustrations, but these illustrations were in service to his fundamental commitment to the biblical text.

Barnhouse's commitment to the authority of Scripture was challenged early in his ministry during the modernist-fundamentalist controversy of the early twentieth century as well as later in his ministry during the rise of mid-century evangelicalism. He stood on the side of the fundamentalists in affirming the bedrock authority of the Bible as the Word of God. However, in contrast to the fundamentalists of his era, Barnhouse remained within the increasingly liberal Presbyterian Church in the USA throughout his ministry.<sup>34</sup>

Much of Barnhouse's ministry was spent as an itinerant and independent Bible teacher while he maintained a half-time schedule at Tenth. However, in the final years of his ministry, he shifted his ministry strategy and strengthened partnerships within his denomination. The strategic shift was defined by his New Year's Resolution of 1953.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> In 1958, the PCUSA merged with the United Presbyterian Church of North America (UPCNA) to form the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (UPCUSA). In 1983, after Barnhouse's death, the UPCUSA joined with the southern Presbyterian churches of the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the PC(USA). The PC(USA) returned to a name similar to the name used during most of Barnhouse's ministry, PCUSA. "History of the Church," accessed August 23, 2019, <https://www.history.pcusa.org/history-online/presbyterian-history/history-church>.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "New Year's Resolution," *Eternity*, January 1953. The full text of the editorial is reproduced in appendix 1.

He recommitted himself to cooperation, through his denomination and the National Council of Churches, with all he considered true believers.

Both pivotal decisions, staying in the denomination in the 1930s and recommitting himself to the denomination in the 1950s, raise questions about Barnhouse's biblical fidelity. Did he abandon his fundamental commitments? Did he shift his preaching strategy later in his life? Despite a strategic shift in ministry partnerships during the last decade of his life, this dissertation will argue that Donald Grey Barnhouse remained faithful to the authority of the Bible from the beginning to the very end of his ministry.

### **Background**

My interest in Barnhouse arises from the confluence of the historical Presbyterian debates in which he was entangled, his apologetic commitment to the authority of the Bible, and his prominence as a preacher known for his illustrations. For the past seventeen years, I have served on the pastoral staff of a Presbyterian Church in Delaware, whose founding can be traced to the modernist-fundamentalist challenges of the 1920s and 1930s. Barnhouse figured prominently in these debates. He affirmed the orthodoxy of the fundamentalists but disagreed with them on their separation from the PCUSA. The founding pastor of my church in 1936, Harold Samuel Laird, was instrumental in the work of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Barnhouse agreed with the theological fundamentals of the Independent Board but vigorously condemned their separation from the denomination despite his own previous conflicts with theological liberals. The same questions Barnhouse wrestled with, balancing a commitment to the authority of the Word with evangelistic opportunities, remain for pastors in every generation. The catalyst issues of the modernist-fundamentalist debate, including the authority of Scripture, remain relevant for ongoing evangelistic and apologetic preaching.

Barnhouse exemplifies the power of illustrations to bring a text into contact with the experiences of his congregation. He filled his sermons with extended analogies and anecdotes. He gave time to develop stories to make the text clear for his listeners. His example helps overcome objections to illustrations as unbiblical or unwise pastorally. Some preachers lament the time wasted on illustrations and the reliance upon emotions in illustrations. A preacher who limits illustrations may believe he is highlighting the text itself, but he ignores the help illustrations bring to the text. Illustrations explain the text, connect the point to real life, and make the text memorable. Barnhouse's illustrative strategy serves as an ongoing model for the expository preacher.

### **History of Research**

Barnhouse features as one of the foremost preachers of his generation. He served for decades as the pastor of a significant Presbyterian Church. He launched and edited magazines. He was the first evangelical preacher with a radio program broadcast on a nationwide network. His radio ministry was a cornerstone of his ongoing ministry, and beginning in 1949 he began preparing sermons designed specifically for the radio, preaching 455 radio messages from Romans.<sup>36</sup> His radio and conference ministries made him perhaps the second-most heard preacher in all of history up to the date of his death, behind only Billy Graham.<sup>37</sup> His prominence as a twentieth century preacher was recognized during his lifetime and in the decades following his death.

Barnhouse has been the subject of limited research despite his importance. He was at the forefront in the modernist-fundamentalist debates in the 1920s and 1930s. He was a significant actor in the rise of mid-century evangelicalism intersecting with key

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<sup>36</sup> "They Grew Up Together: Dr. Barnhouse and the Radio," *Eternity*, March 1961, 28.

<sup>37</sup> Allen C. Guelzo, "Barnhouse," in *Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia: 175 Years of Thinking and Acting Biblically*, ed. Philip Graham Ryken (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 72. Guelzo's chapter was originally published in 1979.

figures in the movement. He helped shape an evangelical identity through his radio ministry, magazines, books, and itinerant preaching. He was known for his expository messages filled with illustrations.

Despite Barnhouse's significant impact on evangelicalism in the twentieth century, minimal research has focused on him. The only published biography is an uncritical memoir of his final years by his widow.<sup>38</sup> Only one unpublished dissertation analyzes Barnhouse's preaching.<sup>39</sup> While Sexton's dissertation offers a brief introduction to his life and ministry along with a helpful introduction to his theological commitments, he provided numerous avenues for continued research. Brief historical overviews of Barnhouse are available in a history of Tenth Presbyterian Church and another in *The Journal of Presbyterian History*, but each limits its scope.<sup>40</sup> All of these resources predate the full availability of Barnhouse's unpublished papers at the Presbyterian Historical Society.<sup>41</sup>

Some unexplored areas of Barnhouse's life and ministry have heretofore received only brief notice. Barnhouse's graduation from Biola was delayed when he was caught lying and had failed to complete assignments required for graduation. He pressed on, however, because of his passion for ministry and commitment to the authority of Scripture. Barnhouse's first vocational ministry opportunities came after World War I with the Belgian Gospel Mission, but he was asked to resign after conflict with the directors of the mission. The questions surrounding Barnhouse's continuation in ministry

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<sup>38</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983).

<sup>39</sup> Ronald Thomas Sexton, "A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse" (ThD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984).

<sup>40</sup> Allen C. Guelzo, "Barnhouse," in *Making God's Word Plain: One Hundred and Fifty Years in the History of Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia*, ed. James Montgomery Boice (Philadelphia: Tenth Presbyterian Church, 1979), 63-87; C. Allyn Russell, "Donald Grey Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 59, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 33-57.

<sup>41</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. The Donald Grey Barnhouse papers were donated to the Presbyterian Historical Society in 1985, 1990, and 2002, and processed in 2011.

after his departure from Belgium have not been explored. He pursued vocational ministry in France, where his desire to preach was solidified. These years of his life, 1912-1925, have been relegated to a few sentences of introduction to prepare for his ministry at Tenth Presbyterian Church. His early years show his foundational commitments to a preaching ministry rooted in the authority of the Word of God.

Barnhouse's ministry pastoring Tenth has received greater notice because of his increase in fame, but the research is extremely limited. His ecclesiastical trial, 1929-1932, offers a first glimpse of his theological alignment with fundamentalists, but provides a clear contrast to his decision in 1936 to remain with his mainline denomination, while fundamentalists separated into new denominations. The questions regarding his commitment to the authority of the Bible after his New Year's Resolution of 1953 can now be more fully explored through the accessibility of documents from the end of his life. Russell considered Barnhouse a "fundamentalist who changed," but the evidence indicates that Barnhouse remained theologically anchored while exploring greater partnerships with believers in his denomination. Any claim that Barnhouse changed from his fundamental beliefs fails to account for his published and unpublished statements. Archival material now allows a fuller examination of Barnhouse's commitment to orthodoxy at the beginning and end of his ministry. An examination of his ministry from the beginning of his theological education to his death will show that Barnhouse maintained his posture as a messenger delivering truth on behalf of another.

The Presbyterian Historical Society archives contain papers from Barnhouse and his family. Additionally, they contain research collected by his longtime ministry partner at his Evangelical Foundation, Paul Hopkins. Shortly after Barnhouse's death, Hopkins began gathering recollections from those who knew Barnhouse at Biola, Princeton, and throughout his ministry. Hopkins and an associate conducted a valuable interview with Mabel Jean Barnhouse, Donald's older sister, months after Donald's death

and shortly before her own. The interview of Mabel Jean provides an immediate family member's reaction to the life of Donald Barnhouse.<sup>42</sup>

Paul Hopkins helped prepare the initial statements of remembrance for Barnhouse, but he continued to research details with the goal of a Barnhouse biography. Hopkins collected boxes of additional letters from Donald and Ruth Barnhouse during their years in Belgium and France, written to a beloved coworker, Elsie Parker, who remained a lifelong friend to Ruth.<sup>43</sup> The letters sent by Donald and Ruth had been kept by their coworker, given to Hopkins, and added to the archives. Barnhouse's copies from Parker had already been archived. Hopkins completed the collection of letters through his ongoing research. The letters offer a richer picture of Barnhouse's early years of ministry. The archives provide an abundant repository of information on an often passed over period of Barnhouse's life.

After Barnhouse's death, Paul Hopkins enlisted volunteers to comb Barnhouse's sermons for personal biographical details.<sup>44</sup> Hopkins secured academic records to clarify Barnhouse's training. He collated notes and drafted brief sections of a potential biography.<sup>45</sup> Hopkins's research was interrupted when he left the Evangelical Foundation for a job with the American Bible Society, two years after Barnhouse's death.<sup>46</sup> Hopkins sought to demonstrate Barnhouse's expository preaching strategy in a

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<sup>42</sup> Mabel Jean Barnhouse, interview by Paul Hopkins and Robert Oerter, January 2, 1961, 16a, Box 15, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. The interviewer, Bob Oerter, asked questions prepared by Hopkins. Mabel Jean Barnhouse died August 1, 1961. "Mabel Jean Barnhouse Dies," *Eternity*, October 1961, 30.

<sup>43</sup> Elsie Parker to Paul Hopkins, September 11, 1961, Box 15, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Elsie's maiden name was Elsie Hopkins although she was unrelated to Paul Hopkins, who served on Barnhouse's staff in the last decade of Barnhouse's life and corresponded with Parker after Barnhouse's death.

<sup>44</sup> The Evangelical Foundation Corresponding Secretary to William Cheatham, November 20, 1951, Box 3, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>45</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, "Draft Biographical Details Regarding Belgium," 1961, Box 14, Folder 27, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>46</sup> Francis W. Anderson to the Evangelical Foundation, December 22, 1962, Box 16, Folder 11,

manner “which would allow the human frailties of the man to emerge, but would tend to emphasize his dedication to the scriptures.”<sup>47</sup> Interest from publishers had dissipated a decade and a half later when he returned to the idea of publishing a book length treatment of Barnhouse’s ministry. Eerdmans replied that Barnhouse was “a major minor figure” and suggested one of the other Christian publishing houses while declining the project for his own publishing company.<sup>48</sup>

Hopkins never published any of his research. Instead he sent his gathered reams of information to the Presbyterian Historical Society. Hopkins’s material in the archives provides contemporaneous insight with the personal knowledge of years of partnership with Barnhouse. Hopkins offers access to material from 1960-1962, the years immediately following Barnhouse’s death. He gathered firsthand remembrances and recollections that would have been lost to the intervening decades as the peers of Barnhouse passed away.

Hopkins serves as a reliable resource because he agreed on the main strategies of the Evangelical Foundation, but he did not support Barnhouse without criticism. Hopkins was hired by Barnhouse to help Barnhouse effectively navigate the balance between partnership with the National Council of Churches and the evangelicals who supported Barnhouse. In 1953, Barnhouse added a handwritten endorsement of Hopkins to a memo Hopkins had written. Hopkins had endorsed Barnhouse’s partnership with the NCC, but he offered warnings about how the information needed to be communicated to their fundamentalist and evangelical partners. In response to Hopkins’s memo, Barnhouse wrote, “Quite right. That’s why you are here. This is your job. Well done.”<sup>49</sup>

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Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>47</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to William B. Eerdmans, July 7, 1975, 1, Box 15, Folder 32, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>48</sup> William B. Eerdmans to Paul A. Hopkins, July 16, 1975, Box 15, Folder 32, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>49</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to Donald Grey Barnhouse, September 18, 1953, Box 5, Folder 8, Donald

Hopkins was one of the few people willing to privately correct and rebuke Barnhouse.

Hopkins hesitated to publish in the immediate wake of Barnhouse's death:

Quite frankly, I have no significant urge to do a biography of Donald Barnhouse which simply tries to make him look like a saint. I knew him too well and of the main reasons I put the whole thing away soon after his death was because of the material I ran into in connection with my research which would not allow me to do that sort of thing.<sup>50</sup>

Decades after Barnhouse's death, in correspondence with another researcher, Hopkins admitted his awareness of Barnhouse's "very serious character faults."<sup>51</sup>

Hopkins's later writing shows he would have supported Barnhouse in remaining in the mainline denomination back at the peak of the modernist-fundamentalist debates. Hopkins remained engaged in missions within the mainline denomination and criticized the fundamentalist separation from the denomination.<sup>52</sup> Hopkins aligned with Barnhouse theologically and strategically, but he was not attempting to write a hagiography. Hopkins asked for personal accounts that captured the strengths as well as the weaknesses of Barnhouse. He saw in Barnhouse "God's gifts in an earthen vessel," and he wanted to capture the fullness of the man.<sup>53</sup> Hopkins gathered personal material with a balanced approach that highlighted the strengths of Barnhouse without ignoring his failures. Hopkins's close connection to Barnhouse, combined with his independence from Barnhouse, make Hopkins a valuable research source.

In addition to the wealth of unpublished material now available, Barnhouse's published sermons still lie waiting for continued analysis. Barnhouse is remembered for

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Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>50</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to William B. Eerdmans, July 7, 1975, 1.

<sup>51</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to C. Allyn Russell, July 29, 1981, Box 14, Unnumbered "Biographical Bits" Folder, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>52</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, *What Next in Mission?* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977), 34–35.

<sup>53</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to Dr. Ward Willis Long, January 21, 1961, Box 15, Folder 14, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

his illustrations, but no critical study has been offered of his illustrative strategy. A posthumously published collection of his illustrations carried his hopeful statement that was never realized: “One of the books I intend to write is a book on the whole art and procedure of illustrating the sermon.”<sup>54</sup> A critical examination of his illustrations fills a gap in the research of Barnhouse. His illustrative strategy serves the contemporary preacher who seeks to bring the truth of God’s word directly to bear on the hearts and minds of his listeners. An analysis of Barnhouse’s illustrations serves exegetical preachers by placing illustrations in a servant’s role to the text. Through practical examples, the importance of illustrations will be made clear in the value they provide for the preacher and his listeners.

### **Methodology**

Barnhouse’s commitment to biblical authority will be examined from his own writings, his professional and personal correspondence, and his published sermons. Little has been written about Barnhouse’s early life beyond brief references to his theological training at Biola and Princeton Seminary, but access to his personal archives offers firsthand insight into his core commitments from the beginning of his theological training. His service as a missionary in Belgium after the First World War and his four years pastoring in the French Alps are usually only given a cursory nod. These years were formative for his commitment to biblical authority and his confidence in his call to ministry. Letters from the period expose his foundational commitments.

The period of his ministry as pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia is better known because he was an increasingly public figure, but key challenges to his orthodoxy at the beginning and end of his ministry called into question his theological fidelity. He sided with fundamentalists theologically but reprimanded

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<sup>54</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Let Me Illustrate: Stories, Anecdotes, Illustrations* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1967), 9.

them for their separation from the denomination in the 1930s. Then in the 1950s he realigned himself with his denomination. He offered a public apology for his own separationist tactics and partnered with denominational agencies in the broadcast of a television program. An examination of his published sermons, editorial commentary in his *Eternity* magazine, and unpublished documents will show that Barnhouse maintained his biblical fidelity throughout his ministry.<sup>55</sup>

Barnhouse's writings include brief explanations of his homiletical strategy as well as practical training for Bible teachers. His homiletical strategy offers a framework for understanding his preaching. Barnhouse's editorials, articles, and books provide confirmation of his preaching strategy and the importance of illustrations and offer corroboration of the main evidence garnered from his sermons.

Analysis of his sermon illustrations will be through examination of his published sermons. His prolific radio and itinerant preaching ministries overlap with his published sermons, but this dissertation will limit its focus to the sermons published in book format. The audio of each sermon will be analyzed, but the choice of audio sermons will be determined by their subsequent publication.<sup>56</sup> The published sermons cover the biblical books of Genesis, Mark, John, Acts, an extensive series on Romans, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Revelation.<sup>57</sup> The published sermons also cover topical series,

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<sup>55</sup> Barnhouse began The Evangelical Foundation, which became the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals. The Alliance maintains an archive of Barnhouse's personal affects as well as unpublished notes and sermons from his ministry. "What Is the Alliance," Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, accessed March 27, 2019, <http://www.alliancenet.org/what-is-the-alliance>. Unpublished notes, letters, and sermons are contained in the Donald Grey Barnhouse Notes, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archive, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>56</sup> Ehrenstein, a colleague of Barnhouse, argued that the only way to be introduced to Barnhouse's ministry was by listening to him rather than merely reading him. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein, "Barnhouse at His Best: A Listening and Reading Guide for the Uninitiated," *Eternity*, April 1975, 37.

<sup>57</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Genesis: A Devotional Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973); Barnhouse, *Mark: The Servant Gospel*; Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), reprinted as Barnhouse, *Illustrating the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1998); Barnhouse, *Acts: An Expository Commentary*, ed. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979); Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*; Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977); Barnhouse, *Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971).

or as Barnhouse sometimes referred to them, “practical messages.”<sup>58</sup> He published fifty-three topical sermons in five books as the listed author.<sup>59</sup> He also had four individual sermons published in compilations.<sup>60</sup> The Keswick Convention published thirty-eight of his sermons from his years preaching at their annual gathering.<sup>61</sup> Nine of these Keswick sermons were reprinted so they are counted only once in the total number of sermons analyzed, although their duplication in the tables is noted. In total, this dissertation examines the illustrations in 705 sermons. Barnhouse’s other writings serve to provide context and corroboration for these sermons.

Limiting analysis to his published sermons will allow for future research on the unpublished sermons of Barnhouse that remain accessible from his radio ministry or in

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<sup>58</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 5.

<sup>59</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not* (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2015); Barnhouse, *Life by the Son: Practical Lessons in Experimental Holiness*. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939); Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits* (Philadelphia: Revelation, 1949); Barnhouse, *God’s Methods for Holy Living* (Philadelphia: Eternity, 1951) which was republished as Barnhouse, *Secrets for Successful Living* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, 1975); Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961).

<sup>60</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “When God Laughs,” in *Unveiling the Future: Twelve Prophetic Messages*, ed. T. Richard Dunham and Harry Rimmer (Findlay, OH: Fundamental Truth, 1934), 99–108; Barnhouse, “God’s Peace on Earth: A Farce or a Force,” in *Special-Day Sermons for Evangelicals: Thirty-Eight Representative Examples of Bible Preaching on Red-Letter Days of the Christian Year and the Calendar Year*, ed. Andrew Watterson Blackwood (Great Neck, NY: Channel, 1961), 79–87; Barnhouse, “Your Right to Heaven,” in *Great Sermons of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter F. Gunther (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1986), 62–69; Barnhouse, “Justification without a Cause,” in *Sermons of the Century: Inspiration from 100 Years of Influential Preaching*, ed. Warren W. Wiersbe (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 144–53. A summary of a frequently repeated sermon was also included in Barnhouse, “Marks of Sonship,” in *88 Evangelistic Sermons*, ed. Charles Langworthy Wallis and Charles L. Allen (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 55–56, but given its abbreviated format, it is not included in analysis of its illustrations.

<sup>61</sup> *The Keswick Convention 1935: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1935); *The Keswick Convention 1936: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1936); *The Keswick Convention 1938: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1938); *The Keswick Week 1946* (Spartanburg, SC: Christian Supply, 1989); *The Keswick Week 1948* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1948); *The Keswick Week 1951* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1951); *The Keswick Week 1953* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1953); *The Keswick Week 1954* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1954); *The Keswick Week 1955* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1955); Barnhouse, “The Day-by-Day Christian Life,” in *Keswick’s Authentic Voice: Sixty-Five Dynamic Addresses Delivered at the Keswick Convention, 1875-1957*, ed. Herbert F. Stevenson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 377–92; Barnhouse, “Heaven Now,” in *Keswick’s Triumphant Voice: Forty-Eight Outstanding Addresses Delivered at the Keswick Convention, 1882-1962*, ed. Herbert F. Stevenson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963), 64–72; Herbert F. Stevenson, ed., *The Ministry of Keswick: A Selection from the Bible Readings Delivered at the Keswick Convention 1921-1956* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1964).

archives. Additional future research can also identify his sermons printed in his magazines *Revelation* and *Eternity*, many of which are included in this analysis because they were subsequently published as books. Archival access to his sermons from his student days or his sermons in French during his ministry in Belgium and France would provide an intriguing comparison to his later ministry if a sufficient number could be located.

Given the central role his Romans sermons played in his pulpit and radio ministry, the published sermons offer a representative overview of Barnhouse's mature preaching strategy and methodology. Theologically, Romans summarized the whole message of the Bible for Barnhouse, and practically, Romans covered giant swaths of his preaching. He summarized the message of Romans as the message of the whole Bible: "The Bible is the story of *Man's Complete Ruin in Sin and God's Perfect Remedy in Christ*. You might call that all of the Bible in ten words."<sup>62</sup> He repeated this summary from Romans in his other preaching and teaching as well.<sup>63</sup>

Barnhouse preached through Romans for the first three and a half years of his pulpit ministry at Tenth.<sup>64</sup> After preaching through Romans at the beginning of his ministry, Barnhouse spent "half a year on the Apostles' Creed, one year on the Epistle of Jude" and then twelve years on John.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, most of the sermons from John

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<sup>62</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Teaching the Word of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940), 106; Emphasis original. Barnhouse repeated the phrase through his Romans series. Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 189; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3b, *God's Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 161; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 2.

<sup>63</sup> Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 75, 111; Barnhouse, "New Year's Resolution," *Eternity*, January 1953; Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1969), 137; Barnhouse, *The Invisible War: The Panorama of the Continuing Conflict between Good and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 17; Paul A. Hopkins, "Television: 'Man to Man,'" *Eternity*, October 1955, 7.

<sup>64</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, iii.

<sup>65</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 215.

are unavailable as only a few were published or recorded.<sup>66</sup> Barnhouse concluded his radio ministry with a “monumental 12-year task of preparing studies from the book of Romans for his radio broadcast” completed only months before his death.<sup>67</sup> My analysis, while heavily dependent upon Barnhouse’s preaching in Romans, is an accurate reflection of his preaching ministry because it matches Barnhouse’s heavy dependence upon Romans.

This dissertation combines historical research into Barnhouse’s life, theology, and ministry, with an analysis of his published sermons. Barnhouse anchored his preaching in the authority of God’s Word and brought the truth, with urgency, to his listeners through his illustrative preaching.

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<sup>66</sup> *Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible: Anthology Index* (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2017).

<sup>67</sup> Paul A. Hopkins and Russell T. Hitt, “Death of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse” (The Evangelical Foundation, November 5, 1960), 1, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse had completed all of the manuscripts, and only four sermons were left unrecorded at the time of his death. “They Grew Up Together: Dr. Barnhouse and the Radio,” 28.

## CHAPTER 2

### COMMITMENT TO AUTHORITY: FROM THE BEGINNING

Barnhouse's call to gospel ministry came as a child. His formal theological training bolstered his commitment to the authority of Scripture. His early ministry opportunities deepened his enthusiasm for preaching. Even when he faced challenges, he rested upon the power of the Word to propel him forward in ministry. This chapter explores the foundational beliefs of Barnhouse from his childhood upbringing through his early ministry. Failures at Biola and in Belgium did not derail his ministry or weaken his tenacity. His perseverance through ecclesiastical trial reinforced his fundamental doctrines. His decision to remain in his denomination as separatists departed showed his strategic priorities.

#### **Family and Church Background**

Barnhouse, born in California in 1895, was influenced by his parents' faith, his conversion through the ministry of Christian Endeavor, his training at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles and then Princeton Seminary, and his missions work in Belgium and France. His childhood faith, formal training beginning in his teenage years, and his vocational ministry in his twenties shaped his theological commitments and confirmed his call to ministry. Barnhouse believed in the authority of the Bible, and his confidence in his call propelled him through early failures.

Barnhouse came to faith through the ministry of a small Presbyterian church in Watsonville, California, where his parents were members.<sup>1</sup> Donald was the youngest of

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<sup>1</sup> Howard W. Oursler, "The Story of the Ministry," in  *Holding Forth the Word: 1927-1952* (Philadelphia: Tenth Presbyterian Church, 1952). Barnhouse's parents arrived separately in California during the years following the gold rush. His mother travelled by ship and crossed Panama. His father

five children and the only boy in the family.<sup>2</sup> A childhood friend of the family remembered his early years: “He was smart, attractive and very badly spoiled.”<sup>3</sup>

Donald was baptized in the Watsonville Presbyterian Church shortly after his first birthday.<sup>4</sup> He was the first child baptized by Pastor Ellsworth Rich, who would continue to serve the church until 1910, through Donald’s childhood.<sup>5</sup> Music was a vital part of Rich’s ministry and a key component of Donald’s home life as his father and sisters were actively engaged in the choir at Watsonville Presbyterian Church.

From childhood, Donald felt the call to preach. He described his childhood confidence in his call to be a preacher:

I was born in a home where there had been a mixed marriage, my father had been a Protestant, my mother a Roman Catholic. But from my earliest childhood there was upon me a sense that I had been called to preach. My father was a contractor, and I can remember vividly an incident that took place when I was a child. It was my fifth birthday. At the time my father was building a small hospital on the edge of our town, and he took me out to the place. I can remember walking on the wide board, slanting upwards, upon which the men were wheeling loads of bricks for the construction of the chimney. The foreman on the job came down to talk to my father. He greeted me and was told that I was five years old that day. He handed me

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came across the West by land. Barnhouse, “Limited Atonement, Part 2,” Sermon, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. Barnhouse frequently mentioned his childhood in California in his anecdotes. Barnhouse, *Acts: An Expository Commentary*, ed. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 39; Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits* (Philadelphia: Revelation, 1949), 136; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 154; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3c, *God’s Heirs: Romans 8:1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 215; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 142; Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 36, 102; Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), 51; Barnhouse, *Mark: The Servant Gospel*, ed. Susan T. Lutz (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1988), 108; Barnhouse, “The Farmer and His Crops,” Sermon, Mark 4:26-29, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>2</sup> “Children of Theodore Barnhouse and Jane Anne Carmichael,” Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>3</sup> Georgia Leora Strong to Paul Hopkins, January 21, 1961, 1–2, Box 15, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>4</sup> Certificate of Baptism (Watsonville Presbyterian Church, June 14, 1896), Box 13, Folder 31, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>5</sup> Rich’s daughter reflected on her father’s ministry in Watsonville. Viola Rich Smith to Paul Hopkins, January 17, 1962, 1, Box 16, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

a five-cent piece and asked me what I was going to do when I grew up. Without the slightest hesitation I replied, 'I am going to preach.' I knew it beyond a doubt.<sup>6</sup>

With the confidence of his experience as a five-year-old, Barnhouse explained, "There never was an instant in my life that I did not know I was going to preach."<sup>7</sup>

Barnhouse's childhood confidence in his future ministry never wavered. When evangelist J. Wilbur Chapman preached a special service at his home church, Barnhouse knew his own preaching ministry was being confirmed. He remembered, "I sat there watching the preacher with a strange calm that I can recall yet, but with an inner voice saying to me in tones that left no room for argument, 'I have called you to do this kind of work when you grow up. You will stand in My name before many people.'"<sup>8</sup>

Pivotal for Barnhouse was the ministry of Christian Endeavor, a youth evangelism and discipleship ministry. He began attending Junior Christian Endeavor as a child at the invitation of his older sister, Mabel Jean Barnhouse. As a fifteen-year-old in 1910, Barnhouse attended the statewide Christian Endeavor Convention in San Jose.<sup>9</sup> There he met Tom Hannay, a Biola student and friend of Mabel Jean, who challenged Donald to consider his own sinfulness, using Isaiah 53:6: "We all like sheep have gone

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<sup>6</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 74–75. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, "The People of God," Sermon, Romans 8:28, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Irresistible Grace, Part 1," Sermon, John 3:3-8; James 1:18, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>8</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 75. Barnhouse thought he must have been a child of eight or ten years old when Chapman visited Watsonville shortly after Chapman's evangelistic tour of Australia. Chapman's tour of Australia took place in 1909, which would have made Barnhouse a teenager if it was after the Australian tour, or Barnhouse decades later conflated the dates and highlighted Chapman's most famous ministry tour. Ford C. Ottman, *J. Wilbur Chapman: A Biography* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1920), 116. Chapman had previously served as a partner with R. A. Torrey, who soon made a lasting mark on Barnhouse at Biola. Ralph and Edith Norton also accompanied Chapman on his Australian tour, and Barnhouse's path intertwined with theirs in missions work in Belgium after World War I.

<sup>9</sup> "What Dr. Barnhouse Owed to C.E.," *Endeavor*, February 1962, 8, Box 16, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse's partnership with Christian Endeavor continued into his pastoral ministry as he hosted weekly Bible studies in Wilmington, DE, after becoming pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. "Bible Class Study: Class for Wilmington," *The Evening Journal*, September 26, 1928, Box 14, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

astray; we have turned every one [*sic*] to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”<sup>10</sup> Hannay challenged Barnhouse to read the verse in the first person singular, “I have turned to my own way,” which brought Barnhouse to confess his sins.<sup>11</sup> Barnhouse frequently referred to the work of God in his life at the age of fifteen.<sup>12</sup> The personal application of the verse to his own life brought Barnhouse to an assurance of faith on July 2, 1910.<sup>13</sup> As a young believer, he pointed to age fifteen as when he became a believer. Later in his life he reconsidered and believed he had really come to faith at age eight when he responded to a gospel message in church. Even later in life he reduced the age to five when he first understood the call of God on his life.<sup>14</sup> The further Barnhouse grew in his spiritual life, the more he realized God had been at work in his life from a very young age. He argued that the date of his salvation was less important than recognizing God’s work in his life all along.

Barnhouse came to realize that Hannay helped him find the assurance of his salvation as a teen. Barnhouse offered his listeners assurance of their own salvation in his later preaching. He wanted them to trust in God’s work of salvation rather than put their trust in their own experience of a moment of salvation. Barnhouse also used his childhood memories to point to the Reformed doctrines of grace. He argued that the important issue was not if a person knew when he was saved, but if he knew that he was saved. In a sermon in which he recounted his experiences at ages fifteen, eight, and five,

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<sup>10</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, “What Made the Man?” *Eternity*, March 1961, 16.

<sup>11</sup> Barnhouse, “Lessons in Living,” Sermon, Romans 15:4, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>12</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 89; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3b, *God’s Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 19, 71; Barnhouse, “Springs of Refreshing,” Sermon, Romans 15:32-33, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>13</sup> Barnhouse listed the date of his assurance of salvation on the back page of the Scofield Bible he used in the 1910s. Reviewed courtesy of Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., interview by author, Paradise, PA, September 11, 2017.

<sup>14</sup> *The Keswick Week 1955* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1955), 76.

Barnhouse argued for the submission to God’s sovereignty in salvation. He explained, “Now when people say to me ‘When were you saved?’ I say four times. Three have already happened, and one hasn’t happened yet.”<sup>15</sup> He summarized the argument in another sermon, “we are saved four times: first, when the Holy Spirit placed us in Christ before the foundation of the world; second, when the Lord Jesus Christ cried, ‘It is finished;’ third, when actually we were made alive by the Spirit; and fourth, in that future day when the last vestige of the Adamic nature is gone forever and the image of Christ has been completed within.”<sup>16</sup> In explanation of his position, Barnhouse argued that the apostle Paul was not saved on the road to Damascus, but that Paul had been saved from his mother’s womb based on his statement in Galatians 1:15. Paul wrote, “God set me apart from my mother’s womb and called me by his grace.” When Barnhouse reflected on his experience at age fifteen, he recognized God’s work in his life before Hannay helped bring him to an assurance of his salvation.

Hannay continued to disciple young Barnhouse and, through Christian Endeavor, affirmed for Barnhouse lessons that shaped his future ministry: the importance of evangelism, the power of conventions to lead people to a place of spiritual decision, the significance of personal Bible reading, and the value of prayer. Hannay was in the first graduating class of six students at Biola in June 1911.<sup>17</sup> Hannay was a fervent evangelist. He regularly flew a small airplane out into the Mojave desert to share the gospel with the thousands of construction workers building an aqueduct to bring water to

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<sup>15</sup> Barnhouse, “Irresistible Grace, Part 1,” Sermon, John 3:3-8; James 1:18, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>16</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God’s Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 36. In describing the four times of salvation, Barnhouse flirted with the doctrine of eternal justification, which would contradict the Westminster Confession of Faith of his ordination vows. WCF 11.4, “God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fullness of time, die for their sins and rise again for their justification: nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.” [https://www.pcusa.org/site\\_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/boc2016.pdf](https://www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/boc2016.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> “Graduation Day,” *King’s Business*, July 1911, 171

the growing region of southern California.<sup>18</sup> After his graduation from Biola, Hannay continued with Christian Endeavor, and his enthusiasm for evangelism was captured in a report that “in 46 days he had held 180 meetings, including services in churches, Y.M.C.A. meetings, at Berkeley and Stanford universities, shops and street services.”<sup>19</sup>

In July 1913, Hannay married a fellow Biola graduate, and within the month they were accepted as missionaries with Africa Inland Mission.<sup>20</sup> With other missionaries they sailed for Africa in September of that year,<sup>21</sup> but by February the tragic news reached California that missionary Tom Hannay was dead from typhoid fever.<sup>22</sup> Biola co-founder and professor, T. C. Horton remembered Hannay: “The story of his life has been written on the hearts of hundreds of lives. . . . To Tom, Heaven was real and so was Hell, and as he poured out his heart in his message many men found through him the Christ of God as Lord of their lives.”<sup>23</sup>

One of the hearts on which Hannay’s influence was pressed was Barnhouse. Hannay’s discipleship ministry left Barnhouse with a life-long commitment to evangelism and Bible study. Barnhouse remembered a train ride with Hannay and another missionary. While Barnhouse busied himself with the newspaper, Hannay read the Bible. When Barnhouse dropped the paper, he noticed Hannay and said, “Tom, I wish I knew my Bible like you know yours.” Hannay replied, “You’ll never learn it reading the newspaper,” and turned his eyes back to his Bible. Barnhouse remembered the impact years later: “It was from that moment that I made the utmost decision that

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<sup>18</sup> “Institute Items,” *King’s Business*, February 1910, 31. This 1910 article misspells Hannay’s name as Hanney. In some of his publications, Barnhouse misspelled the name as Haney, but the other records from Biola cited confirm the name of Thomas Hannay, Jr.

<sup>19</sup> “Institute Items,” *King’s Business*, January 1912, 23.

<sup>20</sup> T. C. Horton, “With the Lord: Obituary,” *King’s Business*, March 1914, 142.

<sup>21</sup> “Eight Sail for African Fields,” *The Continent*, September 25, 1913, 1338.

<sup>22</sup> “Ministerial Obituary,” *The Continent*, February 19, 1914, 260.

<sup>23</sup> Horton, “With the Lord: Obituary,” 141.

nothing, nothing, nothing would ever stand in between me and the Word of God.”<sup>24</sup>

Hannay taught him that every life is a sermon and needs a text. Barnhouse chose a life text at the encouragement of his mentor, Philippians 3:10: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”<sup>25</sup> Hannay also helped Barnhouse to see the need to read the Bible in broad strokes and even encouraged Barnhouse to adopt an entire book as his own. Barnhouse chose Philippians.<sup>26</sup>

Hannay’s impact on Barnhouse, and the whole Christian Endeavor movement, was highlighted by the introduction Barnhouse received as a preacher at a Christian Endeavor convention in 1916, two years after Hannay’s death: “Rev. D. G. Barnhouse Watsonville, Cal. One of Tom Hannay's converts.”<sup>27</sup> Barnhouse estimated that more than three hundred men and women went into ministry or into global missions through the impact of Hannay.<sup>28</sup>

Hannay fostered Barnhouse’s love for the Scriptures and his passion for evangelistic preaching. He helped guide Barnhouse to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles after Barnhouse graduated from high school. From his earliest years, Barnhouse’s commitment to the authority of the Bible and the grace of the gospel were central to his

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<sup>24</sup> Hopkins, “What Made the Man?” 17.

<sup>25</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Resurrection Life and Power,” Sermon, Romans 6:3-5, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, “The Image of His Son,” Sermon, Romans 8:29, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>26</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 242.

<sup>27</sup> “Christian Endeavor Convention Bulletin” (Christian Union Convention of Kentucky, May 1916), Box 14, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse was incorrectly listed as a Reverend in the 1916 program. His Presbyterian ordination did not take place until April 1918.

<sup>28</sup> Ralph L. Keiper and Donald Grey Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible* (Philadelphia: The Bible Study Hour, 1961), 10. Barnhouse placed an estimate on his own ministry of more than two hundred men and women who entered the ministry or missions by 1958, but he did not boast in his work. He mourned over other listeners he may have caused to stumble. Barnhouse, “Judgment for Every Man,” Sermon, Romans 14:10, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

ministry. A biographical sketch from 1959 highlighted his confidence as a five-year-old, which did not weaken in his decades of ministry: “Two strong, clear threads run through the fabric of his teaching: the inspiration of the Bible, and salvation by faith, through grace, plus nothing.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Theological Training**

Barnhouse’s upbringing in the church and his conversion laid the foundation for his theological convictions, but he was shaped by formal theological education.

#### **Bible Institute of Los Angeles**

After high school, Barnhouse followed his sister Mabel Jean and mentor Hannay to study at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. His years at Biola strengthened his commitment to the Scriptures and emboldened him for ongoing ministry. He was taught the Bible by professors who believed in its power and authority, and he continued in ministry opportunities with Christian Endeavor.<sup>30</sup> Biola helped solidify the biblical foundation for Barnhouse’s lifelong ministry.

Barnhouse graduated from Watsonville High School in 1912 and applied that fall to Biola. His three references were his sister, Mabel Jean, on staff at Biola; Hannay, who had led him to Christ and was a Biola graduate; and the Rev. E. B. Hays of Watsonville Presbyterian Church, where Donald was a member. All three of his references list significant shortcomings in the recent high school graduate. His sister Mabel “admitted that her brother had some weaknesses such as self-centeredness, conceit, and a friendly attitude toward girls, ‘but in groups only.’” Hannay acknowledged Barnhouse’s deficiencies: “1. Conceited 2. Tendency to exaggerate 3. Opinionated” but

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<sup>29</sup> “Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse: Biographical Sketch,” April 1, 1959, 1, Box 16, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>30</sup> “Christian Endeavor Convention” (Riverside County Christian Endeavor Union, November 1914), Box 14, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

believed Barnhouse “was a soul winner.” Barnhouse’s pastor recognized that Barnhouse “was enterprising and industrious” but was concerned by his arrogance and even worried that Barnhouse was not converted. When Barnhouse was asked to list his assets, he creatively answered, “\$400 and two strong arms.”<sup>31</sup>

Apparently, the fledgling school was willing to take a risk on Barnhouse in hopes that he would benefit spiritually from the school, as his sister and Hannay both believed would happen. The character flaws revealed themselves during his time at Biola, and throughout his life, while the theological impact of Biola propelled his future ministries. Barnhouse began to study at Biola in January 1913.

Barnhouse’s years at Biola shaped his theological framework. Biola grew up under the tutelage of Reuben A. Torrey. Torrey, the first academic dean in residence at Biola and its primary Bible teacher, influenced Barnhouse in his foundational theological convictions of the authority of the Bible and a dispensationalist hermeneutic.<sup>32</sup>

Barnhouse referenced Torrey’s impact throughout his ministry.<sup>33</sup> Barnhouse recalled, “Two of the most important years of my life were spent under the daily teaching of Dr. R. A. Torrey.”<sup>34</sup> Barnhouse listed Torrey among the great gifts God had given to him along with the influence of his own parents and older sister.<sup>35</sup> Barnhouse included Torrey

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<sup>31</sup> “Notes for Paul Hopkins on Barnhouse’s BIOLA Files,” 1961, 1–2, Box 14, Folder 28, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>32</sup> Paul Rood, “The Forgotten Founder,” *Biola Magazine*, Fall 2013, 15. While Torrey is often called the first dean of Biola, Rood notes that from 1908 until Torrey’s appointment, founding board member William Blackstone served as the dean of educational programs. From early 1909 to 1914, which includes the time of Torrey’s appointment, Blackstone served as a liaison in China for Biola. Thus, Blackstone was officially the first dean of Biola, making Torrey its first academic dean in residence.

<sup>33</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 262; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1b, *God’s Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 73, 109; Barnhouse, *Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 269.

<sup>34</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1948), 59.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Diversity of Gifts,” Sermon, Romans 12:6, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. Barnhouse listed Torrey as an important influence on him alongside James Gray of the Moody Bible Institute, C. I. Scofield, and Arno Gaebelein.

among the spiritual greats in the history of the church, and announced he was preaching the gospel “of Luther and Calvin, of Wesley and Whitefield, of Moody and Torrey.”<sup>36</sup>

A classmate remembered the potential that Torrey saw in Barnhouse and the opportunity they had as students to visit in Torrey’s home.<sup>37</sup> Barnhouse’s older sister, Mabel Jean, described Torrey’s relationship with Donald: “Dr. Torrey took a great liking to Don. He appreciated the keenness of his mind and he did something he never did with any other student, he loaned him his notes.”<sup>38</sup> Torrey’s theology and ministry shaped Barnhouse.

Torrey’s ministry model of direct Bible teaching with an evangelistic urgency is seen in Barnhouse’s later ministry. Torrey’s partnerships across denominations shaped Barnhouse’s later commitments as Biola fostered a passion for ministry unencumbered by denominational limitations. Furthermore, Torrey’s commitment to worldwide evangelism gave Barnhouse a global perspective even in his theological training.

Torrey arrived to lead Biola in the summer of 1911.<sup>39</sup> The newly launched institution, started in 1908, was built on the Bible school model of the Moody Bible Institute, which Torrey had helped establish. Torrey had been personally recruited by Dwight Moody in 1889 to serve as dean of the Bible Institute of the Chicago Evangelization Society. The school, started just a few years before Torrey’s arrival, would later be renamed Moody Bible Institute.<sup>40</sup> Moody also prompted the church he

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<sup>36</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1b, *God’s Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20*, 109.

<sup>37</sup> Harry Anderson to Paul Hopkins, September 14, 1961, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>38</sup> Mabel Jean Barnhouse, interview by Paul Hopkins and Robert Oerter, January 2, 1961, 16a, Box 15, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>39</sup> Roger Martin, *R. A. Torrey: Apostle of Certainty* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord, 1976), 223.

<sup>40</sup> Fred Sanders, “Biola in the American Evangelical Story,” in *Jonathan Edwards and the History of the Evangelical Mind* (Collected Papers from the 2012 Biola Faculty Integration Seminar Led by Doug Sweeney and Facilitated by Rick Langer, Los Angeles), 2015, 215, accessed July 15, 2017, [http://www.academia.edu/16952794/\\_Biola\\_in\\_the\\_American\\_Evangelical\\_Story\\_in\\_Jonathan\\_Edwards\\_and\\_the\\_History\\_of\\_the\\_Evangelical\\_Mind\\_collected\\_papers\\_from\\_the\\_2012\\_Biola\\_Faculty\\_Integration\\_Seminar](http://www.academia.edu/16952794/_Biola_in_the_American_Evangelical_Story_in_Jonathan_Edwards_and_the_History_of_the_Evangelical_Mind_collected_papers_from_the_2012_Biola_Faculty_Integration_Seminar)

had founded, the Chicago Avenue Church, which would become The Moody Church, to call Torrey as pastor.

Torrey's move to Moody was the culmination of his theological transformation from a liberal-leaning proponent of a Social Gospel to a fundamentalist committed to the "the *absolute* and *infallible* authority of the Bible."<sup>41</sup> Torrey was Yale educated and continued his doctoral studies in Europe. He began his first pastorate with a stronger commitment to social reform than an evangelical gospel. However, his daily commitment to Bible study and a spiritual crisis about the authority of the Bible reshaped his theology. In a sermon that he preached repeatedly throughout his ministry and that was published as early as 1898, "Ten Reasons the Bible Is the Word of God," Torrey began with an autobiographical summary of his return to the authority of the Bible and then laid out his argument.<sup>42</sup>

Sanders notes that Torrey recorded this sermon for the radio in the 1920s and is the only known recording of Torrey.<sup>43</sup> With only one recorded sermon of Torrey, the comparison remains incomplete, but the cadence and style of Torrey appears to have had an impact on Barnhouse's later preaching. Torrey's fully enunciated pronunciation of "God" and his trilled Rs match the style Barnhouse adopted. Barnhouse admitted that he developed many of the mannerisms of his teacher Torrey.<sup>44</sup> Barnhouse not only adopted

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eminar\_led\_by\_Doug\_Sweeney\_and\_facilitated\_by\_Rick\_Langer.

<sup>41</sup> Timothy E. W. Gloege, "A Gilded Age Modernist: Reuben A. Torrey and the Roots of Contemporary Conservative Evangelicalism," in *American Evangelicalism: George Marsden and the State of American Religious History*, ed. Darren Dochuk, Thomas S. Kidd, and Kurt W. Peterson (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 216. Emphasis original. See also Geoffrey R. Treloar, *The Disruption of Evangelicalism: The Age of Torrey, Mott, McPherson and Hammond* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 68.

<sup>42</sup> R. A. Torrey, "Ten Reasons the Bible Is the Word of God," in *How God Used R. A. Torrey: A Short Biography as Told through His Sermons*, by Fred Sanders (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2015), 10.

<sup>43</sup> R. A. Torrey, "Some Reasons Why I Believe the Bible to Be the Word of God," Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton, IL, accessed March 14, 2019, <https://www2.wheaton.edu/bgc/archives/docs/torreysermon.html>.

<sup>44</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 24.

Torrey's mannerisms but also his confidence in the authoritative text. Torrey's firm commitment to the authority of the Bible provided theological bedrock for Barnhouse's training.

Torrey was a forceful Bible teacher. His preaching was characterized by its simplicity and urgency.<sup>45</sup> He spoke in clear terms and broke his messages into understandable outlines to aid his listeners. However, simplicity in his message was not the result of simple thinking. Torrey was well educated and well studied. Sanders explains, "Torrey presented himself as intellectually credible and serious, with a message that spoke directly to the mind of his listeners as well as their hearts."<sup>46</sup> Torrey challenged listeners to think and offered critiques of false patterns of thought. Sanders summarizes Torrey's preaching: "One of the secrets of Torrey's effectiveness in preaching was that he mixed apologetics and direct evangelistic appeal judiciously, confronting his audience with convincing arguments and direct invitations to respond to the gospel."<sup>47</sup> Barnhouse's ministry could be summarized with the same words.

Torrey expected his students to have a broad biblical knowledge so that they could understand a topic in its full context. To understand any topic, Torrey demanded a full overview of the Bible's teaching on that theme. He wrote, "The only way to master any topic, is to go through the Bible, and find what it has to teach on that topic."<sup>48</sup> Torrey's strategy was reflected in Barnhouse's ministry. Barnhouse would later demand that the only way to understand any verse was to understand it in the whole context of the Bible. He read and reread the whole Bible following Torrey's strategy. Barnhouse took

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<sup>45</sup> Robert Harkness, *Reuben Archer Torrey: The Man, His Message* (Chicago: Bible Institute Colportage, 1929), 49.

<sup>46</sup> Fred Sanders, *How God Used R. A. Torrey: A Short Biography as Told through His Sermons* (Chicago: Moody, 2015), 47.

<sup>47</sup> Sanders, *How God Used R. A. Torrey*, 19.

<sup>48</sup> R. A. Torrey, *How to Study the Bible for the Greatest Profit: The Methods and Fundamental Conditions of the Bible Study That Yields the Largest Results* (New York: Revell, 1896), 57.

Torrey's lessons to heart. A view of the whole Bible shaped his understanding of any verse or topic.

Torrey's teaching and preaching included stories to help make his message clear.<sup>49</sup> He instructed his students to utilize illustrations in service of the text. Torrey exhorted, "Illustrate every point in the sermon. It will clinch the matter, and fasten it in a person's mind. Think up good illustrations, but do not over-illustrate. One striking and impressive illustration will fasten the point."<sup>50</sup> Barnhouse's preaching ministry followed Torrey's example as he remembered the impact of Torrey's "sermon illustrations unnumbered."<sup>51</sup>

Torrey adopted Moody's broad commitment to partnerships across denominational lines. He explained, "The old distinctions between Presbyterians and Methodists, between Baptists and Congregationalists, between Lutherans and Episcopalians . . . have lost significance for me. To be more exact they never had any great significance for me."<sup>52</sup> A fundamentalist commitment to the Bible and evangelistic efforts were more significant than denominational categories for Moody and Torrey. The same remained true for Barnhouse throughout his ministry.

Barnhouse was introduced to dispensational theology by professor Torrey,<sup>53</sup> and maintained premillennialism in his later ministry.<sup>54</sup> The influence of Calvinism at

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<sup>49</sup> Harkness, *Reuben Archer Torrey*, 107.

<sup>50</sup> Quoted in Sanders, *How God Used R. A. Torrey*, 42.

<sup>51</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "When Winter Comes," May 13, 1939, 2, P00477, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>52</sup> Quoted in Martin, *R. A. Torrey*, 214.

<sup>53</sup> Allen C. Guelzo, "Barnhouse," in *Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia: 175 Years of Thinking and Acting Biblically*, ed. Philip Graham Ryken (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 74.

<sup>54</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Christ's Future Kingdom on Earth," Sermon, Romans 14:17, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. Barnhouse maintained a collection of books written by Torrey throughout his ministry. Box 25, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Princeton Seminary barely softened his dispensationalism, as Barnhouse maintained a dispensational theology throughout his life.<sup>55</sup> His later radio ministry promoted dispensationalism.<sup>56</sup> After thirty years at Tenth, he continued to promote a pre-tribulation rapture in his Thessalonians sermons.<sup>57</sup> Ryrie remembered the inclusion of Scofield reference Bibles in the pews of Tenth as well as the direct distribution of Scofield Bibles by Barnhouse.<sup>58</sup>

Even through his study at Presbyterian Princeton, his ordination as a Presbyterian minister, and his decades of ministry within the Presbyterian Church, Barnhouse did not find his dispensationalism to be out of accord with his Presbyterian vows.<sup>59</sup> Stanley summarizes the theological mixture: “Barnhouse combined Reformed theology with an old-style fundamentalism and a premillennial dispensational view of prophecy.”<sup>60</sup> Reformed theologian Frame remembers his childhood introduction to Barnhouse on the radio as one who combined dispensationalism with “a Calvinistic understanding of God’s sovereignty.”<sup>61</sup> The roots of Barnhouse’s theological system were laid at Biola through the influence of Torrey.

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<sup>55</sup> Randall Herbert Balmer and John R. Fitzmier, *The Presbyterians* (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1993), 126.

<sup>56</sup> Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 12. See also Ralph E. Bass, Jr., *Back to the Future* (Greenville, SC: Living Hope, 2004), 11.

<sup>57</sup> Barnhouse, *Thessalonians*, 99.

<sup>58</sup> Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody, 1996), 9.

<sup>59</sup> John H. Gerstner, *Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth: A Critique of Dispensationalism* (Brentwood, TN: Wolgemuth and Hyatt, 1991), 60.

<sup>60</sup> Brian Stanley, *The Global Diffusion of Evangelicalism: The Age of Billy Graham and John Stott* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 113.

<sup>61</sup> John Frame, *Theology of My Life: A Theological and Apologetic Memoir* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 17. While Frame himself rejected dispensationalism, he remembers the powerful influence of Barnhouse’s preaching. Barnhouse’s preaching at the Keswick Convention was also labelled dispensational. David Bundy, *Keswick: A Bibliographic Introduction to the Higher Life Movement* (Wilmore, KY: Asbury Theological Seminary, 1975), 67.

Torrey's global evangelistic commitment ranks him on par with the great evangelists across the centuries and the successor to Moody's mantle.<sup>62</sup> Torrey preached in all parts of the English-speaking world with global tours, in 1902-1903, 1903-1905, and 1906-1907, reaching Australia, New Zealand, India, and Britain.<sup>63</sup> His global ministry garnered tens of thousands of professions of faith.<sup>64</sup> Torrey brought an evangelistic commitment to Biola as students were required to submit reports on the number of people to whom they had witnessed.<sup>65</sup>

Torrey's ministry strategy and his theological commitments shaped Barnhouse. Barnhouse called his time in Torrey's daily Bible lessons "two of the most important years of my life."<sup>66</sup> Late in his ministry, Barnhouse could still recount details from Torrey's classroom lectures.<sup>67</sup> Barnhouse rested upon the firm authority of the Bible. He preached with simplicity and urgency. He maintained inter-denominational ties. He developed a global missions perspective.

At Biola Barnhouse's intelligence and brilliant memory were on display. He "was looked upon by his fellow students as a superior student" who was in demand as a Bible teacher in the community.<sup>68</sup> A fellow classmate described Barnhouse upon his arrival: "He was only seventeen when he came—a tall, gangling youth, with a head of

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<sup>62</sup> George T. B. Davis, "Introduction: Dr. Reuben A. Torrey: Flaming Evangelist and Spirit-Filled Writer," in *The Treasury of R. A. Torrey* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1954), 7.

<sup>63</sup> Sanders, "Biola in the American Evangelical Story," 216.

<sup>64</sup> William Culbertson, "An Appreciation of R. A. Torrey," in *Great Pulpit Masters: R. A. Torrey* (New York: Revell, 1950), 3:8.

<sup>65</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 17.

<sup>66</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948*, 59. See also Barnhouse, "Editorial: R. A. Torrey," *Eternity*, February 1956, 11.

<sup>67</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 88.

<sup>68</sup> Edwin Ranton to Paul Hopkins, September 6, 1961, 1, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

blond, fluffy hair, and a quick, active mind. He was full of life and mischief, and occasionally had to be reprimanded to some extent by Dr. Torrey.”<sup>69</sup>

The danger of arrogance lurked for Barnhouse as a young man. Another classmate reflected upon their years at Biola: “My main criticism of him is that he knew his intelligence was above average, which made him egotistical as he developed and became successful in his ministry of Bible teaching.”<sup>70</sup> Another classmate recognized Barnhouse’s intellect but also warned of his arrogance. The classmate described Barnhouse’s “remarkable memory and the way he could answer quoting Scripture giving chapter and verses so readily and aptly. He had a very assertive personality, was very positive and persistent which caused some to consider him egotistical.”<sup>71</sup>

Barnhouse gained opportunities to preach through Christian Endeavor, the ministry through which he had come to faith.<sup>72</sup> He also joined musical duets and quartets for evangelistic services, using his strong tenor voice to make the gospel known. He recounted the lyrics from his teenage years even in his final days.<sup>73</sup> His personal notes from the year 1915 show a fervent passion for preaching as he was completing his degree at Biola and moving to Princeton.<sup>74</sup> In 1915 he participated in Christian Endeavor

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<sup>69</sup> Mrs. Lyman Stewart, “What Dr. Barnhouse Meant to Me,” *Eternity*, May 1961, 8. Mrs. Lyman Stewart, nee Lula Crowell, was a student with Barnhouse at Biola and then in 1916 became the second wife of the widowed oilman and philanthropist Lyman Stewart. Lyman Stewart earned his wealth in the oil fields of western Pennsylvania and then California. With T. C. Horton, Lyman Stewart founded Biola. He was also the philanthropist behind the series of book-length journals defending the authority of Scripture, *The Fundamentals*. B. M. Pietsch, “Lyman Stewart and Early Fundamentalism,” *Church History* 82, no. 3 (September 1, 2013): 618.

<sup>70</sup> Florence Colwell to Paul Hopkins, May 30, 1961, 2, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>71</sup> Besse McAnlis to Paul Hopkins, July 24, 1961, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>72</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1b, *God’s Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20*, 19. See also Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 93, 98.

<sup>73</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 32. See also Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1b, *God’s Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20*, 19.

<sup>74</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Sermons Preached,” 1919-1915, Box 11, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

campaigns in Bloomington and Bellflower, California, preaching fifteen and eighteen times respectively. He described the challenge as a young preacher of preaching so many times within a short time period without enough sermons prepared: “When I was in my teens I was invited to speak for a week in a little church in Southern California. There was such blessing that I was invited to continue for a second week, but I was in a quandry [*sic*] for I had no more sermons.”<sup>75</sup> He also preached sixteen times over two visits to a Presbyterian church in Ashland, Kentucky, which he described as a “tiny church” near the home of friends he was visiting.<sup>76</sup> Along with prison ministry and opportunities to preach in other churches local to Biola, Barnhouse recorded sixty-eight sermons in 1915.

Biola encouraged Barnhouse’s commitment to prayer and missions. While working for a summer constructing the building for the Church of the Open Door, the church founded by Torrey, Barnhouse and several classmates climbed to the unfinished roof and spent all night in prayer.<sup>77</sup> Three of the men gathered with him spent a lifetime in foreign missions. Biola helped shape his passion for ministry as well foster a commitment to the study of the Bible and prayer.

The completion of Barnhouse’s two-year Bible degree was not without controversy as he approached graduation. The character flaws identified in his original application to Biola remained struggles for him. First, Barnhouse was caught in an untruthful exaggeration regarding a relationship with a young woman on campus. Mary Hill turned down his marriage proposal, but Barnhouse announced to classmates they were engaged. She explained:

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<sup>75</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 98; Barnhouse, “Justification without a Cause,” in *Sermons of the Century: Inspiration from 100 Years of Influential Preaching*, ed. Warren W. Wiersbe (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 152.

<sup>76</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 76.

<sup>77</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 235; Barnhouse, “Praying for One Another,” Sermon, Romans 15:30-33, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

Young Donald Barnhouse was never anything but a gentleman on any of our numerous dates. Toward the last he did grow much too serious and tried to propose . . . I laughed it all off, turning him down flatly . . . Not long after this the Dean of Women came to me and asked if I were engaged to Donald. When I said ‘No, indeed,’ she told me that D. was spreading this report. A few days later I was told that Dr. Torrey had talked very sternly, [and] that Don acknowledged that he had lied.<sup>78</sup>

Hill recognized at the time Barnhouse’s tendencies toward exaggeration, but held fond memories of him over the decades as she considered him “one of God’s honored messengers” for his lifetime of ministry.<sup>79</sup> A classmate of Hill and Barnhouse summarized Barnhouse’s tendency to stretch the truth as “he had an imagination with an elastic conscience which caused him to exaggerate the truth at different times” while also affirming Barnhouse’s willingness to listen to correction from faculty.<sup>80</sup>

The seriousness of Barnhouse’s lies put his graduation from Biola in jeopardy. Other classmates remembered a second troubling issue from his final semester. Barnhouse excelled academically but failed to turn in completed notebooks from his Bible coursework.<sup>81</sup> His sister Mabel Jean confirmed that Don skipped classes to participate in Christian Endeavor conventions, and he failed to turn in the notebook assignments. Don would be required to complete the assignments which delayed his graduation. Mabel Jean considered Torrey’s response as a firm but loving confrontation that brought Don to tears. She remembered Torrey as “a stern looking man, his eyes were piercing and I imagine he just went right through Don’s soul, but at any rate he broke the

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<sup>78</sup> Mary Hill to Paul Hopkins, August 21, 1961, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>79</sup> Hill to Paul Hopkins, August 21, 1961. In 1954, when the widowed Barnhouse had proposed to Margaret Bell, but before she had given him an answer, he announced it to close friends. From Margaret’s telling, his premature announcement resulted from his excitement and his certainty of her answer rather than an attempt to mislead. Her explanation regarding 1954 matches Mary Hill’s explanation of forty years before. Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 145.

<sup>80</sup> Harlow Parsons to Paul Hopkins, August 19, 1961, 1, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>81</sup> Margaret Roberts to Paul Hopkins, September 2, 1962, 2–3, Box 16, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

news gently but firmly to Donald that he would not graduate with his class.”<sup>82</sup> Instead of completing his degree at the end of 1914, Barnhouse’s graduation was delayed until June 24, 1915.<sup>83</sup>

Torrey required Barnhouse to apologize to his classmates as part of his restoration. A Biola classmate remembered that Barnhouse “had to confess to the student body and faculty that he had told a falsehood. . . . We all admired him for humbling himself as he did and ‘sticking it out’ until they allowed him to graduate.”<sup>84</sup> Barnhouse was learning important lessons that he would need throughout his ministry. He was learning to humble himself when he was wrong, and he was learning to balance his active ministry with his educational goals. He appeared to have learned from his time at Biola when years later he encouraged a young woman in his congregation to balance her involvement with Christian Endeavor with the need to glorify God in her school work.<sup>85</sup> Biola’s influence on his ministry and theology cannot be overstated, and he remained an interested observer of Biola’s growth and success for the remainder of his ministry.<sup>86</sup>

### **Princeton Theological Seminary**

After the completion of his degree at Biola, Barnhouse went east to continue his theological training at Princeton Theological Seminary even though he had not

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<sup>82</sup> Mabel Jean Barnhouse, interview by Paul Hopkins and Robert Oerter, 17a.

<sup>83</sup> “Bible Institute Commencement,” *King’s Business*, August 1915, 665.

<sup>84</sup> Ranton to Paul Hopkins, September 6, 1961, 1.

<sup>85</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *God’s Methods for Holy Living* (Philadelphia: Eternity, 1951), 134.

<sup>86</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Bible Institute of Los Angeles,” *Revelation*, March 1945, 104. Barnhouse returned to Biola to preach at the Torrey Conference in 1945. Louis T. Talbot, “Current Business: Torrey Conference,” *King’s Business*, March 1945, 83. By 1956, Biola advertisements claimed Barnhouse as a notable graduate along with evangelist Percy Crawford who was the founder of King’s College, radio evangelist Charles E. Fuller, Dick and Don Hillis who were missionaries to China and India respectively, director of Moody Institute of Science Irwin Moon, and Dawson Trotman who was the founder of The Navigators. “College and Jim Poure,” advertisement, *King’s Business*, May 1956, 2. See also “Carol Gresh,” advertisement, *King’s Business*, July 1956, 2.

completed the normal bachelor's degree required for seminary admission.<sup>87</sup> The seminary boasted in their formidable faculty: "Benjamin Brekenridge Warfield in Theology, Robert Dick Wilson in Hebrew, William Benton Green in Apologetics, and John W. Davis in Old Testament." Barnhouse contended, "These four anchored me to the Scriptures so that no attack from any quarter could ever shake my faith that the Scriptures are absolutely the Word of God, impregnable, infallible, in short, divine."<sup>88</sup>

Barnhouse brought his dispensational commitments and bombastic personality with him from Biola. He was "a strong and combative personality," who challenged the esteemed professor Warfield in class.<sup>89</sup> Barnhouse, as a newly arrived student, proceeded to lecture Warfield on the intricacies of dispensational theology.<sup>90</sup> Warfield was not dissuaded from utilizing Barnhouse later as a secretary and stenographer.

Not only did Barnhouse bring his dispensational theology to Princeton, he brought his tendency to exaggerate. A Princeton classmate, Floyd Hamilton, remembered Barnhouse's braggadocious claim that he was helping Warfield complete a systematic theology textbook. When a systematic theology was never published, the classmate speculated that Barnhouse was inflating his importance and had only been working with Warfield on a theological article. Floyd reflected on Barnhouse as a student, "his fertile imagination so embroidered the facts that it was many times almost impossible for him to report the truth accurately." Floyd admitted he admired Barnhouse and was taken in by his charm but concluded, "I hate to say this, but Donald always had an exaggerated idea

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<sup>87</sup> "The Opening of the Seminary," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, November 1915, 31. Barnhouse is listed as a junior, a first-year student, at the opening convocation of September 17, 1915.

<sup>88</sup> Barnhouse, "When Winter Comes," 3–4.

<sup>89</sup> Kim Riddlebarger, *The Lion of Princeton: B. B. Warfield as Apologist and Theologian* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2015), 16.

<sup>90</sup> Earl L. Brown, Jr., "The Shepherd Student," *Western Reformed Seminary Journal* 12, no. 2 (August 2005): 28.

of his own importance.”<sup>91</sup> In a letter to Floyd, Paul Hopkins, Barnhouse’s ministry associate in the final decade of his life, conceded that the tendency toward exaggeration was a struggle for Barnhouse throughout his life. Hopkins affirmed Floyd’s reflections: “Your statement about the matter pertaining to Dr. Warfield’s writings is a very keen insight into Donald’s mind and I think that this was a problem with which he wrestled most of his life.”<sup>92</sup> Barnhouse brought his elasticity with the truth east with him. Still, Barnhouse’s convictions were strong. His theological foundations were secure. Another classmate contended that Barnhouse was not arrogant as much as he was certain of his own views.<sup>93</sup> For Barnhouse, Warfield was an influential theologian. Barnhouse later described Warfield as “my dear old professor of theology.”<sup>94</sup>

The professors of Princeton left a lasting mark on Barnhouse. More than a decade after attending as a student, Barnhouse returned to preach in a chapel service at the seminary. Wilson, Barnhouse’s Old Testament professor, attended to judge what kind of preacher Barnhouse had become. Wilson wanted to know if Barnhouse was a “big-godder or little-godder.” Barnhouse recounted the meeting in a sermon years later:

I asked him to explain, and [Wilson] replied: ‘Well, some men have a little god, and they are always in trouble with him. He can’t do any miracles. He can’t take care of the inspiration and transmission of the Scripture to us. He doesn’t intervene on behalf of His people. They have a little god and I call them little-godders. Then there are those who have a great God. He speaks and it is done. He commands and it stands fast. He knows how to show Himself strong on behalf of them that fear him. You have a great God; and He will bless your ministry.’<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> Floyd E. Hamilton to Paul Hopkins, January 26, 1961, Box 15, Folder 14, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>92</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to Floyd Hamilton, May 2, 1961, Box 15, Folder 14, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>93</sup> Herber J. Strickler to Paul Hopkins, March 25, 1961, Box 16, Folder 11, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>94</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 129.

<sup>95</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 340-341. See also Barnhouse, “How Great Is Your God,” Radio Sermon over Station WIP, September 22, 1935, 5, Box 1, Folder 8, Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions Collection, 1933-1936, RG 20, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; David Jeremiah, foreword to *Not God Enough: Why Your*

Wilson commended Barnhouse for his commitment to the inspiration and authority of Scripture.

As a Princeton student, Barnhouse continued to pursue preaching opportunities in local Presbyterian churches, rescue missions, and Christian Endeavor campaigns for a total of eighty-six sermons preached in 1916.<sup>96</sup> His passion for ministry and commitment to the power of God's Word were fostered by his theological training.<sup>97</sup>

### **United States Army: World War I**

Barnhouse's degree at Princeton Seminary was cut short by World War I. He completed two of the planned three years of study at Princeton but did not graduate.<sup>98</sup> Shortly after President Wilson declared war, Barnhouse joined the war effort.<sup>99</sup> In May 1917, he travelled to Washington, DC, to apply for a commission as an Army officer with the signal corps. At the time, he expected to be quickly sent to Europe: "I hope to be sent to France by the first of November if the war continues. Of course, I would be mighty glad to see things over so that my studies would not be broken into."<sup>100</sup>

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*Small God Leads to Big Problems*, by J. D. Greear (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 11.

<sup>96</sup> Barnhouse, "Sermons Preached."

<sup>97</sup> In the summer between his first and second years at Princeton, Barnhouse also took classes at the University of Chicago for the summer quarter of 1916. William J. Van Cleve to Paul A. Hopkins, April 13, 1961, Box 15, Folder 29, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. The memorial issue of *Eternity* magazine incorrectly listed 1915 as the summer he spent at the University of Chicago which was repeated in other summaries of Barnhouse's life. "Synopsis of the Life of Donald Grey Barnhouse," *Eternity*, March 1961, 3. See also Balmer and Fitzmier, *The Presbyterians*, 125. Barnhouse's notes confirmed the records of the University of Chicago registrar, Van Cleve, as all of the preaching venues Barnhouse listed for July and August 1916 were in Chicago. Barnhouse, "Sermons Preached."

<sup>98</sup> Paul Martin, "Princeton Theological Seminary Courses Completed," October 19, 1920, Box 15, Folder 9, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse also completed two courses at Princeton University in 1917, Philosophy 201 and English 201.

<sup>99</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Who Is Lord of Your Conscience?" *Eternity*, August 1961, 23.

<sup>100</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, May 30, 1917, 1, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

He officially began his US Army service on June 27, 1917, and was honorably discharged on January 3, 1919, as a First Lieutenant in the Air Service.<sup>101</sup> The signal corps to which he was assigned included the Aeronautics division, where Barnhouse was placed. He began his training service in Princeton, but after seven weeks was sent to study the theory of flying at the Royal Flying Corps in Toronto, Canada. By training with Canadian soldiers already engaged in the war, he saw glimpses of the destruction in the fields of Europe. He described his experience in Canada:

Conditions here in Toronto are quite different from what they are down in the States. Everything is WAR here, spelled in capital letters, and the thing that grieved me most was to see the hundreds of men around the street corners, in uniforms with empty sleeves and empty trouser legs. Many men have both legs shot off. . . . I will probably see worse when I get to London and Paris.<sup>102</sup>

After his training in Toronto, he continued at The United States Army School of Military Aeronautics at Princeton University in the fall of 1917.<sup>103</sup>

Barnhouse later described his first time flying:

It was an old-fashioned airplane with open cockpits. . . . We were moving more than a hundred miles an hour. . . . We reached over two thousand feet on our first flight. We had risen from a cow pasture near Princeton where a group of us were beginning the road to knowledge of planes.<sup>104</sup>

He longingly remembered, “Those were the days!” He “learned to fly a plane made of wood, held together with wires, covered with cloth, and painted with banana oil” as forty pilots took turns in pairs to fly the two planes.<sup>105</sup> But even during their training, they recognized the reality of death facing them every time they lifted off, and Barnhouse

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<sup>101</sup> “Army of the United States of America Discharge Certificate,” January 3, 1919, Box 15, Folder 9, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>102</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, August 12, 1917, 1, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Emphasis original.

<sup>103</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, October 26, 1917, Box 12, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>104</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Your Right to Heaven* (Philadelphia: Evangelical Foundation, 1955), 21. Barnhouse referred to his flying days in later illustrations. Barnhouse, *Revelation*, 27.

<sup>105</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 109.

witnessed planes crash with fellow pilots in them.<sup>106</sup>

Early in 1918 he was transferred to the newly constructed Kelly Field in San Antonio, Texas. While travelling by train to Texas via St. Louis, he wrote to friends back in New Jersey with the expectation that he was being prepared to enter the battle: “When I am transferred from Kelly [Field in Texas] to France (and there are prospects of it in the near future) I hope to stop off and see you all.”<sup>107</sup> Instead of travelling from Texas to France, he was stationed at Hazelhurst Field in Hempstead, New York. His experience there continued to foster his love of flying: “I am flying every day now and am getting enjoyment out of every moment of it.”<sup>108</sup> He did not see any battle action during the war although he spent some time in the hospital with the measles or scarlet fever in Texas and another hospital stay in New York.<sup>109</sup>

During Barnhouse’s military training, he continued to seek out opportunities to preach. He preached on Sunday mornings in local churches and at YMCA meetings on regional military bases.<sup>110</sup> He tracked his preaching during this era and preached seventy-six sermons in 1917, which included Sunday morning and evening preaching at Presbyterian churches as well as camp meetings at the military base, Camp Dix, New

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<sup>106</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Who Rules the Christian,” Sermon, Romans 13:3-4, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>107</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, January 12, 1918, 2, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. This handwritten letter is dated January 12, 1917, but it must be an example of the common error of including the prior year when writing in January since Barnhouse did not enter the Army until May 1917.

<sup>108</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, April 29, 1918, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>109</sup> George Steel to Mrs. Barnhouse, February 15, 1918, Box 12, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. While his fellow soldier described his condition as measles to Barnhouse’s mother, he labelled it scarlet fever when writing on Barnhouse’s behalf to a family friend. George Steel to Mr. Prentice, February 18, 1918, Box 12, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also Barnhouse’s letter written from a war hospital in Williamsbridge, New York City. Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, October 24, 1918, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>110</sup> Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, October 26, 1917.

Jersey. In 1918 he also preached seventy-six sermons, including at Camp Kelly and a Presbyterian Church in San Antonio as well as regular preaching at Presbyterian Churches in Jersey City, New Jersey, New York City, and Philadelphia.<sup>111</sup> Even as he continued preaching, Barnhouse recognized that his repentance and faith in Jesus as Lord was a lifelong process and saw God at work during his war days.<sup>112</sup>

During his military service, despite the fact that he had not completed his theological degree, he was ordained as a minister by the Monmouth Presbytery, New Jersey, in April 1918.<sup>113</sup> Barnhouse explained how the circumstances of war prompted his unusual ordination: “There had come that day when I visited the Presbytery under whose care I had been as a student. One of the men proposed that I be ordained a year before my time. I was in uniform, and had become a first lieutenant, and so they voted to ordain me so that (as one of them said) I might be able to minister if the need arose.”<sup>114</sup> With his wartime ordination completed, Barnhouse never returned to complete his degree at Princeton Seminary.

### **Belgium and France**

A world at war, a delay in his theological training, or a busy travel schedule could not diminish Barnhouse’s commitment to gospel ministry. Plus, his service in the army introduced him to advances in technology through aviation and radio communication. His interest in world travel and the possibilities for the radio were already being shaped. He spent most of 1917 and 1918, the years the United States was

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<sup>111</sup> Barnhouse, “Sermons Preached.”

<sup>112</sup> Barnhouse, *Acts*, 42. Barnhouse admitted, without providing further details, “There was a time during the First World War, when I was in the army, that I was completely out of the will of God.”

<sup>113</sup> The Evangelical Foundation Corresponding Secretary to William Cheatham, November 20, 1951, 1, Box 3, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>114</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32,76*.

involved in the war, expecting to travel to Europe, but it would not be until after the war that he traveled across the Atlantic.

### **Belgian Gospel Mission**

Near the conclusion of Barnhouse's military service, Torrey introduced Barnhouse to Ralph and Edith Norton and their pioneering missionary efforts in the Belgian Gospel Mission.<sup>115</sup> Torrey helped raise \$100,000 for Bibles for war torn Belgium as the Nortons launched their mission.<sup>116</sup> Early in 1919, Barnhouse joined them in Brussels and, given his quick aptitude for learning French, was handed responsibilities for conducting the newly launched worship services.<sup>117</sup> In September of 1919 a Bible School, L'Institut Biblique de la Mission Belge Evangélique, was initiated with a handful of students under Barnhouse's oversight.<sup>118</sup> The school, modeled on American Bible colleges like Moody and Biola, aimed to provide two-year degrees with the goal of sending graduates to preaching stations around the city and country.

Barnhouse saw growing success in the church and school. By the fall of 1919 the church had grown to be "the largest protestant [*sic*] service in Brussels" with one hundred and twenty worshippers gathered "and not 15 of whom were Christians before the armistice."<sup>119</sup> Barnhouse was viewed as "an enterprising, dynamic young American" because of his ministry fervor and impact.<sup>120</sup> He organized outreach programs, worship

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<sup>115</sup> "Love at First Sight: Belgium and France," *Eternity*, March 1961, 29.

<sup>116</sup> Edith F. Norton, *Ralph Norton and the Belgian Gospel Mission* (New York: Revell, 1935), 146.

<sup>117</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Parents, March 18, 1919, Box 12, Folder 14, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse informed his parents in March 1919 of his arrival in Brussels after travelling through London.

<sup>118</sup> Philip Eugene Howard, *A New Invasion of Belgium* (Philadelphia: Sunday School Times, 1924), 181.

<sup>119</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, September 21, 1919, 1, Box 12, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>120</sup> Phyllis Thompson, *Firebrand of Flanders: The Gospel in Belgium Seen in the Life of*

services, and the Bible school. The mission's goals were to have ten preaching stations established, which would require ten trained pastors. By the end of 1919, months sooner than was anticipated, nine stations were already begun with exactly nine students enrolled for the winter term of 1920.<sup>121</sup> Barnhouse was helping the mission reach its optimistic goals.

Edith Norton offered a glowing assessment of Barnhouse's ministry in Belgium: "In March 1919 we welcomed to Brussels this young man who was to play such a large part under God, in the shaping of the work which has been entrusted to us in that land. Someone has said of Mr. Barnhouse, that if he were set down in the heart of the desert he would get along somehow and make a success in life."<sup>122</sup> Barnhouse reciprocated the affection shown by the Nortons. In April 1921, he wrote to his mother and described the Nortons: "I do not know two people in the world who are more loved than they are. It certainly is a mighty pleasure to work with them. Naturally I have grown very close to them in the last two years; and I am sure that this will increase more and more as the work grows."<sup>123</sup> The mutual admiration between Barnhouse and the Nortons did not last.

**Dismissal from the Belgian Gospel Mission.** Barnhouse's tenure with the Belgian Gospel Mission lasted just over two years. Toward the end of his time in Belgium, Barnhouse bristled under the leadership of the Nortons when they returned from a months-long fundraising tour back in the United States. Barnhouse also behaved

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*Odilon Vansteenbergh* (London: Lutterworth, 1964), 52.

<sup>121</sup> Guy Fleming, *In the Wake of the Whirlwind: The Story of the Belgian Evangelical Mission* (Brussels: Belgian Evangelical Mission, 1973), 81.

<sup>122</sup> Fred Sanders, "Happy Birthday to Donald Grey Barnhouse," *The Scriptorium Daily*, March 28, 2009, accessed May 1, 2017, <http://scriptoriumdaily.com/happy-birthday-to-donald-gray-barnhouse/>, quoting *King's Business*, February 1921, 132.

<sup>123</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mother, April 2, 1921, 3, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

in an unwise manner toward some of the young women of the church.

Elsie Parker Hopkins, a fellow American missionary who served as Ralph Norton's secretary, described Barnhouse's unwise actions with a young woman in the church. Barnhouse, a handsome and eligible bachelor, was asked to dinner by a family in the church. He considered it a pastoral duty, but millions of men had been killed in the war. The family held out high hopes that Barnhouse might show interest in their daughter. The young woman lingered after meetings to ask Barnhouse questions. One night, he drove her home. Elsie described the young woman's complaint regarding Barnhouse: "One night in his loneliness and her loveliness—and moonlight—he kissed her good-night—and realizing temptation, fled. After that he barely spoke [to her]. To the European view he had paid her serious attentions and then repudiated her. Now she had no use for him or the Gospel."<sup>124</sup>

After the Nortons learned of his actions, it was uncovered that there was at least one other young woman with whom Barnhouse had showed a similar lack of wisdom. Even after his departure from Belgium, Elsie learned of a French woman who fell in love with him and was disappointed by the crossed signals Barnhouse had offered. Elsie suspected his American customs and comfort with his sisters had created a "chuminess toward women" which was misunderstood in his European context.<sup>125</sup>

When confronted by the Nortons, Barnhouse admitted his failures. He publicly confessed his sin: "Once before the workers of the Mission, once before the students of the Bible School and once before a group of the Belgian Christians chosen from the

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<sup>124</sup> Elsie Parker to Paul Hopkins, December 30, 1960, Box 15, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>125</sup> Elsie Parker to Paul Hopkins, February 24, 1961, 2, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. For further reference to Mademoiselle Mercier's claim that Barnhouse "led her on" while counseling her to end her relationship with a Catholic man see Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie 'Hoppie' Hopkins, June 26, 1922, 4, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Assembly by Mr. Norton.”<sup>126</sup> Despite his confession, Barnhouse was dismissed from leadership in the mission because of these indiscretions and his leadership conflicts with the Nortons. His dismissal limited his ministry options. Board member Charles Trumbell,<sup>127</sup> who served as the influential editor of the Philadelphia based *The Sunday School Times*, refused to publish anything by Barnhouse because of “the grave sins which were the occasion of the Mission’s letting [him] go.”<sup>128</sup> Trumbell’s opposition was a significant barrier for future ministry in America. *The Sunday School Times* had 110,000 paid subscribers and helped shape fundamentalists’ attitudes stateside.<sup>129</sup> It was not until Barnhouse was installed as pastor at Tenth Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in 1928 that Trumbell would again publish anything by Barnhouse.<sup>130</sup>

In the weeks following his departure from Belgium, Barnhouse admitted “my going was entirely my own fault and no one’s else [*sic*].”<sup>131</sup> He spiritually wrestled with his own sin and sought help from God, “going back over every old sin and difficulty, confessing and re-confessing them to the Lord, repentant and ever remorseful and wondering why, when sin had long since been confessed and put away there was not freedom from the self-accusation.”<sup>132</sup> He saw “the blackness and the hatefulness” of his own heart and found hope in his obedience to the Lord and continued ministry

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<sup>126</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to C. G. Trumbull, June 2, 1924, 1, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>127</sup> Edith F. Norton, *Opened Windows of Heaven* (Toronto: Evangelical, 1927), 18.

<sup>128</sup> Charles G. Trumbell to Donald Grey Barnhouse, May 20, 1924, 2, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>129</sup> Robert William Patterson, “Keswick Theology and American Evangelicalism” (ThM thesis, Westminster Theology Seminary, 1982), 83.

<sup>130</sup> Charles G. Trumbell to Donald Grey Barnhouse, June 15, 1928, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>131</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, June 26, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>132</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, August 28, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

opportunities.<sup>133</sup>

Years later, Barnhouse attempted to mitigate his personal culpability by focusing merely on disagreements about policy and pointing to the resignations of other American team members as evidence of Ralph Norton's failures of leadership. In 1941, he asked Elsie Hopkins, his former co-worker in France, to send a letter to a critic affirming that "there was no charge against morality or honesty in the case of Mr. Barnhouse."<sup>134</sup> Because of her knowledge of his behavior she could not endorse him as he requested, but she did write that Barnhouse had confessed his "youthful errors—sins which had been confessed with a contrite spirit."<sup>135</sup>

Even before the conflict over his relationships with young women in the church, Barnhouse's working situation with the Nortons was strained already. Barnhouse considered himself the de facto leader of the mission because of the Nortons' frequent fundraising travels. Given the growth of the ministry, the Nortons spent many months each year in the United States raising funds for the mission, which left Barnhouse in charge of ministries. Barnhouse defended his ministry to a critic years later: "Mr. Norton, without a knowledge of French, expected to be in America six or even eight months in the year and then come back and take over the complete control of the Mission without knowledge of its inner functioning."<sup>136</sup>

Barnhouse worked tirelessly in the pioneering missions work with limited staff and nearly limitless opportunities, but he bears responsibility for his sins that led to his

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<sup>133</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie 'Hoppie' Hopkins, September 24, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>134</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie Parker, November 6, 1941, 2, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>135</sup> Elsie Parker to Paul Hopkins, January 25, 1961, 2, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>136</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Marie C. Caspar, November 9, 1951, Box 3, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

departure. Even Ralph Hopkins, a long-time associate of Barnhouse at his Evangelical Foundation, acknowledged Barnhouse's failures in Belgium, admitting Barnhouse "had been unwise in some of his actions."<sup>137</sup> However, Hopkins believed that Barnhouse had, over the years, minimized the significance of his personal sins and focused on his future ministry: "it was something that had faded into insignificance in his thinking and I really believe that he had fully forgotten."<sup>138</sup>

Edith Norton reflected on the challenges of 1921, the year Barnhouse was forced out of the Belgian Gospel Mission:

This year, 1921, was a year of crisis. The work had grown very rapidly—too rapidly for the security and the moment of reckoning came. The work was becoming superficial. . . . there were many resignations from among the workers who could not agree to the stern disciplinary measures decided upon . . . and there was a painful after period, when Mr. Norton suffered a barrage of incrimination and criticism for his arbitrary rulings.<sup>139</sup>

The Nortons felt personally betrayed by Barnhouse. Barnhouse's first full-time vocational ministry ended with his dismissal from the Belgian Gospel Mission.

## France

Barnhouse left the Belgian Gospel Mission with sadness, but also confidence in God's call on his life. He wrote to his co-worker Elsie, "I am at the same time desperately unhappy and miserable and at the same time never so serenely calm and joyful in the Lord."<sup>140</sup> Barnhouse did not doubt the continuing work of God in his life. Even after his return to the United States he remembered his departure from Belgium: "I knew that I was in [God's] will and that there was nothing between me and Him that

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<sup>137</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, "Draft Biographical Details Regarding Belgium," 1961, 13, Box 14, Folder 27, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>138</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to Mrs. E. H. Parker, February 24, 1961, 2, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>139</sup> Norton, *Ralph Norton and the Belgian Gospel Mission*, 171.

<sup>140</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie 'Hoppe' Hopkins, June 19, 1921, 2, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

could keep Him from working through me.”<sup>141</sup>

After his departure from the mission, Barnhouse considered four ministry opportunities: a small church in the French Alps whose pastor had been killed in the war, another ministry in Saigon in French Indo China, and two options in the French colony of Tunisia.<sup>142</sup> He chose to serve in France and made the journey to the Alps by walking from the outskirts of Paris all the way to the south of France. His journey across France served as a metaphor for his Christian journey in sermons he preached later in life:

It was not the matter of a morning or an afternoon, but it was the entire month of June. I set off through the countryside; the forest of Fontainebleau, the little village of Mure-sur-Loing, Sens and its old cathedral, prototype of Canterbury, the smiling villages of Burgundy, Dijon and its old houses, and then the pine-filled hills of the Jura, the lake of Geneva, and the Alps beyond.<sup>143</sup>

The journey of five hundred miles did not weaken his resolve. Instead it reconfirmed his commitment to gospel ministry. People responded to his journey “with gaping mouths when they learn that I have walked almost all the way from Paris. ‘Alone?’ they ask. And I have to say no, for He is more real to me than the road which grinds away behind me.”<sup>144</sup> He was sure of the call God had placed on him. He wrote home to his parents in California with confidence in God’s continued work in his life, “God led me out of Brussels to lead me IN to something better of his choosing.”<sup>145</sup> Even as Barnhouse

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<sup>141</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Charles Trumbull, June 13, 1928, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>142</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, September 19, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. While in Belgium, Barnhouse had rejected an opportunity to go to Philadelphia as pastor of Bethany Presbyterian Church, which he had communicated in confidence to a board member of the Mission. Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, August 24, 1920, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>143</sup> Barnhouse, *Your Right to Heaven*, 1955, 55. See also Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3c, *God’s Heirs: Romans 8:1-39*, 21; Barnhouse, “Praying for One Another,” Sermon, Romans 15:30-33; Barnhouse, “Stewardship,” Sermon, Mark 10:28-31, *Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals*, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>144</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, June 26, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Emphasis original.

<sup>145</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mother and Father Barnhouse, August 12, 1921, 1, Box 12, Folder 15, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers. Emphasis original.

described walking through fire, he gave thanks that God had never abandoned him.<sup>146</sup>

The small church in the French Alps was very poor, and Barnhouse believed as a young pastor he would have the energy to strengthen the congregation and the fortitude to make it through the winter.<sup>147</sup> He prayed for God to work in his own heart even as he saw “marvelous” opportunities for ministry in the church.<sup>148</sup>

As he prepared for his preaching ministry in the Alps, Barnhouse remained in contact with friends at the Belgian Gospel Mission. He corresponded with his friend and colleague Elsie, but his affection was growing for another American missionary. Ruth Tiffany had arrived with the Nortons in Belgium on March 9, 1921, before Barnhouse departed Belgium. Barnhouse matter-of-factly described Ruth to his mother:

She is Miss Ruth Tiffany, of whom you'll probably hear more. She is very nice. Age 24, color white, hair, dark blonde, height, medium, slender, eyes gray. Graduate of Juniata college in Pennsylvania and M.A. Cornell University. Has taught High school for one year at Hershey, Pa., and half a year at Moorestown, N.J. Father was a Methodist minister, but died when she was six. Now when I speak of her in the future, you have the background.<sup>149</sup>

By the time he departed Belgium a few months after Ruth's arrival, Barnhouse was interested in building a relationship with Ruth, but Barnhouse was forbidden to write to Ruth as one of the conditions of his departure imposed by the Nortons.

Without opportunity for direct correspondence with Ruth, Barnhouse maintained a connection with Elsie. Both women continued to serve at the mission and were soon-to-become roommates. Barnhouse added a postscript to his June 12, 1921

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<sup>146</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Georges Collinet, July 17, 1924, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse exclaimed, “le feu au travers duquel j'ai passé pendant l'été de 1921. Heureusement Dieu n'a jamais lâché prise!” He described “the fire through which I passed in the summer of 1921. Fortunately, God never let go!”

<sup>147</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, September 20, 1921, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>148</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, March 21, 1922, 1, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>149</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mother, April 2, 1921, 1, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

letter: “I hadn’t meant to say any thing [*sic*] about Ruth in this letter, and I expect that this will be the last time for I don’t want to add to her burdens.”<sup>150</sup> However, within weeks, he was again asking about Ruth even though he feared causing problems for Ruth in the Belgian Gospel Mission.<sup>151</sup> Ruth appeared to have only written to Donald once in 1921 after his departure, and she did so with Edith Norton’s permission in order to end further correspondence with Donald.<sup>152</sup> Despite the Nortons’ interventions, Donald’s affection for Ruth continued to grow, and he hoped for a return to Belgium. He was eager to be fully reconciled to the Nortons. He explained to Elsie his hopes for reconciliation: “Absolutely anything that I can do—I am ready to do.”<sup>153</sup> Barnhouse feared Ralph Norton was allowing others to conclude that Barnhouse had been dismissed for adultery. Barnhouse shared his fears with Elsie: “[Ralph Norton] said that I had been dismissed ‘for lying and other grievous sins’” which led people to assume “I had transgressed the 7th commandment.”<sup>154</sup>

After a year exiled from Belgium, Donald invited Elsie and Ruth to meet him in Paris during their vacation from the mission.<sup>155</sup> Barnhouse had exchanged pulpits with a pastor in the city who was looking for a respite in the Alps.<sup>156</sup> During their two weeks together, Donald asked Ruth to marry him. With his engagement to Ruth Tiffany and the

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<sup>150</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, June 12, 1921, Box 15, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>151</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, June 26, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>152</sup> Elsie Parker to Paul Hopkins, September 11, 1961, 2, Box 15, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>153</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, August 28, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>154</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Elsie ‘Hoppie’ Hopkins, September 24, 1921, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>155</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mabel Barnhouse, August 15, 1922, Box 12, Folder 15, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>156</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, July 26, 1922, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

support of other staff at the Belgian Gospel Mission, Barnhouse remained optimistic in the summer of 1922 that the door might still be opened for him to return to serve in Belgium.<sup>157</sup> He expected the discontent with the Nortons among the mission staff to create an opportunity for him to return with Ruth to serve in Brussels.<sup>158</sup> Barnhouse hoped the Nortons would recognize his repentance and see how much they needed his help. At a minimum, he expected a strategic partnership with the Nortons, even if he did not return to work directly for them in the mission.<sup>159</sup>

Engaged in Paris in July, Donald and Ruth set a wedding date for September in London. Donald and Ruth were married on Monday, September 18, 1922 at Sidcup Chapel.<sup>160</sup> Donald wore a top hat and formal suit with tails, and Ruth wore a simple but elegant dress with a flowing bouquet of flowers.<sup>161</sup> Elsie was present as one of the witnesses and remained a lifelong friend to Ruth.<sup>162</sup>

The Barnhouses attempted to reconcile with the Nortons over the course of the next several years while serving in France. Edith Norton visited with Ruth's mother, Gertrude Tiffany, at Torrey's Montrose Retreat Center in Pennsylvania. Edith described Donald's departure from the mission by comparison to "Paul turning Hymenius and

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<sup>157</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Father Barnhouse, July 23, 1922, 3, Box 12, Folder 15, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, July 26, 1922, 3, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>158</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mabel Barnhouse, August 15, 1922, Box 12, Folder 15, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>159</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, July 26, 1922, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>160</sup> "Wedding Announcement," 1922, Box 16, Folder 16, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; "Wedding at Sidcup Public Hall" (Chiselhurst and District Times, September 22, 1922), Box 16, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; "Alumni Notes," *The Princeton Seminary Bulletin*, November 1922, 19.

<sup>161</sup> "Wedding Photograph," September 17, 1922, Box 16, Folder 16, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>162</sup> H. Lawrence Gooding, "Certified Copy of an Entry of Marriage," September 18, 1922, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Alexander over to Satan.”<sup>163</sup> Donald wrote to the Nortons hoping to uncover steps he could take toward a restoration of the relationship. He asked “what I may do to show you my repentance, my sincerity and my love for the Mission and for you.”<sup>164</sup> Donald admitted they “had justly lost confidence in me” but remained confident in his call to serve the Lord in ministry.<sup>165</sup> Edith replied with a promise to pray for Donald and Ruth, but without endorsing him for continuing ministry.<sup>166</sup> Preparing for his return to the United States in 1925 Barnhouse was eager to put the conflict with the Nortons behind him. He asked them to answer any inquiries about him with a confirmation of confidence in his ministry.<sup>167</sup> He knew he may need their recommendations for job opportunities in the States. The Nortons refused to endorse Barnhouse for ministry leadership and reiterated their concerns about his sin and lack of wisdom.<sup>168</sup>

For his second pastorate in the French Alps, the Barnhouses moved to La Mure, a town of around 5,000 with as many residents in the surrounding villages. Barnhouse helped several Protestant churches in the region reaching “two or three hundred protestants.” He explained, “I have several smaller churches round about, two seven miles away to the south and south-west, and one five miles to the north and another four miles farther north.”<sup>169</sup> It was at this second pastorate in France that Donald and

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<sup>163</sup> Gertrude K. Tiffany to Elsie Parker, September 6, 1923, 4, Box 12, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>164</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mr. and Mrs. Norton, July 17, 1924, 1924, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>165</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mrs. Norton, July 23, 1924, 2, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>166</sup> Edith F. Norton to Donald Barnhouse, July 21, 1924, 3, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>167</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mr. and Mrs. Norton, June 6, 1925, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>168</sup> Ralph C. Norton and Edith Norton to Ruth Barnhouse, June 8, 1925, 3, Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>169</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, December 4, 1923, 1, Box 12, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Ruth welcomed their first daughter, Ruth Tiffany, named after her mother, on October 23, 1923.

Barnhouse's years in France were foundational to his future ministry. He regularly referred to his time in France in his sermons as his "student days in France."<sup>170</sup> While he had not finished his seminary degree at Princeton, he continued to study history in France. France and Belgium also offered him a global ministry perspective. He considered his years in France as "years that were formative in my life."<sup>171</sup> He drew from them for sermon illustrations, and these years help explain his passion for evangelism around the world.<sup>172</sup>

During his pastorates in France, Barnhouse enrolled in courses at the University of Grenoble. While it was pastoral ministry that took him to the Alps, Barnhouse regularly reflected on those years as years in which he was primarily a student and serving in pastoral ministry was done in addition to his studies. When introducing an illustration he explained, "After the first world war I ministered in several country parishes in the mountains of southeastern France while attending the university at Grenoble."<sup>173</sup> He first completed certificates at Grenoble, which were the equivalent of primary school and high school level courses, to enable him to enroll in college level

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<sup>170</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 29; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2b, *God's River: Romans 5:1-11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 27; Barnhouse, *Acts*, 159; Barnhouse also referred to the years in France as "my university days." Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 93; Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living*, 137; Barnhouse, *The Invisible War: The Panorama of the Continuing Conflict between Good and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 139.

<sup>171</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3c, *God's Heirs: Romans 8:1-39*, 139.

<sup>172</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 29.; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 234.; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4a, *God's Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 47; Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 52; Barnhouse, *Mark*, 121.

<sup>173</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2b, *God's River: Romans 5:1-11*, 144.

courses.<sup>174</sup> He then focused on history at the University of Grenoble taking classes two days each week.<sup>175</sup>

Barnhouse believed education served an apologetic purpose. A degree from a well-respected university would demand respect from skeptics. Writing in 1924, Barnhouse described his plans to complete certificates in history and the history of art. The completed certificates would give him a degree that he described as “a little higher than the degree of Master of Arts.”<sup>176</sup> He then planned to apply for a fellowship to study in Jerusalem with Dr. William Albright in 1926-27, with the plan to return to the United States in 1927.<sup>177</sup> His lack of an academic degree unraveled his plans as he was denied acceptance into the program at the American Schools of Oriental Research because “of the academically incomplete character of your studies in this country [the United States], you could hardly be accredited to any college here, especially as you are not a graduate, a standing we should expect of a candidate.”<sup>178</sup>

Barnhouse completed three of four certificates required for his program at the University of Grenoble. He completed “the certificate of Ancient History (with Greek as my language, Greek Archeology as my practical test), the certificate of Modern History, and a certificate of literature,” but he returned to the United States before he finished.<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> “Love at First Sight: Belgium and France,” 29. See also “Certificat D’Etudes Primaires Elementaires” (Academit de Grenoble, June 26, 1922), Box 14, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>175</sup> “University of Grenoble, University of Pennsylvania - Course Notes,” 1924 1923, Box 13, Folders 24-26, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also Barnhouse to Louis N. Prentice, December 4, 1923, 2.

<sup>176</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, November 3, 1924, 3, Box 12, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>177</sup> Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, November 3, 1924, 1, 3.

<sup>178</sup> James A. Montgomery to Mr. Barnhouse, January 10, 1925, Box 15, Folder 9, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>179</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Dr. G. Serr, April 22, 1953, Box 15, Folder 21, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

While Barnhouse did not complete the degree at Grenoble or travel to Jerusalem, he described the value of such degrees:

There is going to be a great struggle in the religious world in the next few years and those of us who believe in the great Fundamentals of the faith should have the very best education that it is possible to get, above all since the liberals often accuse the Fundamentalists of a lack of scientific knowledge. So if we can come back to America with the finest diplomas that the European Universities can give . . . we can at least ask the right to be heard by those who want to destroy all that faith holds dear to us.<sup>180</sup>

For Barnhouse, his studies in Europe held strategic value. He would use his training to advance the fundamentals of the faith.

### **Return to the United States**

In 1925, the Barnhouses returned to the United States and settled in Philadelphia. Barnhouse continued the studies in history he had begun in France, by enrolling in courses at the University of Pennsylvania and serving as a lecturer in their history department for two years.<sup>181</sup> He described his goal: “I am going to work at the University of Pennsylvania and I hope to get a place to teach, either at Penn or at one of the other Colleges around Philadelphia and also get a small Church where I shall preach Sundays.”<sup>182</sup> Barnhouse’s years of preparation in France, along with his continued studying at the University of Pennsylvania, prepared him well for a planned career as a professor, but he continued to feel the call to preach.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, November 3, 1924, 3–4.

<sup>181</sup> “Barnhouse Autobiography,” May 2, 1958, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>182</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to L. N. Prentice, March 30, 1925, 1, Box 12, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>183</sup> Barnhouse, *Acts*, 220.

## **Grace Presbyterian Church**

Barnhouse found his small church to preach in and was called as the pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church, just across the Schuylkill River from Penn in November 1925.<sup>184</sup> He was formally installed by the Presbytery of Philadelphia on Tuesday evening, January 12, 1926. The pastoral charges to the congregation and to Barnhouse were given by fellow ministers John McNeill, whom Barnhouse would soon succeed as pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church, and Clarence Macartney, of Arch Street Presbyterian Church, a leading voice for the fundamentals of the faith.<sup>185</sup>

## **Academic Degrees Awarded**

Even as he preached in France and Philadelphia, Barnhouse continued to study. University of Pennsylvania records indicate he took courses in 1925-26, 1926-27, and 1928-29 but did not complete the requirements to receive a degree.<sup>186</sup> A biographer for an evangelist contemporary with Barnhouse criticizes Barnhouse for never completing a degree after Biola.<sup>187</sup> Continued learning appeared more important to Barnhouse than the attainment of the degree.

The war had disrupted Barnhouse's studies at Princeton. He continued in part-time studies in Grenoble and the University of Pennsylvania. The degrees he received after the conclusion of his formal course work were honorary degrees or, in an interesting case, an earned degree for which he never completed any coursework or even attended the school. Barnhouse was awarded a Master of Theology from Eastern Baptist

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<sup>184</sup> Almer W. Karnell, "Call for a Pastor" (Grace Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, November 17, 1925), Box 16, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>185</sup> Grace Presbyterian Church, "Bulletin," January 3, 1926, Box 12, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>186</sup> Ruth Hodgson, "University of Pennsylvania Graduate Student," March 20, 1961, Box 16, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>187</sup> Dan D. Crawford, *A Thirst for Souls: The Life of Evangelist Percy B. Crawford (1902-1960)* (Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 2010), 108.

Theological Seminary in 1927.<sup>188</sup> The registrar's records confirmed Barnhouse never took classes at Eastern.<sup>189</sup> The archivist for the seminary verifies that Barnhouse was listed in the May 4, 1927 commencement program with the earned degree of Master of Theology and that no honorary degrees were granted by the institution before 1930.<sup>190</sup> The ThM was an earned degree, but earned for prior coursework completed at the Universities of Grenoble and Pennsylvania, and not at Eastern Baptist.<sup>191</sup> The thesis was completed at the University of Grenoble and subsequently submitted on Barnhouse's behalf to Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Decades later Barnhouse explained:

Never have I attended a class at Eastern Seminary in my life. When the Seminary was around the corner from Tenth Church I had much closer fellowship with the members of the faculty . . . . On one occasion I showed to your professor of history a paper I had written in church history and said, 'Don't you think this is good enough to get a Master's Degree in Church History?' He took it and a few months later the Seminary announced that I had been given the degree of Master of Theology on the basis of the thesis research.<sup>192</sup>

Even in 1927, Barnhouse's influence was significant enough that a question, which from his perspective was little more than a passing comment, ended in an earned ThM degree.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> "Hall of Biography: Donald Grey Barnhouse," Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals, Wheaton College, accessed November 4, 2016, <http://www.wheaton.edu/ISAE/Hall-of-Biography/Donald-Grey-Barnhouse>. The ThM diploma remains on display at the Alliance for Confessing Evangelicals offices along with other Barnhouse memorabilia. "Th.M. Diploma" (The Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, May 4, 1927), The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>189</sup> Norman H. Maring to Paul A. Hopkins, February 22, 1961, Box 16, Folder 11, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>190</sup> Frederick J. Boehlke, "E-Mail Message to Author," November 7, 2016.

<sup>191</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Certain Characteristics of the Quarrel of Investitures in France 1060-1125" (ThM thesis, Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1927), Box 13, Folder 17, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>192</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to John A. Baird, Jr., April 26, 1955, Box 3, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>193</sup> Barnhouse's explanation of his ThM came in response to Eastern Baptist Seminary's request that Barnhouse include his degree on the dust jackets of his books in order to benefit Eastern by his endorsement of them. Barnhouse refused because he believed the Eastern faculty had publicly endorsed neo-orthodox positions. By 1955, Barnhouse's fame had grown, but even as early as 1927, Eastern valued a direct link to him. Barnhouse to John A. Baird, Jr., April 26, 1955.

Throughout his life, Barnhouse was known publicly and professionally as “Doctor Barnhouse.” Classmates or others who knew him well might refer to him as Donald or Don or on rare occasions, Barney.<sup>194</sup> He often used his initials on documents or when identifying himself on the phone,<sup>195</sup> but publicly he was known as *Doctor* Barnhouse.<sup>196</sup> His second wife, who came to faith in Christ through his preaching, reminisced that he asked her during their engagement, “What’s my name?,” to which she replied “Dr. Barnhouse, of course.”<sup>197</sup> It seemed more natural to call him Dr. Barnhouse than by his first name.

His doctorate was an honorary doctorate. He was awarded the degree from the newly established Evangelical Theological College, now known as Dallas Theological Seminary.<sup>198</sup> Barnhouse had been influential in securing donations for the fledgling school. A pastoral colleague speculated about the rumors he had heard about the manner by which Barnhouse had acquired his doctorate. He contended, “One of his elders told me in 1934 that Donald helped to secure a library for Dallas Seminary in order to get a degree from the Seminary!”<sup>199</sup> Later Barnhouse also received another honorary degree. In 1952, the Faculté Libre de Théologie Réformée in France, a Reformed seminary for which he helped secure funding and property, conferred an honorary doctor of theology degree.<sup>200</sup> He explained in a sermon that in 1948 he had helped obtain \$30,000 for the

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<sup>194</sup> Strickler to Paul Hopkins, March 25, 1961. See also Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 145. Barnhouse explained that those who knew him publicly called him Doctor, those in his church called him Pastor, and close friends called him by his given name. Barnhouse, *Revelation*, 57.

<sup>195</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 315.

<sup>196</sup> Barnhouse’s radio ministry went by the title “The Bible Study Hour,” but then became known as “Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible” capturing the public identity of *Doctor* Barnhouse. “Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible,” Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, accessed March 15, 2019, <http://www.alliancenet.org/dr-barnhouse-the-bible>.

<sup>197</sup> Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 155.

<sup>198</sup> “Evangelical Theological College—Honorary Degree,” May 9, 1933, Box 13, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>199</sup> Hamilton to Paul Hopkins, January 26, 1961, 2.

<sup>200</sup> Oursler, “The Story of the Ministry.” See also “Faculté Jean Calvin,” The Huguenot

seminary.<sup>201</sup> The seminary rejoiced in Barnhouse's resourceful raising of funds in the United States and Switzerland to purchase a residence and park, which became the campus for the young seminary. In June 1951, Barnhouse spent the month teaching at the seminary.<sup>202</sup>

The dignity attached to Barnhouse's lifetime of study appears to have been important enough for him to include his honorary title in his self-descriptions. He also seems to have considered the importance of public perception afforded by an academic title.<sup>203</sup> For the sake of the gospel, he wanted people to know he had studied hard and was serious about the message he brought. Barnhouse wanted to remove barriers that would keep people from hearing the gospel. In 1948, as Billy Graham was rising to fame, Barnhouse suggested he use his full name instead of the nickname Billy. Barnhouse pressed Graham, "I want you to consider prayerfully the use of William instead of Billy because givers in the north and east almost certainly will not give anything to an institution which is headed by somebody who uses a nickname. It is a small matter but as Paul said 'I am all things to all men that I might by all means save some.' To the easterners you must become an easterner." Speculation about Barnhouse's motives toward his personal academic degree is also confirmed by his desire to also secure a doctorate for his newly hired executive pastor when he served at Tenth Presbyterian. He leaned on the influence of a friend to try to secure an honorary degree from King's College.<sup>204</sup>

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Fellowship, accessed November 4, 2016, <http://www.huguenotfellowship.org/jean-calvin/>.

<sup>201</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 199.

<sup>202</sup> Andre Lamorte, "The Ministry Abroad: In Belgium and France," *Eternity*, October 1952, 18.

<sup>203</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mr. Billy Graham, September 15, 1948, 1-2, Box 16, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>204</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to James Fowle, November 4, 1953, 2, Box 15, Folder 21, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Education was also important for Barnhouse's children. The children were homeschooled for elementary school by their mother Ruth with help from her mother, Gertrude Tiffany.<sup>205</sup> Barnhouse recounted an anecdote of walking into the home nursery and finding his wife teaching their two-and-a-half year old son kindergarten lessons.<sup>206</sup> For secondary and college education, they attended the best schools available.<sup>207</sup> When asked to provide an update for her alma mater, Ruth bragged about her daughter Ruth's high school graduation at age fourteen and her acceptance into Vassar College and Donald, Jr.'s, graduation from high school at age twelve.<sup>208</sup> While Barnhouse warned others of the dangers of sending children into a college of agnostics, he sent his own children to elite but secular institutions.<sup>209</sup>

The importance of education to Barnhouse was tied to his insatiable quest for knowledge.<sup>210</sup> He studied because he wanted to learn all he could about God's world. He studied so that he could clearly communicate the Bible. His lifelong pursuit of learning was in service to his commitment to Bible teaching. Even the appellation he

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<sup>205</sup> David Barnhouse, "Family Info," April 5, 2013 (Kitty Barnhouse Purgason email message to author, August 31, 2019), 4. David indicated that their homeschool education isolated them from other children: "We never left home, and consequently met no one outside the family, and made no friends." David Barnhouse, "McCallie," July 6, 2012 (Kitty Barnhouse Purgason email message to author, August 31, 2019), 1. On the children's isolation, even from other children in the church, see Bill J. Leonard, "Barnhouse, Donald Grey (1895-1960)," in *Biographical Dictionary of Evangelicals*, ed. Timothy Larson (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 36; C. Allyn Russell, "Donald Grey Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 59, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 42.

<sup>206</sup> Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 26.

<sup>207</sup> W. L. Taitte, "The Lady Is a Priest," *D Magazine*, June 1983, accessed August 22, 2016, <http://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1983/june/the-lady-isa-priest/>. Donald Barnhouse, Jr., confirmed that he and his brother David graduated from Harvard and their sister Dorothy graduated from Radcliffe College, which was eventually absorbed into Harvard. Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., interview by author, Paradise, PA, September 11, 2017.

<sup>208</sup> Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, "Juniata College Alumni News Sheet," December 21, 1939, Box 15, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>209</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not* (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2015), 116.

<sup>210</sup> Barnhouse admitted that he had been accused of putting too much emphasis on education at times during his ministry. Barnhouse, "Encouragement of Scriptures," Sermon, Romans 15:4, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

used was to serve the gospel. He wanted listeners to recognize the serious intellectual rigor he used in studying the Scriptures. Esteemed surgeon Koop explained, Barnhouse's "preaching was teaching of the highest intellectual order."<sup>211</sup> He was known as Dr. Barnhouse in order to promote the importance of biblical study and the Bible's power to transform lives.

### **Tenth Presbyterian Church**

While preaching at Grace Presbyterian Church and teaching at the University of Pennsylvania after his return from Europe, Barnhouse received a call as pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church, where he served from 1927 until his death in 1960. Despite his young age and limited ministry experience, Barnhouse knew that Tenth was eager to rebuild after years of decline.

Tenth Presbyterian Church was founded in Philadelphia in 1829 at the intersection of Twelfth and Walnut Streets. By 1856, the church, financed by pew rents, was full and a daughter church was planted at Seventeenth and Spruce Streets and called the West Spruce Street Presbyterian Church. In 1893, when Tenth was in decline, it merged with its daughter church at Seventeenth and Spruce, and took its original name to the new location.<sup>212</sup>

After the long pastorate of Marcus Brownson, 1897-1924, was the brief pastorate of John McNeill, 1924-1927, who had preached at Barnhouse's installation at Grace Presbyterian Church. McNeill, a famous Scottish evangelist who was already in his seventies when he arrived in Philadelphia, left Tenth to accept a call at the Church of

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<sup>211</sup> C. Everett Koop, foreword to *That Man Barnhouse*, by Margaret N. Barnhouse (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983), 9.

<sup>212</sup> Kenneth A. Hammonds, *Historical Directory of Presbyterian Churches and Presbyteries of Greater Philadelphia: Related to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) and Its Antecedents 1690-1990* (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1993), 47-48.

the Open Door in Los Angeles and to serve on the faculty at Biola.<sup>213</sup> The path from Biola to Tenth ran in both directions.

Tenth was a church deteriorating during the 1920s. The magnificent steeple of the original building had to be removed because they could not afford repairs. Membership slipped from 487 members in 1915 to 347 members by 1927. The church was relying on pew rental income to meet budget. Tenth was selling off assets to have cash on hand and the deficit by 1926 had risen to nearly \$3,000.<sup>214</sup> Guelzo summarized the desperate situation: “there was the distinct possibility that the man who would succeed McNeil to the pulpit of Tenth Presbyterian might have little else to do but preside over the disintegration of the church.”<sup>215</sup>

Barnhouse leveraged Tenth’s need for a pastor by making the start of his ministry conditional on the rescheduling of the Sunday evening service and the launch of a radio broadcast for his preaching. He explained to his current congregation at Grace that ministry at Tenth would allow him to focus entirely on gospel ministry. He wrote, “At present, even though my desire is great to give myself utterly to the work of the gospel, it is necessary for me to give much of my time to another position in order to live.”<sup>216</sup> Tenth provided him with a full-time salary that allowed him to leave his teaching position at the University of Pennsylvania. Tenth also provided secretarial

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<sup>213</sup> Daniel W. Draney, *When Streams Diverge: John Murdoch MacInnis and the Origins of Protestant Fundamentalism in Los Angeles* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2008), 168. McNeill lasted less than two years in Los Angeles. The Scottish evangelist had risen to fame with Moody at the 1893 World’s Fair, but he could not overcome the controversy incited when he preached at a liberal church. McNeill, an avowed fundamentalist who resented his board’s attempt to control his preaching schedule, defended his theology, “I preached fundamentalism. I have no sympathy for modernism.” He resigned citing the health of his wife as a contributing factor in his return to Scotland.

<sup>214</sup> Guelzo, “Barnhouse,” 2004, 80.

<sup>215</sup> Guelzo, “Barnhouse,” 2004, 81.

<sup>216</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Resignation from Grace Church,” March 20, 1927, 2, Box 15, Folder 9, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

support and offered resources to reach the neighborhood through community outreach to children in the afternoons.

Barnhouse resigned at Grace Presbyterian Church effective June 1, 1927 after receiving the unanimous call of the members of Tenth Presbyterian Church on March 9, 1927.<sup>217</sup> Barnhouse saw church attendance rise quickly and income began to catch up to even the increased costs of launching a radio broadcast and expanding ministries in the city. By 1929 membership was up to 468, a 35% increase in attendance during his first two years.<sup>218</sup> The attendance at his arrival was significantly lower than the total listed on the membership rolls, so the increase was even greater than the statistics indicate. Barnhouse's first Sunday at Tenth saw him open to Romans 1:1 and preach through Romans for three and half years. He credited the growth at Tenth to the power of God's Word, highlighting the importance of expository preaching: "During that time the congregation grew from a hundred or more to a church filled to capacity, with new life."<sup>219</sup>

Barnhouse's success at Tenth and growing prominence as a powerful preacher brought offers for increased ministry in other venues. The pulpit committee of the 1200 member Bedford Presbyterian Church in Brooklyn asked Barnhouse to interview as a pastoral candidate in 1928.<sup>220</sup> Also in 1928, J. Oliver Buswell, Jr., President of Wheaton College, offered Barnhouse the head of the history department.<sup>221</sup> In 1929, the resigning

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<sup>217</sup> D. Kennedy, "Call for a Pastor" (Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, March 9, 1927), Box 15, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>218</sup> Guelzo, "Barnhouse," 2004, 81.

<sup>219</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "On Expository Preaching," in *We Prepare and Preach: The Practice of Sermon Construction and Delivery*, ed. Clarence Stonelynn Roddy (Chicago: Moody, 1959), 33. Barnhouse claimed the church grew from 150 to more than 500. Barnhouse, *Acts*, 162.

<sup>220</sup> H. M. Dougherty to Donald Grey Barnhouse, June 11, 1928, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>221</sup> J. Oliver Buswell, Jr. to Donald Grey Barnhouse, August 13, 1928, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

pastor of Moody Memorial Church in Chicago asked Barnhouse to consider succeeding him in that prominent pulpit.<sup>222</sup> Barnhouse's answer to the pastor at Moody indicated his expanding ministry opportunities and the great needs in Philadelphia as his reasons for staying at Tenth:

I feel very definitely that my work here is not yet finished. As much as I would welcome a call like this in three or four years more, if the Lord tarry, especially if it were coupled with an opportunity to do some teaching in a small way in the Institute, at present I feel that I must stay here. There are a great many 'fundamentalist' preachers around Philadelphia, but there is so much woeful ignorance of Scripture, that I feel my work is to indoctrinate this city a little more. I have, in addition to my chain radio broadcast, a Saturday evening broadcast of the Sunday School lesson, and three extension Bible classes with more than 2000 attendance in the week's total.<sup>223</sup>

Within his first two years at Tenth, Barnhouse was seeing significant growth and gospel opportunities through his expanding ministries.<sup>224</sup>

### **Modernist-Fundamentalist Controversy**

The doctrinal commitments of Barnhouse placed him amid the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the early twentieth century. Barnhouse aligned himself with the fundamentalists in his stance against modernism, but he found himself at odds with fundamentalists who demanded separation from all non-fundamentalists. Barnhouse was critical of those to his theological left and right, and he was forced to fend off critiques from both sides. Barnhouse was "a staunch evangelical and a powerful defender of the faith" according to Harold Ockenga, one of the founders of the National Association of Evangelicals.<sup>225</sup> Barnhouse has been labelled a "moderate fundamentalist" since he

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<sup>222</sup> P. W. Philpott to Donald Grey Barnhouse, April 23, 1929, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>223</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to P. W. Philpott, April 27, 1929, 1, Box 15, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>224</sup> One of the invitations came from a church with a strict fundamentalist statement for church members' behavior to which Barnhouse could not agree. Barnhouse, *Acts*, 135.

<sup>225</sup> Harold J. Ockenga to the Members of Tenth Presbyterian Church and Friends of Dr. Barnhouse, Pastor, Park Street Church, Boston, October 1, 1952, Box 1, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

avoided the denominational disruption of separatist fundamentalists.<sup>226</sup> Russell Hitt, a colleague of Barnhouse at the Evangelical Foundation, wrote, “He disliked being called a fundamentalist but always insisted he was faithful to ‘the fundamentals.’ He was offended by the legalism and obscurantism of many conservative believers. And although he was a fiery defender of the faith, he was not a separatist.”<sup>227</sup> Hopkins, another long-time colleague of Barnhouse, explained that Barnhouse distanced himself from the fundamentalist label and preferred the label “evangelical.”<sup>228</sup> Barnhouse was firm in his fundamental commitments but hesitant to call himself a fundamentalist.

### **Ecclesiastical Trial**

Barnhouse spoke boldly against modernists and confronted them by name in his teaching ministry. Liberal pastors, the targets of his accurate accusations, protested to his presbytery in 1929.<sup>229</sup> They were incensed that he criticized liberals by name, including pastors within his own presbytery. They also saw his evangelistic gatherings in the city, which drew as many as 2,000 people on Sunday evenings, as a threat to their own ministries. Barnhouse offered an apology to his presbytery, not for his theological commitments, but for criticizing liberals without first going to them individually. The elders at Tenth remained supportive of Barnhouse against his critics within the presbytery.<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Albert R. Beck, “All Truth Is God’s Truth: The Life and Ideas of Frank E. Gaebelein” (PhD diss., Baylor University, 2008), 58 f.n. 40.

<sup>227</sup> Russell T. Hitt, “Barnhouse of Philadelphia,” *Eternity*, April 1975, 16.

<sup>228</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to C. Allyn Russell, July 29, 1981, Box 14, Unnumbered “Biographical Bits” Folder, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>229</sup> Ronald Thomas Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse” (ThD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 33.

<sup>230</sup> Tenth Presbyterian Church, “Session Minutes,” April 16, 1930, Box 9, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Initially, the presbytery accepted Barnhouse's simple apology, but his opponents appealed the decision to the Synod of Pennsylvania and forced an ecclesiastical trial. His critics believed he had broken his ordination vow of submission to his presbytery and his fellow ministers. They claimed Barnhouse was guilty of slander.<sup>231</sup> The trial dragged on for several years and Barnhouse was convicted in 1932 for breach of the ninth commandment—speaking against the liberal ministers—although the punishment he received was mild.<sup>232</sup> Barnhouse received only a verbal admonishment from his presbytery. The conservative moderator, when applying the admonishment, commended Barnhouse “for his adherence to the doctrines of the church and his zeal in preaching the full gospel of salvation.”<sup>233</sup>

### **Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions**

The conclusion of his ecclesiastical trial only marked the beginning of conflict within his presbytery. In 1936, his church hosted the Presbytery of Philadelphia, and Barnhouse made a motion to skip communion during the presbytery meeting because of the open modernist-fundamentalist conflict within the presbytery. After vigorous debate, the presbytery voted to have communion over Barnhouse's objection and he, as host pastor, along with others walked out in protest.<sup>234</sup> Later in that same year, Barnhouse and his elders filed a formal protest against the presbytery for their election of a modernist as moderator.<sup>235</sup> Again that same summer of 1936, the Session of Tenth Presbyterian

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<sup>231</sup> Karl Frederick Wettstone, “A Statement to the Philadelphia Presbytery Relative to ‘The Barnhouse Movement,’” March 5, 1930, 12, Presbytery Legal Cases, 49B, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>232</sup> Gary North, *Crossed Fingers: How the Liberals Captured the Presbyterian Church* (Tyler, TX: Institute for Christian Economics, 1996), 645.

<sup>233</sup> Guelzo, “Barnhouse,” 2004, 85.

<sup>234</sup> H. McAllister Griffiths, “Philadelphia Presbytery Defeats Motion to Omit Communion,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, January 20, 1936, 135.

<sup>235</sup> H. McAllister Griffiths, “Protest Against Moderator,” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, May 18,

Church invited the orthodox Gresham Machen to preach at Tenth despite a request from the presbytery moderator to withdraw the invitation to Machen.<sup>236</sup> Barnhouse did not hesitate to speak out against his presbytery and even had his elders temporarily withhold all funding to the denomination while an ecclesiastical complaint in another presbytery was resolved.<sup>237</sup> In each of these actions, Barnhouse aligned himself with fundamentalists against modernists.

Barnhouse aligned theologically with the fundamentalists against the modernists, but he disagreed with the separatists, including Machen, when the separatists began an independent board to support fundamentalist missionaries. The catalyst for the independent board was the acceptance of modernist missionaries made public by a high profile missionary. Pulitzer Prize winner Pearl Buck served as a denominational missionary in China but openly denied the fundamentals of the faith. Her fame highlighted the dangers of liberal missionaries. Barnhouse publicly condemned Buck's theology.<sup>238</sup> Nevertheless, Barnhouse rejected Machen's Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions. Barnhouse believed an independent missions board would split the church and considered himself a pioneer in his public opposition to the independent board:

I was the first person so far as I know to speak against the formation of an independent board for Presbyterian foreign missions. On the floor of the Philadelphia Presbytery when it was first mentioned, I pointed out that the use of such phraseology would ultimately cause a division in the church. . . . But I am convinced that they were determined on the split and used this phraseology for that purpose.<sup>239</sup>

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1936, 85.

<sup>236</sup> H. McAllister Griffiths, "Tenth Church Refuses to Cancel Invitation, Dr. Machen Preaches," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, July 6, 1936, 163.

<sup>237</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "The Presbyterian Situation," *Revelation*, July 1936, 283.

<sup>238</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "How Great Is Your God?" September 22, 1935, 11-12, Box 1, Folder 8, Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions collection, 1933-1936, RG 20, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>239</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Missionaries (Missions) - Independent Board," January 4, 1954,

In opposition to the fundamentalist board, Barnhouse believed that the gospel preaching missionaries in the denomination deserved continuing support. He knew there were some unbelieving missionaries on the foreign fields but decided to determine for himself the extent of the problem.<sup>240</sup> Barnhouse set out on a sixteen-month trip around the world to assess the situation and concluded that churches should support the denomination's missionaries and work to send more evangelicals onto the mission field. Barnhouse admitted there were some liberals on the mission field, but he reached the conclusion the denominational missionaries were worthy of continued support because the overwhelming majority preached the true gospel. Barnhouse found individual examples of liberalism on the mission field, but nothing that was unknown to the denominational leaders. The denomination was already aware of the problems and actively engaged in finding solutions.<sup>241</sup> Barnhouse believed his denomination would work to root out liberalism among the missionaries.<sup>242</sup> He concluded, "I am personally convinced that the vast majority of our missionary body is personally devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>243</sup>

The fundamentalists, like Machen, took Barnhouse's admission that modernism was found on the mission field as evidence for the necessity of an independent missions board that would exclude modernists.<sup>244</sup> Barnhouse tried to walk the line against the modernists of his denomination without separating from them. He

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The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>240</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Missionaries and Missionaries," *Revelation*, August 1932, 237.

<sup>241</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Report of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse Concerning His Visit to Presbyterian Foreign Mission Stations in Asia, Part II," *Christianity Today*, January 1936, 182.

<sup>242</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "An Open Letter to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.," *The Presbyterian Guardian*, April 20, 1936, 27.

<sup>243</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Report of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse Concerning His Visit to Presbyterian Foreign Mission Stations in Asia, Part I," *Christianity Today*, December 1935, 152.

<sup>244</sup> Edwin H. Rian, *The Presbyterian Conflict* (Willow Grove, PA: The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1992), 101.

received criticism from liberals and moderates for his labelling of some missionaries as liberal hypocrites, but most of the criticism he faced came from conservatives upset that he would not join them in denouncing the denomination.<sup>245</sup> In a letter to the Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions, he wrote:

We have a sincere difference of opinion as to what is right. I honestly believe the following. The first great wrong is the modernism in the Presbyterian Church. I see it and have done what I believe the Lord wants me to do against it so that no one can honestly question my position. I believe, however, that the second great wrong was the creation of the Independent Board.<sup>246</sup>

Barnhouse's view matched those of other evangelicals. Harry Ironside wrote, "I thoroughly believe in separation from iniquity, either in the form of moral evil or false doctrine, but I do not believe in the labeling whole groups of people as apostate."<sup>247</sup>

Barnhouse remained committed to the denomination and remained steadfast in his view that the fundamentalist separatists were wrong to leave the denomination.<sup>248</sup> He argued, "Intolerance on the part of fundamentalists is just as bad as intolerance on the part of modernists."<sup>249</sup> He worried that separatists were more concerned with "one proselyte from the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. than . . . over ninety and nine converts from heathendom."<sup>250</sup> Barnhouse could rest upon the claims that his denomination had not officially changed any of their doctrinal positions. His presbytery

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<sup>245</sup> Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living*, 177.

<sup>246</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to the Rev. Charles J. Woodbridge, The Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions, March 16, 1937, Box 8, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, "A Christian Stays in the Church," *The Presbyterian: An Evangelical Weekly*, February 16, 1939, 3, Box 6, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>247</sup> H. A. Ironside to Dr. Donald G. Barnhouse, May 9, 1938, Box 6, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>248</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Dr. Roy T. Brumbaugh, January 9, 1934, Box 16, Folder 2, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>249</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Intolerance," *Revelation*, September 1936, 365.

<sup>250</sup> Barnhouse, "A Christian Stays in the Church," 3.

voted to “reaffirm our belief in the doctrines set forth in the Confession of Faith.”<sup>251</sup> A sister presbytery, engaged in parallel trials with members of the Independent Board, summarized the orthodoxy of the continuing denomination:

In all the recent years of controversy, no action of the General Assembly has attempted to alter or to nullify a single statement of this Confession of Faith. . . . The Presbytery of New Castle is only expressing the mind of every Presbytery by here and now reaffirming its belief in the Bible, as the infallible rule of faith and practice, in the deity of Christ, in His Virgin Birth, in His atoning work, in His resurrection, in His personal glorious return, and in other essential truths of the Christian faith.<sup>252</sup>

Barnhouse’s decision to remain in the denomination caused lingering conflict with fundamentalists who demanded separation.<sup>253</sup> While he stayed in the denomination, his involvement with his presbytery was minimal after these confrontations in the 1930s until his reconciliation with the presbytery in 1954.<sup>254</sup> Barnhouse retained his Presbyterian credentials, avoided conflict with his fellow Presbyterians, and conducted his ministry independent of presbytery oversight. As long as he did not create new conflict, the presbytery seemed content to allow Barnhouse freedom to operate his ministry. During those intervening years, Barnhouse remained committed to his gospel preaching, refused to separate from his denomination, and held fast to his doctrinal commitments.

From the beginning of his ministry, Barnhouse was grounded in the authority of the Bible. He endured through personal failures and ministry disappointments. He graduated a semester late from Biola but persevered in ministry. At Biola, Barnhouse

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<sup>251</sup> “Philadelphia Presbytery’s Pronouncement,” *Christianity Today*, August 1936, 83.

<sup>252</sup> Presbytery of New Castle, “A Resolution Adopted by the Presbytery of New Castle at a Special Meeting” (Dover, DE, June 30, 1936), 1, Box 1, Folder 10, Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions Collection, 1933-1936, RG 20, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>253</sup> Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, “Fundamentalism as a Way of Seeing the World,” *Anglican Theological Review* 75, no. 4 (September 1993): 509. Barnhouse’s eldest daughter, Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, rejected the fundamentalism of her father and considered the fundamentalist view of Scripture to be idolatrous because it limited God’s revelation to the Bible. Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, “Fundamentalism as a Way of Seeing the World,” 519.

<sup>254</sup> Harrison W. Fry, “Presbyterians Heal a Breach: Philadelphia Presbytery Receives D.G. Barnhouse, Endorses His National Council TV Program,” *The Christian Century*, December 1, 1954, 1475. See also Leslie W. Sloat, “Peaceful Coexistence?” *The Presbyterian Guardian*, December 15, 1954, 224.

confirmed his childhood call to ministry. He developed his core theological convictions. He affirmed the authority of the Bible as he pursued numerous preaching opportunities. His continuing education at Princeton Seminary anchored him to the authoritative text. After serving in the Army, he invested himself in gospel preaching in Belgium. Barnhouse sought new ministry when he departed from the Belgian Gospel Mission. His long walk through France confirmed his dependence upon the call and power of God. He preached faithfully and continued to study while serving in France. Upon his return to the United States and the launch of his ministry at Tenth, Barnhouse committed himself to the preaching of the authoritative Word. He endured through an ecclesiastical trial. He affirmed the fundamentals of the faith even as fellow fundamentalists separated from the denomination. Barnhouse's unwavering commitment to the authority of the Bible preserved him in ministry through his theological training, initial ministry experiences, and the beginnings of his ministry in Philadelphia.

## CHAPTER 3

### COMMITMENT TO AUTHORITY: TO THE END

Barnhouse's early years at Tenth saw the growth of the ministry even through the midst of his struggles with the presbytery. He remained in the denomination as separatists departed, but his ministry connections within his denomination were limited during the first twenty-five years of his ministry at Tenth. He focused his attention on his growing ministry at Tenth, radio broadcasts, conference speaking opportunities, and magazines. After a dozen years at Tenth, his ministry at the church changed in 1939 when the congregation agreed to have him as pastor for six months of the year while freeing him for itinerant preaching the other six months.

In 1953, he penned a "New Year's Resolution" in which he repented for his past harshness toward conservatives within liberal organizations and committed himself to greater partnerships. His 1953 confession and subsequent shift in tone brought accusations of theological compromise, but Barnhouse remained committed to his core theological commitments to the very end of his ministry. He repeated his strategy from the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy: he loudly clamored for theological orthodoxy while seeking gospel opportunities wherever they could be found. His 1950s response repeated his lifetime commitment: hold fast to the gospel and preach as urgently as possible. This chapter explores Barnhouse's expanding ministry opportunities and lifelong commitment to biblical authority.

#### **Thirty-three Years as Pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church**

Barnhouse remained pastor of Tenth Presbyterian Church from his 1927 installation through the remainder of his life. He joined the legacy of preachers with a

high view of Scripture who had filled Tenth's pulpit. Barnhouse became the fourth long-tenured pastor, the fourth "B," following Henry Augustus Boardman, 1833–1876, William Pratt Breed, 1856–1889, and Marcus A. Brownson, 1897–1924, with ministries of forty-three, thirty-three, and twenty-seven years respectively.<sup>1</sup> Barnhouse's thirty-three years, 1927-1960, were par for Tenth's consistency of fervent gospel preachers.

Preaching was the central aspect of Barnhouse's ministry, and preaching was the driving engine of Tenth's strategy. Linda Boice, the wife of Barnhouse's successor James Boice, described her experience visiting Tenth:

It was preaching that brought me to the church when I came to Philadelphia as a university student in the late 1950s. I heard Dr. Donald Barnhouse, with his unforgettable sermon illustrations, 'making God's Word plain,' and in doing so making it clear that the wonderful gospel of the grace and mercy of our sovereign and redeeming Lord was the only foundation on which to build one's life.<sup>2</sup>

The pulpit of Tenth was the heartbeat of the church's ministry.

During these years, Barnhouse expanded his ministry to include radio preaching, a conference schedule, and the publication of a monthly magazine through the ministry he founded, the Evangelical Foundation. He was an early adopter of radio as a tool for ministry because of the urgency of the gospel message. He saw broad and open doors for preaching opportunities. Barnhouse's preaching ministry extended beyond his pulpit at Tenth into the city of Philadelphia through evangelistic preaching and beyond the city through radio and conferences.

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<sup>1</sup> James Montgomery Boice, ed., *Making God's Word Plain: One Hundred and Fifty Years in the History of Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Tenth Presbyterian Church, 1979), 41. Boardman remained pastor of Tenth at its original location, Twelfth and Walnut Streets, while Breed was the pastor of the new West Spruce Street Presbyterian Church, which accounts for the overlap in the years of their pastorates. Boice became the fifth "B" in Tenth's stable pastoral history with a ministry of thirty-two years, 1968-2000.

<sup>2</sup> Linda M. Boice, foreword to *14 Words from Jesus*, by James Montgomery Boice and Philip Graham Ryken (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013), 8.

## Pastoral Care

Barnhouse's schedule kept him away from Tenth for much of every week and for many Sundays each year. Concerns about his broader ministry responsibilities caused an elder to resign in 1936 over the amount of time Barnhouse spent away from Tenth.<sup>3</sup> Barnhouse maintained the support of his church for his ongoing schedule. In April 1938, Barnhouse proposed a plan to his elders that would have him preach at Tenth half the Sundays of the year, allowing them to hire an assistant pastor to preach the remainder of the Sundays and to provide pastoral care. The schedule allowed Barnhouse flexibility to preach around the country, and even to take weeks in a row out of his Tenth pulpit. In November, the congregation approved the change in his pastoral call, and the plan took effect in 1939.<sup>4</sup> The plan was reaffirmed by church leadership in 1943 and 1949. Barnhouse's planned absences did not weaken the church's gospel emphasis. Dwight Small, the executive pastor who preached in Barnhouse's absence, affirmed Barnhouse's continued commitment to the church and its ministry as the National Association of Evangelicals recognized Tenth's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary: "Barnhouse and the congregation of Tenth Church have stood without equivocation for the great fundamentals of the faith."<sup>5</sup>

Even with his busy schedule, Barnhouse maintained a love for his congregation. His broader evangelical commitments did not weaken his care for the church. He created a plan, through assistant pastors and his elders, to provide ongoing care for the congregation.<sup>6</sup> He showed his pastoral concern directly through his

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<sup>3</sup> Allen C. Guelzo, "Barnhouse," in *Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia: 175 Years of Thinking and Acting Biblically*, ed. Philip Graham Ryken (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 91.

<sup>4</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, "Notes Regarding Tenth Presbyterian Church Congregational Meetings," n.d., Box 16, Folder 11, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also "For 33 Years Its Pastor: Tenth Presbyterian Church," *Eternity*, March 1961, 24–25; "He Left His Mark on England: Keswick and Cambridge," *Eternity*, March 1961, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Dwight Hervey Small, "A Great Pulpit In a Great City," *United Evangelical Action*, May 15, 1954, 6, Box 15, Folder 21, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 51.

preaching. For Barnhouse, preaching was the priority of pastoral ministry: “I also say to the young men of my church that if they can be satisfied doing anything else than preaching, then they should not be in the ministry.”<sup>7</sup> Pulpit ministry carries significant freight in pastoral care. Public exhortation provides opportunity for meaningful pastoral care. Marcel prioritized the pastor’s public ministry: “Preaching communicates more effectively than the most pertinent and convincing explanation given in private.”<sup>8</sup> Barnhouse exemplified Marcel’s approach as the preacher reaches individuals through his corporate ministry.

Barnhouse’s care for his congregation was largely confined to the pulpit. At the beginning of his ministry at Tenth, he established this expectation: “I told my people they would get *one* pastoral call. After that, if they saw me coming to their door they could be sure either the sheriff or the undertaker was right behind me. I have an assistant pastor who is a real *pastor*.”<sup>9</sup> In an early draft of a preaching article, in a detail not included in the published version, he admitted after thirty years at Tenth that he had not visited more than one percent of the homes of his church members.<sup>10</sup> The visits he described in his sermons were usually evangelistic visits, family emergencies, or death bed visits.<sup>11</sup> As a public figure, he received requests for pastoral care from those who felt their need was too humiliating to ask of their own pastors, although Barnhouse encouraged them to seek their own pastors in humility.<sup>12</sup> He claimed it would be

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<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Ministers - Teachers - Preparation,” January 30, 1957, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>8</sup> Pierre Charles Marcel, *The Relevance of Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1977), 65.

<sup>9</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983), 64. Emphasis original.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Expository Preaching,” 2, Box 15, Folder 11, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>11</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Acts: An Expositional Commentary*, ed. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 20.

<sup>12</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1969), 193;

impossible to shock him after the scope of serious sins confessed to him.<sup>13</sup>

The pastor must understand his people in order to effectively preach. Barnhouse relied upon his early years of pastoral ministry experience to help him understand his congregation, even in his later years of ministry when other staff pastors were responsible for the direct care of the congregation. After thirty years of ministry at Tenth he explained:

While at the present time I am able to devote all my time to study and teaching, it is only because my church is large enough to support another minister and a pastor and has sent me out as a teacher because the Lord has so manifestly opened the door in that direction. The early days of my ministry were rich in experiences that only a pastor can have. I do not see how a teaching ministry can be effective without understanding and personal nurturing that comes from pastoral work.<sup>14</sup>

Barnhouse's pastoral ministry in Belgium, France, at Grace, and his early years at Tenth gave him the necessary pastoral experience to understand the needs of his congregation.

A pastor's ministry is not defined by his pulpit prowess alone, but by his love for his people. Near the end of this ministry, Barnhouse wrote, "If one is to enter the ministry he should have a great love for people. The Church work of the minister is not to be a socialite or a great pulpiteer but a shepherd of souls. And thus, he can only be an effective shepherd if his sheep know he loves them."<sup>15</sup> Barnhouse continued to express his love for the people of his church to the very end of his ministry, boasting in his church of more than thirty years when preaching in other venues.<sup>16</sup> He loved his church and rejoiced in the ministry flexibility they provided to him.

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*The Keswick Week 1955* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1955), 18.

<sup>13</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), 282–283.

<sup>14</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Ministers - Teachers - Definition of Preaching," February 6, 1957, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>15</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Ministers - Called, How to Know," October 11, 1957, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>16</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 88.

Barnhouse viewed his pastoral ministry as a preaching ministry that extended beyond the walls of his church, but he never wanted to stand in the way of pastoral care for his congregation. He remained willing to step aside from his pastoral relationship to allow the church to call another pastor in his place if that was best for the congregation.<sup>17</sup> At the twenty-five-year mark, 1952, he offered to resign to allow the church to hire a full-time pastor. Barnhouse praised his congregation's view of his broader gospel ministry: "They've tolerated me for a quarter of a century and they have let me free to go elsewhere and preach. They have been unselfish. For when God gives a man a ministry of expounding the Word of God it immediately belongs to the whole Church and he has to expand with it that it may go out that way. And I love this church, and I love these people."<sup>18</sup> Near the end of his life, Barnhouse was making initial preparations for his retirement from Tenth so that plans could be made for a successor.<sup>19</sup> He never ceased in his concern for the people of Tenth.

Barnhouse maintained a busy travel schedule because he loved people and loved to travel, but most of all he believed in the authoritative power of the Word of God, and he sought every opportunity to preach.<sup>20</sup> Barnhouse often preached six times per week, and by 1955 he estimated that he had preached 12,000 sermons.<sup>21</sup> His regular

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<sup>17</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to The Session, Tenth Presbyterian Church, April 16, 1952, Box 9, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>18</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Dr. Barnhouse's Speech at Town Hall," 1952, Box 5, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>19</sup> C. H. M. Foster, "Homecall of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse: A Tribute," *The Life of Faith*, November 10, 1960, 894, Box 14, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Barnhouse was told by the Board of Pensions of the UPCUSA that he could begin drawing his pension if he retired from Tenth in 1960 upon his sixty-fifth birthday. Donald Grey Barnhouse to Board of Pensions, April 8, 1959, Box 8, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers; Donald Hibbard to Donald Grey Barnhouse, June 19, 1959, Box 8, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers.

<sup>20</sup> "The Indefatigable Circuit Rider: Bible-Teaching Missions," *Eternity*, March 1961, 33.

<sup>21</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: The Second Time," *Eternity*, December 1955, 10; C. Allyn Russell, "Donald Grey Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed," *Journal of Presbyterian History* 59, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 38.

Monday night class in New York City lasted for decades, even longer than a long-running Broadway show.<sup>22</sup>

A glimpse at Barnhouse's schedule shows the frequency of his preaching. His schedule in December 1944 had him preaching Sundays at Tenth in Philadelphia, Mondays at Union Methodist Church in New York, Tuesdays at Rivermont Presbyterian Church in Lynchburg, Virginia, Wednesdays at First Presbyterian Church in Roanoke, Virginia, Thursdays in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Fridays at Wallace Memorial United Presbyterian Church in Washington, DC.<sup>23</sup> His itinerary required nearly one thousand miles of travel each week. He kept the busy schedule of preaching every night, except Saturday, the following month, January, 1945, except that he added a trip across the country to his itinerary. After preaching engagements consecutive nights in Pittsburgh, Chicago, and Wichita, Kansas, he travelled to California. For the rest of the month in California, he preached Sundays in San Francisco, Mondays at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Fresno, Tuesdays in Stockton, Wednesdays in Sacramento, Thursdays in Oakland, and Fridays back at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Fresno, before finishing the month with a final Sunday at the Church of the Open Door in Los Angeles.<sup>24</sup> On top of the cross country trip and final visit to Los Angeles, Barnhouse travelled nearly eight hundred miles each week in California. Several years later, Blaiklock traveled with Barnhouse on the "Barnhouse circuit" and described the overnight train trips and plane flights required to maintain Barnhouse's preaching engagements across the country.<sup>25</sup>

Someone once asked Barnhouse if he had seen a popular television show airing on Tuesday evenings, and Barnhouse replied, "I don't know a Tuesday night where I have

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<sup>22</sup> "Longer Than 'Abie's Irish Rose': New York Bible Class," *Eternity*, March 1961, 26.

<sup>23</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Speaking Engagements," *Revelation*, December 1944, 544.

<sup>24</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Speaking Engagements," *Revelation*, January 1945, 48.

<sup>25</sup> E. M. Blaiklock, "Dr. Barnhouse at Home," *The Life of Faith*, January 2, 1952, 7. Blaiklock believed few other preachers could bear the burden of Barnhouse's rigorous schedule.

not been preaching.”<sup>26</sup> He consistently preached six days a week. He was compelled to preach: “The question may well be asked: what drove Dr. Barnhouse to such a grueling schedule? . . . Above all was his overwhelming awareness that the Bible is, in its entirety, the Word of God—infallible, inerrant and authoritative.”<sup>27</sup> Barnhouse’s commitment to the authority of the Bible was evident in his full ministry schedule.

Russell concluded that that “Barnhouse failed as a pastor.”<sup>28</sup> Russell’s assessment ignored the ongoing effectiveness of Barnhouse’s preaching ministry and the church’s continued willingness to keep him as pastor in a part-time role. His pastoral ministry was not merely to the members of Tenth in Philadelphia. Barnhouse considered himself an itinerant preacher, not on horseback, but in trains and planes. His ministry included Tenth but was never confined to Philadelphia.

## **Family**

Barnhouse’s family lived for many years in a church manse next door to Tenth. The home at 1701 Delancey Place was the location of the children’s early education and kept the family in the heart of the church community. When his wife, Ruth, developed cancer at age 42, the Barnhouse family moved out of the city to an eighteenth-century farmhouse in Doylestown, Pennsylvania, an hour north of Tenth.<sup>29</sup> The Doylestown home provided Barnhouse with an ample study for his continued sermon preparation and gave him additional time with his family during his wife’s illness. When Ruth died on March 18, 1944, at the age of forty-six, she was survived by her four children.<sup>30</sup> Their

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<sup>26</sup> Barnhouse, *Acts*, 170.

<sup>27</sup> “The Indefatigable Circuit Rider: Bible-Teaching Missions,” 33.

<sup>28</sup> Russell, “Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed,” 54.

<sup>29</sup> Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 142.

<sup>30</sup> “Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse Funeral Service,” March 1944, Box 15, Folder 25, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

daughter Ruth had married and would complete medical school as a psychiatrist. Donald, Jr., was in his final semester at Harvard where he would graduate at age seventeen. Their younger son David was taking classes in Havana but would also complete a medical degree, at Harvard, in the coming years. Dorothy, the youngest, was eleven years old and enrolled in a boarding school in Toronto.<sup>31</sup> Barnhouse officiated his wife's funeral at Tenth, and the family expressed their thanks for the prayers and support they received from the church and broader evangelical community.<sup>32</sup> Barnhouse continued his relentless ministry schedule. He had preached the week of Ruth's death in West Virginia. Ruth died on Saturday. He cancelled his preaching responsibilities for Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, which was the day of the funeral, but he was back on the road for the remainder of that week. He preached Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in Cincinnati, Ohio.<sup>33</sup>

Barnhouse's ministry schedule did not slow after Ruth's death. He continued to serve in his varied ministries. Hearing Barnhouse preach in Florida, Douglas and Margaret Bell came to an understanding of the gospel of grace. Their liberal Methodist minister had warned them of the danger of Barnhouse's ministry, but they moved beyond their mere intellectual assent to a true faith through Barnhouse's preaching.<sup>34</sup> The Bells then travelled with Barnhouse in his preaching ministry, and Barnhouse brought Doug Bell onto the board of his Evangelical Foundation soon after.<sup>35</sup> Two years later, Doug Bell suffered a massive heart attack and died. Within just a few months, Barnhouse

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<sup>31</sup> Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse obituary, *Daily News*, Huntington, PA, March 20, 1944, accessed September 21, 2018, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/77443904/ruth-tiffany-barnhouse>.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse," *Revelation*, May 1944, 191.

<sup>33</sup> "Datebook," March 1944, Box 4, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>34</sup> Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 17.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Memorandum to Paul Hopkins and Douglas M. Bell," March 14, 1952, Box 5, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

proposed to the widowed Margaret. She had two adult children, a son training as a Naval Cadet and a daughter enrolled at the University of Florida.<sup>36</sup> Barnhouse and Margaret Bell were married in the summer of 1954. His son, Donald, Jr., attended the wedding on his own honeymoon.<sup>37</sup> Margaret proved a devoted supporter in Barnhouse's final years of ministry. As a married man and a widower and then remarried, Barnhouse pursued constant ministry opportunities.

### **Evangelical Foundation**

Barnhouse established a separate organization, outside of the oversight of Tenth, for his other ministry endeavors. The Evangelical Foundation oversaw his radio broadcasts, his conference teaching ministry, and the publication of *Revelation* magazine and later *Eternity* magazine.

### **Radio Ministry**

Barnhouse was one of the first preachers to adopt radio as a strategic tool for gospel proclamation. As a condition for his acceptance of the pastorate in 1927, Barnhouse required Tenth to reformat their evening service and to install equipment to allow the radio broadcast of the evening service.<sup>38</sup> Commenting on the changes made at Tenth upon his arrival, Barnhouse told the newsletter for his alma mater, Biola, that the most important factor in accepting the pastorate at Tenth was the installation of the radio equipment.<sup>39</sup> The strategy of radio broadcasting was generally well received within

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<sup>36</sup> "Bell-Barnhouse Engagement," *Eternity*, May 1954, 11.

<sup>37</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., interview by author, Paradise, PA, September 11, 2017.

<sup>38</sup> George H. Hill, *Airwaves to the Soul: The Influence and Growth of Religious Broadcasting in America* (Saratoga, CA: R&E, 1983), 10–11.

<sup>39</sup> Fred Sanders, "Happy Birthday to Donald Grey Barnhouse," *The Scriptorium Daily*, March 28, 2009, accessed May 1, 2017, <http://scriptoriumdaily.com/happy-birthday-to-donald-gray-barnhouse/>.

evangelical congregations because the radio provided an extension of the church's preaching ministry.<sup>40</sup>

Radio was an early evangelistic tool for preachers. The first church service that had been broadcast was January 2, 1921 at Calvary Episcopal in Pittsburgh, PA.<sup>41</sup> Beginning in 1922, Torrey, Barnhouse's Biola mentor, preached to an estimated 100,000 listeners through the radio broadcasts of Biola.<sup>42</sup> Barnhouse began broadcasting the new evening vesper service of Tenth on a local Philadelphia radio station in 1927. Recognizing the increasing potential of radio, perhaps motivated by his military experience in the Army Signal Corps, Barnhouse was the first preacher to purchase air-time from a network in 1928.<sup>43</sup>

In the early decades of radio broadcasts, evangelical preachers were disadvantaged by the requirements of free religious airtime controlled by the Federal Council, and later the National Council of Churches. Government regulations required broadcasters to offer free air time to religious programs. The Federal Council of Churches was given oversight and offered the slots to progressive and modernist religious broadcasters. Evangelicals were systematically excluded from the free broadcasts. Some evangelicals built their own stations to gain control over broadcasting decisions, but Barnhouse was the first religious broadcaster to purchase radio time.<sup>44</sup> He sidestepped the religious broadcasting rules brokered by the Federal Council of Churches and avoided

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<sup>40</sup> Leonard I. Sweet, "Communication and Change in American Religious History: A Historiographical Probe," in *Communication and Change in American Religious History*, ed. Leonard I. Sweet (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 56.

<sup>41</sup> Ben Armstrong, *The Electric Church* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1979), 19.

<sup>42</sup> Douglas Carl Abrams, *Selling the Old-Time Religion: American Fundamentalists and Mass Culture, 1920-1940* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2001), 38.

<sup>43</sup> Hal Erickson, *Religious Radio and Television in the United States, 1921-1991: The Programs and Personalities* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1992), 36.

<sup>44</sup> R. Laurence Moore, *Selling God: American Religion in the Marketplace of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 246.

the need for their endorsement. Other evangelical preachers followed Barnhouse's lead and purchased time on stations. When the requirements of free religious airtime were removed in 1960, evangelicals remained on the air, using their previously purchased airtime and wholly owned stations, while those who had received free broadcast slots through the NCC were left scrambling.<sup>45</sup>

Barnhouse signed the national contract with CBS for \$40,000 by faith even though only eleven cents remained in the account after the first year of local broadcasts.<sup>46</sup> His radio purchase made him the first preacher committed to biblical orthodoxy "to have a regular program on a national network when CBS began broadcasting the Bible Study Hour weekly."<sup>47</sup> He continued to innovate because he was driven by the importance of the message.

Barnhouse recognized the evangelistic value of the radio broadcast, calling it in 1935, "The Most Economical Way to get the Gospel to the Masses of the Unsaved."<sup>48</sup> Optimism regarding radio's evangelistic impact prompted Foulkes, another evangelist, to speculate in 1937 that radio was the equivalent of another Pentecost.<sup>49</sup> Radio was a technological opportunity to convert the masses.<sup>50</sup> Barnhouse entered on the ground floor of the growing evangelistic reach of radio.

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<sup>45</sup> Moore, *Selling God*, 245.

<sup>46</sup> Dennis N. Voskuil, "The Power of the Air: Evangelicals and the Rise of Religious Broadcasting," in *American Evangelicals and the Mass Media: Perspectives on the Relationship Between American Evangelicals and the Mass Media*, ed. Quentin J. Schultze (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 79.

<sup>47</sup> Michael Edgar Pohlman, "Broadcasting the Faith: Protestant Religious Radio and Theology in America, 1920-1950" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2011), 4. See also Barry C. Siedell, *Gospel Radio* (Lincoln, NE: Back to the Bible Broadcast, 1971), 71. The first coast-to-coast network program was just the year before Barnhouse's national broadcasts, the 1927 Rose Bowl football game. William J. Peterson, "Making Waves: Christian Radio is on the Move Again," *Eternity*, October 1975, 16.

<sup>48</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "The Radio Ministry," advertisement, *Revelation*, October 1935, 397.

<sup>49</sup> Quentin J. Schultze, "Keeping the Faith: American Evangelicals and the Media," in *American Evangelicals and the Mass Media: Perspectives on the Relationship Between American Evangelicals and the Mass Media* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 31.

<sup>50</sup> Quentin J. Schultze, *Christianity and the Mass Media in America: Toward a Democratic*

Radio ministry was a cornerstone of Barnhouse's ongoing ministry. By 1932, the broadcasts had expanded to more than one hundred stations. However, in the midst of the Depression, he had to cut costs and reduce the stations to only two stations, in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. As his support base expanded, Barnhouse again expanded his national impact. Beginning in 1949 until his death in 1960, he began preparing sermons designed specifically for the radio and he crafted 455 radio messages through the book of Romans.<sup>51</sup> All of the Romans messages had been prepared, and only the final four were not prerecorded at the time of his death. His verse-by-verse expositions captured audiences with his intensity and clarity.

While Barnhouse's theological position gathered listeners from across denominational lines, he continued to have significant impact among mainline Presbyterians.<sup>52</sup> Armstrong summarized the effectiveness of Barnhouse's Romans radio series: "Thrilled by the urgency of the message, eager listeners hung on every word. Contrary to the predictions of the leaders of the organized church, the program was an even greater success than its predecessor [Barnhouse's broadcasts from 1927-1948], and, even more surprising, it appealed to college-age adults."<sup>53</sup> In 1959, with more than thirty years of weekly broadcast experience, the Evangelical Foundation celebrated the tenth anniversary of "The Bible Study Hour," ten years of Romans broadcasts following two decades of other programming. The Evangelical Foundation had grown by 1959 to include a staff of fifty-three people including fourteen full-time employees overseeing

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*Accommodation* (East Lansing, MI: MSU Press, 2005), 143.

<sup>51</sup> "They Grew Up Together: Dr. Barnhouse and the Radio," *Eternity*, March 1961, 28.

<sup>52</sup> Quentin J. Schultze, "Evangelical Radio and the Rise of the Electronic Church, 1921-1948," *Journal of Broadcasting and Electronic Media* 32, no. 3 (Summer 1988): 299.

<sup>53</sup> Armstrong, *The Electric Church*, 60.

“The Bible Study Hour” with Paul Hopkins as Executive Secretary and Ralph Keiper as director of research.<sup>54</sup>

As a result of his pioneering work in radio, Barnhouse was one of the first inductees into the Hall of Fame of the National Religious Broadcasters.<sup>55</sup> Barnhouse was a pioneer in Christian broadcasting.<sup>56</sup> As noted in the introduction, Barnhouse’s radio broadcasts and conference ministry made him perhaps the second-most heard preacher in all of history up to the date of his death.<sup>57</sup> Barnhouse’s radio ministry offered public evidence of his continued commitment to his theological priorities. The radio broadcasts, from their launch in 1927 through Barnhouse’s death, were built upon the bedrock of Barnhouse’s theological commitments: “the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Scriptures, and the Person and Work of Jesus Christ as Lord and only Saviour.”<sup>58</sup>

The radio ministry also highlights the importance of Barnhouse’s illustrative preaching strategy. His anecdotes and stories held attention without the benefit of the preacher’s physical presence. His illustrations helped listeners create visual images in their minds.<sup>59</sup> Radio, described by a later broadcast legend, Paul Harvey, as “the ultimate visual medium,” required listeners to create mental images as they listened.<sup>60</sup> Radio programs that utilized images, analogies, and stories facilitated the listeners’ interaction

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<sup>54</sup> “Ten Years Teaching the Word of Truth” (The Bible Study Hour, January 1959), 4, 7, 10, Box 5, Folder 16, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>55</sup> “National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame,” National Religious Broadcasters, accessed May 24, 2018, [http://nrb.org/membership/media-awards/nrb\\_hall\\_of\\_fame](http://nrb.org/membership/media-awards/nrb_hall_of_fame).

<sup>56</sup> Howard W. Oursler and Robert J. Lamont, “Memorial Minute on the Life and Service of Dr. Barnhouse” (Philadelphia Presbytery, March 1961), Box 15, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; Wendell P. Loveless, *Manual of Gospel Broadcasting* (Chicago: Moody, 1946), 14–15.

<sup>57</sup> Guelzo, “Barnhouse,” 2004, 72. Only Billy Graham was heard by more people.

<sup>58</sup> “I Am Not Ashamed of the Gospel of Christ,” *Eternity*, October 1961, 3.

<sup>59</sup> Michael Rogness, *Preaching to a TV Generation* (Lima, OH: CSS, 1994), 45.

<sup>60</sup> Kent Kovington, “The 100th Birthday of a Radio Legend,” World Radio Blog, accessed August 31, 2018, <https://worldandeverything.org/2018/08/the-100th-birthday-of-a-radio-legend/>.

with the visual medium of radio. Barnhouse's illustrations helped listeners create mental pictures of the truths he announced.

The impact of Barnhouse's sermons continue to the present as his sermons continue to be heard in the digital age.<sup>61</sup> The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, started by Barnhouse as the Evangelical Foundation, produces a digital application of Barnhouse sermons. The Alliance continues to promote and publish material from Barnhouse, including audio recordings never-before broadcast as they uncover them in the archives.<sup>62</sup>

### **Conferences, Magazines, and Other Opportunities**

Barnhouse's Evangelical Foundation oversaw his vigorous conference schedule, magazine publishing, and radio broadcasts. Barnhouse founded *Revelation* magazine with the first issue published in January 1931. The magazine provided a forum to publish a sermon from his CBS radio broadcast and also to address current events from a Christian perspective. The goal was to promote growth in Christ through clear teaching.<sup>63</sup> The title for the magazine was chosen to reflect the dependence upon God's revealed Word: "We have a REVELATION from God, and that He gave it to us, knowing full well, when He did so, every item of twentieth century need, and that need is fully met. Our business is to get the Word out to the people."<sup>64</sup> As editor, Barnhouse provided monthly editorials, regular sermons, frequent articles, and reactions to world events. When dealing with current events, he sought to respond from a biblical

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<sup>61</sup> Bob Brady, "Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals 2016 Annual Report" (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals), accessed August 28, 2016, <http://www.alliancenet.org/annual-report>. The Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible podcast was streamed or downloaded 189,034 times in 2015.

<sup>62</sup> "Alliance Report 2019" (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals), accessed July 25, 2019, [http://www.alliancenet.org/sites/default/files/images/what-is-alliance/ace\\_report2019\\_final.pdf](http://www.alliancenet.org/sites/default/files/images/what-is-alliance/ace_report2019_final.pdf).

<sup>63</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Our Message," *Revelation*, January 1931, 10.

<sup>64</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Our Name," *Revelation*, January 1931, 10. Emphasis original.

perspective. Barnhouse believed his editorial comments in his magazines would remain relevant even after fifty years.<sup>65</sup>

The magazine also brought the ongoing need for fundraising and the possibility of controversy. In 1939, Barnhouse removed managing editor Schuyler English. At the end of 1938, English claimed the magazine would be in the black for the year, but early in 1939, Barnhouse discovered they were nearly seventeen-thousand dollars in debt.<sup>66</sup> A decade later, Barnhouse faced an even larger crisis that ended with his removal by the board. His name last appeared on the *Revelation* masthead in September 1949. The 1949 crisis resulted from Barnhouse's opposition to the divorce and remarriage of an officer of the board of directors, Kingsley Barnes. Barnes's remarriage was to another member of the magazine staff, Elizabeth Davies. Barnhouse had originally been led to believe Barnes's divorce was biblical, but when he learned that the facts indicated that Barnes had left his wife under the charge of his own adultery, Barnhouse condemned the action. The board removed Barnhouse, but the session of Tenth fully supported him through the controversy.<sup>67</sup>

Barnhouse paid off the debt incurred by *Revelation* even though he had been forced out.<sup>68</sup> He did not leave magazine publishing but produced issue number one of *Eternity* magazine in April 1950. He considered the first volume of *Eternity* to be the

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<sup>65</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to James D. White, December 22, 1954, 3, Box 4, Folder 5, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>66</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Wilbur Smith, October 7, 1949, 2, Box 15, Folder 20, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>67</sup> V. Clifford Harrington to Mabel Barnhouse, October 31, 1949, Box 1, Folder 17, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>68</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Noel Rippey, May 20, 1948, Box 8, Folder 16, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. The creditors acknowledged Barnhouse was not personally responsible for the debt: "We fully realize that your responsibility for settlement of this account is purely a self imposed obligation and that legally you could have ignored the whole matter." J. Stanley Best to Donald Grey Barnhouse, October 12, 1951, Box 8, Folder 17, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers. Best served as the president of the National Typesetting Corporation.

equivalent to the next volume of his previous magazine.<sup>69</sup> He was not able to take the mailing list with him from *Revelation*, but his connections in the industry encouraged their readers to subscribe.<sup>70</sup> The first issue of *Eternity* reached a larger paid circulation than his final issue with *Revelation*.<sup>71</sup> In its decade with Barnhouse as editor, *Eternity* outlasted and absorbed several other Christian periodicals including Frank Gaebelein's *Our Hope*.<sup>72</sup> Even after Barnhouse's death, circulation rose, and the magazine continued for several more decades.<sup>73</sup>

Barnhouse's writing ministry covered current events and social concerns. Even as his editorial work occupied significant swaths of his time, he never lost his central passion for preaching. Barnhouse "could speak and write on wide-ranging topics, but he remained foremost a powerful teacher of the Word."<sup>74</sup> His editorials and articles display the format of a preacher. His writing dripped with illustrations and anecdotes. A compilation of his essays from *Eternity* include illustrations on every other page.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Vol. 19, No. 10," *Eternity*, April 1950, 13. *Revelation* folded as Barnhouse was going to print with his first issue of *Eternity*. *Revelation*'s final volume was issued March 1950.

<sup>70</sup> William J. Peterson, "Twenty-five Years of Eternity," *Eternity*, April 1975, 12.

<sup>71</sup> Barnhouse, "Editorial: Vol. 19, No. 10," 13. Sutton indicates that *Revelation* never exceeded 15,000 subscribers. Matthew Avery Sutton, "Was FDR the Antichrist? The Birth of Fundamentalist Antiliberalism in a Global Age," *Journal of American History* 98, no. 4 (January 2012): 1055. Sutton's assessment matches the *Revelation* records, which show a high of 14,381 subscriptions in 1946. "Form 3539-A: Analysis by Zones of Subscription List," September 27, 1946, Box 8, Folder 19, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>72</sup> "Eternity Magazine Masthead," *Eternity*, January 1961, 2.

<sup>73</sup> "Report from the Editors," *Eternity*, August 1961, 5. Peterson indicated that 1956 was the high point for circulation during Barnhouse's lifetime, with nearly 35,000 copies in print. Peterson, "Twenty-five Years of Eternity," 62. A 1958 report by Audience Analysts, Inc. listed 24,867 subscribers to *Eternity*. "Survey of Eternity Readers," December 1958, Box 4, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. After Barnhouse's death, the magazine continued to grow with circulation up to 50,000 by 1975. Peterson, "The Magazine that Lived," *Eternity*, May 1975, 65. The final volume of *Eternity* was published in January 1989 with its mailing list of 20,000 taken over by *World* magazine. "'Eternity' Turns Final Page," *Christianity Today*, January 13, 1989, 58. The final issue, *Eternity*, January 1989, was edited by James M. Boice and contained contributions from prominent religious figures including Eugene Peterson, Josh McDowell, J. I. Packer, and R. C. Sproul.

<sup>74</sup> Dennis Schultz, "A Voice Lives On," *Religious Broadcasting*, October 1, 1983. Available in Box 15, Folder 26, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>75</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, reprinted as Barnhouse, *Illustrating Great Themes of*

Barnhouse continually brainstormed additional ideas to help expand his preaching ministry. He developed “portable church services” with recordings to be used by rural churches without a pastor.<sup>76</sup> His portable church services included music and “the greatest sermons of history” recorded by voice actors. When the project was conceived, the longest tapes could only record fifteen minutes, but the technology advanced by the time of production to allow for a full hour on one side of a tape.<sup>77</sup> In the final decade of his life, Barnhouse was exploring an animation deal with Walt Disney which would have moved him into an entirely new genre and medium. Barnhouse imagined the animated short opening with a preacher ascending to the pulpit and drawing the children’s attention with a story about frog soldiers.<sup>78</sup> Television, too, captured Barnhouse’s interest as he saw increasing possibilities in his already busy ministry.

**Keswick and Cambridge.** Barnhouse’s busy schedule is highlighted by his notes about his Atlantic crossings. Beginning with his military crossing in 1919 and his return after his missions work in 1925, Barnhouse made forty Atlantic crossings by 1953.<sup>79</sup> Beginning in 1935, Barnhouse travelled frequently to speak at the Keswick

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*Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1997).

<sup>76</sup> “Great Sermons on Tape,” *Time*, December 17, 1951, 75; Howard W. Oursler, “The Story of the Ministry,” in *Holding Forth the Word: 1927-1952* (Philadelphia: Tenth Presbyterian Church, 1952).

<sup>77</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Portable Church Services,” *King’s Business*, November 1951, 10.

<sup>78</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Proposed Outline for Animated Motion Picture,” 1954, Box 1, Folder 9, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. The story of the soldiers was an analogy about WWI soldiers meeting a certain height standard for a parade review when none of them understood the metric measurement. Instead of comparing themselves to the absolute standard, the soldiers were left to compare themselves to one another. The human tendency is to measure one’s morality against his neighbor rather than God’s perfect standard. Barnhouse frequently repeated the illustration. Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Road to Happiness* (Philadelphia: Evangelical Foundation, 1930), 10-11; Barnhouse, *Your Right to Heaven* (Philadelphia: Evangelical Foundation, 1955), 13-14; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2a, *God’s Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 71-74.

<sup>79</sup> “Trips - Lists of Trips Made by D.G. Barnhouse,” September 1953, Box 9, Folder 32, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; Barnhouse, “No Separation,” Sermon, Romans 8:38-39, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

Convention, the annual Bible conference for evangelicals in the lake district of northwest England.

Barnhouse's Biola mentor, Torrey, had been active in the Keswick movement in the 1910s and 1920s when he taught at Biola.<sup>80</sup> Torrey's evangelical and global perspective created a positive view of Keswick for American evangelicals.<sup>81</sup> Barnhouse received a more prominent teaching role in 1936. The 1936 convention was the highest attended in the sixty-year history of Keswick, and Barnhouse's featured sermons were later published as *God's Methods for Holy Living*.<sup>82</sup> Barnhouse's 1938 sermon series at Keswick included his best remembered sermon. He had prepared the full week of sermons in advance, but the night before his final sermon, he scrapped his plans and began afresh.<sup>83</sup> In this final sermon of the week, he instead offered a personal account of walking with God throughout the busyness of an ordinary day. Every year he returned to Keswick, several people remarked on how that sermon, "Walking," had been transformative in their spiritual lives.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ian S. Rennie, "Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and beyond, 1700-1990*, ed. Mark A Noll, David Bebbington, and George A Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 339. Naselli notes that Torrey was influential in Keswick theology and is the most frequently quoted non-Pentecostal in Pentecostal literature of the day. Andrew David Naselli, "Keswick Theology: A Survey and Analysis of the Doctrine of Sanctification in the Early Keswick Movement," *Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal* 13 (2008): 26.

<sup>81</sup> David L. Eby, "The Reformed Response to the Higher Life Movement" (ThM thesis, Westminster Theology Seminary, 1982), 15; Robert William Patterson, "Keswick Theology and American Evangelicalism" (ThM thesis, Westminster Theology Seminary, 1982), 75. Eby also lists Trumbell, of the *Sunday School Times*, as a popularizer of Keswick in America. Eby, "The Reformed Response to the Higher Life Movement" 22.

<sup>82</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living* (Philadelphia: Eternity, 1951).

<sup>83</sup> Clarence H. M. Foster, "The Ministry Abroad: At Keswick," *Eternity*, October 1952, 18–19; *The Keswick Convention 1938: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1938), 205. Barnhouse also abandoned his planned opening sermon at Keswick in 1951 and preached instead on the return of Christ. *The Keswick Week 1951* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1951), 18.

<sup>84</sup> Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living*, 10.

At Keswick, Barnhouse displayed his “exceptional talent for the graphic and often witty anecdote to illuminate his meaning.”<sup>85</sup> His illustrations were acknowledged even while he was at Keswick. Other preachers referred back to Barnhouse illustrations from earlier in the day, and his illustrations were also highlighted by the Keswick Committee in their introductory comments.<sup>86</sup>

After World War II, Barnhouse returned to Keswick and preached a series from Ephesians. The July 1946 conference, the first after the cancelled years of the war, offers insight into Barnhouse’s preaching style. A university student was captivated by the American preacher: “While the rain beat on the tent [the students] sat enthralled as this heavily-built American, with his smiling face and twinkling eye, with vigorous gestures and a voice which no rain could drown expounded the Epistle to the Ephesians.”<sup>87</sup> Barnhouse captured attention with his engaging style and illustrative preaching.

Barnhouse preached repeatedly at Keswick from 1935 to 1955.<sup>88</sup> Barnhouse was the most prominently featured American preacher at Keswick during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.<sup>89</sup> He was described as “a veritable giant, with a voice to match his magnificent physique, he is exceptionally forceful and controversial for a Keswick speaker. Always entralling to hear, he has a startling way of expressing spiritual truth—and after the meetings is invariably surrounded by eager young people, arguing and explaining!”<sup>90</sup> Barnhouse’s dynamic style, direct explanation, and poignant illustrations

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<sup>85</sup> John Pollock, *The Keswick Story: The Authorized History of the Keswick Convention*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1964), 161.

<sup>86</sup> *The Keswick Convention 1938*, 118, 134, 158.

<sup>87</sup> John Pollock, *A Cambridge Movement* (London: Murray, 1953), 254.

<sup>88</sup> Pollock, *The Keswick Story*, 169.

<sup>89</sup> Herbert F. Stevenson, ed., *Keswick’s Authentic Voice: Sixty-Five Dynamic Addresses Delivered at the Keswick Convention, 1875-1957* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 252.

<sup>90</sup> Stevenson, ed., *Keswick’s Authentic Voice*, 252–253.

made him a favorite of Keswick. He regularly filled the main tent beyond capacity.<sup>91</sup> The large tent at Keswick, the largest in the country at the time, seating 4,000 guests, required overflow seating for hundreds more when Barnhouse preached.<sup>92</sup>

Keswick theology, particularly in the years before Barnhouse's involvement, centered on a view of sanctification that relinquished personal responsibility. The definitive explanation of Keswick teaching admitted that in sanctification the Christian "ceases from his own struggles to live a holy life, and enters the 'rest of faith.'"<sup>93</sup> J. I. Packer criticized Keswick teaching for its conflation of sanctification with justification in practice.<sup>94</sup> All agreed that justification is an act of God's grace in which the believer is passive, but they disagreed on the believer's role in sanctification. Packer argued that Keswick theology wrongly made Christians passive in the continuing work of God in sanctification. Keswick teachers asked Christians to "let go and let God" do the work of sanctification rather than expecting Christians to "trust God and get going" in their sanctification.<sup>95</sup> In early Keswick teaching, sanctification was achieved by abandoning personal effort and trusting in the miraculous intervention of the Spirit. Barnhouse, while not rejecting the Keswick invitation to preach, willingly challenged Keswick's "false doctrine" of the "victorious life" in his 1938 sermons at Keswick.<sup>96</sup>

Barnhouse's Reformed view of sanctification was at odds with early Keswick teaching, but the overarching trajectory of Keswick theology moved toward the

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<sup>91</sup> *The Keswick Week 1951*, 86, 114.

<sup>92</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Life by the Son: Practical Lessons in Experimental Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 71.

<sup>93</sup> Steven Barabas, *So Great Salvation: The History and Message of the Keswick Convention* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2005), 95.

<sup>94</sup> James I. Packer, "'Keswick' and the Reformed Doctrine of Sanctification," *The Evangelical Quarterly* 27, no. 3 (July 1955): 154.

<sup>95</sup> Andrew David Naselli, *No Quick Fix: Where Higher Life Theology Came From, What It Is, and Why It's Harmful* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2017), 23.

<sup>96</sup> *The Keswick Convention 1938*, 173.

Reformed understanding as the twentieth century progressed.<sup>97</sup> Keswick theology was so tolerant of Reformed perspectives that some participants considered Keswick theology a mild form of Calvinism.<sup>98</sup> Naselli, affirming Packer's criticisms of early Keswick theology, acknowledges that by the time of Barnhouse, Keswick allowed for a more Reformed view of sanctification. They had abandoned their "let go and let God" theology and, in the decades following Barnhouse, regularly welcomed Reformed preachers.<sup>99</sup> During his ministry at Keswick, Barnhouse broadened the definition of Keswick theology to include his own biblical emphases. He argued that Keswick theology was broadly about life in the Spirit, which he equated to union with Christ.<sup>100</sup> As he reflected on the impact of Keswick near the end of his life, Barnhouse praised Keswick for highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit in the Christian life.<sup>101</sup> Keswick did not compromise Barnhouse's theology, but instead, his participation there showed his global perspective and desire to preach as broadly as possible.

Barnhouse's forceful style was occasionally interpreted more negatively, even by those who knew him well. Some feared his boldness in preaching overflowed into arrogance. His wife, Margaret, admitted "his own life was a constant battle to subdue an upsurging, cocky, too sure self into yieldedness to the Holy Spirit."<sup>102</sup> Foster, the vice chairman of the Keswick Convention, agreed with Margaret's assessment, but he pressed the issue further. He indicated, "Here folk often thought him far too cocksure and

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<sup>97</sup> Charles W. Price and Ian M. Randall, *Transforming Keswick* (Carlisle, England: OM, 2000), 80.

<sup>98</sup> David Daijoon Cho, "The Old Princeton Presbyterian Response to the Holiness Movement in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries in America" (PhD diss., Westminster Theology Seminary, 1994), 174.

<sup>99</sup> Naselli, *No Quick Fix*, "Introduction," note 5, Kindle.

<sup>100</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946* (Spartanburg, SC: Christian Supply, 1989), 238.

<sup>101</sup> Price and Randall, *Transforming Keswick*, 223.

<sup>102</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, "What Was He Really Like?" *Eternity*, March 1961, 8.

dogmatic.”<sup>103</sup> Foster was not only an instrumental leader in the Keswick Convention, but Barnhouse considered him “my closest friend in England.”<sup>104</sup> Hitt, who continued to serve at The Evangelical Foundation after Barnhouse’s death, admitted: “Sometimes the directness and forceful style irritated some in his audiences but they never forgot what he said.”<sup>105</sup> Hitt contended, “His real authority as a teacher stemmed from his passionate commitment to the Word of God. Beneath his brusque exterior was a childlike faith in the living God and the Holy Scriptures.”<sup>106</sup> Those who knew him best, his wife and closest friends, feared his confidence in ministry could slide into arrogance.

With increased transatlantic exposure, Barnhouse was invited by university students at Keswick to preach to the Cambridge Intercollegiate Christian Union in 1946.<sup>107</sup> His preaching helped revive the ministry of CICU in the post-war period.<sup>108</sup> Barnhouse’s six nights of preaching prompted a response from John Pollock. Pollock offered, perhaps, the most evocative description of Barnhouse’s preaching:

‘If we conceive God to be perfect,’ he began, each word spoken slowly and with force, as if very life depended on it, ‘we must admit His power to hide Himself from any to whom He does not wish to reveal Himself.’ From this unexpected start he proceeded, his words sometimes fast but incisive, his tone at times pleading, at times fierce and declamatory, to show ‘that men cannot find God by themselves but must come in submission to the revelation of Himself which He has made by the

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<sup>103</sup> Clarence Foster to Paul Hopkins, March 27, 1961, Box 15, Folder 7, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Foster, as previously quoted, also considered Barnhouse “America’s foremost Bible teacher.” C. H. M. Foster, “Homecall of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse: A Tribute,” *The Life of Faith*, November 10, 1960, Box 14, Folder 10, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>104</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mabel Jean Barnhouse, August 6, 1954, Box 15, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>105</sup> Russell T. Hitt, preface to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973).

<sup>106</sup> Russell T. Hitt, introduction to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 7–8.

<sup>107</sup> Barnhouse preached for the CICCU in 1946 and 1949. Oliver R. Barclay and Robert M. Horn, *From Cambridge to the World: 125 Years of Student Witness* (Leicester: InterVarsity, 2002), 136–38.

<sup>108</sup> David Goodhew, “The Rise of the Cambridge Inter-Collegiate Christian Union, 1910–1971,” *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 54, no. 1 (January 2003): 77.

Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible'....the conviction with which he expounded Scripture, his anecdotes and references which revealed the extent of his reading, his wit, his pugnaciousness balanced by an obvious sincerity and love made each evening an event. Barnhouse could be scoffed at and the claims of his messaged refused, but he could not be ignored.<sup>109</sup>

Barnhouse's preaching at Cambridge highlighted his biblical fidelity, apologetic emphasis, passionate delivery, and illustrative strategy. He emphasized grace and made the truth plain. Pollock provided the most detailed descriptions of Barnhouse's preaching. As such, his recollections warrant another lengthy review:

There was a vigor in Dr. Barnhouse's method and a blend of clarity and warmth in his thought which had been foreign to the University for years. We were used to sermons scholarly and dull; and to those which were interesting and spiritual but lacked intellectual depth. Here was a man who could meet liberal theologians on their own ground, yet be intelligible to the simplest freshman and make hardened war veterans sit up. Another feature of Dr. Barnhouse's preaching was his uncompromising presentation of Scripture. The Word of God was a weapon in his hands. No one was left in doubt that the Word from Genesis to Revelation was quick, powerful, and sharp. To many Cambridge men, reared on the insipid leavings of modernism, the Mission was a rediscovery of Scripture, and sent them scurrying back to take down dusty Bibles from their shelves, to see 'whether these things were so.' . . . It was impossible to listen to God's servant and be neutral. . . . One could not be apologetic for a Gospel which came in such power. The Gospel also came in love. There was a humanity about the man which balanced the force of his message.<sup>110</sup>

Barnhouse pressed the truth because he believed in the power and authority of God's Word. He willingly attacked skeptical thinking to force his listeners toward the truth. He recognized that the central claims of Christ demanded a response. Jesus could not be left as a noble teacher but had to be considered "God, a liar, or a lunatic."<sup>111</sup> A claim of divinity like Jesus made could only come from the Lord or someone who was "crooked or crazy."<sup>112</sup> Barnhouse preached with an apologetic undertone, pointing listeners to the claims of Christ. Forrester, president of Gordon College at the time of

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<sup>109</sup> Pollock, *A Cambridge Movement*, 255–56.

<sup>110</sup> J. C. Pollock, "The Ministry Abroad: At Cambridge University," *Eternity*, October 1952, 16.

<sup>111</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 60.

<sup>112</sup> Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not*, 71.

Barnhouse's departure to glory, reflected on Barnhouse's impact among college students: "He could speak to the university mind of our generation as few men have been able to do. Dr. Barnhouse combined an intellectual stature and a deep spirituality and an absolute dedication to the cause of Christ."<sup>113</sup> Barnhouse preached with gospel urgency in his commitment to the authority of the Bible. His preaching had a global impact among the broad evangelical community through his itinerant preaching, radio broadcasts, and magazines.

### **New Year's Resolution**

The fundamentalists departed the denomination during Barnhouse's early years at Tenth. While Barnhouse remained in the mainline denomination, he had very little interaction with his denomination through the remainder of the 1930s and 1940s. Barnhouse mainly worked within "an isolated evangelical subculture" during his ministry.<sup>114</sup> However, Barnhouse marked a significant shift in strategy with his "New Year's Resolution" of 1953. His editorial, "New Year's Resolution," drawn from his reflections on his twenty-fifth anniversary at Tenth, softened his posture toward modernists in his final years and raised the suspicions of fundamentalists that he had renounced his evangelical commitments.

Barnhouse announced his change of strategy in his magazine *Eternity*. He wrote, "Early in my ministry I conceived the idea that I must strike out against all error wherever I saw it. . . . If it was in Christian Science, Unitarianism, or in Romanism, I swung hard. If it was in some fundamental leader with whom I was in ninety-five per cent agreement, I swung hard at the five per cent."<sup>115</sup> Barnhouse was not rejecting any of

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<sup>113</sup> James Forrester, "What Dr. Barnhouse Meant to Me," *Eternity*, June 1961, 6.

<sup>114</sup> D. G. Hart, *That Old-Time Religion in Modern America: Evangelical Protestantism in the Twentieth Century*, American Ways Series (Chicago: I. R. Dee, 2002), 67.

<sup>115</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "New Year's Resolution," *Eternity*, January 1953. The full text of the editorial is reproduced in appendix 1.

his fundamental theological convictions. He continued, “Without in anywise changing my theological outlook, and without lowering my right to unveil, editorially, specific heresy when I find it in print, I want to move closer to many men who are undoubtedly going to be with me in Heaven, but with whom I have disagreed on denominational emphasis.” Barnhouse stressed that he was only changing his methodology, not his theology.<sup>116</sup> He softened his posture toward his own denomination and the National Councils of Churches (NCC), the ecumenical partnership of mainline churches devoted to societal improvement. Previously, he had refused to partner with those tainted by denominational or institutional liberalism, but in his final years, he would partner with anyone he considered a true believer.

Barnhouse’s reconciliation with his denomination was propelled by his partnership with the NCC on a television program. He needed the formal endorsement of his presbytery for the program to move forward. The NCC, motivated in part by a desire to show their willingness to include conservatives, offered Barnhouse thirteen episodes of a television broadcast while they allowed him full content and creative control.<sup>117</sup> He saw the television series as a gospel opportunity that would not force any compromise on his part. He explained, “I am accepting time which the TV industry makes available through the NCC to present the simple truths of salvation. In doing this (I shall not be censored in any way but am having complete freedom to tell the glorious salvation offered in Christ.”<sup>118</sup> Barnhouse explained his decision in which he laid out his strategy of cooperation:

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<sup>116</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Compromise,” *Eternity*, March 1958, 6.

<sup>117</sup> Lowell Sperry Saunders, “The National Religious Broadcasters and the Availability of Commercial Radio Time” (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 1968), 140. See also Sloat, “Peaceful Coexistence?” 224.

<sup>118</sup> “Barnhouse (Position) - Card #3,” January 12, 1955, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA. Parenthesis original.

Formerly I was totally opposed to the National Council of Churches because of its domination by men who seem from their writing to be practical Unitarians. However as time has gone on there has been some change in the leadership of the committee. The heads of some of the departments, I have found to be born-again men. It is my determined policy to work with any man whom I know to be truly born-again and who is seeking to honor the name of Christ.<sup>119</sup>

Upon his request, his presbytery unanimously endorsed him to the NCC, allowing Barnhouse to complete his television programs.<sup>120</sup>

Barnhouse's partnership with believers in liberal denominations reflected his theological desire for Christian unity. He explained, "Personally I came, with the last half dozen years, to the conclusion that if any man truly believes that Jesus Christ is Lord and the Savior of the world, that I must have fellowship with him."<sup>121</sup> For Barnhouse, Christian fellowship must be extended to all who profess faith in Christ. According to Barnhouse, Christians err when they separate and label entire groups or denominations as modernist. "The divisions in fundamental Protestantism today are sin."<sup>122</sup> Hopkins, director of Barnhouse's radio and publishing ministry, warned against isolating fundamentalists and evangelicals. Barnhouse needed to partner with born again believers in the NCC without angering fellow conservatives. Hopkins feared the partnership with the NCC would make conservatives, the majority of Barnhouse's listeners and readers, feel like "we have kicked the NAE [National Association of Evangelicals] and our fellow evangelicals in the face."<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Memorandum to Nan Keiper," September 13, 1954, Box 7, Folder 32, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Statement by Dr. Barnhouse," *Monday Morning: A Magazine for Presbyterian Ministers*, December 20, 1954, Box 8, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>120</sup> Harrison W. Fry, "Dr. Barnhouse, Presbytery Heal Breach After 22 Years," *The Evening Bulletin*, November 12, 1954, Box 15, Folder 16, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>121</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "One Church," *Eternity*, July 1958, 19–20. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, "One Lord," *Eternity*, September 1958, 25; Barnhouse explained the joy of fellowship in the years following his New Year's Resolution in his sermon "What is the Church," Sermon, Romans 12:4, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>122</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Who is Against Us?" Mark 9:38-41, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>123</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, "Dear DGB," September 18, 1953, Box 5, Folder 8, Donald Grey

Barnhouse recognized genuine believers within the NCC.<sup>124</sup> Barnhouse chose to give the benefit of the doubt to those who claimed to be believers.<sup>125</sup> Still he remained willing to acknowledge that not all within the ecumenical movement were genuine believers. The Christ of many ecumenists was not the Christ of the Bible. Barnhouse knew that some denied the divinity of Christ, his atoning sacrifice, and his bodily resurrection.<sup>126</sup> His partnership with his denomination and the NCC would not compromise his fundamental beliefs. Barnhouse changed his partnership strategy, but he continued to affirm his core theological beliefs. In a speech shortly after the announcement of his strategic shift, he declared, “If anybody goes out and says Dr. Barnhouse is compromising, I think you are lying. I will stand just as strong and stern for the truth as I ever have.”<sup>127</sup> He was emphatic: “I believe the only Redeemer of God’s people is the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>128</sup>

In direct response to critics who claimed he had become a liberal, he wrote, “I believe and teach that men are lost and that they can be saved only by the new birth, through faith in the work which Jesus Christ accomplished in dying upon the cross of Calvary.”<sup>129</sup> He reaffirmed his commitment to the exclusive claims of Christianity: “I have not changed my doctrines in the slightest. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness.”<sup>130</sup> Barnhouse partnered with all who were true

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Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>124</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse and Russell T. Hitt, “Window on the World: World Council of Churches,” *Eternity*, September 1954, 18.

<sup>125</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Suspicion,” *Eternity*, April 1954, 15.

<sup>126</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Tomorrow: The Ecumenical Movement,” *Eternity*, April 1951, 11.

<sup>127</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “What’s Wrong With Fundamentalists,” circa 1953, 27, Misc Scripts folder, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>128</sup> “Barnhouse- Statement of Faith,” May 6, 1954, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>129</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Where Am I Going?” *Eternity*, June 1954, 7.

<sup>130</sup> Barnhouse, “Where Am I Going?” 40. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Learning

believers, whether in the NAE or NCC. “Wherever it is possible for believers to fellowship together in Christ, they should do so. . . . It is only where there is open denial of the absolute deity of our Lord and the necessity of His redemptive work that we must draw the line.”<sup>131</sup> Barnhouse refused to compromise on the doctrines of the resurrection of Christ and the sovereignty of God.<sup>132</sup>

Barnhouse remained willing to expose liberalism as “sheer unbelief.”<sup>133</sup> He labelled himself an evangelical in contrast to modernist rejections of biblical authority.<sup>134</sup> He refused to accept Roman Catholicism or non-Christian religions.<sup>135</sup> His commitment at the end of his ministry aligned with his commitment at the beginning of his ministry. He rejected non-Christian religions and those who attempt to make Christianity merely one religion among many possible truths. In 1928, near the beginning of his ministry at Tenth, he presented a resolution to his presbytery:

Whereas, it has become a matter of public knowledge that Presbyterian ministers, members of this Presbytery, have lent their names to a movement for fellowship among various religions, including Shintoism, Buddhism, Unitarianism, Ethical Culture, Judaism, Mohammedanism and other non-Christian religions; Be it resolved, that this Presbytery of Philadelphia go on record as being unalterably opposed to any fellowship that tends to name Christianity as one of many equally

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Discipleship,” Sermon, Gospel of John, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>131</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Separation,” *Eternity*, October 1954, 13. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, “We Are One Body in Christ,” *Eternity*, March 1957, 42.; Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Thanksgiving and Warning,” *Eternity*, September 1957, 9.

<sup>132</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “First the Lord,” Sermon, Acts 3:25-26, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>133</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Liberalism and Neo-Orthodoxy,” *Eternity*, September 1950, 13. Barnhouse “remained vigorously opposed to outright liberalism.” J. A. Carpenter, “Barnhouse, Donald Grey,” in *Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America*, ed. D. G. Hart and Mark A. Noll (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 26.

<sup>134</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Cursing of the Fig Tree,” Sermon, Mark 11:12-14, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. He also continued to declare that some were apostate within the church. Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Apostate,” *Eternity*, October 1954, 12.

<sup>135</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Window on the World: Chapel of All Faiths,” *Eternity*, April 1951, 7. He could not accept membership in the Philadelphia Council of Churches because it included Unitarians, Mormons, and Christian Scientists. Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Philadelphia Council,” *Eternity*, January 1958, 4.

good religions; that we reaffirm our belief that Christianity is a revelation and so the final and absolute religion.<sup>136</sup>

Barnhouse held firm to his faith in Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation.

Sexton concluded that Barnhouse, even after his change in strategy, still saw the fundamental doctrines as “his ‘irreducible minimum’ which he considered absolutely non-negotiable.”<sup>137</sup> Russell, despite his provocative article title, “Fundamentalist Who Changed,” admitted that Barnhouse “announced major changes in personal attitudes, but no changes in doctrine.”<sup>138</sup> Barnhouse’s commitment to the fundamentals of the faith did not prevent ministry partnerships that he hoped would expand his gospel influence.

### **Authority of Scripture**

Barnhouse rested his doctrinal claims on the authority of the Bible.

Barnhouse, to the very end, repeatedly asserted “the absolute authority of the Word of God.”<sup>139</sup> Scripture alone provides the foundation of authority for Christian convictions. Any other foundation becomes an individualized commitment to personal autonomy. Barnhouse explained, “Any man preaching or teaching religious truth who does not have the utmost confidence in the Word of God as perfect, supreme, and final, is forced into a position where he must rely on his own judgment as to what is true and what is not true.”<sup>140</sup> Barnhouse continued to affirm the doctrine of the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture.<sup>141</sup> In his preaching, he reminded his listeners that he was teaching what the

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<sup>136</sup> Marilyn Evers, “An Examination of the ‘Fundamentalist-Modernist’ Controversy in the Presbytery of Philadelphia, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A, 1920-1934,” 1958, 10–11, Box 5, Folder 28, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>137</sup> Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse,” 126.

<sup>138</sup> Russell, “Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed,” 48.

<sup>139</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Thoughts,” *Eternity*, April 1959, 19. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Authority of Scripture,” *Eternity*, November 1960, 26; Donald Grey Barnhouse, “How the Lord Looked at Scripture,” *Eternity*, December 1, 1960, 17.

<sup>140</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: On What Authority,” *Eternity*, May 1956, 11.

<sup>141</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “How Is the Bible Inspired?” *Eternity*, April 1959, 25. See also Ralph L. Keiper and Donald Grey Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible* (Philadelphia: The Bible Study

Bible teaches. If they disagreed with an unpalatable doctrine, such as the doctrine of hell, he pressed them to admit that it is what the Bible teaches and that they were rejecting the Bible's teaching.<sup>142</sup> Barnhouse, to the end of his ministry, affirmed the importance of the fundamental doctrines of the church. He wrote of the virgin birth, "If Christ's birth were not unique, the Bible would have no authority."<sup>143</sup> Barnhouse called listeners to submit to God's authority.

Barnhouse defended the authority of Scripture by using Scripture in his sermons. Scripture is its own best defense. He offered an analogy of a prop from a movie set, a rubber bayonet. In contrast to a real weapon, the rubber bayonet's ineffectiveness would be exposed as soon as it was used.<sup>144</sup> The true weapon's power is demonstrated in its use. Barnhouse explained his analogy: "The Word of God does the Work of God."<sup>145</sup> The Bible's authority is displayed when the Bible is read and believed. As Jesus responded to critics using the Scriptures, Barnhouse sought to use the Bible to defend the Bible.<sup>146</sup> Barnhouse believed the Bible was its own best defense: "Our side is not the side of the defence. We are not defending the truth of the Word of God. The truth of God needs no defence. Our side is the side of the prosecution. As we declare the truth, every mouth is stopped and all the world is brought guilty before God."<sup>147</sup> Barnhouse

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Hour, 1961), 7.

<sup>142</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Eternal Grace," Sermon, Romans 2:12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>143</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 54.

<sup>144</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Life After Death," Mark 12:18-27, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, *Mark: The Servant Gospel*, ed. Susan T. Lutz (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1988), 129.

<sup>145</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 161. Barnhouse changed the material of the bayonet to papier-mâché.

<sup>146</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Who Is Christ?" Mark 12:35-40, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>147</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 15.

believed the Bible served as its own apologetic resource. He explained, “The only thing to do with a man who refuses to accept the Bible is to continue quoting it to him.”<sup>148</sup>

Barnhouse’s preaching rested upon his conviction regarding the Bible’s authority.

**Defense of exclusivity.** Barnhouse defended the exclusivity of the gospel to the end of his life. His 1953 shift was not a theological adjustment of his fundamental beliefs but only a strategic shift in his willingness to seek out true believers within liberal organizations. Barnhouse spoke clearly of his commitment to the exclusive claims of Christian truth:

One of the most important claims of Christ, if not the most important, was that He was truth and that nothing else was truth. He taught, beyond question, that no one could be saved except through belief in Himself. . . . Truth is exclusive, it denies and shuts out its opposite. The greater the truth the greater the realm in which it refuses rivalry. So Christ, as Saviour stands alone. He is God and no other voice can tell us anything about God. He alone is the way and the truth. . . . The uniqueness of the claims of Christ can be held without the slightest intolerance, but they must be held without any compromise.<sup>149</sup>

For Barnhouse, truth was only possible because of God. Truth comes from God and depends upon God. Against agnostics who denied the possibility of religious knowledge, Barnhouse affirmed the one true way of salvation in Christ alone.<sup>150</sup> He preached with urgency: “If you don’t believe in Jesus, you are *already lost*.”<sup>151</sup> For Barnhouse, there was only one way of salvation.

Barnhouse asserted the authority of God. “God is the only being in the universe who has the right to be intolerant.”<sup>152</sup> God is sovereign and holy. He declares

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<sup>148</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “New Life for Service,” Sermon, Romans 7:6, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>149</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Exclusive Finality,” *Revelation*, December 1948, 541. See also Barnhouse, “What Brought You to Christ?” *Revelation*, June 1933, 209.

<sup>150</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: The Only Answer,” *Revelation*, June 1939, 230. See also ; Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: How Many Religions,” *Eternity*, July 1956, 13.; Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 53.

<sup>151</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 39. Emphasis original.

<sup>152</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: The Intolerance of God,” *Revelation*, July 1942, 308.

truth. He offers salvation. The exclusivity of Christianity results from the sovereign authority of God himself. Barnhouse preached with urgency, “If he is not Lord of all, he is not Lord at all.”<sup>153</sup> This foundational belief in Christ was a claim he held through the very end of his life, even reaffirming that phrase in the month of his final surgery.<sup>154</sup>

### **Strategic Partnerships**

Barnhouse shared the core theological commitments of the fundamentalists, but he did not share their separatist strategy. However, he remained willing to expose the theological errors of modernists, and he never wavered in the fundamental truths of Christianity. Barnhouse saw a gospel opportunity with television that required the endorsement of his presbytery. He asked his presbytery for an endorsement. In his request, he highlighted his submission to presbytery decisions early in his ministry and his renewed commitment to partnership with the presbytery.<sup>155</sup> His previous decades had been focused on evangelical ministries, but he now identified opportunities within his own denomination and the NCC. He was not changing his theology. He was only shifting his ministry attention. He was partnering with believers wherever they were found. Barnhouse defended the strategy of his 1953 resolution:

Let me clarify my position once again. I believe that there is only [one] way of salvation and that is through Jesus Christ (John 14:6). . . . What I am seeking to point out . . . is, not that there are many ways to come to God. There is only one way - through Jesus Christ. . . . But, I am suggesting that there is no reason why Christians cannot be in separate denominations, provided these denominations preach the gospel.<sup>156</sup>

While Barnhouse remained a Presbyterian throughout his ministry, he

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<sup>153</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Separated Christians,” Sermon, Galatians 5:22-23, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>154</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Separated Christians,” *Eternity*, October 1960, 31.

<sup>155</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Statement to the Philadelphia Presbytery,” November 9, 1954, Box 9, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>156</sup> “Barnhouse- Position on Salvation Concerning Denominations,” circa 1953, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

remained open to partnerships with other denominations and had always downplayed the significance of denominational affiliation.<sup>157</sup> Edwin Houk served for four years as Barnhouse's executive pastor at Tenth and captured Barnhouse's inter-denominational characteristics: "Dr. Barnhouse preaches with the enthusiasm of a Baptist, he teaches with the doctrinal soundness of a Presbyterian, he promotes God's program with a vision of a Methodist, he evangelizes with the zeal of a Salvationist, and always reaches men with the Gospel of Christ as a true servant of the Lord."<sup>158</sup> Barnhouse's emphasis was on the individual's personal understanding of the gospel rather than outward church affiliation. He affirmed the importance of church membership and engagement with the mission of the church, but he did not emphasize denominations:

If I were in your position I would look for the following in a given church: (1) I would not be concerned as to whether it were Presbyterian, Baptist, or Methodist. However, being a Presbyterian, I would be interested in it, but my main concern is that it be a church which honors the Word of God. (2) Does it preach the message of salvation: Man's complete ruin in sin and God's perfect remedy in Christ? (3) Does it seek to bring souls to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ? (4) Does it have a teaching ministry which would enable me to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Word? (5) What is its interest in missions? (6) What does it do to encourage people in the home community to grow in Christian fellowship and how does it go in to meet the lost?<sup>159</sup>

Barnhouse stressed the importance of each individual's personal understanding of the gospel.

Barnhouse saw the open door for evangelism through the growing medium of television and rejoiced in his partnership with gospel believing men in the NCC.

Television viewership was expanding rapidly. In 1949, only 2% of American homes had televisions, but five years later that number had grown to more than 50%.<sup>160</sup> Television

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<sup>157</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Church - Affiliation," September 23, 1957, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>158</sup> C. Edwin Houk, "What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me," *Eternity*, March 1961, 25.

<sup>159</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Church—Attendance," October 14, 1958, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>160</sup> Joel Nederhood, "The Back to God Hour: Mission Television Report," in *Christian Reformed Church Synod Report*, Report 1:A (Grand Rapids: Christian Reformed Church, 1977), 170,

provided access to a growing number of American homes, and Barnhouse, like he had done decades before with his radio broadcast, was at the cutting edge of technological opportunities. Television promoted a flood of creativity for Barnhouse as he considered the possibilities to reach more people with the gospel.<sup>161</sup> Remaining in the denomination opened doors for him with the NCC. Barnhouse sought a broader influence and gospel impact than a separation from the denomination would have given him. He argued, “I believe that I have a much wider witness because I have remained in the denomination.”<sup>162</sup>

Barnhouse sought to preach at every opportunity afforded to him. Barnhouse argued with the separatist-fundamentalist Robert Ketchum about the importance of preaching in any venue offered: “It is impossible for me to conceive of a set of circumstances in which I would not be willing to witness for Christ. I would preach in a Hindu temple if the priest gave me an invitation or in a Roman Catholic church.”<sup>163</sup> Ketchum, upon hearing Barnhouse preach at a venue Ketchum considered liberal, remarked, “I confess that I rather expected him to play to the intelligentsia of his audience. . . . I cannot tell you how happy I am that exactly the opposite took place. There was no attempt to display the talents of a great and brilliant mind, but there was a straight-forward, hard-hitting presentation of the simple Gospel of salvation through the blood of Jesus Christ.”<sup>164</sup> The gospel compelled Barnhouse to preach wherever a door was opened to him. He would take the opportunity to preach the true

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accessed April 18, 2018, <http://www.calvin.edu/library/database/crcnasynod/1977agendaacts.pdf>.

<sup>161</sup> Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 278.

<sup>162</sup> “Barnhouse (Ministry)- Leaving It (Leaving the Presbyterian Denomination),” August 12, 1953, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>163</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to R. T. Ketchum, December 22, 1959, Box 4, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>164</sup> R. T. Ketchum, “Memo to the Council of Fourteen,” December 11, 1959, 1, Box 4, Folder 4, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

gospel wherever he was invited whether “a Roman Catholic church or a Jehovah’s Witness Kingdom Hall, or the Christian Science Mother Church.”<sup>165</sup> His commitment to preach wherever he was invited matched his missionary commitments affirmed in prior decades.<sup>166</sup> If the opportunity offered him freedom to preach the true gospel then he would seize the opportunity.

Barnhouse’s strategic shift was part of the larger optimism of mid-century evangelicalism. The 1950s was a period of religious enthusiasm in America: “Denominations were growing. Worship attendance was at its peak, and church membership, as a percent of the population, stood at an all-time high.”<sup>167</sup> Church attendance was at an “historic high after World War II” as “60 percent of Americans belonged to a church and almost as many attended on a regular basis.”<sup>168</sup> Religious observance in the last decade of Barnhouse’s life, the 1950s, created an optimism for the growth and health of the church. Barnhouse rode “the crest of the Protestant mainstream” and remained optimistic about the continued health of the church.<sup>169</sup> Barnhouse traced God’s work through all of human history and believed he lived in the time of God’s greatest grace. He argued, “His greatest grace has been reserved for the United States in our generation. Never has any people been so blessed, and never have so many sinned against so much grace.”<sup>170</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Barnhouse, *Acts*, 141.

<sup>166</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “To the Church at Philadelphia: Address Delivered to the Meeting of the Philadelphia Fundamentalists,” September 26, 1946, 3, Box 10, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>167</sup> Arleon L. Kelley, “Local Ecumenism in Historical and Cultural Context,” in *A Tapestry of Justice, Service, and Unity: Local Ecumenism in the United States, 1950-2000* (Tacoma, WA: National Association of Ecumenical and Interreligious Staff, 2004), 11. See also James Davison Hunter, “The Evangelical Worldview Since 1890,” in *Piety and Politics: Evangelicals and Fundamentalists Confront the World*, ed. Richard John Neuhaus and Michael Cromartie (Lanham, MD: Ethics and Public Policy Center, 1987), 45.

<sup>168</sup> Moore, *Selling God*, 240.

<sup>169</sup> William B. Lawrence, *Sundays in New York: Pulpit Theology at The Crest of the Protestant Mainstream, 1930-1955*, ATLA Monograph Series 41 (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 1996), ix.

<sup>170</sup> Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of*

Barnhouse surveyed the American landscape and recognized that millions heard evangelical sermons every week: “They are not lacking across the country.”<sup>171</sup> He claimed, at the beginning of 1960, “The United States of America is completely evangelized.”<sup>172</sup> He believed his own denomination was returning to its more conservative roots.<sup>173</sup> He saw “a tremendous movement back to the conservative position in his denomination.”<sup>174</sup> Barnhouse believed the vast majority of ministers in his denomination were true, born-again believers.<sup>175</sup> The highpoint of American religious involvement cultivated a hopeful outlook for denominational partnerships. Barnhouse’s optimism continued to grow as his ministry partnerships expanded.

Visible public evangelism and the post-war economic growth lent support to the possibilities of ecumenical agreement. Barnhouse publicly supported the ministry of Billy Graham.<sup>176</sup> Support of Graham was a distinguishing mark between evangelicals and fundamentalists and Barnhouse sided with evangelicals.<sup>177</sup> He was disappointed by the criticisms against Graham by fundamentalists.<sup>178</sup> He called the ministry of Graham a

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*Departure*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 147.

<sup>171</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 96.

<sup>172</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Missionary with a Vision,” Sermon, Romans 15:19-20, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>173</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to William Bordeaux, August 7, 1953, 1, Box 15, Folder 21, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>174</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Mr. and Mrs. Chas. S. Pressel, January 20, 1955, 1, Box 16, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>175</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Harry F. Kauffman, June 6, 1958, Box 15, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>176</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4c, *God’s Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 142; Barnhouse, “Editorial: Billy Graham,” *Eternity*, April 1951, 14.

<sup>177</sup> John H. Armstrong, “The Emerging Face of Being One: Ecumenical Windows for Evangelicals,” *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 49, no. 2 (Spring 2014): 296; Thomas S. Kidd, *Who Is an Evangelical?: The History of a Movement in Crisis* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), 75.

<sup>178</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Window on the World: Billy Graham and New York City,” *Eternity*, July 1956, 19.

blessing from God.<sup>179</sup> Barnhouse believed Graham belonged in the company of great evangelists like Wesley and Moody.<sup>180</sup> Graham, in turn, recognized the significance of Barnhouse's ministry. Graham turned to Barnhouse for advice on his radio program, "Hour of Decision."<sup>181</sup> Graham also asked Barnhouse to provide suggestions for Graham's first book, *Peace with God*.<sup>182</sup> Graham thanked Barnhouse for the labor of love in sending the edits and acknowledged, "I almost completely redid the chapter on Conversion to bring it more in conformity with your thinking and, in reality, my own."<sup>183</sup> Barnhouse condemned the pride that could make someone feel superior to other Christians, a flaw he identified in fundamentalists' rejection of Graham.<sup>184</sup> He believed fundamentalists committed the sin of failing to love their neighbors.<sup>185</sup> The evangelistic enthusiasm of Graham's Crusades strengthened Barnhouse's optimism in the health of the church in the 1950s.

Barnhouse's confrontational nature was softened after his New Year's Resolution. Earlier in his ministry, Barnhouse was criticized for his posture toward critics and allies alike. Oursler summarized the response Barnhouse provoked: "Barnhouse had many enemies. There are those who disagreed with his theology, and there are those who could not tolerate the man personally. They regarded him as rude, unmannerly, self-centered, inconsiderate. He often rubbed people the wrong way—

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<sup>179</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 134.

<sup>180</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 229.

<sup>181</sup> Billy Graham to Donald Grey Barnhouse, May 17, 1951, Box 6, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>182</sup> Billy Graham, *Just as I Am: The Autobiography of Billy Graham* (New York: HarperCollins, 2018), 284.

<sup>183</sup> Billy Graham to Donald Grey Barnhouse, August 29, 1953, Box 6, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>184</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Exclusivism," *Eternity*, February 1958, 5.

<sup>185</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Hard?" *Eternity*, March 1958, 7. See also "Barnhouse (Position) - Fundamentalists," November 10, 1955, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

sometimes unconsciously, often deliberately.”<sup>186</sup> His sister, Mabel Jean, acknowledged his flaws: “He was very strong in so many ways you could forget the weakness and the meanness . . . it wasn’t meanness it was thoughtlessness or an effort to have his own way.”<sup>187</sup> She explained, “Most everybody felt that he was conceited because he always had an answer and was always ready with everything.”<sup>188</sup> His son, Donald, Jr., recalled his father’s frequent assertion, “I may not always be right, but I’m never in doubt.”<sup>189</sup> Barnhouse’s biblical confidence and personal confidence sometimes intertwined.

Barnhouse did not change his theological priorities or preaching commitments, but his confrontational strategy and strong personality softened in his final years. In his later years, his family saw a gentler approach to theological controversy. His shift was not theological, but in terms of ministry strategy and personal relationships. Barnhouse’s daughter, Ruth, credited some of the softening to her step-mother, Margaret, whom Ruth described as “very good for him.”<sup>190</sup> Barnhouse’s strategic openness coincided with a general moderation of his attitude. His theological convictions did not diminish, but he was strategically more open to ministry opportunities and his disposition softened as he was more accepting of believers wherever they may be found.

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<sup>186</sup> Howard W. Oursler, review of *That Man Barnhouse*, by Margaret N. Barnhouse, *Eternity*, September 1983, 76.

<sup>187</sup> Mabel Jean Barnhouse, Interview by Paul Hopkins and Robert Oerter, January 2, 1961, 35a, Box 15, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>188</sup> Mabel Jean Barnhouse, Interview by Paul Hopkins and Robert Oerter: Continued, January 2, 1961, 26, Box 15, Folder 23, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>189</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., interview by author. Donald, Jr., argues that his father’s theology would have moved in a more progressive direction based on their conversations during the 1940s and 1950s. Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., *Good God!* (Self-published, Leo Victor, 2015), 93. See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., *The Fix* (Self-published, Leo Victor, 2017), 11-12.

<sup>190</sup> W. L. Taitte, “The Lady Is a Priest,” *D Magazine*, June 1983, accessed August 22, 2016, <http://www.dmagazine.com/publications/d-magazine/1983/june/the-lady-isa-priest/>. Barnhouse’s son, David, agreed with his sister’s assessment. Wife Marge was a positive influence on Donald. David Barnhouse, “Parent Assessment,” February 17, 2012 (Kitty Barnhouse Purgason email message to author, August 31, 2019), 6-7.

Barnhouse's openness toward broader partnerships within liberal organizations may have also resulted from his global perspective. Barnhouse travelled the world in support of missionaries. His ministry in Belgium and France had offered opportunity to serve in areas where evangelicals were a tiny minority in religiously hostile contexts. In his later ministry, he frequented England as a conference speaker and travelled broadly throughout Europe. Evangelicals in Britain were more open to broader partnerships within liberal denominations than evangelicals in America.<sup>191</sup> Barnhouse, like British evangelicals, saw the strategic value of partnering with gospel preaching believers of all denominations.<sup>192</sup>

Evangelicals sought a balance between the compromise of liberalism and the separation of fundamentalism.<sup>193</sup> Barnhouse believed he had struck the balance by maintaining his core commitments and partnering with the NCC. The increasing secularism of the ecumenical movement did not rise to the fore until the 1960s, after Barnhouse's time.<sup>194</sup> Barnhouse did not live to see the continued slide of liberal denominations and organizations away from the gospel.

Barnhouse was right to take the evangelistic opportunity provided to him by the television series. He was right to acknowledge individual believers within liberal denominations. However, he failed to see the pervasive liberalism within his

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<sup>191</sup> David Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in Its Settings: The British and American Movements since 1940," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and beyond, 1700-1990*, ed. Mark A. Noll, David Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 370.

<sup>192</sup> Ian S. Rennie, "Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North Atlantic Evangelicalism," in *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and beyond, 1700-1990*, ed. Mark A. Noll, David Bebbington, and George A. Rawlyk (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 339.

<sup>193</sup> Timothy George, "Evangelicals and the Present Ecumenical Moment," in *Critical Issues in Ecclesiology: Essays in Honor of Carl E. Braaten*, ed. Carl E. Braaten, Alberto L. García, and Susan K. Wood (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 55.

<sup>194</sup> M. E. Brinkman, "The Common Challenge to Ecumenicals and Evangelicals—an Ecumenical Appraisal," *Exchange* 23, no. 3 (December 1994): 195.

denomination. His semi-autonomous, itinerant ministry gave him freedom but helped insulate him from encroaching liberalism. He did not foresee the increasing power of the liberals within his own denomination because he relentlessly pursued every gospel opportunity presented to him. Barnhouse exposed the potential dangers of a militant separationist policy, but his criticisms against fundamentalists isolated men who should have been his allies. Barnhouse never faltered in his commitment to biblical authority and never shied away from a preaching engagement.

### Death

Barnhouse maintained long hours, travelled to distant destinations, and preached with great frequency. He described his physical vigor even late in his ministry, telling his listeners that his doctor had declared he was in better health than most men his age.<sup>195</sup> By the end of 1958, his health was beginning to falter. After a fall in which he broke his nose, his doctor ordered a change in diet to help control his blood sugar issues.<sup>196</sup> Still he continued at his relentless pace. At the start of 1960, he was making plans for preaching engagements across the following years, including a 1961 trip to England and a 1962 trip to India.<sup>197</sup> Barnhouse held those plans loosely, as he admitted a hospital stay, or even his own death, might end such plans.

In the summer of 1960, he completed the manuscripts for his mammoth Romans radio series.<sup>198</sup> He struggled with a mysterious illness and sought medical care

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<sup>195</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "God's People Not Cast Off," Sermon, Romans 11:1, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. Although Barnhouse admitted spending thirty-seven days without preaching while recovering from major surgery in 1955. Barnhouse, "Editorial: The Second Time," *Eternity*, December 1955, 10.

<sup>196</sup> Thomas M. Durant, M.D. to Donald Grey Barnhouse, December 31, 1958, Box 16, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>197</sup> Barnhouse, "Missionary with a Vision," Sermon, Romans 15:19-20.

<sup>198</sup> "Dr. Barnhouse Dies at Age 65, Noted Preacher," *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 6, 1960, 30, Box 15, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

in September, leading to the diagnosis of a massive brain tumor. An emergency operation was performed October 8 at Temple University Hospital in Philadelphia.<sup>199</sup> He remained in the hospital for four weeks with his wife by his side. Margaret described his thinking as clear, but his speech at times was limited to mumbling.<sup>200</sup> He prayed during his final days and asked for his favorite Scripture passages to be read. Each of his children visited. On November 5, 1960, Barnhouse entered glory.<sup>201</sup>

Barnhouse's funeral, at his beloved Tenth Presbyterian Church, was officiated by the Rev. Robert Lamont on November 9.<sup>202</sup> His life verse of Philippians 3:10 and the inscription included as the dedication in all of his books, Revelation 1:5-6, were included in the funeral program. The words serve as a fitting close to the life of a minister dedicated to the proclamation of the gospel: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us to be a kingdom and to be priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

Barnhouse's death prompted reactions of sympathy from across the theological spectrum. His partnerships with evangelicals and his willingness to partner with moderates showed itself in those who offered prayers for his recovery or condolences upon his death. Few preachers draw support from evangelicals like Billy Graham, Bill Bright, Ray Ortlund, and the National Association of Evangelicals while also receiving support from the National Council of Churches.<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> "Donald Grey Barnhouse: March 1895-November 1960," *Eternity*, December 1, 1960, 6.

<sup>200</sup> Margaret Barnhouse to Paul Hopkins, November 1, 1960, Box 16, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>201</sup> Frank E. Senn, MD, "Certificate of Death," November 5, 1960, Box 15, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>202</sup> "In Memorarium: Donald Grey Barnhouse" (Tenth Presbyterian Church, November 9, 1960), Box 10, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>203</sup> Billy Graham to Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 1, 1960, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia; Bill Bright to Mrs. Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 15, 1960, Box 3, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers; Raymond C. Ortlund to Mrs. Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 15, 1960, Box 3, Folder 3, Donald Grey Barnhouse

Barnhouse remained committed to his core evangelical beliefs to the end of his life. He sided theologically with the fundamentalists early in his ministry and never wavered from his foundational commitments. However, he remained in his increasingly liberal denomination. He opened himself to new partnerships after his New Year's Resolution in 1953, but he never weakened his doctrinal foundations. Through his expansive ministry on the radio and itinerant preaching, he boldly announced the need for faith in Christ alone. He defended the authority of Scripture. He pointed to the exclusivity of the gospel. Barnhouse saw himself as the messenger boy, with a message of massive importance, running with urgency to deliver it to his listeners. He preached through the final months of his life and remained faithful to the end.

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Papers; George L. Ford, Executive Director, The National Association of Evangelicals, to Mrs. Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 14, 1960, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers; S. Franklin Mack, Executive Director, Broadcasting and Film Commission, National Council of Churches, to Mrs. Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 7, 1960, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers; Theodore L. Tucker, Executive Secretary, National Council of the Churches of Christ, Africa Committee, to Dr. Paul A. Hopkins, The Evangelical Foundation, November 14, 1960, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers.

## CHAPTER 4

### BARNHOUSE'S PREACHING STRATEGY

Barnhouse's homiletical strategy was to make the text clear. He sought to explain the Word of God to his congregation. He believed that preaching should be clear: "Expository preaching must be direct and simple, if the hearer is to assimilate it."<sup>1</sup> His mantra was that of the messenger: "If you disagree with what I am teaching, just remember I didn't write it. I am only the messenger boy delivering the telegram."<sup>2</sup> Barnhouse argued that Western Union, the delivering agency, was responsible for the telegram until it was signed for by the recipient. He applied the analogy to preachers: "We must be very careful to make the message plain, and to see that it gets into the hands and consciousness of the individual."<sup>3</sup> This analysis of his homiletical strategy is derived from an examination of his preaching and is confirmed by his descriptions of his preaching in his published articles and sermon series. He often commented on his preaching strategy in letters. His goal was to make the text of Scripture understandable. He believed the truth of the Bible impacted the contemporary lives of his listeners.

Barnhouse's starting point was the authority of Scripture. Describing his preaching strategy, he wrote, "Apart from the authority of the Word of God there is no basis for preaching, no basis for extending the offer of salvation to sinners, no promise to believers that they can be forgiven and maintained in a relation of fellowship with the

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "On Expository Preaching," in *We Prepare and Preach: The Practice of Sermon Construction and Delivery*, ed. Clarence Stonelynn Roddy (Chicago: Moody, 1959), 36.

<sup>2</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, "What Was He Really Like?" *Eternity*, March 1961, 8. Quoted above in chapter 1.

<sup>3</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Delivery," *Eternity*, June 1954, 16.

Lord.”<sup>4</sup> Barnhouse rested on the authority and power of God for preaching, but he recognized that the message must be understood by the listeners for communication to take place.<sup>5</sup> Barnhouse emphasized biblical authority when describing the pastor’s responsibility, which is to “feed his flock, and the only food is the Word of God.”<sup>6</sup>

Barnhouse insisted that the preacher must be born again to understand and proclaim the text.<sup>7</sup> A believing preacher may be an assumed prerequisite for evangelicals, but given the liberalism rampant around him, Barnhouse emphasized the spiritual requirements of the preacher. True preachers “back all of their proclamations by the authority of the Bible, the Word of God” and must be personally called by God to the ministry.<sup>8</sup> Barnhouse warned young men that if they could be satisfied doing any other job, even that of the President, then they should not enter ministry. God sends a man with “a yearning, churning, burning inside him.”<sup>9</sup>

Barnhouse aimed to bring the message directly to each listener. He told his Keswick audience, after the chairman had called an attendee forward to receive a message from a telegram messenger boy, that as the preacher his goal was to bring a message “directly addressed to each individual, as the telegram had been to the young man.”<sup>10</sup> Barnhouse relied upon the frequently repeated image of a messenger boy to explain his preaching.<sup>11</sup> He filled his sermons with clear explanations and vivid

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<sup>4</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: On What Authority,” *Eternity*, May 1956, 11.

<sup>5</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Communication,” *Eternity*, August 1959, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The Whole Word,” *Eternity*, July 1957, 8.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Emotionalism,” *Revelation*, September 1939, 350.

<sup>8</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 91.

<sup>9</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 91.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Life by the Son: Practical Lessons in Experimental Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 9.

<sup>11</sup> Barnhouse, “Healing of the Demoniatic,” Sermon, Mark 5, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

analogies, anecdotes, and stories. He preached with urgency and gospel conviction. This chapter identifies Barnhouse's exegetical priorities and his commitment to theological fundamentals in his preaching. The authority of the Bible sent Barnhouse into his study for long hours of preparation. The importance of the message filled his sermons with illustrations. He brought the message straight to his audience along the quickest route of illustrations.

### **Exegetical Priorities**

Barnhouse offered his definition of expository preaching: "Expository preaching is the art of explaining the text of the Word of God, using all the experiences of life and learning to illuminate the exposition. The prime factor in expository preaching is the belief that the Bible is the Word of God."<sup>12</sup> The preacher starts with the theological commitment to Scripture, invests a lifetime of study into the text, and then works to clearly explain it to his congregation. Life experience and illustrations aid in the explanatory work of exegetical preaching.

Barnhouse did not restrict his definition of preaching to homiletical articles but offered the definition for his sermon listeners.<sup>13</sup> He revealed his strategy to his listeners. To be truly transformed, he expected his congregation to share his core commitments. Only by the power of the Word and the work of the Spirit would the preacher see change in his listeners. The preached Word is the power of the church. Transformation and revival in the church only come through the Word, and the basis of a preacher's ministry is expository preaching.<sup>14</sup> Barnhouse explained, "The answer to the problems of the

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<sup>12</sup> Barnhouse, "On Expository Preaching," 29.

<sup>13</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "With Him," Mark 3:13-19, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>14</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Expository Preaching," *Revelation*, January 1949, 1-2.

Church of Jesus Christ is the preaching of the Word of God, and when that Word is preached, men and women will be built up and grow in the knowledge of Christ.”<sup>15</sup>

Barnhouse’s commitment to the Bible’s authority lasted his entire ministry. In the summer of 1960, in what were the final months of his life, Barnhouse met with Keiper to prepare materials for an upcoming book, *How to Study Your Bible*.<sup>16</sup> In the opening chapter, Barnhouse set forth his lifelong commitment to expository preaching and the authority of the Bible: “As those who are familiar with my ministry will know, I have limited my preaching and my teaching to the exposition of God’s Word. In my early ministry I was made to see that ‘faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God’ (Rom. 10:17).”<sup>17</sup>

Barnhouse remembered his student experience of preaching a week of meetings in a suburb of Los Angeles. When asked to preach a second week, he realized he had no more sermons left. He took the Pacific Electric streetcar into the city to purchase copies of sermons from great men like Moody and Spurgeon. As he rode, he pulled out his Bible and began to make notes on John 1:12. He wrote out the verse and scribbled his notes on the page below. On his return from the city, he realized he had missed the first word of the verse: “But.” The missing word forced Barnhouse to see his verse in contrast to the preceding verses and excited him about the meaning of the text. He described the impact of his exegetical work on his future ministry:

I was so excited by my own digging into the Word, that I decided to bring what I had found to the people. To my amazement, that Monday night audience seemed to enjoy much more my exposition of John 1:12 than they had all the sermons of the previous week. I decided to finish my exposition of John 1:12 and explained to them verse eleven on Tuesday night. I can honestly say I have been explaining all

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<sup>15</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Expository Preaching,” *Revelation*, January 1944, 6.

<sup>16</sup> Ralph L. Keiper and Donald Grey Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible* (Philadelphia: The Bible Study Hour, 1961), Preface.

<sup>17</sup> Keiper and Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible*, 7.

the verses of John’s Gospel and all the other verses in the Bible ever since.<sup>18</sup> Barnhouse, from his earliest preaching opportunities as a student at Biola, committed himself “to bring what [he] had found to the people.” He was a servant of the Word compelled to clearly and passionately explain the text.

Barnhouse’s preaching rested upon his commitment to biblical authority. Sheppard, a Presbyterian Missionary to the Congo, sat under Barnhouse’s preaching ministry during World War II. He wrote, “I remember his insistence upon the veracity and dependability of the Scriptures and of their relevance to the world in which we live.”<sup>19</sup> Barnhouse’s commitment to the authority of the Bible forced him to say what the Bible says. It confined him to the text, but also freed him from fear. Edwards, after quoting Barnhouse on the priority of biblical authority, summarized the importance of the preacher’s posture toward the Bible: “The doctrine of inspiration guarantees that as long as I restrict my preaching to what the Bible says, I will never be embarrassed. . . . When my preaching is true to the biblical text it is automatically true to life.”<sup>20</sup>

Barnhouse feared that too many preachers of his day were catering to the whims of church members as if they were customers rather than offering them the truth of the Bible even if it offended or embarrassed their sensibilities.<sup>21</sup> He judged his sermons by how clearly the message of the Bible was communicated.<sup>22</sup> Expository preaching keeps the sermon rooted in the text and provides the context for application.

When confronting challenging topics such as the doctrine of hell, Barnhouse pointed to the authority of Scripture, “You may not believe in this doctrine. But I am

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<sup>18</sup> Keiper and Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible*, 9.

<sup>19</sup> Walter D. Sheppard, “What Dr. Barnhouse Meant to Me,” *Eternity*, May 1961, 7.

<sup>20</sup> J. Kent Edwards, *Deep Preaching: Creating Sermons That Go Beyond the Superficial* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 18.

<sup>21</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits* (Philadelphia: Revelation, 1949), 93.

<sup>22</sup> Ronald Thomas Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse” (ThD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 147.

asking you to admit that this is what the Bible teaches. . . . I am here to do one thing: to reflect the Word of God as simply and accurately as I possibly can.”<sup>23</sup> Barnhouse committed himself to the study and communication of the message of the Bible. He did not pander to his audience’s expectations, but he pressed them to believe the message from the Bible.

Barnhouse’s exegetical goal was to understand every passage through its connection to the whole of Scripture. He explained, “I believe that the only way to understand any given passage in the Word of God is to take the whole Bible and place the point of it, like an inverted pyramid on that passage, so that the weight of the entire Word rest upon a single verse, or indeed, a single word.”<sup>24</sup> The strength of Barnhouse’s approach was his ability to bring systematic biblical teaching and context to bear on each individual passage. Barnhouse captured the topical concerns of each passage while remaining committed to the explanation of each text. Larsen identifies Barnhouse, alongside Lloyd-Jones, in their ability to “bring much of the systematic teaching of Scripture to bear upon that seminal text.”<sup>25</sup>

Barnhouse’s series on Romans, which he preached in his first three and a half years at Tenth and then expanded to 455 sermons later in his ministry, displayed his strategy. Each passage was used to explain the broader message of the whole of Scripture. At times in his Romans series, Barnhouse built from the themes of Romans to provide exposition of other biblical passages. In a sermon with the listed text of Romans 13:11, he did not directly reference Romans, but spent the sermon in an exposition of

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<sup>23</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Eternal Grace,” Sermon, Romans 2:12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>24</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Man’s Ruin: Expository Messages on the Whole Bible, Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure.*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Van Kampen, 1952), iii–iv. See also Barnhouse, *The Invisible War: The Panorama of the Continuing Conflict between Good and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 12.

<sup>25</sup> David L. Larsen, *The Anatomy of Preaching: Identifying the Issues in Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 1999), 31.

Psalm 51.<sup>26</sup> He could trace a theme from Romans through numerous Old Testament references to prove his point. He also stacked New Testament texts in order to affirm the teaching of his text in Romans for the day.

Barnhouse could linger over just one word in a passage, but he never confined himself to that passage alone. Instead he took listeners through multiple biblical passages to support his central message. In a sermon preached from Psalm 42:5, Barnhouse examined John 15, Isaiah 2, 1 Corinthians 3, and John 4.<sup>27</sup> Preaching from Psalm 1, Barnhouse began by showing how Jesus fulfilled the psalm. Then he walked through various biblical passages to show the meaning of success according to the psalm. Barnhouse referenced Hebrews 11 to show those considered failures by the world's standards. He contrasted the powerful political leaders with John the Baptist in Luke 3. He quoted an obscure passage from 1 Chronicles 26 to respond to the mocking of a liberal minister.<sup>28</sup> Barnhouse moved rapidly through biblical passages in order to strengthen his theological point or provide illustrative insight into his starting passage.

Most of Barnhouse's exegetical series took significant time, lingering in each book of the Bible, as was most obvious with Romans. However, at times Barnhouse preached thematic sermons to explain key doctrines or to connect with seasonal holidays. His topical sermons were the mainstay of his conference preaching. Even in the Tenth pulpit, Barnhouse preached overviews of a verse or phrase rather than devoting multiple sermons in a series to the same verse or phrase. His overview of Galatians took only a few months on the radio compared to the years he preached through John or Romans.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Steps in the Christian Life," Sermon, Romans 13:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>27</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Our Dependence Upon God," Sermon, Psalm 42:5, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>28</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "What Is Success?" Sermon, Psalm 1:3, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>29</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "No Other Gospel," Sermon, Galatians 1:1-2, Dr. Barnhouse and

Barnhouse kept listeners engaged with his clear explanations and sermon structures. He provided auditory prompts to help the listeners. In a sermon on the once-for-all death of Christ from Hebrews, Barnhouse used verbal cues to mark the movement of the sermon: “The mind of God planned the cross. The law of God commanded the cross. The Word of God promised the cross. The holiness of God required the cross. The love of God provided the cross. The Son of God accomplished the cross. . . . The justice of God accepted the cross. . . . The grace of God gives it to us.”<sup>30</sup>

Barnhouse expected the preached Word to change minds. He wanted his listeners to reorient themselves to the priorities of the biblical text. After preaching at Philadelphia Bible Institute, Barnhouse received a report of the impact of his preaching: “Our students were deeply stimulated in their thinking concerning the issues raised. Some healthy debates and bull sessions were enjoyed regarding the matters you introduced, and we have all profited from your ministry.”<sup>31</sup> Barnhouse’s reaction to the letter indicates one of his priorities for his preaching: “I’ve made them Think! That’s what I tried to do.”<sup>32</sup>

At age fifteen, when he received assurance of his salvation, Barnhouse chose his life verse, Philippians 3:10: “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.”<sup>33</sup> His

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the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>30</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Paid in Full,” Sermon, Hebrews 10:12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>31</sup> Edwin C. Deibler to Donald Grey Barnhouse, November 27, 1957, Box 16, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>32</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Reaction to Deibler Letter,” January 1958, Box 16, Folder 12, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. Emphasis original.

<sup>33</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3b, *God’s Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 19, 71. See also Ralph L. Keiper, “Life Text of Dr. Barnhouse,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 19; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 150.

preaching ministry aligned with his chosen verse. He sought Christ and the hope of the resurrection in his sermons. Barnhouse offered biblical context for each text he preached. His preaching was Christ-centered, not in finding Christ in a small detail hiding in a passage, but in connecting each passage to the overarching drama of the Bible. Barnhouse believed the ministry of Jesus was central to understanding the Bible and that the Old Testament could not be understood without the New.<sup>34</sup> He argued that Christ is found in every part of the Bible.<sup>35</sup> Explaining Jesus's view of Scripture, Barnhouse asked, "How do we know Jesus Christ? Only through the Bible, the Word of God."<sup>36</sup>

In his notes on Genesis, Barnhouse saw that what was true for the patriarchs was "more true of the Lord Jesus."<sup>37</sup> Chapell explains the strategy: "Christ-centered preaching, rightly understood, does not seek to discover where Christ is mentioned in every biblical text but to disclose where every text stands in relation to Christ's ministry."<sup>38</sup> In his preaching, Barnhouse drove toward Christ. His conclusion to a Keswick series is emblematic of his strategy of pointing a congregation to the Savior: "There is our answer, and there must be the last word of these addresses. Christ. CHRIST. CHRIST."<sup>39</sup>

Barnhouse recognized some biblical truths are applicable only to believers. He made explicit to unbelievers present that certain points were not applicable to them.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1969), 9–10.

<sup>35</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 33.

<sup>36</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "How the Lord Looked at Scripture," *Eternity*, December 1, 1960, 17.

<sup>37</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 240.

<sup>38</sup> Bryan Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott M. Gibson and Matthew D. Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 7.

<sup>39</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946* (Spartanburg, SC: Christian Supply, 1989), 244. Emphasis original.

<sup>40</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "What Do We Preach?" *Revelation*, February 1937, 54.

Even after making the distinction between the saved and unsaved, Barnhouse made the gospel clear for unbelievers by showing them the “vast love of God and . . . His infinite hatred of sin.”<sup>41</sup> He clarified, “If, of course, you have never believed in Him, you must come first to the cross; but if you have believed in Him, then the power is available to you.”<sup>42</sup> He explained that it was his goal to “include a word of [the whole outline of Christian truth], at least, in every sermon that I ever preach.”<sup>43</sup> Every sermon centered on Christ because “from eternity to eternity” everything centers in Jesus Christ.<sup>44</sup> For Barnhouse, “the central theme of the Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ.”<sup>45</sup>

Grace is the basis for Christianity. Grace is the starting point for becoming a Christian and necessary for continued growth in the gospel. The gospel is not only the message for unbelievers but also the message that believers need to live as believers.<sup>46</sup> Gospel-centered preaching keeps grace at the center of the Christian life. Merida explains:

If one preaches the Scriptures in view of their redemptive history that culminates in Jesus, then the gospel will be integrated naturally into every sermon. The unbeliever will be confronted with his need for repentance and his need for hope in Christ. On the other hand, exposition will edify the believers in the church and remind them that they do not work for grace but from grace and by grace.<sup>47</sup>

Barnhouse pointed to Christ in his sermons. He emphasized the grace of God through his ministry.

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<sup>41</sup> Barnhouse, “What Do We Preach?” 55.

<sup>42</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 30.

<sup>43</sup> Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 79.

<sup>44</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), 214.

<sup>45</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 94.

<sup>46</sup> Tim Chester and Marcus Honeysett, *Gospel-Centred Preaching: Becoming the Preacher God Wants You to Be* (Surrey, UK: Good Book, 2014), 63.

<sup>47</sup> Tony Merida, *The Christ-Centered Expositor: A Field Guide for Word-Driven Disciple Makers* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016), 17.

Grace-filled preaching applies the gospel to believers and unbelievers such that “every sermon is a ‘salvation sermon.’”<sup>48</sup> Jensen concurs, “Every sermon should be evangelistic, for every sermon should make the gospel clear.”<sup>49</sup> An evangelistic sermon does not demand nor preclude an altar call, but it does mean that the gospel will be explained and applied to believers and unbelievers in each sermon. Barnhouse preached to believer and unbeliever: “Preach the necessity of the new birth to those who are lost, and the necessity of the fulness of the Spirit to those who are saved.”<sup>50</sup> When addressing unbelievers, Barnhouse called for faith and repentance. He turned his attention to the lost and offered a word of invitation: “Thus we close on a note of personal appeal. The Gospel is for you individually, today the door of grace is open.”<sup>51</sup> He preached with urgency, “You *must* decide for Christ.”<sup>52</sup> He was willing to leave a chilling question linger as a concluding line: “Why not accept Him now?”<sup>53</sup>

Barnhouse did not consider himself primarily an evangelist—he thought of himself in terms of teaching and discipleship—but his sermons bear an evangelistic thrust because he regularly turned his focus on unbelievers and challenged them to put their trust in Christ. His introductory or concluding prayers often beseeched God to bring unbelievers to the position of faith. To help explain conversion, he used illustrations of

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<sup>48</sup> John Piper, *The Supremacy of God in Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015), 83.

<sup>49</sup> Phillip Jensen, “Preaching the Word Today,” in *Preach the Word: Essays on Expository Preaching in Honor of R. Kent Hughes*, ed. Leland Ryken and Todd A. Wilson (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2007), 162.

<sup>50</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 124.

<sup>51</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “When God Laughs,” in *Unveiling the Future: Twelve Prophetic Messages*, ed. T. Richard Dunham and Harry Rimmer (Findlay, OH: Fundamental Truth, 1934), 108.

<sup>52</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not* (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2015), 109. Emphasis original. See also Barnhouse, “When God Laughs,” 101, 108; Barnhouse, “Marks of Sonship,” in *88 Evangelistic Sermons*, ed. Charles Langworthy Wallis and Charles L. Allen (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 56; Barnhouse, “Who Can Forgive Sins?” Sermon, Mark 2:1-12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, “Persuaded by Christ,” Sermon, Romans 14:14, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>53</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 83.

people coming to see their sin and responding in faith.<sup>54</sup> Barnhouse emphasized his teaching ministry rather than an evangelistic preaching ministry. He explained, “Many times I have said to an audience, ‘I am not a preacher; I am a teacher.’”<sup>55</sup> He believed his primary function was to strengthen believers in their faith, and he spent his life teaching and preparing to teach.

Barnhouse compared evangelists to obstetricians but saw his ministry primarily as discipleship: “But I am a pediatrician; I train those who are already born again, in the things of the Lord so that they may grow in Him.”<sup>56</sup> Barnhouse heeded the admonition to do the work of an evangelist, but he saw his ministry as primarily to believers.<sup>57</sup> Nevertheless, his ministry was filled with evangelism. He preached primarily to believers but then turn attention to unbelievers listening. He explained, “I am presuming that you are a believer in Jesus Christ,” before calling unbelievers to repentance.<sup>58</sup> While Barnhouse preached first to believers, his ministry contained an evangelistic thrust. Billy Graham, a name synonymous with American evangelism, praised Barnhouse’s evangelistic ministry: “No man ever did any finer evangelism than he did.”<sup>59</sup>

Keller argues for the type of strategy employed by Barnhouse, preaching that reaches believers and unbelievers in the same sermon. Keller writes, “When the preacher

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<sup>54</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The First and Great Commandment,” Sermon, Mark 12:28-34, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>55</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 49.

<sup>56</sup> “The Indefatigable Circuit Rider: Bible-Teaching Missions,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 33; See also *The Keswick Week 1955* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1955), 16; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2b, *God’s River: Romans 5:1-11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 10.

<sup>57</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4c, *God’s Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 82; Barnhouse, “Importance of Marriage,” Sermon, Mark 10:1-12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>58</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 227.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas P. Johnston, *Examining Billy Graham’s Theology of Evangelism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 208.

solves Christians' problems with the gospel—not by calling them to try harder but by pointing them to a deeper faith in Christ's salvation—then believers are being edified and nonbelievers are hearing the gospel, all at the same time.”<sup>60</sup> Barnhouse preached to believers but called unbelievers to faith and repentance within the same sermon.

### **Doctrinal Commitments**

Barnhouse's exegetical strategy was informed by his theological framework. He was committed to the sovereignty of God, the authority of Scripture, and the person and work of Jesus Christ. To explain his preaching goals, Barnhouse turned to Isaiah 55:11 in which the power for preaching rests in God's powerful use of his Word. Barnhouse described his arrival as pastor of Tenth. He turned the pulpit Bible to Isaiah 55 as a reminder of God's power for preaching. He was amazed that his predecessors had kept the pulpit Bible open to the very passage to which he turned. He viewed their decision as “the testimony of ministries that were established upon the solid foundation of divine revelation.”<sup>61</sup> Barnhouse relied upon the power of God in his preaching.

Russell, a critical biographer, summarized Barnhouse's fundamental commitments:

Barnhouse condensed his own set of fundamentals to three in number, each one reflecting an emphasis upon the supernatural: 1. the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ whom he viewed as the second person of the Godhead; 2. the death and resurrection of Christ for the redemption of persons estranged from God by sin; 3. the plenary inspiration of the Old and New Testaments as the revelation of God's command.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York: Viking, 2015), 120.

<sup>61</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Isaiah 55:11,” in  *Holding Forth the Word: 1927-1952* (Philadelphia: Tenth Presbyterian Church, 1952). See also Rick Phillips, “Dr. Barnhouse's Text”, Sermon, Isaiah 55:10-11, Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia (November 11, 2010), accessed August 12, 2016, <http://www.tenth.org/resource-library/sermons/dr-barnhouse-s-text>.

<sup>62</sup> C. Allyn Russell, “Donald Grey Barnhouse: Fundamentalist Who Changed,” *Journal of Presbyterian History* 59, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 39.

Barnhouse's commitments to the fundamentals of the Christian faith rooted his preaching in the power of the gospel. He summarized the teaching of the Bible in "three sentences. . . . I deserve Hell. Jesus Christ took my Hell. There is nothing for me but His Heaven."<sup>63</sup>

Barnhouse's ministry was shaped by his years at Biola. His eschatology and doctrine of the church were influenced by his dispensational tendencies. His years at Princeton and decades as a Presbyterian preacher showed him to be a staunch Calvinist. He was devoted to the Reformed soteriology of his Presbyterian convictions. He emphasized the doctrines of grace and the sovereignty of God. Barnhouse, through explanation and illustration, encouraged his congregation to trust in God in times of joy and times of sorrow. God's sovereign power was never forfeited even through the darkest hours of war or international conflict. Barnhouse counseled individuals and comforted his audiences with the hope of God's sovereign power reflected in the gospel. Even as his family walked through the difficulty of his first wife's illness and death, and even during his final months in which he was diagnosed with cancer, Barnhouse remained steadfastly rooted in the doctrine of God's sovereignty.

Barnhouse's doctrinal commitments shaped his preaching strategy. Barnhouse was a confessional Presbyterian, but he was also shaped by his earlier dispensational training. He has been described as holding the combination of "a mildly dispensational premillennialism with a traditional Calvinist theology."<sup>64</sup> Barnhouse believed in the special status of the nation of Israel and expected a future earthly kingdom following a rapture and tribulation. He eschewed the label dispensationalist because he emphasized grace in every age of redemptive history unlike some fervent dispensationalists. He

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<sup>63</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 116; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God's Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 73.

<sup>64</sup> J. A. Carpenter, "Barnhouse, Donald Grey," in *Dictionary of the Presbyterian and Reformed Tradition in America*, ed. D. G. Hart and Mark A. Noll (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1999), 26.

explained, “I have never called myself a dispensationalist. . . . I’m against any form of so-called ‘dispensationalism’ which would make salvation on any other condition than that of pure grace.”<sup>65</sup> Still he affirmed his position as “a pretribulation rapturist and a premillenarian.”<sup>66</sup> His preaching from Romans 9-11, the Thessalonian letters, and Revelation betrayed his strong dispensational tendencies. He believed it was a monstrous distortion of the Bible to apply the promises of Israel to the church.<sup>67</sup> For Barnhouse, a dispensational understanding of national Israel was the only way to hold on to the authority of the Bible: “As far as I am concerned, if God does not bring the Jews back into Palestine and give them the whole of the land . . . then the Bible is not a trustworthy book.”<sup>68</sup>

Alongside his dispensational eschatology, Barnhouse emphasized the Reformed doctrines of grace in his preaching. A biographer claims Barnhouse “thumped the drum for TULIP so loudly that he has to be given much credit for sowing the seed of the modern Reformed renewal in evangelicalism.”<sup>69</sup> Yet Barnhouse recognized that Calvinism had to be presented with a gentle compassion. He wrote, “It was impossible to go out to the unsaved with a cold hearted, dogmatic presentation of the Bible doctrine of election.”<sup>70</sup> He did not market himself as Reformed, but he did not shy away from Reformed doctrines even when preaching in a Methodist church or the tents of Keswick.

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<sup>65</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Dispensations,” December 20, 1951, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>66</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983), 161.

<sup>67</sup> Barnhouse, “Power - Spiritual and Temporal,” Sermon, Romans 9:4, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>68</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 106.

<sup>69</sup> Allen C. Guelzo, “Barnhouse,” in *Tenth Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia: 175 Years of Thinking and Acting Biblically*, ed. Philip Graham Ryken (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2004), 72.

<sup>70</sup> Barnhouse, “What Do We Preach?” 55.

For Barnhouse, God's foreknowledge did not negate human responsibility, and he sought to maintain this biblical tension in his preaching.<sup>71</sup> He repeatedly affirmed the total depravity of humanity. He clarified the term for his listeners who were tempted to reject it out of hand: "Total depravity does not mean that there is no good in man, but that there is no good in man which can satisfy God."<sup>72</sup> Barnhouse taught predestination, but he rejected Calvin's doctrine of "double predestination," the predestination of the lost.<sup>73</sup> For Barnhouse, the teaching of limited atonement was a necessary framework for true gospel teaching.<sup>74</sup> He taught the perseverance of the saints and summarized his soteriological view: "The totality of our salvation is by the grace of God alone."<sup>75</sup> To listeners who rejected his message as "old-fashioned Calvinistic theology," Barnhouse explained that he was simply offering them the Bible's explanation for their relationship with God.<sup>76</sup>

Even more important than Calvinist doctrine for Barnhouse, he offered "an irreducible minimum of Christian truth" required for salvation. The core truths of Barnhouse contradicted the false teachings of liberals. Barnhouse affirmed the fullness of fundamental Christian doctrine as essential for salvation:

First, Jesus Christ is none other than the Second Person of the Godhead, and before His human birth He existed eternally as God. He took upon Himself a human body

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<sup>71</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "God - Foreknowledge," September 26, 1957, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, "Predestination - Doctrine Of," October 10, 1958, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>72</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1b, *God's Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 216.

<sup>73</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God's Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 28; Barnhouse, "God, Judge of the World," Sermon, Romans 9:19-24, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>74</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Calvinism: Limited Atonement," October 24, 1955, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>75</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Eternal Security - Question Regarding Apostasy," circa 1953, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>76</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3a, *God's Grace: Romans 5:12-21* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 174.

of His own creation in order that He might grow up to die on the Cross. He shed His blood as an offering which could satisfy all the demands of His perfect justice and holiness. At the same time, His love was given the freedom to reach down to mankind and save those individuals who would accept the fact of their own unworthiness and consequent condemnation and the fact that all of His righteous demands were satisfied by the death penalty which He paid. All this is sealed to us as factual by the resurrection of that body which was crucified, which resurrection is a certain guarantee to us that we are accepted and that we shall live eternally with Him, reigning with Him forever and ever. Nothing short of this can be called Christianity.<sup>77</sup>

The gospel message was the heart of Barnhouse's preaching ministry. He devoted himself to the clear and urgent proclamation of biblical truth.

### **Commitment to Study**

Barnhouse's commitment to the Bible as the authoritative Word of God led him to a lifetime of biblical study. Graham extolled Barnhouse's biblical understanding with a generous superlative: "I think he knew the Scriptures better than any man I ever knew."<sup>78</sup> Graham relayed, in a letter to Stott, a proverb Graham had heard from Barnhouse: "If I had only three years to serve the Lord, I would spend two of them studying and preparing."<sup>79</sup> Study was core to Barnhouse's preaching ministry.

Barnhouse's foundation was the Bible. The Bible, studied prayerfully, is the basis for the sermon. He labored in Bible study for hours each work day. He described his working schedule: "I early became geared to a 16-hour working day. . . . In those [early] years my Bible study averaged ten hours a day. I early developed the prayer habit of doing my praying while studying the Bible, always in line with the thoughts that were brought up by the Word of God."<sup>80</sup> Barnhouse did not set aside the hard work of study in

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<sup>77</sup> Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 110. Barnhouse repeated his "irreducible minimum" in similar language in his 1958 sermon "Doubtful Disputations," Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 166.

<sup>78</sup> Billy Graham, "What Dr. Barnhouse Means To Me," *Eternity*, March 1961, 7.

<sup>79</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 181.

<sup>80</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to James D. White, December 22, 1954, 3, Box 4, Folder 5, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

his later years, but in the last year of his life admitted, “I spend more time in solid study now than in the years when I was in college, seminary, or graduate school.”<sup>81</sup> Still he did not view the work as a burden but as a joy. He claimed, “Preaching the gospel rests me.”<sup>82</sup> The hours of study found release in the joy of preaching.

For Barnhouse, the key to ministry was the commitment to study: “The secret of the success of any useful servant of God is the time he spends studying the Scriptures.”<sup>83</sup> Barnhouse described “a thousand times” he found himself at his typewriter with his Bible and books arrayed around him only to finally look at the clock and realize the night had disappeared and dawn was arriving.<sup>84</sup> Even on nights when he retired at a reasonable hour, he described his practice of meditating on a verse of Scripture as he fell asleep so that for the last thirty years of his ministry he said, “I sleep like a baby.”<sup>85</sup> Waking or sleeping, the Word was his constant companion.

Barnhouse argued, “No man is ever going to be able to fill the pulpit adequately unless he spends thousands of hours year after year in the study of God’s Word.”<sup>86</sup> Week after week, he poured over the Word. He never tired of the task. The preacher’s first responsibility was time alone with God in the Word and in prayer. The personal devotion in the Word strengthens the preacher against the dangers of giving up because of difficulties or giving in to listeners’ expectations. The preacher “will walk

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<sup>81</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The Obedient Heart,” Sermon, Romans 15:18, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>82</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 318.

<sup>83</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Bible Study - How to Study the Scriptures,” circa 1953, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>84</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 15–16.

<sup>85</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 77. Barnhouse also described his practice of meditating on Christ as he fell asleep during his 1938 Keswick sermons. Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 88.

<sup>86</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Acts: An Expository Commentary*, ed. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 59.

into the pulpit with the profound conviction that he is sent by God and that he must speak as the oracles of God.”<sup>87</sup> Throughout his ministry, Barnhouse marveled at the inexhaustible riches of the Word of God.<sup>88</sup> A preacher can spend a lifetime in the Word and still have more to discover. There are deeper truths to be understood. There are clearer expressions that can be preached.

Barnhouse’s strategy for study involved biblical and systematic theology with reference works at the ready. He described reading fifty commentaries at the beginning of his ministry to prepare for each sermon, but after a lifetime of ministry he confined himself to the Greek text, some translations, a concordance, and vocabulary aids.<sup>89</sup> An English dictionary remained part of his study preparation as he drilled down into the meaning of words. Even near the end of his ministry, he continued to study the Oxford English Dictionary as part of his weekly sermon preparation.<sup>90</sup> Barnhouse wanted to be clear with words and often provided definitions or etymological clarifications. His home office included a multi-tiered desk which he could swing down in front of him to keep multiple reference works open simultaneously.<sup>91</sup>

Barnhouse depended upon Scripture to explain Scripture. He explained, “The best way to interpret Scripture is to study Scripture.”<sup>92</sup> He repeatedly read from Genesis to Revelation “in a rapid, sweeping way, with a subject matter in mind. I have gone

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<sup>87</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Why Ministers Crack Up,” *Eternity*, December 1956, 12.

<sup>88</sup> Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not*, 7.

<sup>89</sup> Barnhouse reviewed every verse containing the word under consideration. For example, he described the strategy for understanding discipleship by systematically reviewing every verse that included the word disciple. Barnhouse, “Learning Discipleship.”

<sup>90</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Ministers - Teaching - Expository Preaching,” February 7, 1955, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals Archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>91</sup> April 1, 2017 tour of The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals offices, Lancaster, PA

<sup>92</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2b, *God’s River: Romans 5:1-11*, 168.

through the Bible in this way perhaps three or four hundred times”<sup>93</sup> Even near the end of his ministry, with a wealth of biblical knowledge and thousands of sermons already preached, Barnhouse continued to read through the Bible several times each year: “In the course of a year I read through the whole Bible many times that I might be able to teach the truth of God’s Word. I can only give what has been given me by the Holy Spirit and if I am in error, I can only wait on the Holy Spirit to teach me the truth as I study.”<sup>94</sup>

Barnhouse believed his preaching rested not on his own “oratory or tricks” but on the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>95</sup> Barnhouse prayed through every part of his preparation and depended upon the Lord when he preached. He exclaimed, “How dare we stand to preach when we have not received power from the Lord!”<sup>96</sup> The power of the Spirit is revealed in the preaching moment but also in the preacher’s preparation. The preacher’s task is to pass along to the people the truth of the Bible. He must study the Bible. The preacher can stumble into error, so he must continually study the Bible for the Spirit to convince him of the truth.

For Barnhouse, the preacher depends upon the power of the Spirit and the authority of the Word. He compared the ministries of Moody and Beecher, in which Moody relied upon biblical evangelism and Beecher upon his excellent oratory.<sup>97</sup> Moody’s ministry thrived because he relied upon the Word while Beecher’s shrank after his death. The preacher must depend upon the Word and not his personal persuasiveness. Barnhouse admitted he was not a polished preacher like the greats who had come before

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<sup>93</sup> Barnhouse, “Ministers - Teaching - Expository Preaching.”

<sup>94</sup> “Barnhouse- Disagreement,” November 30, 1954, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>95</sup> Paul A. Hopkins to C. Allyn Russell, October 7, 1981, Box 14, Unnumbered “Biographical Bits” Folder, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>96</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 105.

<sup>97</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 72. Barnhouse also noted the contrasts between Moody and Beecher in Barnhouse, *Acts*, 221.

him. Instead his words rushed with an urgency befitting the message: “My metal comes pouring from the furnace in a hot torrent.”<sup>98</sup> Barnhouse poured over the message in long hours and poured out the message with urgency. Barnhouse had a message to deliver. His power rested not in himself, but in the work of the Spirit through the Word. Barnhouse understood that “God never promised to bless our preaching, or our eloquence, or our logic, or our charm, or any of our attainments. What God has promised to do is to use his Word through us.”<sup>99</sup>

Barnhouse’s lifetime of study made him firm in his commitments. Often as a guest preacher, he followed up the sermon with a question and answer session. Another preacher remembered the impact of Barnhouse’s biblical study. When a questioner confronted Barnhouse with being intolerant, Smith recollected:

Dr. Barnhouse prefaced his answers the next night with the booming statement: ‘...I am not intolerant—not at all! I am simply intransigent, that’s all.’ When we had scurried to the dictionary, we found that this word meant ‘refusing to compromise.’ How very suitable was that garment for his wearing! The distillation of a half-century’s living with God’s Word gave him that distinctive garb of intransigence, and he wore it bravely and well.<sup>100</sup>

The preacher’s confidence arrives through his personal study and is confirmed by the power of the Spirit in the preacher’s preparation.

Bible reading and study must remain a priority for the Christian and was central advice in Barnhouse’s admonition to preachers: “The Bible must come first into the Christian’s life, if he is to know power and peace. The Chinese preacher Leland Wang followed the rule, ‘No Bible, no breakfast.’”<sup>101</sup> The lesson from Barnhouse’s

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<sup>98</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946*, 31.

<sup>99</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Signs and Wonders,” Sermon, Romans 15:19, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>100</sup> C. Ralston Smith, “What Dr. Barnhouse Meant to Me,” *Eternity*, April 1961, 10.

<sup>101</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Living from the Word of God,” in *We Prepare and Preach: The Practice of Sermon Construction and Delivery*, ed. Clarence Stonelynn Roddy (Chicago: Moody, 1959), 39. See also Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 93; Barnhouse, “The Day-by-Day Christian Life,” in *Keswick’s Authentic Voice: Sixty-Five Dynamic Addresses Delivered at the Keswick Convention, 1875-1957*, ed. Herbert F. Stevenson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1959), 381.

teenage years that he must prioritize the Bible over the newspaper stuck with him through the end of his life. Johnson's description of a preacher applies well to Barnhouse: "The life of the preacher is lived in the Book."<sup>102</sup>

It remained Barnhouse's lifelong goal, and his self-described "greatest spiritual need," "to know more of the Word of God in order that I might know Him better."<sup>103</sup> He was not after sermon fodder, but he was after an intimate relationship with God. It was necessary for the preacher to offer the life-giving hope he had personally found in his study of the Word: "What is the secret [to avoid dull sermons]? The answer, of course, lies in the fact that the men whose preaching blesses hearts have been drawn to the fountain of blessing and have drawn their message from the never failing source of all refreshment."<sup>104</sup> Barnhouse's commitment to biblical authority drove him into his study to find Christ in his Word. He was the messenger boy delivering God's telegram.

### **Significance of Illustrations**

Barnhouse believed that truth must be illustrated to be understood. Mere announcement is insufficient. In his training materials for teachers, he argued, "Telling is not teaching."<sup>105</sup> The truth must be clarified. Learners come to understand the truth through examples. Barnhouse wanted even children to understand the great doctrines of Scripture, but he believed the most effective tool was illustrations. Leaders at Tenth Presbyterian Church updated their children's Sunday School curriculum by culling Barnhouse's sermons for useful illustrations and building the Bible lessons with his

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<sup>102</sup> Darrell W. Johnson, *The Glory of Preaching: Participating in God's Transformation of the World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009), 197.

<sup>103</sup> Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken*, 78.

<sup>104</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Editorial: Dull Sermons," *Revelation*, June 1944, 232.

<sup>105</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Teaching the Word of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940), 9.

illustrations as introductions.<sup>106</sup> He believed illustrations were a significant aspect of his preaching ministry. He intended to complete a book explaining the “art and procedure of illustrating the sermon” to guide other preachers.<sup>107</sup> Unfortunately, he never finished the project.

Barnhouse’s preaching exemplified the claim that “all of life illustrates Bible doctrine.”<sup>108</sup> He gathered illustrations from all areas of life. Every walk through the farm could yield illustrations for Barnhouse. Martin described an instance when he was shooting destructive birds on the farm and accidentally shooting a blue bird. Barnhouse used the mistake to illustrate the danger of labelling too many people as modernists.<sup>109</sup> Barnhouse gathered illustrations from his constant reading and regular observations of the world around him.<sup>110</sup> When he travelled, he informed missionaries that part of his reason for visiting was to hear their best stories.<sup>111</sup> Illustrations were always on his mind because illustrations are everywhere. He admitted, “I’m always looking for a sermon illustration.”<sup>112</sup>

Everything, “even the most seemingly mundane or unimportant instances of life,” could serve to illustrate biblical truth.<sup>113</sup> It can be said of Barnhouse, like Adams

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<sup>106</sup> Barnhouse, *Teaching the Word of Truth*, 7.

<sup>107</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Let Me Illustrate: Stories, Anecdotes, Illustrations* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1967), 9. Quoted above in chapter 1.

<sup>108</sup> Michael Duduit, “A Preaching Interview with Steve Brown,” *Preaching*, November 1, 1992, <http://www.preaching.com/resources/articles/11567328/>.

<sup>109</sup> Richard J. Mouw, “Shoot-First Apologetics,” *Christianity Today*, November 2006, 98. Mouw recounted Martin’s version of the story. Barnhouse related the story without naming Martin. Barnhouse, *Acts*, 107.

<sup>110</sup> Barnhouse, “Ministers - Teaching - Expository Preaching.”

<sup>111</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1948), 102; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God’s Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 37; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 190.

<sup>112</sup> Barnhouse, “Stewardship,” Sermon, Mark 10:28-31, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>113</sup> Allen Ray Raynor, “A Strategy to Improve the Use of Illustrations in Expository Preaching at First Baptist Church, Broomfield, Colorado” (DMin thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,

said of Spurgeon, “All creation was a vast source of raw materials” for his illustrations.<sup>114</sup>

For Barnhouse, the whole universe was made to illustrate God’s truth. He explained his illustrative strategy:

We were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Suddenly I realized that in the plan and thought of God, I was older than the sun, the moon, the stars, the earth, the trees, the garden and everything else. ‘Since God planned me before He planned trees and lakes and mountains, and storms and sunsets,’ I said, ‘everything that there is was created in order to illustrate spiritual truth.’ Everything. I don’t care what it is—the way the echo sounds if you clap your hands, the way light gleams off metal, the way paper tears, you name it—you can find a sermon illustration in it. A sermon illustration is in the things right around you.<sup>115</sup>

God created the world to display his grace. Barnhouse preached, “There is nothing on this planet which God did not create to illustrate His plan and methods of grace.”<sup>116</sup>

Barnhouse admitted he was always looking for illustrations from all aspects of life.<sup>117</sup>

The preacher never rests in his pursuit of biblical truth and clarity.

All of life’s experiences, from the grandest to the simplest, serve as fodder for the preacher’s files.<sup>118</sup> Barnhouse constantly sought illustrations, anecdotes, and quotations. His wife remembered his practice of jotting notes and observations throughout the day. He kept little squares of paper in his left-hand coat pocket for taking notes and then put the completed notes in his right-hand pocket. At the end of each day, his wife gathered his “pocket scraps,” as he called them, for the secretary to collate and

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2012), 61.

<sup>114</sup> Jay Adams, *Sense Appeal in the Sermons of Charles Haddon Spurgeon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976), 49.

<sup>115</sup> Barnhouse, *Let Me Illustrate*, 9.

<sup>116</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3a, *God’s Grace: Romans 5:12-21*, 150.

<sup>117</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Stewardship,” Mark 10:28-31, *Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible*, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>118</sup> John Ortberg, “Illustrating with Slices of Life: Finding Powerful Sermon Illustrations in the Stories and Scenes of the Everyday,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 527.

file.<sup>119</sup> He organized illustrations to utilize in future sermons.

From his childhood reading of the encyclopedia, Barnhouse gained the skills of hunting for illustrations of truth.<sup>120</sup> He sought illustrations on vacation, in his ministry, and from his family experiences. As he explained the need for illustrations to his children while driving, they took up the challenge.<sup>121</sup> One child asked how the lines on the road can illustrate truth, and he explained the properly marked path to heaven. Another child asked about the telegraph poles, and he described how believers are to listen to God's Word. The third child wanted to know about the bird sitting on the wire, and their father answered about resting in God's truth even as bad news travelled right under their feet.

Howard Hendricks, mentored by Barnhouse, affirmed Barnhouse's expertise as "as master of illustrations."<sup>122</sup> Hendricks was tasked by Barnhouse to sit at a desk for hours to practice his observational skills by coming up with illustration ideas based on the objects in the room. The practice of observation trained the preacher for a lifetime of gathering sermon illustrations. For Barnhouse, illustrations are all around, if the preacher is willing to notice.

Sexton commented on Barnhouse's preaching: "His stories, like his sermons in general, were rather lengthy, but his ability as a storyteller usually captivated his listeners."<sup>123</sup> Barnhouse's illustrations were widely remembered as a strength of his preaching. He did not think they distracted from his message but gave clarity to the truth.

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<sup>119</sup> Margaret Barnhouse to Walter Ungerer, October 16, 1962, 2, Box 15, Folder 8, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>120</sup> Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 243.

<sup>121</sup> Barnhouse, *Let Me Illustrate*, 9-10.

<sup>122</sup> Howard Hendricks and William Hendricks, *As Iron Sharpens Iron: Building Character in a Mentoring Relationship* (Chicago: Moody, 1995), 15-16. Hughes also identified Barnhouse as "a master of illustration." R. Kent Hughes, *Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1990), 164.

<sup>123</sup> Sexton, "A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse," 186.

He was not conceding to the attention spans of his listeners as if they needed a break from exegesis. He believed illustrations helped create understanding for his listeners. For Barnhouse, “a story lives by its details.”<sup>124</sup> He willingly lingered in lengthy illustrations and infused his anecdotes and analogies with poignant specifics. When he was criticized for using an illustration of a violent murderer brought before the Supreme Court, he responded, “I am called upon by God and answerable to Him to be faithful to the whole witness of the Bible. . . . Would you have me become a totally dishonest minister, cease to declare the whole council of God and stand up in front of an audience with nothing more than a Gospel of sugar and spice and everything nice?”<sup>125</sup> Powerful, even painful, details within a sermon helped expose the horror of sin. Barnhouse did not shrink from challenging his audience. His illustrations sought to expose the hearts of listeners to the authority of God’s Word. Barnhouse’s task was to make the word of God plain, and illustrations gave expressive power to his task.

Illustrations must be shaped to the cultural context of the audience. Barnhouse recognized that different illustrations needed to be chosen when preaching in different parts of the world: “You no doubt find it true that when you preach to the people in West Africa you cannot use the same illustrations as you would to an American audience.”<sup>126</sup> For his post-war Keswick audience, Barnhouse catered to their context with three successive military metaphors and a fourth army analogy later in the same sermon, or he could describe a cricket ball breaking a window.<sup>127</sup> He also knew that an illustration might need to press against cultural expectations. He warned his radio listeners that he

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<sup>124</sup> Barnhouse, *Teaching the Word of Truth*, 10.

<sup>125</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Barnhouse- Illustrations,” July 3, 1954, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>126</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Barnhouse- Illustrations,” December 15, 1955, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals archives, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>127</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946*, 79-81, 83; *The Keswick Week 1954* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1954), 46.

was going to offer them a “slightly daring” illustration that might challenge their sensibilities, but he offered it because it made the truth clear.<sup>128</sup> To explain the joy of a living sacrifice from Romans 12:1, Barnhouse provided the example of a newly married man whose first girlfriend returned to flirt with him. He only had to reach out his hand and take what she was offering, but he remembered his wife and found greater joy in his sacrifice of the illicit pleasure. The daring illustration served his purpose. As he interpreted the biblical context, Barnhouse also wanted to match the cultural context of his audience with an illustration that clearly captured the truth of his message.

### **Harry Emerson Fosdick’s Illustrations**

Barnhouse used illustrations in service of biblical authority. In contrast, Harry Emerson Fosdick, a contemporary liberal preacher, used illustrations to press his message of liberal Christianity. A comparison with Fosdick’s preaching strategy identifies the importance of the theological commitments of the preacher. The theological framework of the preacher controls his use of illustrations. Illustrations serve the message of the minister. Illustrations served Barnhouse’s commitment to biblical authority. Illustrations served Fosdick’s commitment to humanity’s intrinsic goodness. Illustrations help communicate and clarify the message, and illustrations compel listeners to respond.

Fosdick was the leading modernist preacher during the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy. His sermon “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?” in 1922 stoked the fires of the debate. The sermon’s dissemination across the country presented the modernist response to fundamentalism.<sup>129</sup> Fosdick resigned his Presbyterian pulpit when charges were filed in his presbytery for his liberalism. He eventually took the ecumenical pulpit of the newly formed Riverside Church in New York, funded by John

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<sup>128</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 18.

<sup>129</sup> Evan Todd Fisher, “Strengthen What Remains: The Rhetorical Situation of James Montgomery Boice” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 4.

D. Rockefeller, Jr. Fosdick remained in the pulpit of Riverside Church from its opening in 1930 to his retirement in 1946, which were years Barnhouse was at Tenth.

Fosdick was recognized for using illustrations in his preaching. He filled his sermons with analogies and anecdotes.<sup>130</sup> Like Barnhouse, Fosdick displayed “keen powers of observation” by which he drew illustrations from all areas of life “whether a symphony orchestra, a cathedral, or a college campus, to some bit of truth.”<sup>131</sup> Unlike Barnhouse, Fosdick’s illustrations were not designed to support the authority of the Bible. Instead, Fosdick began with the felt needs of his listeners in his preaching. Fosdick believed exegetical preaching failed because it missed the needs of listeners.<sup>132</sup> The preacher needed to start with a modern problem and then find a sliver of wisdom in the Bible that had something to say about the issue. Fosdick believed the most effective preaching took place when the preacher grounded the sermon in the needs identified through his pastoral counseling ministry.<sup>133</sup> Fosdick explained his preaching strategy: “Every sermon should have for its main business the head-on constructive meeting of some problem which was puzzling minds, burdening consciences, distracting lives.”<sup>134</sup>

For Fosdick, the Bible was simply a source of wisdom to help an individual gain an inner religious experience. Fosdick described his understanding of the Bible: “The Bible came alive to me—an amazing compendium of every kind of situation of human experience with the garnered wisdom of the ages to help in meeting them.”<sup>135</sup> He

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<sup>130</sup> Edmund Holt Linn, *Preaching as Counseling: The Unique Method of Harry Emerson Fosdick* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson, 1966), 92, 98.

<sup>131</sup> Linn, *Preaching as Counseling*, 52.

<sup>132</sup> Linn, *Preaching as Counseling*, 12.

<sup>133</sup> Henry Pitney Van Dusen, introduction to Harry Emerson Fosdick, *Riverside Sermons* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), viii.

<sup>134</sup> Harry Emerson Fosdick, *The Living of These Days: An Autobiography* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), 94.

<sup>135</sup> Fosdick, *The Living of These Days*, 95.

appealed to the Bible to encourage people to reach out with affirmations of love toward their fellow humans.<sup>136</sup> Fosdick placed the listener in a position of authority over the Bible and appealed for “a human verdict” in response to the sermon.<sup>137</sup> Fosdick did not preach against sin because he believed in humanity’s basic goodness. Fosdick described his strategy: “For the most part I would rather preach not so much to convict men of their sins as to convince men of their possibilities.”<sup>138</sup>

An evangelical assessment of Fosdick highlights his theological failures. Fosdick had “no gospel to solve man’s problems [and] no message about the redemptive acts of God in history.”<sup>139</sup> Barnhouse criticized Fosdick’s “total failure to comprehend either the holiness of God, the sinfulness of sin, or the nature of the work that the Lord Jesus was performing by becoming sin for us.”<sup>140</sup> Fosdick’s liberal theology forced him to offer only words of pious optimism. Andrew Blackwood offered a stark evaluation of Fosdick: “If any young man wishes to learn what to preach, he may look elsewhere; if he would learn how to preach, he should tarry here.”<sup>141</sup> Blackwood recognized the genius of Fosdick’s presentation and delivery and exposed the failure of Fosdick’s theology and content.

Nelson offers the reminder that Fosdick’s understanding of biblical authority shaped his preaching strategy: “One should not divorce Fosdick’s method from his beliefs about the Bible. As a modernist, he was a theological liberal who denied the

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<sup>136</sup> Harold C. Warlick, Jr., “Fosdick’s Preaching Method,” *Religion in Life* 41, no. 4 (Winter 1972): 515.

<sup>137</sup> Robert Moats Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick: Preacher, Pastor, Prophet* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 344.

<sup>138</sup> Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 350.

<sup>139</sup> Martin F. Camroux, “Liberalism Preached: Harry Emerson Fosdick,” *The Expository Times* 106, no. 2 (November 1994): 46.

<sup>140</sup> Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*, 217.

<sup>141</sup> Miller, *Harry Emerson Fosdick*, 339.

possibility of miracles and the inerrancy of Scripture.”<sup>142</sup> Barnhouse, criticizing Fostdick’s poorly titled *A Guide to the Understanding of the Bible*, preached against Fostdick’s conclusions: “The modern idea of God is all sugar and spice and everything that is nice. He has no Hell for the wicked, and little by little He has become so respectable that He can be worshipped in good taste by the people of Park Avenue and Morningside Heights.”<sup>143</sup> Fostdick used illustrations to prop up his message, but his message undermined the authority of the Bible. Illustrations do not inherently strengthen biblical authority. Illustrations are tools that serve the preacher’s underlying theological commitments.

An analysis of a dozen Fostdick sermons from across his ministry, beginning with his “Shall the Fundamentalist’s Win?” to his retirement, shows a preacher in command of illustrations but divorced from biblical authority.<sup>144</sup> In his most famous sermon, “Shall the Fundamentalists Win?,” Fostdick used multiple analogies to undermine biblical authority. He compared fundamentalists to children playing tiddlywinks and exalted science against fundamentalists who spoon feed truth to unsuspecting listeners.<sup>145</sup> His 1952 sermon “Finding God in Unlikely Places” used seventeen illustrations in only nine pages of text.<sup>146</sup> He pointed to history and quoted poetry and hymnody to show his

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<sup>142</sup> Dustin Boe Nelson, “Pastoral Preaching: A Reformation and Redefinition of a Pastor’s Call to Preach for the Purpose of Sanctification” (PhD diss, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019), 39.

<sup>143</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 250.

<sup>144</sup> The twelve Fostdick sermons include all five Fostdick sermons in Paul H. Sherry, ed., *The Riverside Preachers: Fostdick, McCracken, Campbell, Coffin* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1978), three sermons from Harry Emerson Fostdick, *Riverside Sermons* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1958), and one sermon each from annual anthologies, Fostdick, *What Is Vital in Religion: Sermons on Contemporary Christian Problems* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1955), including the titular sermons from Fostdick, *Successful Christian Living: Sermons on Christianity Today* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1937); Fostdick, *Living Under Tension: Sermons on Christianity Today* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941); Fostdick, *On a Being Fit to Live With: Sermons on Posts-War Christianity* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946).

<sup>145</sup> Sherry, ed., *The Riverside Preachers*, 36–37.

<sup>146</sup> Sherry, ed., *The Riverside Preachers*, 18–26.

listeners that God can appear in difficult times. In a Christmas sermon, “The Christ of History and the Christ of Experience,” he quoted sentimental poems and hymns, interspersed emotional stories, all to drive home his point that Jesus’s purpose was to “reproduce his life in ourselves, our families, our nations, and our world until the Christ of history becomes the Christ of universal experience—that is Christianity.”<sup>147</sup> Fosdick offered no hope of salvation because humanity merely needs encouragement to show love to others.

Fosdick used emotional stories to drive home his point. In an anti-war sermon, he told the powerful story of gathering with soldiers in a ruined barn to sing a hymn the night before a battle.<sup>148</sup> In another sermon, he explained Mozart may have died in poverty, but Mozart’s power is still felt every time one of his compositions is played.<sup>149</sup> Fosdick described the work of missionaries who “transformed cannibals into folk finely fit to live with.”<sup>150</sup> The missionaries had helped bring spiritual awareness, which was also Fosdick’s goal with his illustrations. His illustrations pointed to the hope of a universal brotherhood of mankind and the divinity in each individual.<sup>151</sup> Fosdick combined his illustrations—from history and poetry and personal experience—to build to the conclusion that humans can restore hope through personal achievement.<sup>152</sup> When a young man confessed moral failures, Fosdick offered him the encouraging word that he was “a very lovely person.”<sup>153</sup> Fosdick’s illustrations offered the same hope to his listeners. His illustrations served the communication strategy of his sermons.

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<sup>147</sup> Fosdick, *What Is Vital in Religion*, 45.

<sup>148</sup> Sherry, *The Riverside Preachers*, 50.

<sup>149</sup> Fosdick, *Riverside Sermons*, 6.

<sup>150</sup> Fosdick, *On a Being Fit to Live With*, 8.

<sup>151</sup> Fosdick, *Riverside Sermons*, 39, 273.

<sup>152</sup> Fosdick, *Living Under Tension*, 8.

<sup>153</sup> Fosdick, *Successful Christian Living*, 5.

An illustration, in the hands of a preacher committed to biblical authority, strengthens the congregation's confidence in the Word of God. Fosdick's illustrations turned listeners inward to a hope in themselves. By contrast, Barnhouse pointed his hearers to the work of Jesus Christ. Barnhouse's illustrations helped his listeners trust the authority of the Bible. Barnhouse's preaching strategy was to bring the Word directly to his listeners as a telegram messenger boy. He began with the authority of the Bible and committed himself to arduous study. He poured hours every week into the study of Scripture. Barnhouse believed illustrations were essential to clear teaching. Illustrations allowed him to move as quickly as possible from the truth to the listener. His task was to make the truth of God understandable. According to Barnhouse, illustrations are an essential tool for the preacher.

## CHAPTER 5

### THE PURPOSES OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Barnhouse's illustrative preaching served his commitment to the authority of the biblical text. He delivered the message by the most efficient route by helping his listeners understand the text through illustrations. Examining the broader context of sermon illustrations confirms their importance and necessity. First, this chapter affirms the necessity of illustrations and defends against criticisms of illustrations. Next, a sampling of biblical examples substantiates the importance of illustrations for clear communication. Then the purposes of illustrations in the broader homiletical literature provide corroboration for Barnhouse's illustrative priorities. By exploring a broad range of preaching texts, the cumulative argument offers support for Barnhouse's illustrative efforts. Homileticians offer their explanations of the value of illustrations. Then a sample of the broader cultural context shows the power of story in other areas of life from social sciences to entertainment. These examples of the power of story verify the potential for illustrations. The chapter concludes with some cautions and limitations. Barnhouse's illustrative strategy offers a useful example for contemporary preachers.

#### **Necessity of Illustrations**

Illustrations are included within the traditional homiletical structure of explanation, illustration, and application. Illustrations should not be treated as supplementary or optional as if all that is really needed is explanation and application. Illustrations bring the truth of the explanation to bear on the hearts of the listeners. Illustrations "inflame the heart."<sup>1</sup> Illustrations aid explanation and application.

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<sup>1</sup> Bryan Chapell, "Illustrate to Help Rather than Impress," The Gospel Coalition, accessed

Illustrations help apply the truth of the biblical passage because they “demonstrate real life” in common images and experiences.<sup>2</sup> Illustrations illuminate biblical truth like windows let light into an otherwise dark room. Well-constructed and well-placed windows make truth visible.

Adams argued for the necessity of illustrations: “Illustrations are the life blood of a sermon. They create and hold interest, make a point clearer than the mere statement of it ever could, concretize abstract fact, show how to implement biblical requirements, and help make truth practical and memorable.”<sup>3</sup> An illustration shows the truth more clearly than explanation alone. An illustration applies the truth more directly than application alone. Illustrations make sermons compelling for listeners. John Reed offers a challenge: “Let me propose a simple test for a powerful sermon. Try not listening to the preacher. I once had a pastor I could not avoid listening to. . . . When I analyzed the reason for this gripping experience, I discovered that the key was his excellent choice and use of illustrations.”<sup>4</sup> Illustrations make truth visible, but they also grip listeners with the truth. The listener is drawn into the meaning of the sermon.

A biblical sermon rests on truth claims, but a sermon should not only include bare propositions. “A good sermon usually achieves a healthy balance of abstraction and imagery.”<sup>5</sup> A sermon should make abstract truth practical through illustrations. Illustrations do not replace truth claims in a sermon; illustrations serve the truth.<sup>6</sup>

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August 28, 2015, <http://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/illustrate-help-rather-impress>.

<sup>2</sup> Michael Duduit, “What Is Expository Preaching? An Interview with Bryan Chapell,” *Preaching*, March 2001, 6.

<sup>3</sup> Jay Adams, “Illustrating God’s Truth,” *Institute for Nouthetic Studies*, accessed August 28, 2015, <http://www.nouthetic.org/blog/?p=6527>.

<sup>4</sup> John W. Reed, “Visualizing the Big Idea: Stories That Support Rather than Steal,” in *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching: Connecting the Bible to People*, ed. Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 148.

<sup>5</sup> John Killinger, *Fundamentals of Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 105.

<sup>6</sup> Woodrow Michael Kroll, *Prescription for Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House,

Illustrations press the weight and importance of abstract truth into the hearts and minds of listeners. The congregation understands the text, and also feels its significance through illustrations. Illustrations are necessary for biblical preaching.

Illustrations connect the story to the lives of the listeners. The more the illustration connects with the listeners' experience, the more likely it is to be applied by the listeners. Illustrations from shared experience make concrete the abstract principles of the sermon in a manner that connects to life.<sup>7</sup> To say that the story should connect with the listener's life is not to limit stories to true accounts. Even fictional stories, when acknowledged as such, can connect with listeners and help convey biblical truth.<sup>8</sup> The connection is found in the true to life details of the illustration and its relationship to the listener's experiences.

Illustrations help the congregation understand biblical truth. McDill responds to his student's question: "Do we have to have an illustration for every point?" 'No,' I answer, 'you only need illustrations for the points you want to be understood and remembered.'<sup>9</sup> Every important truth in a sermon should be illustrated. Illustrations aid understanding and serve memory. Listeners remember illustrations more than other components in a sermon. Chapell compiled a "Sermon Component Retention Hierarchy." He lists the parts of a sermon that a listener is most likely to remember in this order: "Concluding Illustration, Introductory Illustration, Other Illustrations, Specific

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1980), 169ff.

<sup>7</sup> Keith Willhite, *Preaching with Relevance: Without Dumbing Down* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2001), 111–12. At the top of Willhite's hierarchy of illustrations are those which come from the shared experience of the preacher and the congregation. Willhite built his hierarchy on Kenneth Burke's identification theory. The evangelical preacher can find positive value in the theories of Burke although the preacher must be careful to root authority and truth in Scripture. Bryan Chapell, "Facing Two Ways: Preaching to Experiential and Doxological Priorities," *Presbyterion* 14, no. 2 (September 1988): 100.

<sup>8</sup> Mark Galli and Craig Brian Larson, *Preaching That Connects: Using the Techniques of Journalists to Add Impact to Your Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 59.

<sup>9</sup> Wayne McDill, *The 12 Essential Skills for Great Preaching* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1994), 195.

Applications (esp. if the listener strongly disagrees or, secondly, strongly agrees), Basic Idea of the Message, An Interesting Thought Expressed in the Message, A Main Point Statement, An Expository Concept.”<sup>10</sup> Illustrations rank highest in the hierarchy of what will be remembered, taking the top three positions in the hierarchy. The most memorable components for the congregation are illustrations. Decker and York affirm Chapell’s hierarchy by supporting his top two hierarchy spots of introduction and conclusion as “the most important place for illustrations.”<sup>11</sup> Salmon concurs, “Invariably, it is the stories, or the images, that are hung in the heart and remembered.”<sup>12</sup> Illustrations connect to the mind and the heart and make truth memorable.

Memorability aids the impact of the sermon because it creates further reflection upon the truths of the text. But the memorability of illustrations raises concern for some preachers. They fear the illustration will be remembered better than the point it was trying to illustrate. Even preachers who see the value of illustrations hesitate because illustrations can overwhelm the text. Jason Allen identifies the concern: “If a week later your hearers still remember your illustration, but not the point it was making or the text connected to it, that is a problem.”<sup>13</sup> Allen is right if he is only raising a warning flag, but he overstates the case that a well-remembered illustration is always a problem. The key issue is whether or not the illustration helped make the text clear during the sermon. The ability to remember a specific point of explanation a week later is less important than the understanding that takes place during the preaching. Yes, a

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<sup>10</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 141–42.

<sup>11</sup> Hershanel W. York and Bert Decker, *Preaching with Bold Assurance: A Solid and Enduring Approach to Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2003), 153. On conclusions, see also Brian L. Harbour, “Concluding the Sermon,” in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 216–24.

<sup>12</sup> Bruce C. Salmon, *Storytelling in Preaching* (Nashville: Broadman, 1988), 102.

<sup>13</sup> Jason K. Allen, “Five Rules for Sermon Illustrations,” *Jason K. Allen* (blog), May 10, 2017, <https://jasonkallen.com/2017/05/five-rules-for-sermon-illustrations/>.

well-remembered illustration may have overwhelmed the meaning of the text, but a well-remembered illustration may be remembered exactly because of its effectiveness. In the moment, the light was upon the text, the listener understood, and the Holy Spirit brought change. For the listener to retain the illustration's meaning days later does not negate its initial effectiveness. To require illustrations to remain tied to one specific meaning misunderstands the function of analogical illustrations and misunderstands the effectiveness of progressive sanctification. To grow in the gospel does not require the believer to remember every spiritual truth gained in his or her journey. The memorability of illustrations is an asset, not a liability. Even highly memorable illustrations no longer connected to a specific biblical text have spiritual value for the believer.

Brown affirms the importance of illustrations: "A good principle is this: if you can't illustrate it, it isn't true or it doesn't matter."<sup>14</sup> Lehman bluntly concludes, "A message without an illustration is like a house without a door."<sup>15</sup> Richard argues, "The impact of a sermon is always connected to the illustrations in it."<sup>16</sup> A sermon can be rescued by a good illustration that captures the truth of the text.<sup>17</sup> Hostetler echoes the need for illustrations with an even more direct assertion: "Anyone who would argue the point has lost his homiletical marbles."<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Steve Brown, *How to Talk So People Will Listen* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), chap. 10, "Illustrate," para. 3, Kindle. See also R. Scott Pace, *Preaching by the Book: Developing and Delivering Text-Driven Sermons*, ed. Heath A. Thomas (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2018), 79.

<sup>15</sup> Louis Paul Lehman, *Put a Door on It! The "How" and "Why" of Sermon Illustration* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1975), IX.

<sup>16</sup> Ramesh Richard, *Scripture Sculpture: A Do-It-Yourself Manual for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 125.

<sup>17</sup> Charles W. Koller, *How to Preach without Notes* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 84.

<sup>18</sup> Michael J. Hostetler, *Illustrating the Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Ministry Resources Library, 1989), 7.

## Criticism of Illustrations

Many preachers use illustrations in a supplemental role to explain the text but would willingly drop illustrations if listeners' attention was not so hard to maintain. In such a homiletical framework, illustrations become a necessary evil because people are poor listeners. Motyer lamented the continued need for illustrations: "To tell you the truth, I have come to the conclusion that the chief usefulness of illustrations is to give our hearers a little rest!"<sup>19</sup> Illustrations, for preachers like Motyer, serve only as rest stops along the highway of biblical exposition. Illustrations, at best, take time away from the more important work of explanation.

Others press the argument even further, rejecting illustrations more fervently. Buttrick, in his monumental text, warned, "What could kill the church is not so much sermons as sermon illustrations! . . . lengthy, overblown, often mawkish illustrations."<sup>20</sup> For Buttrick illustrations are destructive. Barth concurred, "Especially unhelpful is the method of seasoning a sermon with all kinds of illustrations. In no circumstances should we hunt around for these!"<sup>21</sup> Their vehement opposition to illustrations elevated their punctuation and, one suspects, their blood pressure. Illustrations, in the eyes of critics, weaken sermons.

Preachers resist illustrations for fear of watering down their message. Exegetical preachers may unnecessarily avoid illustrations for fear of deviation from the message of the text. Stories tap into emotions and emotions can distract from the truth. Heiple's recent argument serves as an example of the rejection of sermon illustrations because of their reliance upon emotions. Rooted firmly in the Reformed tradition, he argues that preachers either appeal to emotions or rely on the truth. A preacher cannot

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<sup>19</sup> J. A. Motyer, *Preaching? Simple Teaching on Simply Preaching* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2013), 115–16.

<sup>20</sup> David Buttrick, *Homiletic Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987), 127.

<sup>21</sup> Karl Barth, *Homiletics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 117.

reach truth through emotions or stories. According to Heiple, preaching that relies on emotions fails to honor the authority of the biblical text. He explicitly rejects all attempts to motivate through sermon illustrations because the apostles only utilized truth claims in their preaching.<sup>22</sup> Heiple contends, “Motivation that comes from intentionally appealing to the emotions or stirring up feelings does so without any regard for the truth of the message.” Emotional stories have no biblical warrant. Ironically, Heiple then offers his own illustration in the sentences immediately following his bold claim that any emotional motivation ignores the truth: “I cried at the end of *Old Yeller*, and then went out and hugged my dog. Adherents of false religions are often strongly motivated.”<sup>23</sup>

Evangelical preachers’ hesitation in using sermon illustrations may rest upon their fear of harming the authority of the biblical text. Many preachers may not make an articulated argument, like Heiple, but some preachers have a general uneasiness regarding the weakness of illustrations.<sup>24</sup> Suspicion of illustrations creates confusion not only for modern preachers, but suspicion has also been a problem in the history of the church. Some segments of the church, such as the Dutch Reformed tradition of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, believed that illustrations diluted the authority of the Word by entertaining audiences.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the Dutch Reformed, the Westminster divines, in the sixteenth century, eagerly accepted illustrations because they “may convey the truth

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<sup>22</sup> Ray E. Heiple, Jr., *Preaching with Biblical Motivation: How to Incorporate the Motivation Found in the Inspired Preaching of the Apostles into Your Sermons* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2017), 268. Heiple’s entire argument fails because he relies exclusively on five examples of apostolic preaching. See my review of Ray E. Heiple, Jr., *Preaching with Biblical Motivation*, *The Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society*, 19, no. 1 (March 2019): 91-92.

<sup>23</sup> Heiple, *Preaching with Biblical Motivation*, xix.

<sup>24</sup> Tucker points to John MacArthur as another example of a preacher who avoids stories in his sermons because of their potential for emotional manipulation. Austin B. Tucker, *The Preacher as Storyteller: The Power of Narrative in the Pulpit* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2008), 60.

<sup>25</sup> Bryan Chapell, “Insights from the Westminster Standards for Today’s Preachers,” *Presbyterian* 31, no. 1 (2005): 15.

to the hearers' heart with spiritual delight."<sup>26</sup> For the divines, illustrations do not negate the power of the Word or reduce its importance. Chapell references the Westminster Larger Catechism, which exhorts preachers to preach by "wisely, applying themselves to the necessities and capacities of the hearers."<sup>27</sup> The preacher should consider how to best communicate to his hearers. Illustrations serve to make truth meaningful to listeners. Preachers serve not only the truth, but also serve their listeners as they make the truth understandable and applicable.

Another reason evangelical preachers hesitate in their use of illustrations is the suspicion surrounding the New Homiletic. The New Homiletic emphasizes narrative but deemphasizes propositional truth. No longer is truth imposed upon listeners. Rather stories create possibilities for the listeners to add their own meaning. Storytelling offers a creative avenue for the preacher to explore personal change without requiring listeners to believe in the authority of the Bible. Craddock affirmed the power of stories but minimized the importance of propositional truth when he wrote, "Illustrations are, in fact, stories or anecdotes which do not illustrate the point; rather they *are* the point."<sup>28</sup> Rice defined exegesis as imaginative listening and disconnected the meaning from the authorial intent.<sup>29</sup> In the New Homiletic, illustrations are prized because stories allow the listener to find his or her own truth.

Lischer, in a critique of the New Homiletic, first explained the New Homiletic's approach: "To many preachers story telling seems more ethical, more honest, than other rhetorical endeavors, perhaps because the spinning of tales appears less authoritative or less sophisticated and therefore less manipulative than straightforward

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<sup>26</sup> Chapell, "Insights from the Westminster Standards," 16.

<sup>27</sup> Chapell, "Insights from the Westminster Standards," 12.

<sup>28</sup> Fred B Craddock, *Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 204. Emphasis original.

<sup>29</sup> Richard L. Eslinger, *A New Hearing: Living Options in Homiletic Methods* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 21.

analysis and proclamation.”<sup>30</sup> A story allows the listener to shape the truth and removes the submission to biblical authority for the New Homiletic. Lischer’s critique affirms the importance of biblical explanation and proclamation. Evangelical preachers concur with Lischer’s call to submit to the authority of the text, but they overstate the argument if they reject all storytelling because of the excesses of the New Homiletic. The evangelical preacher affirms the importance of propositional truth and biblical authority. If the choice were between story or truth, then the evangelical would rightly choose truth. In reality, truth can be communicated through story.

Evangelical preachers must continue to affirm biblical, propositional truth and reject the New Homiletic, but this does not include the rejection of their insights into the power of stories. The danger for evangelicals would be to reject the power of illustrations based on their rejection of the narrative preaching of the New Homiletic. Evangelicals are able to keep stories without sacrificing truth.<sup>31</sup> Learning to tell stories well is one of the positive lessons evangelical preachers can take from the New Homiletic.<sup>32</sup> Chapell offers an evangelical conclusion: “Since Scripture itself communicates through narrative forms, we should welcome a method that uses that same form of communication. . . . At the same time, we should recognize that not all Scripture communicates in narrative formats and, thus, we should question whether narrative preaching has exclusive rights to the modern pulpit.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Richard Lischer, “The Limits of Story,” *Interpretation* 38, no. 1 (January 1984): 29.

<sup>31</sup> Bryan Chapell, “The Future of Expository Preaching,” *Presbyterion* 30, no. 2 (September 2004): 66.

<sup>32</sup> Barnabas Youn Soo Kim, “The Use of Imagination for Expository Hermeneutics and Homiletics” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2014), 116.

<sup>33</sup> Bryan Chapell, “When Narrative Is Not Enough,” *Presbyterion* 22, no. 1 (1996): 4. For a helpful critique of the New Homiletic, see David L. Allen, “Preaching and Postmodernism: An Evangelical Comes to the Dance,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 5, no. 2 (2001): 69ff. See also Randal Alan Williams, “The Impact of Contemporary Narrative Homiletics on Interpreting and Preaching the Bible” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006).

The fear of association may extend beyond the New Homiletic. Evangelical preachers are committed to the authority of Scripture and do not want illustrations to water down their message. They may fear the association with a story-telling preacher like Joel Osteen who insists on stories to connect with his audience.<sup>34</sup> Not wanting to adopt Osteen's theology, evangelical preachers may unnecessarily reject the inclusion of illustrations in their preaching. The preacher may fear that turning to stories weakens theological rigor, even if the guilt is only by association in the minds of the congregation. Preachers may view storytelling as a simplistic method that betrays their years of education. Evangelical preachers want to highlight their exegetical dependence upon the authority of the Bible, but they wrongly avoid the very illustrations that most directly shine light upon that authority.

### **Biblical Examples of Illustrations**

The Bible is full of stories and parables. God communicates to humanity through stories and narrative. Large portions of Scripture are presented in narrative form. The form and content of Scripture affirm the usefulness of story to convey truth. The Bible verifies the power of illustrations. The gospel is given as a story, a true story in history.<sup>35</sup> Preachers have biblical warrant for using illustrations to convey truth. The Bible is filled with "stories, illustrations and metaphors" which "capture the imaginations" of listeners.<sup>36</sup> By using illustrations, preachers model themselves on God, the great communicator.

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<sup>34</sup> Carmine Gallo, "Joel Osteen: 7 Keys to Successful Public Speaking," *Forbes*, January 9, 2012, <http://www.forbes.com/sites/carminegallo/2012/01/09/joel-osteen-7-keys-to-successful-public-speaking/>.

<sup>35</sup> Ian Macpherson, *The Art of Illustrating Sermons* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1964), 37.

<sup>36</sup> Gregory Edward Reynolds, *The Word is Worth a Thousand Pictures: Preaching in the Electronic Age* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 394.

Jesus's ministry was marked by the powerful application of truth through stories.<sup>37</sup> Barnhouse highlighted Jesus's illustrations as he taught through the Gospels.<sup>38</sup> Barnhouse modelled his preaching on the ministry of Jesus, who used OT stories to illustrate his points.<sup>39</sup> Jesus did not hesitate to respond to a question regarding propositional truth with a story. Stories have power to press truth into the lives of the audience. Three quarters of Jesus's recorded teaching is illustrative.<sup>40</sup> The conclusion is clear: Jesus was a storyteller.<sup>41</sup> "He was a Master in the use of illustrations."<sup>42</sup>

Spurgeon pointed to the example of Jesus as a singularly sufficient argument to press his students into the task of illustrating.<sup>43</sup> Blackwood, in his classic text, drew attention to Jesus as a teacher: Jesus "never employed abstractions."<sup>44</sup> Ferguson, examining the Sermon on the Mount, describes the purpose of Jesus's illustrations: "They do not aim to entertain, although some of them are humorous, nor do they aim merely to keep people's attention. They are meant to open up the listener's conscience and help him to realise his true spiritual condition before God."<sup>45</sup> The illustrations of Jesus aimed at the heart of the disciples. He transformed hearts through his illustrative preaching.

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<sup>37</sup> Joseph M. Stowell III, "Preaching for a Change," in *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching: Connecting the Bible to People*, ed. Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 137.

<sup>38</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 36, 38.

<sup>39</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4c, *God's Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 46.

<sup>40</sup> Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, 44.

<sup>41</sup> Charles L. Rice, "Preacher as Storyteller," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 31, no. 3 (1976): 188. See also Tucker, *The Preacher as Storyteller*, 1.

<sup>42</sup> Ralph W. Neighbour, preface to *Knight's Illustrations for Today*, by Walter B. Knight (Chicago: Moody, 1977), 5.

<sup>43</sup> Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Art of Illustration: Being Addresses Delivered to the Students of the Pastor's College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1897), 2.

<sup>44</sup> Andrew Watterson Blackwood, *The Preparation of Sermons* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1948), 152.

<sup>45</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson, *Sermon on the Mount* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1988), 108.

Other biblical examples show the same truth; illustrations have power to explain, apply, and motivate. Nathan’s parable, a brief but powerful illustration, convicted David of his sin. Nathan’s sermon shows “the extraordinary extent to which *a story has power*.”<sup>46</sup> Nathan’s illustration compelled David’s participation in the story. “He was so involved in the story. . . . He pronounced judgment on himself!”<sup>47</sup> Story has the power to actively engage the listener.<sup>48</sup> Biblical stories tug on emotional heart strings.<sup>49</sup> David’s sense of justice was aroused by the parable. He understood the truth in a way he could not have understood if Nathan had directly confronted him. Truth concealed in a story forces its way into the listener’s life. A story has a Trojan-horse ability to invade a heart with truth.<sup>50</sup> A story gets past the listener’s defenses so that he or she is exposed to the powerful truth of Scripture.<sup>51</sup>

The Bible itself only makes sense by understanding its narrative framework. Nienhuis argues for “the irreducibility of narrative:” stories “cannot be distilled down into a purer, simpler, ‘truer’ form.”<sup>52</sup> The Bible is not filled with stories so that preachers can extract principles. The Bible is filled with stories because people understand truth

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<sup>46</sup> Robert McAfee Brown, “The Power of Story: The Nathan Syndrome,” in *Persuade Us to Rejoice: The Liberating Power of Fiction* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1992), 25. Emphasis original.

<sup>47</sup> Richard A. Jensen, *Telling the Story: Variety and Imagination in Preaching* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1980), 135.

<sup>48</sup> Kevin E. Ruffcorn, “Evoking Memories in Sermon Illustrations,” *The Christian Ministry*, July 1987, 27.

<sup>49</sup> Adam B. Dooley, “Application in the Sermon” (lecture, Expository Preaching Workshop, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX, February 28, 2011), <http://media.swbts.edu/item/492>.

<sup>50</sup> Michael Duduit, “Preaching and Story: An Interview with Max Lucado,” *Preaching*, April 2006, accessed September 11, 2015, <http://www.preaching.com/resources/articles/11547721/>.

<sup>51</sup> Reg Grant and John Reed, *Telling Stories to Touch the Heart: How to Use Stories to Communicate God’s Truth* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2001), 7; W. E. Sangster, *The Craft of the Sermon* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1951), 21. Hart and Daughton conclude that narratives have the ability to “disarm audiences.” Roderick P. Hart and Suzanne M. Daughton, *Modern Rhetorical Criticism* (Boston: Pearson, 2005), 88.

<sup>52</sup> David R. Nienhuis, *A Concise Guide to Reading the New Testament: A Canonical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 13.

through story. The preacher should follow the biblical pattern in his preaching.

Brown reaches a strong conclusion given the biblical example of illustrations: “No matter how accurate our truth or how deep our message, if there are no illustrations, we have missed the very clear methodology of God: to make truth relevant with stories that illustrate that truth.”<sup>53</sup> Robinson examined the biblical evidence and concluded that “anyone who loves the Bible must value the story, for whatever else the Bible is, it is a book of stories.”<sup>54</sup> The Bible affirms the appropriateness and usefulness of stories. A preacher seeking to follow the biblical pattern should utilize illustrations in his sermons.

### **The Value of Illustrations**

Into the confusion and hesitation regarding illustrations, preachers should include illustrations to serve the truth of the text and the needs of the congregation. Illustrations are used not to give listeners a rest but to engage the hearts, minds, and wills of the hearers. Stories capture attention and demand a response like a child who grabs his parent’s chin to gain a listening.<sup>55</sup> Illustrations create clarity by offering pictures for the listeners.<sup>56</sup> Illustrations serve the truth, aid in application, and help motivate toward action. The purposes of illustrations, gathered from the insights of homileticians, show their importance for preaching.

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<sup>53</sup> Steve Brown, “Illustrating the Sermon,” in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 199.

<sup>54</sup> Haddon W. Robinson, *Biblical Preaching: The Development and Delivery of Expository Messages*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2001), 130.

<sup>55</sup> Calvin Miller, “Narrative Preaching,” in *Handbook of Contemporary Preaching*, ed. Michael Duduit (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 104.

<sup>56</sup> Haddon Robinson, “Clearly: How to Preach So Everyone Understands,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 334.

## **Illustrations Shine Light on the Biblical Passage**

Illustrations cast light on a biblical passage. Like a window floods a room with light, an illustration makes truth visible. Illustrations help the listener understand the passage. Where there was darkness and confusion, a congregation gains insight into biblical truth. An illustration is not a distraction from the main thrust of the sermon or an aside to give listeners a rest. An illustration serves explanation by creating clarity in the minds of listeners. Illustrations are not ornamentation to merely recapture a wandering listener, but they help explain the truth of the text.<sup>57</sup> Illustrations clarify the meaning of the biblical passage. Ryle wrote that the preacher who uses illustrations “turns his hearers’ ears into eyes and makes them see what he speaks of.”<sup>58</sup> Illustrations “make truth more ‘see-able.’”<sup>59</sup>

Preachers might skip illustrations for truths they believe are already clear, but illustrations serve to emphasize and explain even the simplest truths. Illustrations serve the key points of the text. Millar and Campbell exclaim, “Don’t sweat over illustrating the complicated stuff—just illustrate the obvious!”<sup>60</sup> An illustration confirms the explained truth. Examples offer intelligibility more powerfully than explanation alone. Illustrations shine a light on the truth by bringing clarity and also by providing emphasis to key points in a sermon.

## **Illustrations Make the Abstract Concrete**

Illustrations make abstract principles concrete. Instead of leaving an idea in the realm of the conceptual, an illustration makes the truth direct and clear. Stott

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<sup>57</sup> Lucas O’Neill, *Preaching to Be Heard: Delivering Sermons That Command Attention* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019), chap. 1, “The Trouble with Winning Attention,” para. 10, Kindle.

<sup>58</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Light from Old Times* (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2015), 408.

<sup>59</sup> David L. Olford, *Anointed Expository Preaching* (Nashville: B&H, 1998), 169.

<sup>60</sup> Gary Millar and Phil Campbell, *Saving Eutychus: How to Preach God’s Word and Keep People Awake* (Kingsford, Australia: Matthias Media, 2013), 58.

explained, “Illustrations transform the abstract into the concrete, the ancient into the modern, the unfamiliar into the familiar, the general into the particular, the vague into the real, and the invisible into the visible.”<sup>61</sup> Abstract principles can be ignored and abstract truth alone remains unconvincing.<sup>62</sup> An intangible idea does not apply to a listener because he does not understand its relevance. The listener identifies with a concrete example more directly than an abstract principle.<sup>63</sup> She understands the principle’s connection to life in the specific details.

Illustrations connect the obscure with the familiar.<sup>64</sup> By connecting new truth with aspects of life that are already understood, the illustration serves explanation. The connection helps listeners better understand the biblical truth proclaimed. Examples aid comprehension and help achieve the preacher’s goal of clarity.<sup>65</sup> Truth in the abstract is truth that remains misunderstood or unapplied. Illustrations bring truth into the practical experience of the congregation.

Illustrations contain “the power of specificity.”<sup>66</sup> Stories provide lived detail that allow for the transference of principles into life. Illustrations connect principle with experience.<sup>67</sup> Listeners “imbibe a sense of the meaning of [their] own baffling dramas”

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<sup>61</sup> John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Art of Preaching in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 239.

<sup>62</sup> Jones, *Principles and Practice of Preaching*, 136.

<sup>63</sup> Richard L. Eslinger, “Story and Image in Sermon Illustration,” *Journal for Preachers* 9, no. 2 (1986): 21. See also Richard Hart, “Illustrations Enliven Our Preaching,” *Priest* 70, no. 3 (March 2014): 24.

<sup>64</sup> Lionel Crocker, *Henry Ward Beecher’s Art of Preaching* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934), 48; Craig Brian Larson, “Preaching Pyrotechnics: Why Some Illustrations Work Better Than Others,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 488.

<sup>65</sup> Jay Adams, “Theology of Powerful Preaching,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 35.

<sup>66</sup> Peter Jonker, *Preaching in Pictures: Using Images for Sermons That Connect* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2015), 57.

<sup>67</sup> Timothy Keller, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (New York:

from illustrations.<sup>68</sup> Stories delve into complex ideas and situations to offer clarity in sermons. Illustrations dive into truth and allow preachers to wrestle with complicated issues.<sup>69</sup> Complexity is broken down through examples and fosters understanding. Theological complexity is not ignored by illustrations, but instead illustrations allow the preacher to demonstrate serious theological truths.<sup>70</sup> Illustrations bring truth out of the conceptual realm and into real life.

Illustrations make the conceptual understandable. Hughes offers an experiment for the preacher who might doubt the importance of illustrations:

If you want to see what it is like for your congregation to hear an abstract sermon, go to your public library and find a mechanical journal in a field you have not studied and read it. Make sure it does not have any pictures. Read it for as long as you normally preach on Sunday. You will know how most people feel when they have endured an abstract sermon with few or no pictures.<sup>71</sup>

Conceptual language feels divorced from life. Illustrations make concepts concrete. The listener sees how and why the concepts matter because he understands them in concrete ways through illustrations.

The argument thus far for making the abstract concrete has focused on a move from the propositional to the practical because the propositional is only truly understood in the practical. Many western, seminary educated preachers may not feel the weight of the argument. The preacher finds comfort in the propositional and feels at home in the abstract. His training and experience may cause him to overlook the learning styles of

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Viking, 2015), 173.

<sup>68</sup> Stephen D. Crites, "Narrative Quality of Experience," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 39, no. 3 (September 1971): 304.

<sup>69</sup> Sanjay Nigam, "The Storytelling Brain," *Science and Engineering Ethics* 18, no. 3 (September 2012): 568.

<sup>70</sup> Paul Scott Wilson, *The Four Pages of the Sermon: A Guide to Biblical Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999), 207.

<sup>71</sup> Jack Hughes, *Expository Preaching with Word Pictures: Illustrated from the Sermons of Thomas Watson* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2001), 62. Hughes shows the value of illustrations from the preaching of the Puritan Thomas Watson.

the majority of his listeners. Chan, in making a case for evangelism in a skeptical world, points to evidence that most people learn through concrete examples: “Estimates are that four out of five people in the Western world prefer concrete-relational learning. And nine out of ten non-Westerners prefer concrete-relational learning.”<sup>72</sup> Hollifield confirms Chan’s statistics and encourages the use of stories in communication: “80% of the world’s population are oral learners.”<sup>73</sup> An overwhelming majority of a preacher’s neighbors, although he may have scared away some neighbors by his abstract preaching, would benefit from a more concrete preaching style. The significance for storytelling as a means of conveying truth is confirmed by the use of storytelling among oral cultures and its implementation by evangelical missions agencies.<sup>74</sup> The goal of preaching is not merely to have people in pews but to have listeners understand and apply what they hear.

Illustrations connect the theoretical to the lives of listeners and help the preacher avoid overly theoretical preaching.<sup>75</sup> Capill summarizes the value of sermon illustrations: “Illustrations, used judiciously, are of immense help in impressing truth upon the heart. They help because they put truth in a more tangible, concrete form. Instead of seeing clothes on a rack, we see them on a person. Instead of examining a jewel in the dark, a light is thrown on it and we see it clearly.”<sup>76</sup> Illustrations serve exegesis by moving from the abstract to the concrete, from the propositional to the practical.

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<sup>72</sup> Sam Chan, *Evangelism in a Skeptical World: How to Make the Unbelievable News about Jesus More Believable* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 174–75.

<sup>73</sup> Gregory K. Hollifield, “By 2050: Preparing Effective Preachers for an Emerging Secondary Oral Society,” *Journal of the Evangelical Homiletics Society* 19, no. 1 (March 2019): 43.

<sup>74</sup> Patricia Napier, “I Want to Tell You a Story,” *Evangel* 20, no. 3 (September 2002): 87.

<sup>75</sup> Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 340–41.

<sup>76</sup> Murray A. Capill, *The Heart Is the Target: Preaching Practical Application from Every Text* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2014), 159.

## Illustrations Serve Application

Illustrations shine light on the truth and move it from the abstract to the concrete. The value of illustrations for the preacher and listener covers the whole range of the sermon: “Illustration is a special servant of explanation and application.”<sup>77</sup>

Illustration serves expository preaching by bringing the truth to bear on the lives of the listeners. Good expository preaching, expository preaching that bridges the gap from the biblical text to the lives of listeners, needs illustrations. Illustrations can give concrete examples of application. Chapell reminds preachers of the goal of preaching:

“Expository preaching does not merely obligate preachers to explain what the Bible says; it obligates them to explain what the Bible means in the lives of people today.”<sup>78</sup>

Ronald Allen conducted interviews to gain insight into how preaching brings about change. Allen offers advice to preachers. The preacher should use true stories of people who have changed their actions or thinking because it “helps facilitate fresh avenues of thought and behavior” in listeners.<sup>79</sup> Examples of application in illustrations help answer the “how?” and “why?” of application. Illustrations offer pictures of practical Christian living.<sup>80</sup> Sunukjian asserts, “As the speaker visualizes concrete, specific, detailed, real-life scenarios, the biblical truth becomes vivid, memorable, and life-changing.”<sup>81</sup> The listener gains practical knowledge through the experience of others. Illustrations help capture the life situations of the congregation to serve

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<sup>77</sup> Al Fasol, “Illustration in Preaching,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology* 27, no. 2 (1985): 28.

<sup>78</sup> Bryan Chapell, “Components of Expository Preaching,” *Preaching*, 4–11.

<sup>79</sup> Ronald J. Allen, “How Do Sermons Help People Change? Discoveries from 263 Interviews with People Who Listen to Sermons,” *Encounter* 69, no. 1 (2008): 66.

<sup>80</sup> Craig Brian Larson, “Power of Everyday-Disciple Illustrations: What Kind of Examples Influence Hearers Most?” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 531.

<sup>81</sup> Donald R. Sunukjian, “Preaching to a Culture Dominated by Images,” in *The Worlds of the Preacher: Navigating Biblical, Cultural, and Personal Contexts*, ed. Scott M. Gibson (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 152.

application.<sup>82</sup> When listeners see themselves in the sermon, they are better prepared to act on the demands of the sermon.

Hughes and Kysar affirm the importance of stories and images. They urge doctrinal preaching but want to avoid the abstract and impractical. “To put it simply: We live in the particularities of the world, and we learn through the particular. The value of imagery and story in preaching is that they invite us to consider their truth for our lives.”<sup>83</sup> Illustrations bring truth to bear upon the lives of listeners. By offering specific and concrete examples, the preacher affords a broader application. In specific examples, people see how the text applies in the lives of people around them, which allows them to see how it applies in their own lives. Rather than limit application to the individual in the story, an illustration helps everyone see how the truth would apply in his own life. By using examples of concrete application, illustrations “transcend individual experiences” and allow for a “universal” application.<sup>84</sup>

The goal of preaching is changed lives. Bryan argued, “There is no other method which can so effectively redeem conduct as that of a story.”<sup>85</sup> Jones agreed and urged the use of analogies and stories: “Illustrations are the most effective way of convincing the judgments, arousing the emotions, and moving the wills of congregations.”<sup>86</sup> A story helps listeners feel the weight of the situation, the depth of their need, the importance of biblical truth, and the need for response. Illustrations allow

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<sup>82</sup> J. Grant Howard, *Creativity in Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 56.

<sup>83</sup> Robert G. Hughes and Robert Kysar, *Preaching Doctrine* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2009), 57.

<sup>84</sup> Haddon Robinson, “Preaching to Everyone in Particular,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 117–18.

<sup>85</sup> Dawson C. Bryan, *The Art of Illustrating Sermons* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1938), 215.

<sup>86</sup> Ilion T. Jones, *Principles and Practice of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), 138.

listeners to see how someone else has struggled through a problem and found a biblical solution.<sup>87</sup> Illustrations provide concrete examples to prompt a response. Moody and Weekes argue that one of the most effective tools for application is the illustration.<sup>88</sup> Illustrations serve explanation and application and cannot be left as an optional component in the primary preaching structure.

Illustrations are not mere ornaments on a sermon designed to maintain an audience's fickle attention. Illustrations are essential to the preacher's goal of changing lives. Illustrations do not negate the preacher's confidence in the power of the Holy Spirit. Evangelical preachers place the power for change in the work of the Holy Spirit rather than in the illustration. Chapell writes, "Only the Holy Spirit working by and with the Word of God in the hearts of men and women can effect the spiritual changes that are the mark of true preaching."<sup>89</sup> Barnhouse agreed in his answer to seminary students: "I preach to a cubic foot of air in front of my mouth and from then on it's up to the Holy Spirit."<sup>90</sup> Illustrations, like explanation and application, rely upon the power of the Spirit through the preached word for effectiveness.

### **Illustrations Connect with the Emotions**

Illustrations connect with listeners because illustrations engage the emotions. Stories build a connection between the listener and the characters in the story.<sup>91</sup> The details of illustrations are necessary so "that the listener can vicariously enter the

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<sup>87</sup> Haddon Robinson, "Blending Bible Content and Life Application: How to Talk to People About Themselves," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 297.

<sup>88</sup> Josh Moody and Robin Weekes, *Burning Hearts: Preaching to the Affections* (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2014), 85.

<sup>89</sup> Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, 140.

<sup>90</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), 320.

<sup>91</sup> Graham Johnston, *Preaching to a Postmodern World: A Guide to Reaching Twenty-First Century Listeners* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 156.

narrative world of the illustration.”<sup>92</sup> Illustrations create “experienced truth” for the congregation.<sup>93</sup> An illustration immerses the listener in truth. Emotional and evocative language draws the listener in and allows her to experience the reality expressed in the illustration.<sup>94</sup> The listener is engaged because she is emotionally connected to the experience.

Illustrations aim at the mind, heart, and will. York argues for the value of illustrations to reach the mind through the heart because illustrations engage the emotions of the audience.<sup>95</sup> Ferguson also affirms the “imaginative power” of illustrations for reaching the heart.<sup>96</sup> Beeke confirms, through his historical research, the preaching strategy of rooting the heart experience in the truth.<sup>97</sup> The heart involves the emotional response of the congregation and illustrations effectively marshal emotions. Stories impact listeners because they work in the heart before connecting with the mind.<sup>98</sup> They allow the preacher to “go heart to heart” with the congregation.<sup>99</sup> The strategy is not

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<sup>92</sup> Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, 21.

<sup>93</sup> Adrian Lane, “The God Who Illustrates: Using Illustrations in Preaching,” *Churchman* 128, no. 4 (2014): 10, accessed August 27, 2015, <https://aahomiletics.files.wordpress.com/2015/02/article-illustration-20-february-2015.pdf>.

<sup>94</sup> Jay Adams, “Sense Appeal and Storytelling,” in *The Preacher and Preaching: Reviving the Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Samuel T. Logan (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1986), 358.

<sup>95</sup> Hershael W. York, “Communication Theory and Text-Driven Preaching,” in *Text-Driven Preaching: God’s Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*, ed. Daniel L Akin, David Lewis Allen, and Ned Lee Mathews (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010), 242.

<sup>96</sup> Sinclair B. Ferguson, “Preaching to the Heart,” in *Feed My Sheep: A Passionate Plea for Preaching*, ed. Don Kistler (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria, 2002), 209.

<sup>97</sup> Joel Beeke, *Reformed Preaching: Proclaiming God’s Word from the Heart of the Preacher to the Heart of His People* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 47.

<sup>98</sup> Kenton C. Anderson, *Choosing to Preach: A Comprehensive Introduction to Sermon Options and Structures* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006), 187.

<sup>99</sup> S. Bowen Matthews, “Conviction and Compassion: It Takes Both Toughness and Tenderness to Rescue People from Sin,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 253.

emotional impact alone, but its goal is an emotional and volitional response that is cognitively rooted. Stories get to the mind through the emotions.

An illustration combines logical arguments with emotional appeal to persuade listeners. The illustration captures the congregation's attention and helps them care about the issues presented. The goal of an effective illustration is to challenge the whole person.<sup>100</sup> A story allows the listener to embrace the truth and truly hear what is being said.<sup>101</sup> It does not always require an entire story with insight into the emotional situation of the characters to capture the attention and stir the emotions of a congregation. A brief helpful analogy or word picture can "enliven the imagination and stir the emotions."<sup>102</sup> A metaphor impacts the whole person when propositional truth may only reach the mind.<sup>103</sup> Pictorial language moves beyond the intellect into the heart.<sup>104</sup>

The preacher's goal is "not just to tell people the truth but to help them feel it brushing against the inside walls of their hearts."<sup>105</sup> Gospel transformation demands more than intellectual assent to the truth of the sermon. Piper, well known for his preaching enthusiasm, argues that the preacher aims at the "awakening of emotional and intellectual sensitivity for more serious and beautiful things."<sup>106</sup> Transformation involves

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<sup>100</sup> Hoin Kim, "Explaining, Illustrating, Arguing and Applying: Preaching in Terms of Appealing to the Whole Person" (ThM thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2002), 53. See also Thomas J. Nettles, *The Privilege, Promise, Power and Peril of Doctrinal Preaching* (Greenbriar, AR: Free Grace Press, 2018), 52.

<sup>101</sup> F. Dean Lueking, *Preaching: The Art of Connecting God and People* (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 94.

<sup>102</sup> Craig Brian Larson, "Seven Habits of Highly Effective Preaching," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 395.

<sup>103</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Preaching and Teaching with Imagination: The Quest for Biblical Ministry* (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1994), 46.

<sup>104</sup> Paul Scott Wilson, *Imagination of the Heart: New Understandings in Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1988), 21.

<sup>105</sup> Thomas H. Troeger, "Shaping Sermons by the Encounter of Text with Preacher," in *Preaching Biblically*, ed. Don M. Wardlaw (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1983), 172.

<sup>106</sup> John Piper, *Expository Exultation: Christian Preaching as Worship* (Wheaton, IL:

the whole person, including the emotions. “Illustrations exegete Scripture in terms of the human condition creating a whole-person understanding of God’s Word.”<sup>107</sup>

Chester and Honeysett highlight the value illustrations can have in evangelistic preaching by connecting to the hearts of unbelievers: “Our job is not simply to convince them that the truth is true, but also that the truth is good. We need to make people wish it were true before they’ll really engage with whether it is true.”<sup>108</sup> The usefulness of stories for preaching grows in Western cultures as they become increasingly suspicious of truth claims.<sup>109</sup> Stories allow for truth to be understood and felt. Listeners yearn for stories, and stories allow truth to be comprehended even among postmodern listeners.<sup>110</sup>

Analogies and illustrations provides an emotional back door for theological truth to reach a skeptical audience.<sup>111</sup> When a story begins, “the audience lets down their guard to listen.”<sup>112</sup> Eswine affirms the value of illustrations for postmodern people, but he also recognizes the broader power of stories for people in all ages “because the Bible is full of stories.”<sup>113</sup> Illustrations reach the mind through the heart and aid the preacher in gaining a hearing even from his unbelieving audience members.

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Crossway, 2018), 152.

<sup>107</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 166.

<sup>108</sup> Tim Chester and Marcus Honeysett, *Gospel-Centered Preaching: Becoming the Preacher God Wants You to Be* (Surrey, UK: Good Book, 2014), 78–79.

<sup>109</sup> Michael Duduit, “Preaching and Story: An Interview with Max Lucado,” *Preaching*, April 2006, accessed September 11, 2015, <http://www.preaching.com/resources/articles/11547721/>. See also Tucker, *The Preacher as Storyteller*, 12.

<sup>110</sup> Mark Miller, *Experiential Storytelling: (Re)Discovering Narrative to Communicate God’s Message* (El Cajon, CA: emergentYS, 2004), 36.

<sup>111</sup> John Koessler, “Why All the Best Preachers Are Theological,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 245.

<sup>112</sup> Torrey Robinson, “First-Person Narrative Sermons: Taking Advantage of the Power of Drama and the Pull of Story,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 449.

<sup>113</sup> Zack Eswine, *Preaching to a Post-Everything World: Crafting Biblical Sermons That Connect with Our Culture* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 61. See also Craig A. Loscalzo, *Apologetic*

Some preachers may hesitate to use emotional illustrations for fear of emotional exploitation. Dooley explains, “Tear-jerking stories are often criticized as being laden with manipulation. While often the case, those who seek to persuade should never fear to employ an emotion eliciting illustration that corresponds to the pathos of the text preached.”<sup>114</sup> Emotions serve the preacher’s purpose if they are drawn from the text and honestly applied through engaging stories. Illustrations help the preacher match the emotional impact demanded by the text.<sup>115</sup> In an emotionally charged text, the preacher would miss the truth of the passage if he recited it with an emotionless demeanor through unaffected prose. An illustration helps the preacher match the tone of the text. The congregation more fully understands the truth when they understand it emotionally.

### **Illustrations and the Image of God**

A wise preacher recognizes that his listeners were created by God with the need for stories. He need not lament that stories and illustrations help a congregation understand a sermon. The power of illustrations is rooted in the doctrine of creation. Humanity is created in God’s image to respond to him intellectually, emotionally, and volitionally. Chapell writes, “Scripture presents its truth in propositions as well as in narratives because the Bible proclaims that believers are made in the image of God.”<sup>116</sup> Stories have the power to capture the whole person because people are made for truth in narratives.

Stories are part of the human experience. Miller asserts, “God has wired

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*Preaching: Proclaiming Christ to a Postmodern World* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2000), 22.

<sup>114</sup> Adam Brent Dooley, “Utilizing Biblical Persuasion Techniques in Preaching without Being Manipulative” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2006), 131.

<sup>115</sup> Gregory K. Hollifield, “Expository Preaching that Touches the Heart,” *Preaching*, April 2004, 22.

<sup>116</sup> Chapell, “The Future of Expository Preaching,” 67. Jussely concurs with Chapell’s assessment that warrant for illustrations rests in the narrative structure of the Bible and the creation of man in God’s image. Steve Jussely, “A Case for Illustrative Preaching,” *Journal of Biblical Counseling*, Winter 1998, 45.

people to want to tell stories and hear stories.”<sup>117</sup> Arrington concurs, “The majority of your congregants . . . have a God-given wiring for story.”<sup>118</sup> Cospser makes the theological claim clear: humanity was “made in the image of a storytelling God.”<sup>119</sup> Storytelling reveals God’s creativity in humanity.<sup>120</sup> By using illustrations, the preacher acknowledges the image of God in his congregation.

Every listener lives within the context of real-life story. Congregations live in towns and cities within relationships. Human lives are storied. Arthurs ponders the appeal of stories: “Perhaps the pervasive presence of story can be explained because we live narratively as characters overcoming problems in a setting.”<sup>121</sup> Tilley removes the hesitation with his affirmation: “*Human* experience is *inherently* narrative in form.”<sup>122</sup> There is no human knowledge that is not gained from within the human story. Every person is part of their own life narrative within the broader narrative of God’s work. Narrative is not merely a construct of culture but rooted in the nature of mankind.<sup>123</sup> Humans were made for narrative. Thus, narrative provides an effective means to explain life’s truths to storied people

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<sup>117</sup> Kevin A. Miller, “3-D Storytelling: How to Make Sermon Stories Come Alive,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 486.

<sup>118</sup> Yancey C. Arrington, *Preaching That Moves People: How to Get Down the Mountain of Your Messages with Maximum Impact* (League City, TX: Clear Creek Resources, 2018), 49.

<sup>119</sup> Mike Cospser, *The Stories We Tell: How TV and Movies Long For and Echo the Truth* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 28.

<sup>120</sup> John Walsh, *The Art of Storytelling: Easy Steps to Presenting an Unforgettable Story* (Chicago: Moody, 2003), 88.

<sup>121</sup> Jeffrey D. Arthurs, *Preaching with Variety: How to Re-Create the Dynamics of Biblical Genres* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007), 63.

<sup>122</sup> Terrence W. Tilley, *Story Theology* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1985), 23. Emphasis original.

<sup>123</sup> Gerard Loughlin, *Telling God’s Story: Bible, Church, and Narrative Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 64.

Illustrations make abstract truth personal: “The story offers the flesh—the human element that breathes life into the word.”<sup>124</sup> Stories and examples incarnate the truth for the congregation.<sup>125</sup> People are narrative by nature, making sense of the world through their experiences in time and place.<sup>126</sup> As “narrative creatures,” men and women understand the world through story.<sup>127</sup> Life makes sense only through story.<sup>128</sup> Stories help listeners understand what it means to be human.<sup>129</sup>

The process does not require listeners to hear a story and then analyze the story to distill truth. People naturally understand truth through story, which aids the preacher and apologist in disclosing complex truth.<sup>130</sup> Humans “are wired for story, learn through story, and inevitably tell stories.”<sup>131</sup> Preachers work to distill truth from a text, but sometimes fail to restore truth to its lived context. Illustrations help avoid the dilemma of tetherless truth by offering practical context for truth.

Even the critic of illustrations will admit that illustrations increase interest and attention. Rather than complain about a congregation’s attention span, a wise preacher sees the image of God in his congregation. God made his listeners attentive to and

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<sup>124</sup> Kenton C. Anderson, *Integrative Preaching: A Comprehensive Model for Transformational Proclamation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 51.

<sup>125</sup> Warren Wiersbe, “Imagination: The Preacher’s Neglected Ally,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 565.

<sup>126</sup> William J. Bausch, *Storytelling the Word: Homilies and How to Write Them* (Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 1996), 90.

<sup>127</sup> Scott Hoezee, *Actuality: Real Life Stories for Sermons That Matter* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2014), 123.

<sup>128</sup> Darius L. Salter, *Preaching as Art: Biblical Storytelling for a Media Generation* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 2008), 49; Trevin Wax, *This Is Our Time: Everyday Myths in Light of the Gospel* (Nashville: B&H, 2017), chap. 2, “Stories are the Stuff of Life,” para. 7, Kindle.

<sup>129</sup> Sondra B. Willobee, *The Write Stuff: Crafting Sermons That Capture and Convince* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009), 44.

<sup>130</sup> Holly Ordway, *Apologetics and the Christian Imagination: An Integrated Approach to Defending the Faith* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road, 2017), 103.

<sup>131</sup> Sean Post, *The Stories We Live: Discovering the True and Better Way of Jesus* (Ravensdale, WA: GCD, 2015), 109.

interested in stories. It is not a concession to the weakness of humanity to tell stories, but a recognition of the creativity of God reflected in sermon listeners. Illustrations help keep a congregation awake, but using such a tool does not expose frailty in the preacher.<sup>132</sup> Instead the illustrative preacher recognizes the image of God in those he serves.

Arthurs offers the perspective of a veteran preacher: “Every experienced preacher knows that story rivets attention and increases retention.”<sup>133</sup> Listeners impulsively listen when a story is told. They do not need to be convinced of the effectiveness of illustrations. Illustrations tap into human dignity to gain attention. Stories draw listeners in because stories connect with the reality of life.<sup>134</sup> Listeners cannot help but lean into a story. Listeners’ interest in the characters and the plot of an illustration instinctively arouses interest.<sup>135</sup> Stories help people see why they should care about the sermon’s topic.<sup>136</sup> Because listeners engage when a story is told, even a poorly told story can have a greater impact than a list of principles.<sup>137</sup> Illustrations serve the listeners because they reach the listeners as people made by God for story.

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<sup>132</sup> James W. Cox, “Illustrations,” in *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching*, by William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1995), 264.

<sup>133</sup> Jeffrey D. Arthurs, *Preaching as Reminding: Stirring Memory in an Age of Forgetfulness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2017), 87.

<sup>134</sup> John Koessler, “View from the Pew,” in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today’s Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 125.

<sup>135</sup> Calvin Miller, *Marketplace Preaching: How to Return the Sermon to Where It Belongs* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 135.

<sup>136</sup> Alyce M. McKenzie, *Making a Scene in the Pulpit: Vivid Preaching for Visual Listeners* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2018), 82.

<sup>137</sup> D. Bruce Seymour, *Creating Stories That Connect: A Pastor’s Guide to Storytelling* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2007), 13.

## Illustrations Motivate

Illustrations connect with the heart and mind of the listener, and illustrations serve the preacher's goal of motivating the congregation to respond to the truth of the biblical passage. Adams argued, "The Scriptures and scriptural principles come alive for them and help motivate them to a biblical response."<sup>138</sup> Preachers aim at the heart. The heart is more than the seat of emotions but is the biblical core of an individual. The heart is the center of the person and includes the individual's will.

Sermons should be persuasive, changing beliefs and actions. The preacher aims at the listener's will. Morgan reminded preachers: "The preacher should never address a crowd without remembering that his ultimate citadel is the citadel of the human will."<sup>139</sup> Hostetler asserts, "The sermon . . . is essentially *motivational*."<sup>140</sup> Stories have the power to inspire and transform listeners.<sup>141</sup> Illustrations seek to motivate the congregation by engaging the emotions and will. Chapell contends that "the primary purpose of illustration is not merely to clarify but to motivate."<sup>142</sup> Akins, Curtis, and Rummage concur: "Illustrations motivate, persuade, and convince. Illustrations are not meant merely to clarify; they are primarily to motivate."<sup>143</sup> Merida offers his assessment affirming the importance of illustrations for motivation: "The most effective preachers that I know can touch the heart and mind with an illustration that explains, applies,

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<sup>138</sup> Jay Adams, *Preaching with Purpose: A Comprehensive Textbook on Biblical Preaching* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1982), 87.

<sup>139</sup> G. Campbell Morgan, *Preaching* (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1964), 13.

<sup>140</sup> Michael J. Hostetler, *Introducing the Sermon: The Art of Compelling Beginnings* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 13. Emphasis original.

<sup>141</sup> Paul Smith, *Lead with a Story: A Guide to Crafting Business Narratives That Captivate, Convince, and Inspire* (New York: Amacom, 2012), 11.

<sup>142</sup> Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, 40.

<sup>143</sup> Daniel L. Akin, Bill Curtis, and Stephen Rummage, *Engaging Exposition* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011), 163.

argues, or intensifies biblical truth, in such a way as to inspire and motivate the hearers to respond.”<sup>144</sup>

When the illustration is explanatory, then the illustration motivates the listener to embrace the truth expressed. When the illustration is applicatory, then the illustration motivates the listener to act in response. Illustrations carry motivational power. Well-told, vivid stories apply biblical truth to the congregation and engage listeners’ hearts, minds, and desires. Again Chapell explains, “Motivations for us to act in accordance with God’s Word are frequently best forged in the illuminating fires of illustration.”<sup>145</sup>

Stories offer the key tool for persuasion.<sup>146</sup> Stories allow the listeners to reach practical conclusions on their own and adopt the conclusions for themselves.<sup>147</sup> The goal of preaching is to help listeners visualize the fullness of God’s glory and grace, and illustrations help create that vision.<sup>148</sup> Sermons draw congregations into the drama of God’s redemptive story and allow them to engage as participants in the work of the gospel.<sup>149</sup> Illustrations give a direct line to active participation.

Reaching a listener emotionally can help transform the will. Montoya, a staunch advocate of expository preaching, contends that “expository preaching must use imagination to stir the emotions to bring about the submission of the will.”<sup>150</sup> Stories connect with the listener’s creative ideas for change and compel action. Stories involve

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<sup>144</sup> Tony Merida, *Faithful Preaching: Declaring Scripture with Responsibility, Passion, and Authenticity* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2009), 108.

<sup>145</sup> Chapell, *Using Illustrations to Preach with Power*, 39.

<sup>146</sup> Esther K. Choy, *Let the Story Do the Work: The Art of Storytelling for Business Success* (New York: Amacom, 2017), Introduction, “Insight 2,” para. 3, Kindle.

<sup>147</sup> Annette Simmons, *The Story Factor* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus, 2001), 3.

<sup>148</sup> Darryl Dash, *Preach Well: A Short Guide to Making Even the Average Sermon Much Better* (Toronto: Gospel for Life, 2018), chap. 16, “Preaching to Transform,” para. 7, Kindle.

<sup>149</sup> Eric Brian Watkins, *The Drama of Preaching: Participating with God in the History of Redemption* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), 44.

<sup>150</sup> Alex Montoya, *Preaching with Passion* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000), 132.

the listener and foster the listener's enthusiasm to learn.<sup>151</sup> Stories and images use “the power of pictorial language . . . to engage the imagination, and so motivate the listener to collaborate” in his or her response.<sup>152</sup> Illustrations achieve more than clarifying the text; illustrations help move the will.<sup>153</sup>

Again, some preachers fear the manipulative power of stories. They fear change will not be empowered by the Holy Spirit but only by the power of an emotional story. However, the transformative goal of sermons requires a whole-person response, which includes bringing the emotions under the authority of Scripture. Utilizing moving stories allows the preacher to reach the heart and mind of the listener. Vines and Dooley defend the use of emotionally provocative stories: “Does this mean we should pull the heartstrings of our audience? Absolutely! As long as our goal is not emotion for the sake of emotion, we should skillfully aim for the heart as well as the head when we preach, just as the biblical writers did.”<sup>154</sup> Emotionally charged stories should match the tone of the text and aid in persuasion.

Illustrations aim at the mind, heart, and will. Illustrations get to the mind through the heart because they engage the emotions of the audience. An illustration combines logical arguments with emotional appeal to persuade listeners. An effective illustration challenges the whole person. Illustrations are not mere ornaments on a sermon designed to maintain an audience's inconstant attention. Illustrations are essential to the preacher's goal of changing lives.

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<sup>151</sup> Christine Dillon, *Telling the Gospel Through Story: Evangelism That Keeps Hearers Wanting More* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2012), 19.

<sup>152</sup> Jolyon P. Mitchell, *Visually Speaking: Radio and the Renaissance of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 220.

<sup>153</sup> Leslie B. Flynn, *Come Alive with Illustrations: How to Find, Use, and File Good Stories for Sermons and Speeches* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 40.

<sup>154</sup> Jerry Vines and Adam B. Dooley, *Passion in the Pulpit: How to Exegete the Emotion of Scripture* (Chicago: Moody, 2018), 45–46.

## Illustrations Connect the Preacher with Listeners

Illustrations aid a congregation in motivating change, but they also aid the preacher's pastoral connection with his church. Stories allow the preacher to model humility for his listeners as he reveals himself through illustration.<sup>155</sup> Illustrations connect the preacher to the congregation as he draws examples from his life and theirs. They see his interests and gain practical insight into Christian living through his storytelling.<sup>156</sup> Illustrations build trust as the congregation understands the preacher's life and witnesses his reactions through personal stories. Even impersonal analogies expose his care for them. He makes truth simple because he loves them. He brings the Word to them with urgency and strengthens their reliance upon God's truth.

Illustrations develop the connection between the preacher and his church.<sup>157</sup> Church members see his care to make the text accessible and understand his pastoral heart through his efforts to serve them. Through illustrations the preacher connects with his congregation and builds trust with his listeners.<sup>158</sup> Illustrations make personal bonds between the preacher and those listening.<sup>159</sup> An illustration feels intimate and helps cement the pastoral relationship. Kim reaches this conclusion: "Illustrations are the primary vehicles that preachers employ to make real connections with listeners."<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Jeffrey Arthurs and Andrew Gurevich, "Theological and Rhetorical Perspectives on Self-Disclosure in Preaching," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 157, no. 626 (April 2000): 216.

<sup>156</sup> Dan Baty, "Heart-To-Heart Preaching: How to Tap Authentic Emotions, Both Yours and the Listeners," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 560.

<sup>157</sup> John A. Beck, *God as Storyteller: Seeking Meaning in Biblical Narrative* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2008), 2.

<sup>158</sup> Richard Richardson, "Cross-Cultural Preaching: How to Connect in Our Multicultural World," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 172.

<sup>159</sup> Haddon Robinson, "Bringing Yourself into the Pulpit," in *Mastering Contemporary Preaching* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1990), 139.

<sup>160</sup> Matthew D. Kim, *Preaching with Cultural Intelligence: Understanding the People Who Hear Our Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 204. Kim's primary interest is in preaching to a culturally diverse congregation and community, and he recommends gathering illustrations from a variety of cultures. Barnhouse's world travels and illustrations gathered from international sources placed him

Illustrations serve the pastoral relationship.

The value of illustrations grows as preachers see their power to shine light on the biblical passage, to make the abstract concrete, and to help apply the biblical text. Illustrations connect emotionally with people made in God's image and help motivate them to change in their spiritual growth. Illustrations connect the preacher with the congregation and show their shared humanity and experiences. Illustrations are a necessary tool for preachers.

### **The Cultural Context of Illustrations**

Beyond the biblical warrant for illustrations, the broader cultural context offers evidence of the power of stories to communicate truth. A quick survey of literary criticism, neuroscience, popular communication, and entertainment corroborates the biblical and homiletical evidence. The appeal to these arguments substantiates what has already been seen in the review of the biblical and homiletical evidence. The survey demonstrates the common human experience of the power of stories. The insights of researchers and communicators outside of the field of homiletics shows the common grace of God since every person is made by a storytelling God.

Literary critic Holland argues that stories, whether fiction or nonfiction, draw the listener into the truth portrayed. Listeners immerse themselves in the story and willingly suspend disbelief. A listener may immediately reject a propositional truth claim that challenges his already held beliefs, but he will temporarily suspend disbelief when confronted with the same truth in a story. Holland explains, "If you subject yourself to any narrative, you believe it for the time you are making coherent sense of that narrative."<sup>161</sup> Bald truth claims may be quickly rejected, but a story immerses the listener

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further along in his cultural intelligence than many contemporary preachers to whom Kim writes.

<sup>161</sup> Norman N. Holland, "Spider-Man? Sure! The Neuroscience of Suspending Disbelief," *Interdisciplinary Science Reviews* 33, no. 4 (December 2008): 315. Tucker points to two concepts in Holland that are useful to the preacher: first, the suspension of disbelief when listening to a story and the

in the truth. Presenting truth in story form helps gain a hearing for the truth. Hart and Daughton agree: “Narratives do advance persuasion because (1) they disarm audiences by enchanting them, (2) they awaken within audiences dormant experiences and feelings, and (3) they thereby expose, subtly, some sort of propositional argument.”<sup>162</sup>

A story helps make truth believable.<sup>163</sup> For the preacher, a sermon illustration causes the listener to accept the truth of what is told as he makes sense of the story. An illustration does not guarantee the listener will agree in the end, but it does increase the possibility for truth to be accepted. The listener may end up rejecting the truth, but only after he has tried it out. To listen to a story causes people to make sense of the truth claims of the story.

Recent research in neuroscience also provides support for the value of illustrations. For communication to occur in preaching “what is in the preacher’s mind must be duplicated—as far as is possible, given the signal-to-noise ratio in all utterances—in congregants’ minds.”<sup>164</sup> One of the most effective ways to duplicate the preacher’s mind is through a well-told story. When a vivid story is told, the listener’s brain matches the story-teller’s brain.

Researchers at Princeton’s Neuroscience Institute measured the neural responses of a story-teller and those who listened to the story. The most attentive listeners, based on responses to a questionnaire, had brain scans that closely matched the

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tendency to identify with a story’s character. Tucker, *The Preacher as Storyteller*, 15.

<sup>162</sup> Roderick P. Hart and Suzanne M. Daughton, *Modern Rhetorical Criticism* (Boston: Pearson, 2005), 88.

<sup>163</sup> Sarah E. Worth, “Storytelling and Narrative Knowing: An Examination of the Epistemic Benefits of Well-Told Stories,” *The Journal of Aesthetic Education* 42, no. 3 (2008): 49. Worth’s claims align with Haddon Robinson’s concerns for preaching. Illustrations “make generalities understandable and believable.” Haddon W Robinson, *Biblical Sermons: How Twelve Preachers Apply the Principles of Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989), 215.

<sup>164</sup> Abraham Kuruvilla, *A Vision for Preaching: Understanding the Heart of Pastoral Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 73.

story-teller.<sup>165</sup> Successful communication brings the listener's brain into a similar state as that of the communicator.<sup>166</sup> The neural match is not merely an emotional response, but depends upon cognitive understanding of the story. Similar studies confirm that brain scans only match when communication occurs and not only through an emotional connection, as subjects showed no correlation in brain scans when the stories were told in a language foreign to the listener.<sup>167</sup> The emotional and intellectual connection to a story cause the storyteller's and the listener's brains to match.

Research by neuroscientists confirms that stories are a powerful tool for communication. The human "brain is hardwired to respond to story."<sup>168</sup> Stories emotionally engage the listener and imaginatively connect the listener to the communicator. Multiple neural networks are engaged when listeners hear stories.<sup>169</sup> The conclusions of neuroscience lead business consultants to offer training to corporate leaders in storytelling, a strategy that can also serve preachers.<sup>170</sup> Illustrations allow the preacher to connect his congregation to the truth of the Bible.

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<sup>165</sup> Amy Barth, "Good Listeners Get Inside Your Head," *Discover* 32, no. 1 (February 1, 2011): 71.

<sup>166</sup> Suzanne Dikker et al., "On the Same Wavelength: Predictable Language Enhances Speaker-Listener Brain-to-Brain Synchrony in Posterior Superior Temporal Gyrus," *Journal of Neuroscience* 34, no. 18 (April 30, 2014): 6267. The research story was told on the podcast Radiolab, *Are You My Brain Double?*, accessed May 11, 2015, [http://www.radiolab.org/story/122564-soul-mates-and-brain-doubles/?utm\\_source=sharedUrl&utm\\_medium=metatag&utm\\_campaign=sharedUrl](http://www.radiolab.org/story/122564-soul-mates-and-brain-doubles/?utm_source=sharedUrl&utm_medium=metatag&utm_campaign=sharedUrl). See also Yulia Lerner et al., "Topographic Mapping of a Hierarchy of Temporal Receptive Windows Using a Narrated Story," *Journal of Neuroscience* 31, no. 8 (February 23, 2011): 2906–15; Johanna Sanger, Ulman Lindenberger, and Viktor Muller, "Interactive Brains, Social Minds," *Communicative and Integrative Biology* 4, no. 6 (November 1, 2011): 655–63.

<sup>167</sup> Greg J. Stephens, Lauren J. Silbert, and Uri Hasson, "Speaker–Listener Neural Coupling Underlies Successful Communication," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America* 107, no. 32 (August 10, 2010): 14426.

<sup>168</sup> Lisa Cron, *Wired for Story: The Writer's Guide to Using Brain Science to Hook Readers from the Very First Sentence* (New York: Ten Speed, 2012), 1. Wintherup affirms the hardwired reality by repeating Cron's quote in nearly identical form. Douglas Witherup, *Interrobang Preaching: (Re)Discovering the Communication Secrets of Jesus* (Kannapolis, NC: Interrobang, 2014), 24.

<sup>169</sup> Richard H. Cox, *Rewiring Your Preaching: How the Brain Processes Sermons* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012), 41.

<sup>170</sup> Paul J. Zak, "Why Your Brain Loves Good Storytelling," *Harvard Business Review*, October 28, 2014, accessed January 9, 2018, <https://hbr.org/2014/10/why-your-brain-loves-good->

The power of stories finds support in both popular culture and scientific research. TED talks—originally focused on technology, entertainment, and design—now cover global issues in brief, informative lectures. Analysis of the talks indicates that the most engaging lectures derive their power from stories. Stories capture attention and highlight the importance of the topic. Stories connect the listeners with the speaker. Stories engage the full range of the human experience: intellect, emotions, and will. Stories allow the listener to understand the topic from the speaker’s point of view. Stories do more than entertain; stories persuade. Gallo summarizes the conclusion: “Storytelling is the ultimate tool of persuasion.”<sup>171</sup>

Examination of the most compelling and most watched TED lectures finds storytelling as the primary explanation for their success:

Essentially, the *best* speakers on the TED stage were the ones who had mastered the art of storytelling. They had mastered how to craft and present their stories in a way that allowed them to share their message with the world without seeming like they were lecturing their audience. That’s just one of the advantages of stories—they allow you to share your message without your audience feeling like you’re preaching to them, which in turn makes it easier for them to accept your message.<sup>172</sup>

Even for the preacher, who is obviously preaching to his listeners, a story connects with the congregation. Listeners are engrossed in the truth so that they feel a part of the sermon rather than mere targets for the sermon. Stories offer persuasive power because they offer ethical instruction that is not heard as bald command. Listeners engage with the characters in the story and learn to share their moral perspective without alerting the listener’s resistance through explicit ethical demands.

McKee, in his foundational guidance for screenwriters, places the emphasis on storytelling: “Storytelling is the creative demonstration of truth. A story is the living

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storytelling.

<sup>171</sup> Carmine Gallo, *Talk Like TED: The 9 Public-Speaking Secrets of the World’s Top Minds* (New York: St. Martin’s, 2014), 47.

<sup>172</sup> Akash Karia, *TED Talks Storytelling: 23 Storytelling Techniques from the Best TED Talks* (Lexington, KY: CreateSpace, 2015), 2–3. Emphasis original.

proof of an idea, the conversion of idea to action.”<sup>173</sup> Truth is understood through story. A story has power because the whole person is engaged. The mind wrestles with ideas because the viewer is emotionally connected. McKee explains, “In a story, you not only weave a lot of information into the telling but you also arouse your listener’s emotions and energy.”<sup>174</sup>

Other creators of popular entertainment agree with McKee’s conclusions. Film screenwriter and director, Pete Docter, known for his work with the blockbuster movies of Pixar Animation Studios, argues, “The power of story is that it has an ability to connect with people on an emotional level.”<sup>175</sup> Knowing the power of stories, Pixar writers toil for years, with constructive feedback loops, to capture the emotional impact each screenplay requires.<sup>176</sup> Because stories capture audiences’ emotions so powerfully, the story must be carefully shaped. Fellow Pixar filmmaker Stanton states it directly, “We all love stories. We’re born for them.”<sup>177</sup> Studio executive Guber believes the authenticity and vulnerability of good storytelling can emotionally transport viewers to help them see more complex truths than a recitation of facts could accomplish.<sup>178</sup> Screenwriter Godawa, writing from a Christian perspective, argues for the power of storytelling: “Story is persuasive because it embodies worldview in a narrative.”<sup>179</sup>

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<sup>173</sup> Robert McKee, *Story: Substance, Structure, Style and the Principles of Screenwriting* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 113.

<sup>174</sup> Bronwyn Fryer, “Storytelling That Moves People: A Conversation with Screenwriting Coach Robert McKee,” *Harvard Business Review* 81, no. 6 (June 2003): 52.

<sup>175</sup> Pete Docter, “Introduction to Storytelling, Pixar in a Box: The Art of Storytelling” (Khan Academy), accessed January 14, 2018, <https://www.khanacademy.org/partner-content/pixar/storytelling>.

<sup>176</sup> Ed Catmull and Amy Wallace, *Creativity, Inc.: Overcoming the Unseen Forces That Stand in the Way of True Inspiration* (New York: Random House, 2014), 74.

<sup>177</sup> Andrew Stanton, “The Clues to a Great Story,” TED, 2012, accessed January 9, 2018, [https://www.ted.com/talks/andrew\\_stanton\\_the\\_clues\\_to\\_a\\_great\\_story](https://www.ted.com/talks/andrew_stanton_the_clues_to_a_great_story).

<sup>178</sup> Peter Guber, *Tell to Win: Connect, Persuade, and Triumph with the Hidden Power of Story* (New York: Crown Business, 2011), 42.

<sup>179</sup> Brian Godawa, *Word Pictures: Knowing God Through Story and Imagination* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009), 104.

Storytelling is not only entertainment. The power of stories is not limited to the movie theater but is explicitly applied to the corporate world of management and leadership. Stories shape actions. Leaders need stories to help employees and clients understand the importance of their decisions.<sup>180</sup> Storytelling can be a powerful persuasive tool in the war to shape ideas. Sachs argues, in his provocatively titled book *Winning the Story Wars*, “Stories are a particular type of human communication designed to persuade an audience of the storyteller’s worldview.”<sup>181</sup> Stories are meant to persuade. Stories are powerful tools for communicators. Stories provide tangible details that allow listeners to relate to the speaker and characters in the story. Stories help listeners remember and apply lessons because they immerse the listener in the emotional context of the characters.

Contemporary culture views stories as weapons that can shape ethical discussion as seen in the impact of TED talks and the use of stories across popular culture. Storytelling stretches across all human cultures. Stories frame human experiences in all aspects of life. Museums, theme parks, and cathedrals shape visits with stories. “Storytelling is everywhere.”<sup>182</sup> Stories engage listeners with real situations and ethical issues. Psychological researchers argue, “Narrative is also a potent persuasive tool . . . and it has the ability to shape beliefs and change minds.”<sup>183</sup> Popular level experience and research by neuroscientists confirm that stories are a powerful tool for

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<sup>180</sup> Fiona Hewitt, “Storytelling: The Heart of Leadership,” *New Zealand Management* 62, no. 1 (February 2015): 27.

<sup>181</sup> Jonah Sachs, *Winning the Story Wars: Why Those Who Tell (and Live) the Best Stories Will Rule the Future* (Boston: Harvard Business Review, 2012), 18.

<sup>182</sup> Todd Martens, “Themed Entertainment Designers From Disney, Knott’s, Efteling and More Preach the Importance of Play over Technology,” *LA Times*, April 9, 2018, <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/music/la-et-hc-teahwards-theme-park-20180409-story.html>.

<sup>183</sup> Jeremy Hsu, “The Secrets of Storytelling: Our Love for Telling Tales Reveals the Workings of the Mind,” *Scientific American Mind* 19, no. 4 (September 2008), accessed November 9, 2016, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-secrets-of-storytelling/>.

communication. Stories emotionally engage the listener and imaginatively connect the listener to the communicator.

Narrative provides a coherent framework for understanding life. Stories help a person make sense of himself, explain himself to others, and understand others.<sup>184</sup> Recognition of human employment in narrative moves beyond bare propositional facts. People accept truth from God within the narrative of God's relationship with his people. Theology should not be reduced to a systematic collection of propositions, although it includes propositional truth, but it should include our storied relationship with God. The relational demands of obedience, which God places on believers, always come in the context of the story of redemption. God imposed the commands of the law on Israel, but he first reminded them of his actions on their behalf in history. In order to know who they were and what was expected of them, the people of God needed to know the story of which they were a part. Preachers announce truth effectively through stories. Preachers help connect individual stories to God's metanarrative. Listeners need stories to understand the story of God's action in history.<sup>185</sup>

### **Cautions and Limitations**

The cultural context of the power of stories confirms the importance of illustrations for preachers. However, the very power of stories raises concerns. Illustrations can be misused. Preachers can ignore the biblical text and rest upon illustrations or allow an illustration to distort the truth of the Bible. An illustration can muddle the message if it does not clarify the truth of the text. A poorly phrased analogy can confuse instead of instruct.

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<sup>184</sup> Roger C. Schank, *Tell Me a Story: Narrative and Intelligence* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1995), 44.

<sup>185</sup> Thomas G. Long, "What Happened to Narrative Preaching?" *Journal for Preachers* 28, no. 4 (2005): 12.

It is also possible for an illustration to weaken the pastoral bond if misappropriated. The integrity of the preacher may be undermined by false or misleading illustrations.<sup>186</sup> The trust of the congregation is lost if a preacher claims experiences as his own that really happened to another. He can harm his ministry if he reveals confidences from his family's life or from his counseling ministry. The danger is removed when he offers honest attribution or merely asks the congregation to imagine the scenario with him.

The emotional impact of illustrations also presents a potential danger. Because of the emotional power of illustrations, preachers risk manipulating the emotions of a congregation.<sup>187</sup> As the adage reminds preachers, "Abuse does not negate good use."<sup>188</sup> Even while admitting the potential dangers of illustrations, the honest and meaningful inclusion in sermons serves the preacher's commitment to the priority of the biblical text.

Illustrations do not negate the importance of exegetical work. Illustrations serve the exegetical priorities of the expository preacher as illustrations help him make the text clear. Begg identifies the danger of a preacher who considers himself a storyteller rather than a servant of the text: the storyteller "has convinced himself that since everyone loves a good story and since people tend to be less inclined to follow the exposition of the Bible, he will develop his gift of storytelling to the neglect of the hard work of biblical exposition."<sup>189</sup> Some opponents of illustration might take Begg's words

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<sup>186</sup> Wayne Harvey, "Illustrating with Integrity and Sensitivity: Seven Questions for Staying above Reproach," in *The Art and Craft of Biblical Preaching: A Comprehensive Resource for Today's Communicators*, ed. Haddon W. Robinson and Craig Brian Larson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 521–23. For more on the potential dangers of illustrations see Marguerite Shuster, Richard Allen Farmer, and Haddon W. Robinson, "What Sermon Illustrations Should Be Banned from Pulpits? Not Every Story Helps the Preaching Moment," *Christianity Today*, June 2014, 30–31; Richard F. Ward, "Taking a New Look at Some Old, Old Stories," *Clergy Journal* 78, no. 1 (October 2001): 10.

<sup>187</sup> LeRoy Patterson, "Dangers of Illustrating Sermons," *Leadership*, Fall 1983.

<sup>188</sup> Cornelius Plantinga, *Reading for Preaching: The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 36.

<sup>189</sup> Alistair Begg, *Preaching for God's Glory*, Wheaton, IL (Crossway, 2011), 18.

to eliminate illustrations, but Begg's own preaching shows the value of illustrations in service to exposition. He does not skip the hard work of exegesis but uses illustrations to clarify and explain the text. The illustration serves the preacher's commitment to the authority of the Bible.

Illustrations do not replace biblical explanation but serve explanation and application. Illustrations should not distract from the meaning of the text or divert attention away from the text. The preacher's goal is to make the text clear and apply the text. Some illustrations will draw the listeners away from the text. The preacher should heed Clowney's warning: "Be sure that illustrations do not distract from what they illustrate. Catch attention with a story about a sports or music idol, and you may never get it back."<sup>190</sup> However, in the hands of a wise preacher, a congregation's attention can force confrontation with the truth.

Illustrations are necessary tools for the preacher. Hesitations regarding their effectiveness or distracting nature overlook the strategic value illustrations hold. Illustrations help the preacher explain the biblical text. Illustrations offer guidance in application. The value of illustrations stretches across the breadth of the preacher's purposes. Illustrations shine light on the text. Illustrations move from abstraction to concrete understanding. Illustrations connect with the whole person by engaging the imagination and emotions. The value of illustrations is drawn from the creation of humanity in God's image. People live storied lives and are made for stories. Because of this, illustrations offer opportunity to motivate listeners. Illustrations help strengthen the preacher's connection with his congregation. The biblical and cultural contexts offer confirmation of the value and necessity of illustrations.

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<sup>190</sup> Edmund P. Clowney, *Preaching Christ in All of Scripture* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2003), 58.

## CHAPTER 6

### BARNHOUSE'S ILLUSTRATIVE STRATEGY

Barnhouse strategically employed sermon illustrations. He used illustrations as tools to explain the biblical text. His use of illustrations “was perhaps unparalleled in his generation. No one who heard Dr. Barnhouse explain the Scriptures could ever forget the striking illustrations he employed to make spiritual truth come alive.”<sup>1</sup> Barnhouse is remembered for his illustrative skill: “Few men in the English-speaking world have possessed the ability to use illustrations as did this gifted servant of Christ.”<sup>2</sup> A significant portion of Barnhouse’s homiletical legacy is tied to his sermon illustrations.

Barnhouse’s illustrative skill was repeatedly highlighted by those remembering his ministry. Dr. C. Everett Koop, a member of Barnhouse’s church and prominent physician who later served as Surgeon General, described Barnhouse’s preaching:

Being saturated with the Scriptures, he never failed to find a poignant illustration in any circumstance. After he recovered from the serious operation in his chest, I was chatting with him about it and told him I had taken the opportunity during his surgery to hold his heart in my hand. He immediately replied, ‘And you found it deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.’<sup>3</sup>

Even as a hospital patient, Barnhouse imagined illustrative angles from his experiences. Another Philadelphia doctor explained a complicated medical procedure that Barnhouse then included as a sermon illustration: “Throughout his life he always affirmed his belief that there is nothing in our environment which cannot teach us a spiritual lesson, if only

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<sup>1</sup> Russell T. Hitt, introduction to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Bible Truth Illustrated* (New Canaan, CT: Keats, 1979).

<sup>2</sup> William J. Peterson, preface to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Illustrating the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1998), 8.

<sup>3</sup> C. Everett Koop, “What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 7.

we have the eyes to see it.”<sup>4</sup> Carnell, of Fuller Theological Seminary, wrote, “I remember Dr. Barnhouse as a gifted biblical expositor, and especially in the use of supporting illustrations.”<sup>5</sup>

Barnhouse constantly sought illustrations for his teaching. He considered how experiences and observations could be used to explain the wonderful mysteries of Scripture. He explained, “My mind runs to sermon illustrations and almost everything I hear passes through the mill to find out if there’s a possible use to illustrate spiritual truth.”<sup>6</sup> He could pull an analogy from a sign posted in a restaurant: “This business is not for profit; we didn’t intend it this way.”<sup>7</sup> Barnhouse leveraged the humorous sign to make the biblical point: God intends each believer to make spiritual progress; if one does not see progress, like the profit of the restaurant, then the believer has failed to meet God’s purpose. In other instances, Barnhouse captured serious news accounts dominating the headlines. He pulled anecdotes from pastoral crises and tragic events. Illustrations were everywhere for Barnhouse.

Barnhouse used various types of illustrations. He developed figurative language and brief analogies. He created parables and fictional accounts.<sup>8</sup> He could also linger and develop longer stories. He crafted illustrations from common situations. He imagined a child asking for a better grade on a wrong arithmetic answer since he was

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<sup>4</sup> Thomas M. Durant, “What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 8.

<sup>5</sup> Edward John Carnell, “What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me,” *Eternity*, March 1961, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Brothers in Christ,” Sermon, Romans 8:14, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. See also Barnhouse, “Suffering and Glory,” Sermon, Romans 8:18, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible; Barnhouse, “Limited Atonement, Part 2,” Sermon, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The Blessed Life,” Sermon, Romans 15:13, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>8</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “War in Heaven,” Sermon, Revelation 12:7-10, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, “Separated Christians,” Sermon, Galatians 5:22-23, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

closer to the right answer than his classmate, illustrating that sinners wrongly compare themselves to one another rather than to God's perfect standards.<sup>9</sup>

To illustrate the inspiration that comes from the Holy Spirit, Barnhouse explained his studies in Athens, his picnic dinners on the Acropolis with his wife and child, staring out at the sea, watching a ship under sail. The scene prompted a memory from a Greek historical account of a sea battle, which made the connection to the text. As the wind carried the ship, so the Spirit carried the prophets.<sup>10</sup> He had taken time to set the scene from his student days and describe the picnic. He was willing to wander through introductory details before pressing his main illustrative point.<sup>11</sup> At times, particularly in his stories, the contextual details about his travels or education had little to do with the illustration's point, but it offered him opportunity to connect with his listeners and he took time to develop the story.

Barnhouse's illustrations were often simple but profound. Barnhouse helped his children understand the hope of the gospel while traveling to their mother's funeral. He cast their attention to the shadow of a truck on the roadway and asked them, "Would you rather be run over by the truck or by the shadow of the truck?"<sup>12</sup> One of the children offered the obvious answer that she would rather be run over by a shadow since a shadow does not hurt. Barnhouse replied, "Remember, children, Jesus let the truck of death strike him so that it could never destroy us. Mother lives with Jesus now—only the shadow of death passed over her."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Eternal Grace," Sermon, Romans 2:12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, "Weighed and Found Wanting," *Park Street Spire*, December 1955, 13, Box 14, Folder 6, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>10</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "The Gospel of God," Sermon, Romans 1:1, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>11</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "God's Workmanship," Sermon, Ephesians 2:8-10, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>12</sup> Margaret N. Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1983), 186.

<sup>13</sup> Bryan Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching: Redeeming the Expository Sermon* (Grand

Barnhouse's shadow of death illustration alone would be enough to cement his illustrative legacy as it has been repeated by generations of preachers. Numerous preachers from Graham to Lucado, Jeremiah, and Keller have found spiritual power in that personal and powerful illustration.<sup>14</sup> Chapell uses Barnhouse's illustration as a template to teach others the power of illustrations:

I have used this illustration at more than one funeral. Not only does it speak movingly of deep biblical truth, but it also does all an illustration must with a great economy of words. Listeners focus their attention on the Barnhouses' situation, see what the children see, and even listen in on the dialogue. Even more crucial than a vicarious experiencing of the event, however, are the master preacher's final words to his children, which enable them to relate the details of the illustration to Christian death.<sup>15</sup>

The story's effectiveness is rooted in its emotional impact and its clear analogy. With the simple yet powerful story, Barnhouse offered hope, and in its retelling, continues to offer hope to Christians.

Another familiar Barnhouse illustration asked the congregation to imagine what Philadelphia would be like if Satan was in charge of the city. Rather than describe the horrors of sin and destruction, Barnhouse suggested the city would be beautiful but absent of any gospel hope. Horton began his *Christless Christianity* with Barnhouse's thought experiment: "If Satan took over Philadelphia, all of the bars would be closed, pornography banished, and pristine streets . . . and the churches would be full every

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Rapids: Baker, 1994), 189.

<sup>14</sup> Billy Graham, *Approaching Hoofbeats: The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 204; Graham, *Death and the Life After* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 74; Max Lucado, *Traveling Light: Releasing the Burdens You Were Never Intended to Bear* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001), 93–94; David Jeremiah, *What Are You Afraid Of? Facing Down Your Fears with Faith* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2013), 242; Timothy Keller, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* (New York: Dutton, 2013), 317. See also Michael P. Green, ed., *Illustrations for Biblical Preaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989), 91; Mark Hitchcock, *55 Answers to Questions about Life After Death* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah, 2005), 77; Erwin W. Lutzer, *One Minute After You Die: A Preview of Your Final Destination* (Chicago: Moody, 1997), 61; Sean McDowell, ed., *Apologetics for a New Generation* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2009), 185; G. Jack Wren, *Shock the Wheat: Helping Jesus Seek and Save the Lost* (Nashville: WestBow, 2015), 17.

<sup>15</sup> Chapell, *Christ-Centered Preaching*, 189.

Sunday . . . *where Christ is not preached.*”<sup>16</sup> The powerful image is utilized by other preachers to show the deceptive dominion of sin and the necessity for a Christ-centered spiritual life. Lawson, Merida, and Mohler all borrow from Barnhouse.<sup>17</sup> Barnhouse’s illustrations continue to serve the church.

Barnhouse utilized illustrations throughout his ministry. In his early years at Tenth, a children’s curriculum was built from his illustrations. The illustrations were further developed for teacher training in *Teaching the Word of Truth*.<sup>18</sup> Near the end of his ministry, when offered the opportunity to host an evangelistic television program, *Man to Man*, Barnhouse followed the pattern of using a vivid story to capture attention and explain biblical truth. The television episodes would have played just as effectively on the radio since the staging was Barnhouse alone in a living room, but Barnhouse believed television offered an unprecedented opportunity to reach a growing television audience that did not yet understand the gospel.<sup>19</sup> After the story, Barnhouse explained the biblical truth he was illustrating with a Bible in hand, and he concluded each episode with a repeatable prayer of salvation. His television strategy was to tell a story to illustrate a biblical truth, draw a conclusion based on the story, and then challenge his listeners to respond.

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Horton, *Christless Christianity: The Alternative Gospel of the American Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008), 15. Emphasis original.

<sup>17</sup> Steven J. Lawson, *The Kind of Preaching God Blesses* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2013), 20–21; Tony Merida, *Proclaiming Jesus: Christ-Centered Teaching and Preaching* (GCD Books, 2015), 15; R. Albert Mohler, Jr., *Exalting Jesus in Hebrews*, ed. David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary* (Nashville: B&H, 2017), 35. See also Jason R. Velotta, *Reclaiming Victory: Living in the Gospel* (Mustang, OK: Tate, 2012), 23.

<sup>18</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Teaching the Word of Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940), 7. More than 150,000 copies of *Teaching the Word of Truth* were sold during Barnhouse’s lifetime, which appears to have been his book with the most sales based on its inclusion in the announcement of his death. Paul A. Hopkins and Russell T. Hitt, “Death of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse” (The Evangelical Foundation, November 5, 1960), 3, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>19</sup> Paul A. Hopkins, “Television: ‘Man to Man,’” *Eternity*, October 1955, 6.

Barnhouse asked his hosts for their best stories when he travelled. For example, in his television program, “Man to Man,” Barnhouse highlighted some of these stories. In one episode, Barnhouse shared the story of a household servant who was blackmailed over a mistake. The servant was forced to comply with every demand of the blackmailer until he confessed his sin to the master of the house. Confession and forgiveness brought freedom.<sup>20</sup> In a later television episode, Barnhouse borrowed another missionary story. A Korean elder saw the need to live a holy life based on a parable about a man who refused to move out after his home was sold.<sup>21</sup> The parable imagined a landlord who was unable to evict a tenant. Through the parable, the elder described the necessity of evicting sin in his own life. Barnhouse could take a simple illustration or a complicated story from his personal ministry to explain the gospel. In each brief television episode, Barnhouse distilled the central message of the gospel focused on the grace provided through the ministry of Jesus.

Collections of Barnhouse’s illustrations show his willingness to draw from historical accounts such as the murder of Elma Sands, the first sensational unsolved murder in America, and Spurgeon’s sound check in the Crystal Palace, which led a workman on site to give his life to Christ. Barnhouse also utilized fictional accounts and parables such as the little boy who only rescued a friend who had fallen in the ice because “he had my skates on.”<sup>22</sup> Barnhouse borrowed human interest stories from the news and from his own experiences to illustrate biblical truth. His storytelling ability could move his preaching from a whisper to thunderous emphasis. Sermon illustrations served Barnhouse’s exegetical strategy of explaining the biblical text. Ortlund captured well

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<sup>20</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The Dead Duck,” *Man to Man* (Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 1955).

<sup>21</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Elder Kim,” *Man to Man* (Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 1955).

<sup>22</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Bible Truth Illustrated* (New Canaan, CT: Keats, 1979), 4, 20, 56, 182.

Barnhouse's strategy even when handling massive doctrines: "He put in an illustrative window and flooded the truth with light and freshness."<sup>23</sup>

### **Sermons Examined**

This dissertation seeks a thorough examination of Barnhouse's illustrative preaching. Investigation of his entire sermon corpus, even if extant, would prove nearly impossible given his prolific preaching ministry. In order to delimit a sample of his preaching, this dissertation explores all of the sermons of Barnhouse printed in book format. The study was heavily dependent upon Romans because Barnhouse was heavily dependent upon Romans. This dissertation also examines topical sermons, those printed under Barnhouse's name or included in the Keswick volumes, to supplement exploration of his verse-by-verse preaching. A total of 705 sermons were examined. More than 3,600 illustrations fill those sermons.

However, even a thorough examination of Barnhouse's preaching through published sermons has some limitations. Therefore, audio recordings of Barnhouse's sermons were also consulted. The sermons were chosen for inclusion in this dissertation because they are in printed books, but the audio versions of the sermons give the best representation of Barnhouse's preaching. The edited books of Barnhouse's sermons frequently condensed longer series by grouping multiple sermons into one chapter. The printed versions often reduced the number of illustrations compared to the audio recording of the same sermon. The audio of the sermons gives a clearer account of Barnhouse's illustrative strategy.

Barnhouse's devotional commentary on Genesis offers fewer illustrations than the other sermons analyzed because of its abbreviated nature. The editors of the Genesis commentary reduced the length of his illustrations. For example, an anecdote about his

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<sup>23</sup> Raymond C. Ortlund, "What Dr. Barnhouse Means to Me," *Eternity*, March 1961, 32.

childhood experience of the great northern California earthquake of 1906 in a Keswick sermon from the same Genesis text was reduced to a mere analogy in the Genesis commentary.<sup>24</sup> When he repeated the illustration in his Revelation commentary, he returned to a full description of the disaster and his memory from his childhood home: “a glow in the sky that enabled us to read at midnight by the light of the burning city.”<sup>25</sup> In *Genesis*, he offered only an analogy. The Genesis commentary contains eleven chapters with no illustrations of any kind and twelve chapters with only one analogy or anecdote, which is rare for Barnhouse’s preached sermons. Even when his teaching was condensed by editors, Barnhouse still offered analogies and anecdotes.

Editors not only reduced the number of illustrations, but at times pulled illustrations from Barnhouse’s other sermons. The text of *Mark: The Servant Gospel* contains seventeen additional illustrations that were not included in the original audio of Mark. The twelve brief chapters compress forty sermons from the audio sermon series. The audio sermons contain numerous illustrations not found in the written text. The forty audio sermons from Mark have been analyzed for this project in order to capture Barnhouse’s preaching strategy.

Barnhouse’s commentary on Acts includes mainly material he taught during the Scripture readings in his church before the actual sermon began. Barnhouse provided his congregation with a running commentary during the Scripture reading, which could take more than twenty minutes to complete.<sup>26</sup> The analysis of Barnhouse’s Acts commentary is limited to five sermons. The remainder of the Acts commentary consists

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<sup>24</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Genesis: A Devotional Commentary*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1973), 71; Barnhouse, “Earthquake in the Soul” *The Keswick Week 1951* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1951), 107.

<sup>25</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 136.

<sup>26</sup> Henry Herbert Ehrenstein, foreword to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Acts: An Expository Commentary*, ed. Herbert Henry Ehrenstein (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1979), 10.

of exegetical notes drawn from his running commentary before the actual sermons.

The sermons from the Gospel of John are selected sermons from his later years and do not include the twelve years of preaching from Barnhouse's early years at Tenth. Two of the chapters from *The Love Life* are excluded from analysis because they were based on the running commentaries during the Scripture reading like those in the Acts commentary.<sup>27</sup>

Barnhouse's Romans series comprised the bulk of his radio ministry and occupies a significant focus of this dissertation. His Romans sermons were preached on the radio from 1949 through his death in 1960, and the commentaries were published from 1953 through 1964 in ten volumes. In the first five volumes, covering Romans chapters one through five, the sermons were transcribed nearly word for word so that the printed volumes closely match the audio recordings. Beginning with Romans 6, in the volumes published after his death, there are numerous sermons available in audio format only. Romans 6 has five sermons not included in the print edition. From Romans 8 through the end of the series, most of the chapters were edited down from multiple sermons or the audio was not included at all. In addition, the print volume includes three sermons at the end of Romans 11 that were not recorded for the radio. Therefore, for the five audio-only sermons from Romans 6, and then for all of Romans 8-16, this dissertation utilizes the audio recordings to supplement the written series. Beginning with Romans 8, the sermon structures and number of illustrations are derived from the audio recordings plus the three non-recorded sermons in Romans 11. Without the audio recordings, the analysis would only identify the priorities of the editors rather than the priorities of Barnhouse in his original sermons.

The sermons in his exegetical commentary on Revelation were originally

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<sup>27</sup> Chapters 10 and 23 of *The Love Life* are excluded from analysis as they were not sermons but based on his informal Scripture readings. Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973).

published as sermons in *Revelation* magazine and later recorded for the radio.<sup>28</sup> But only the first forty were recorded by Barnhouse, through Revelation 16:1. Some of the later chapters were written by Barnhouse, but the final chapters were produced by Keiper to match Barnhouse's theology and offer a complete commentary for publishing. Only the forty Revelation sermons that Barnhouse preached on the radio are included in the analysis.

Two series of Keswick sermons, 1936 and 1938, were later published as *God's Methods for Holy Living* and *Life by the Son*. Plus, several individual sermons were reprinted in Keswick anthologies. Only one copy of each sermon was included in the overall totals since the text is a nearly identical reprint in each case.

Barnhouse's eighty-five topical sermons average more than eight illustrations per sermon. The subset of topical sermons preached at Keswick, including *God's Methods for Holy Living* and *Life by the Son*, include a remarkable 12.5 illustrations per sermon across the thirty-seven sermons. He saturated his topical preaching with illustrations. Barnhouse preached 620 exegetical sermons through books, including 455 from Romans. His biblical book series include 4.77 illustrations per sermon with more than five illustrations per sermon in Acts and Thessalonians and more than six illustrations per sermon in John. Romans, which is the bulk of the analysis, averaged 5.23 illustrations per sermon. The highest average of illustrations in Romans was 7.48 illustrations per sermon in volume 1a, Romans 1:1-32. The lowest average in Romans was 3.68 illustrations per sermon in volume 3b, Romans 6:1-7:25.

The major factor that shaped the number of illustrations Barnhouse used in an individual sermon was whether Barnhouse was preaching from one passage or preaching topically. When he preached exegetically primarily from one passage, he used 4.77

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<sup>28</sup> Russell Hitt, introduction to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Revelation: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971), 8.

illustrations per sermon. When he preached topically from many passages, he used 8.28 illustrations per sermon. The genre of the passage did not impact the number of illustrations per sermon. There was no discernable difference in the number of illustrations when preaching from narrative passages or didactic passages. Apart from the outlier of Genesis in its edited edition, his exegetical sermons range from 3.4 illustrations per sermon in Mark to 6.1 illustrations per sermon in John. The fewest and the greatest number of illustrations each came from the Gospels. If the Romans volumes are considered individually, then he reaches a high of 7.48 illustrations per sermon in his sermons from a biblical book. The number of illustrations in his topical sermons was greater than any of his biblical book series. Barnhouse filled his sermons with illustrations. Overall, Barnhouse is rightly remembered for his illustrative method.

### **Analogies, Anecdotes, and Stories**

Barnhouse regularly used analogies, anecdotes, and less frequently, stories. This dissertation differentiates colorful language from illustrations. This dissertation also differentiates between analogies, anecdotes, and stories. Although his preaching was full of vivid language beyond his illustrations, his analogies were more than mere picturesque language. His analogies were a sentence or several sentences of purposeful comparison for the sake of illustration. He often referenced them as analogies or used descriptive phrases to introduce them: “let us think,” “compare,” “likewise,” or “suppose.” Descriptive language alone, like “the genial heat of [God’s] presence” or Jesus as “the central target” of hatred, was not counted as an analogy. Sentence long descriptions on the same page rose to the level of analogy: “Too many say to the Lord that they will be glad to enlist in His army if He will provide air-conditioned quarters, sumptuous rations, first-class transportation, and all the luxuries” and “Just as the muscles of a corpse can be stimulated to jerky movements by an electric current, so our Adamic nature is roused by

trespass to its fancied rights.”<sup>29</sup> Barnhouse’s vibrant descriptions fill his preaching, but such language only counted as an analogy when it was drawn into a full sentence or paragraph length comparison.

Barnhouse’s anecdotes were brief personal or historical experiences. Quotations from poetry or, more frequently, from hymns are categorized as anecdotes. While some poem and hymn quotations were quite lengthy, they never reached the length of a story. For this reason, all poem and hymn quotations are categorized as anecdotes. Barnhouse also used biblical stories anecdotally. Cross references to other passages were not counted as anecdotes unless Barnhouse used them illustratively. If he simply referenced, even by reading an extended section, another passage to repeat his point, then it was considered a cross reference and not counted as an illustration. If he told the biblical account in story form or used another passage to create an illustration, then the biblical text was counted as an anecdote or, in rare instances, as a story.

The only difference in categorization between an anecdote and a story is its length. An anecdote covered a couple of sentences to a couple of small paragraphs. A story covered a longer space of several paragraphs or even several pages. The distinction between anecdote and story does not rest on factors like the level of detail or emotional weight of the illustration. The only difference between an anecdote and story was the length of illustration. Given the increased time he devoted to a story, his stories included more detail and were often the most emotionally charged of his illustrations.

### **Sample Sermon**

A sample sermon will help clarify the distinction between analogies, anecdotes, and stories. The primary goal of the analysis, however, is to show the

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<sup>29</sup> Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4b, *God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 83.

cumulative effect of Barnhouse's overall illustrative strategy.<sup>30</sup> The example sermon also shows the extreme of Barnhouse's illustrative saturation in a sermon with twenty-three illustrations, the most in a single sermon. Barnhouse preached "The Christian's Resources" as part of the series "Great Themes of the Gospel" during the afternoon lessons at the Keswick Convention in 1955.<sup>31</sup> As an example of his topical preaching, the sermon is more reliant upon illustrations than his exegetical preaching from a book of the Bible. 1955 was the last of his eight years preaching the afternoon sermons at Keswick, so it provides an example of his mature and developed preaching. The sermon includes six analogies, fifteen anecdotes, and two stories for an astounding total of twenty-three illustrations. The sermon is also one of the rare Barnhouse sermons to contain more than one story, although most of the multi-story sermons are found in his topical preaching.

Barnhouse began "The Christian's Resources" with an anecdote from his ministry: he offered a prize of ten dollars to any child in his church who could find a promise he wished were in the Bible that was not contained in the great promises of Scripture. He continued with a second anecdote from his days in Torrey's Biola classroom when Torrey forced the class phrase by phrase through a biblical text. He stacked a third anecdote about a dying saint he had met in London who had written "T.P." in the margin of her Bible to indicate how the verse was "tried and proven" in her life. He then offered his fourth and fifth anecdotes by recounting two biblical accounts. He imagined Abraham walking a mile and owning the whole area based on God's promise. Then he told the account from 1 Chronicles 11:22 where one of David's mighty

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<sup>30</sup> For an Old Testament example of a variety of illustrations within one sermon see Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Robbing God," Sermon, Malachi 3:6-15, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>31</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Great Themes of the Gospel: The Christian's Resources," *The Keswick Week 1955* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1955), 74-80.

warriors killed a lion in a pit on a snowy day.<sup>32</sup> Barnhouse joked that he had never heard a sermon from that text, but he wanted his listeners to know that God would be with them as he had been with the warrior.

Barnhouse's sixth anecdote came from the night prior at Keswick in which he met with a group of Scottish ministers as they considered church members who left a worship service worse than when they entered. His seventh anecdote recounted church attenders who told Barnhouse the effectiveness of their preacher at home grew based on the urgency of their personal prayers for his preaching. The change took place not in the preacher but in the listeners as they prayed. The eighth anecdote is a quotation of the first stanza and refrain of the hymn "They Tell Me the Story of Jesus is Old." In the ninth, Barnhouse introduced "an anecdote" he read about Moody leading a man to faith using Isaiah 53. He offered an embarrassing personal anecdote for the tenth when he tried to show his young sons how far he could jump and fell on the deck of the ship.<sup>33</sup>

Barnhouse's eleventh anecdote in the sermon also came from his experience while at Keswick and identified his constant pursuit of illustrations. His wife offered him the "illustration" of spiritual growth as they walked through the gardens and noticed how far apart the large trees had originally been planted. They must have appeared unnecessarily far apart as small trees. Only as full-grown trees would an observer realize the original wisdom of the gardener. The twelfth anecdote was a simple example of a little boy's response when asked if he was afraid he might slip through God's fingers. The boy insisted, "I am one of the fingers."<sup>34</sup> The boy knew he was part of the body of

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<sup>32</sup> See also Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4c, *God's Glory: Romans 14:13-16:27* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 50.

<sup>33</sup> See also Barnhouse, "Perseverance of the Saints, Part 2," Sermon, John 10:27-30, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>34</sup> See also Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 370; Barnhouse, "Perseverance of the Saints, Part 1," Sermon, John 10:27-30, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

Christ, the church, and could not slip from God's care.

For the thirteenth anecdote, Barnhouse returned to his experience of greeting people after worship at Tenth and shaking the hand of a man who had lost a finger. The man's hand would be fully healed in the future kingdom of God. Barnhouse offered hope of restoration to his listeners. Barnhouse's fourteenth anecdote described a farm visit. He was shown a lamb with a notched ear that identified the lamb and its owner. His fifteenth and final anecdote used a historical reference to Columbus. Columbus's discovery did not bring the full land under European control. Continued exploration would be needed.<sup>35</sup> Barnhouse used the historical anecdote to illustrate that salvation arrives quickly but sanctification takes time.

Barnhouse also used six analogies in the sermon. He critiqued his listeners for having a very small Bible, by which he referred not to the physical size of the Bible, but to their inadequate theological beliefs. His second analogy compared a child who believes babies are delivered by a stork to young Christians who have simplistic views of their faith. The third analogy likened the translation from 1 John of "little children" to the Scottish term bairns, a term of affection for children. His fourth analogy related spiritual warfare to the requirement in wrestling that both shoulders and a hip be pinned down in a wrestling match. Barnhouse's next analogy was to a soft blanket comforter and the comfort God offers believers. His sixth and final analogy asked the congregation to consider a child who needed a reprimand. Barnhouse pointed to the loving discipline believers receive from God.

Barnhouse's two stories are stories he repeated in other sermons. In the middle of his Keswick sermon, he recounted his own experience of people asking him when he was first saved. For years Barnhouse had answered that he was saved at age fifteen when Hannay shared the gospel with him. He went on to explain that he later came to

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<sup>35</sup> See also *The Keswick Week 1953* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1953), 121–122.

understand that day was when he received assurance of his salvation, that he had been a believer much longer. His last story came as he ended the sermon by asking, “May I close with a story?” He then offered a lengthy telling of a story about a Bible promise box. During their years in France, Ruth mentored a young woman and helped her make a box filled with encouraging Bible verses. Barnhouse had forgotten about the little box until he met the woman again after World War II. She had suffered through the war and struggled to find food for her children. She had only potato peelings to offer them, but she had the Bible promises. When she reached for the box, it fell. Through her tears, she saw the promises of God strewn across the floor. In her darkest moment, the woman’s heart was flooded with hope because of the certain promises of God. Barnhouse’s closing illustration pulled his listeners in with details and emotional impact.

In this one sermon, Barnhouse piled illustration upon illustration. Simple analogies and anecdotes clarified his meaning. Two stories anchored the sermon, in the middle and as a conclusion. He used an astonishing twenty-three illustrations in one sermon. None of his other sermons reached this amount, although his Keswick sermons averaged twelve-and-a-half illustrations per sermon, but a walk through this sermon shows the variety of Barnhouse’s illustrations. Illustrations were an essential communication tool for Barnhouse.

### **Analogies**

Considering the whole of Barnhouse’s preaching shows him a master of simple analogies to illuminate the biblical text. Often he began with an arresting image and then built his sermon from the initial analogy. In his sermon “Marks of the Christian Walk,” he opened with a string of three simple analogies: how a person walks reveals his personality, the comparison of a lit cigarette to the sun, and a light bulb with no filament.<sup>36</sup> He also started “The Marks of Sonship” from John 1, a sermon he frequently

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<sup>36</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,

adapted for other contexts, with three analogies: the movement of the planets, standing in a forest, and watching a father with his children.<sup>37</sup> Simple pictures helped create context for the sermon.

Barnhouse repeated his analogies in different contexts. He asked his listeners to imagine distilled water poured into a glass that had been smeared with smallpox. The contaminant on the glass polluted the water just as a person's attempted good deeds would be polluted by his impure motives. Barnhouse's analogy fit numerous sermons.<sup>38</sup> He used an analogy of a colonial family who left for the frontier in 1770. When they finally meet other settlers in 1785, they ask about the king and learn that a Revolution has taken place and Washington is president.<sup>39</sup> They were already American citizens without knowing the truth, like believers who already have blessings of which they are not yet aware. The analogy worked for his American radio listeners, and he even risked preaching it at Keswick. Barnhouse offered an example of the calm a Christian can experience in his assurance of salvation. Even with a storm raging on the surface of the ocean, the submarine finds calm waters fifty or one hundred feet down.<sup>40</sup> The analogy could also be expanded to an anecdote when Barnhouse put it on the lips of the

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1961), 133–134.

<sup>37</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 1–2. A summary of this sermon was included in an anthology of evangelistic sermons, Barnhouse, "Marks of Sonship," in *88 Evangelistic Sermons*, ed. Charles Langworthy Wallis and Charles L. Allen (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), 55–56

<sup>38</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 141; Barnhouse, "Rich Young Ruler," Sermon, Mark 10:17-27, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. The analogy remained the same although the contaminate was changed to diphtheria in Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 56; Barnhouse, "Man Who Wouldn't Go to Church," *Man to Man* (Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 1955); Barnhouse, "Total Depravity, Part 2," Sermon, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>39</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 2b, *God's River: Romans 5:1-11* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 128; *The Keswick Week 1953*, 98.

<sup>40</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4c, *God's Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27*, 15; Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not* (Lancaster, PA: Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 2015), 91.

submarine commander who had first related the account to him.<sup>41</sup> A simple story or analogy created a visual image to offer peace to his listeners.

Barnhouse's analogies quickly and clearly communicated the truth of the biblical text. A survey of a few illustrations from his Genesis commentary shows his straightforward brilliance. He could speak of the need for a port in a storm to capture the fears of Adam and Eve.<sup>42</sup> He compared Cain to a well attired man on Fifth Avenue.<sup>43</sup> He declared, "Faith is not a mushroom that grows overnight in damp soil; it is an oak tree that grows for a thousand years under the blast of the wind and rain."<sup>44</sup> The examples were often drawn from daily life, like a radio dial that slipped to another program between the question and the answer without the listener noticing.<sup>45</sup> Sometimes believers do not realize they have not listened to God for an answer but have turned to worldly advice. Barnhouse showed the spiritual poverty of believers by imagining a beggar found with bank books in the lining of his coat.<sup>46</sup> He depicted the folly of parents by describing a father who moved to Vegas to gamble and was surprised that his sons became gamblers.<sup>47</sup> To defend the rightness of God's demands for obedience, Barnhouse explained, "A baby cries for a sharp knife when he sees the sun glint from its blade, but no mother in her right mind would give the knife to him."<sup>48</sup> Even in Barnhouse's abbreviated notes on Genesis, his analogies abound.

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<sup>41</sup> *The Keswick Week 1954* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1954), 45.

<sup>42</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 19.

<sup>43</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 32.

<sup>44</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 81.

<sup>45</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 111. See also *The Keswick Week 1951*, 100; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 4a, *God's Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 10; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 207.

<sup>46</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 118.

<sup>47</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 140.

<sup>48</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 141.

A Barnhouse analogy helped listeners see the uncomplicated truth he offered. He described the purpose of the law with the silliness of a “Speed Limit 55” sign in the year 1900.<sup>49</sup> No vehicles could reach that speed in that year. Only when people sped were speed limits signs installed. Moses merely posted the signs after people sinned, but the promises given to Abraham retain priority. An image of two canoes attached to the dock with chains allowed the congregation to imagine floating down the river by breaking just one of God’s commands. It would take only one broken link on the chain to send a canoe adrift.<sup>50</sup>

Barnhouse created absurd analogies to expose foolishness. To help listeners understand the difference between trusting in Christ rather than merely trusting in the Bible, he told a “farcical parable.”<sup>51</sup> He imagined a hotel stay with an ocean view. When talking to a friend about the view, it would be nonsense to describe the window. The friend wants a description of the beach and the sea. Believers look through the Bible to Christ like looking through the window to the ocean. Barnhouse made truth understandable through analogies.

Barnhouse’s analogies also served apologetic purposes by showing the absurdity of objections to Christianity. In an extended analogy, Barnhouse showed how it would be impossible to live a day without faith.<sup>52</sup> Faith is required every day. A person without faith could not get out of bed for fear the boards would rot beneath his feet. He could not take an elevator without faith. He could not trust the radio broadcasts.

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<sup>49</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Mark: The Servant Gospel*, ed. Susan T. Lutz (Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1988), 132; *The Keswick Week 1955*, 17; Barnhouse, “Works of Darkness,” Sermon, Romans 13:12-14, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, “Not Servants, but Sons,” Sermon, Galatians 3:14-4:7, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals.

<sup>50</sup> Barnhouse, *Mark*, 133. See also Barnhouse, “Limited Atonement, Part 2,” Sermon, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>51</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 88.

<sup>52</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4c, *God’s Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27*, 74.

Each person lives each day with a certain amount of faith. To criticize Christians for faith, in a sure and certain Bible, is to ignore the faith everyone lives by every day.

Analogies drawn from daily life served Barnhouse's apologetic purpose.

Barnhouse's 1,303 analogies, with an average of 1.85 per sermon, show him as a master of comparison. He regularly offered clear explanations of deep concepts. He connected to ordinary experiences. He engaged the imaginations of his listeners.

Barnhouse was an expert at finding and creating analogies to clarify biblical truth.

### **Anecdotes**

Barnhouse frequently utilized anecdotes in his preaching. He often quoted from literature or hymns. He could build a small story around an analogy or he could tell a brief story in a few sentences. His anecdotes were the fodder of his sermons and display the brilliance of his illustrative mind. He gathered and told anecdotes from all aspects of life.

Barnhouse regularly quoted hymns in his sermons. Sometimes he built a sermon point around several stanzas of a hymn.<sup>53</sup> In other sermons he followed the historic pattern of concluding the sermon with a hymn, even using a lengthy quotation.<sup>54</sup> Barnhouse might only quote a phrase of a hymn or he could quote ten stanzas.<sup>55</sup> Hymn lyrics, familiar to his listeners who were frequently church attenders, helped him quickly summarize important truth in words already memorized.

Barnhouse even quoted hymns he thought taught incorrect theology in order to offer truth in contrast.<sup>56</sup> Barnhouse rejected the hymn "I think when I read that sweet

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<sup>53</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits* (Philadelphia: Revelation, 1949), 89.

<sup>54</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 66; Barnhouse, *Mark*, 100–101; Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not*, 67; Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 212.

<sup>55</sup> Barnhouse, *Mark*, 30–31; Barnhouse, *Life by the Son: Practical Lessons in Experimental Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1939), 82–83.

<sup>56</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Invisible War: The Panorama of the Continuing Conflict*

story of old” because it sentimentalized the desire to be with Jesus during his earthly ministry rather than placing hope in Jesus’s death and resurrection.<sup>57</sup> He also criticized the “faint and cold” love of the church in “Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove” for its defeatist view of the church.<sup>58</sup>

Barnhouse also used the memorable language of hymns to create surprise with his own adjustments to lyrics. He offered personalized stanzas he had written to match a thought in his sermon.<sup>59</sup> At times, the rewritten stanza was a purposefully butchered paraphrase to expose the sin of the church. Barnhouse adjusted “Glad day! Glad day! Jesus may come today” to “Sad day, sad day, Jesus can’t come today” to display the error of those who await specific world events before the return of Christ.<sup>60</sup> He changed “Count you many blessings, Name them one by one” to “Count your many blessings, Weigh them ton by ton.”<sup>61</sup> The altered hymn text helped his listeners stop and consider the biblical truth of God’s faithful provision. Believers should not be surprised at God’s provision, but they could measure God’s blessings by the ton.<sup>62</sup>

Adjusting the lyrics to another hymn, Barnhouse explained, “I am very free with hymns because so many men have twisted their theology to fit the form of verse.”<sup>63</sup> Barnhouse changed the lyrics to “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less” to offer assurance of salvation to his listeners. Barnhouse replaced “may” with “shall” in the second half of

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*between Good and Evil* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1969), 286.

<sup>57</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 181–182.

<sup>58</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946* (Spartanburg, SC: Christian Supply, 1989), 124.

<sup>59</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 113.

<sup>60</sup> Barnhouse, “It is Later Than You Think,” Sermon, Romans 13:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>61</sup> *The Keswick Week 1953*, 43.

<sup>62</sup> Barnhouse, “Lord of All,” Sermon, Romans 10:12-13, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>63</sup> *The Keswick Week 1953*, 73.

the line: “When He shall come with trumpet sound, Oh, then I *shall* in Him be found!” The changed lyrics brought a soldier to faith in the midst of a World War II battle. The young man remembered the lyrics Barnhouse had taught him at a Bible class in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. After the war, the soldier recounted, “I was saved because Dr. Barnhouse changed the words of a hymn.” The oft-quoted hymn with amended lyrics transformed a soldier on a war-torn beach.

Most of Barnhouse’s hymn quotations were brief phrases from well-known hymns that burned the truth into the minds of those who listened. He concluded a sermon with complementary quotations from “Rock of Ages” and “Jesus, Thy Blood and Righteousness.”<sup>64</sup> His most frequently quoted hymn was “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less.” As noted above, he was willing to alter a stanza, but more commonly he quoted the hymn without adjustment. Barnhouse repeatedly quoted the stanza “My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness” and the refrain “On Christ, the solid rock I stand; All other ground is sinking sand.”<sup>65</sup> Barnhouse’s hymns anchored him in the authority of the Bible by using familiar language to display biblical teaching.

Barnhouse relied upon story anecdotes in his sermons. In a couple of sentences, he could create a scene to help explain the biblical text. He described two pictures of the same man showing the contrast of living in sin compared to being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.<sup>66</sup> He took listeners to a tool shop in the Panama Canal Zone to show

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<sup>64</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Your Right to Heaven,” in *Great Sermons of the Twentieth Century*, ed. Peter F. Gunther (Westchester, IL: Crossway, 1986), 69. See also Barnhouse, *How God Saves Men* (Philadelphia: Bible Study Hour, 1955), 12.

<sup>65</sup> Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not*, 99; Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 25; Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 63; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 1a, *Man’s Ruin: Romans 1:1-32* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 190; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2b, *God’s River: Romans 5:1-11*, 156; Barnhouse, “Clothed with Christ,” Sermon, Romans 13:12-14, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, “The Oath of God,” Sermon, Romans 14:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible; *The Keswick Week 1955*, 20; Barnhouse, *Thessalonians*, 51; Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 96.

<sup>66</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 33.

tools used only in emergencies.<sup>67</sup> The tools explained how even the most unexpected Bible chapters are necessary for our spiritual health in times of difficulty. Barnhouse showed God's grace in the Christian's discipline by recalling a story from the life of artist Edward Burne-Jones, whose granddaughter was dismissed from the table for misbehavior and sent to stand facing a corner.<sup>68</sup> The child's evident remorse prompted Burne-Jones to paint a beautiful scene in the corner so that it became his granddaughter's most precious spot in the room. A place of discipline was later seen as a place of beauty.

Barnhouse peppered anecdotes throughout his sermons. He began a lesson with two contrasting characters, a high school student and a world-renowned writer, to make his opening insight with dual anecdotes.<sup>69</sup> The depth of their contemplations may differ, but the esteemed writer and the young student wrestle with questions about suffering common to humanity. Anecdotes could serve to strengthen or contrast one another.

Some of Barnhouse's anecdotes had a hint of humor and he occasionally told jokes. He began an editorial with a joke about a sermon so boring it caused the preacher to fall asleep at night merely by reciting its outline.<sup>70</sup> In a sermon in his TULIP series, he told a joke he had read in *Reader's Digest*. A girl asked her mother, "Where did I come from?" Her mother explained that she had been delivered by a stork. Her mother answered the girl's further questions by explaining, "I was found in a cabbage patch and grandmother was found in a rose bush." The eight-year-old child was forced to admit on her assignment at school, "There has not been a normal birth in our family for three

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<sup>67</sup> Barnhouse, *Genesis*, 67.

<sup>68</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946*, 33; Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 98.

<sup>69</sup> Barnhouse, *The Invisible War*, 36–37.

<sup>70</sup> Barnhouse, "Editorial: Dull Sermons," *Revelation*, June 1944, 232. Margaret noted that Barnhouse used a congregation's laughter against them, at times, to expose their sin. Margaret Barnhouse, *That Man Barnhouse*, 47.

generations.”<sup>71</sup> As the laughter faded, Barnhouse explained, “Now why tell a story like that? I do not do it for the sake of humor. I do it for a profound theological purpose. You will not forget that story.” He wanted his listeners to understand that they should not have a childish “stork theology” or “cabbage patch theology” that gave credit to humans for salvation. He wanted them to have a mature theology that gave all credit for the new birth to God alone.

In a humorous anecdote, Barnhouse described Torrey’s preaching ministry in Australia in which a barber had come to faith in Christ and committed himself to evangelism. The nervous barber lathered a client’s face, and with the razor held over the client, asked, “Are you prepared to die?”<sup>72</sup> Barnhouse commended the barber’s fervor, but suggested his audience should be more tactful in evangelistic encounters.

Barnhouse’s anecdotes could use the absurd to communicate truth. He told a parable of a wealthy man with magnificent trees on his estate.<sup>73</sup> A vindictive neighbor, wanting to harm the rich man, decided to cut down one of the trees at night. He toiled, with a shout of glee at his handiwork, until the tree crashed down upon him. The next morning when the estate owner found the horrific scene, he realized the tree that had been removed with evil intent was the very tree that needed to be taken out for an upcoming project. Barnhouse applied the parable to the evil intentions of Satan, which God will use for the believer’s ultimate good.

Barnhouse, especially in the sermons he preached multiple times, could build the entire structure through the links of anecdotes and analogies. For example, in his

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<sup>71</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Irresistible Grace, Part 1,” Sermon, John 3:3-8; James 1:18, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>72</sup> Barnhouse, *Thessalonians*, 36–37.

<sup>73</sup> Barnhouse, *Revelation*, 221–222; *The Keswick Week 1955*, 110; Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Irresistible Grace, Part 2,” Sermon, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Ronald Thomas Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse” (ThD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 184, quoting a Barnhouse sermon entitled, “Problem of Evil.”

sermon “Knowing the Risen Christ,” he began with a biblical truth explained immediately through seven anecdotes and two analogies.<sup>74</sup> The sermon combined anecdotes from his childhood, war, church history, two from missions, Irish history, and his own ministry at Keswick. He immediately followed with simple analogies from the observations of a bird and fatherhood. Truth was made clear in the quick examples he offered his listeners.

Barnhouse developed his sermon “Hope in Death,” from Romans 5:2, around thirteen anecdotes.<sup>75</sup> He began by stating the theme of the sermon as the hope of the Christian immediately after death. He started with an analogy of fresh air rushing into a cavern when a wall is broken down. Then he constructed the sermon on the framework of anecdotes. First, he described an archaeologist uncovering a body. Then he described the hope of the first martyr, Stephen, from Acts. He added another martyr’s witness to a pagan king from church history. He reminisced about the drums he heard, banged for the dead, on a trip to India. Fifth, he exposed the fear of death in Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes. Next, he told of the shriek of an unbelieving daughter at her mother’s funeral. Then he quoted a stanza of the hymn “How Firm a Foundation” to show the Christian is never forsaken even in death. He recalled a joke he heard as a child about Irishmen entering heaven. Then he offered lines from Longfellow. Tenth, Barnhouse described a woman who mistakenly thought her dead husband was merely sleeping. Another hymn, “Jesus paid it all,” contrasted with a fictional stanza, “Jesus paid it ninety nine per cent,” showed the Christian’s hope must be in Christ alone. Next, he criticized a man who wasted his money on unnecessary life-extending measures for fear of death. Finally, for the thirteenth anecdote, he portrayed a Korean War soldier and his eagerness to return home for a family banquet. Barnhouse built the sermon upon the

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<sup>74</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 36–39.

<sup>75</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2b, *God’s River: Romans 5:1-11*, 55-62.

framework of anecdotes to help make the hope of life eternal clear. His practical examples offered immediate purchase for application in the lives of his listeners. Hope flowed through the sermon in vivid images.

Barnhouse's anecdotes could be drawn from ordinary experiences or extraordinary events. He recounted an emergency appendectomy performed on a World War II submarine when no doctor was present.<sup>76</sup> A pharmacist's mate, who had previously seen the procedure performed, was the only option for the dying submariner. With improvised equipment, the surgery proved successful. Barnhouse assessed the operation performed by the sailor as greater than that of a trained surgeon because of the circumstances involved. The extraordinary wartime anecdote provided a concrete example of how the works of the Christian can be considered great in God's eyes.

With an economy of words, Barnhouse could set the scene and spring the conclusion. Telling the story of a missionary travelling from Great Britain to Africa, Barnhouse displayed the surprise of the trader who witnessed the missionary ready to set foot onto the fever-infested shore. The trader warned the missionary he would die if he went ashore. Barnhouse pounced on his listeners with the missionary's brilliant reply: "I died before I left London."<sup>77</sup> So should it be for all who are found in Christ.

Barnhouse described preaching in Belfast during the blackout at the beginning of World War II.<sup>78</sup> The meeting hall had a large glass roof that had not yet been prepared for the blackout so, at the appointed hour, the lights in the hall were shut off completely and Barnhouse was forced to preach in the darkness. During one of the night's meetings,

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<sup>76</sup> *The Keswick Week 1946*, 216; Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3b, *God's Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 50.

<sup>77</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948* (London: Marshall, Morgan, and Scott, 1948), 62; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God's Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 34.

<sup>78</sup> *The Keswick Week 1953*, 66; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 1a, *Man's Ruin: Romans 1:1-32*, 256.

the lights accidentally came back on startling the whole room, but one man was constrained to turn to his neighbor for explanation. The blind man was unable to account for the commotion. For Barnhouse, the anecdote illustrated the beginning of Jesus's ministry when John the Baptist bore witness to Jesus. The spiritual truth could not be seen through blind eyes.

Many anecdotes make frequent appearances in his sermons. He confessed, "I have used this illustration many times because it is one that adapts itself in several ways. Some truths will bear reiteration."<sup>79</sup> He repeatedly referenced two images of King George VI, one in royal regalia and another on the bombed-out streets of London, to help explain the incarnation.<sup>80</sup> Barnhouse told of another encounter with a young man from Jakarta who gave his life to Christ and sent written notifications to all of his friends that he would no longer be frequenting the same establishments he had visited before.<sup>81</sup> The young man made an immediate and public stand for Christ that opened numerous doors for gospel witness. Barnhouse repeatedly referenced his visit with missionary Amy Carmichael to clarify the point of the text.<sup>82</sup>

The strength of Barnhouse's illustrative ability is evidenced by his ability to retell a biblical story in his own words. More than a mere cross-reference, Barnhouse drew his listeners in with details in his retellings. Most of his illustrations drawn from biblical stories were brief anecdotes although he could develop them into lengthier stories. He turned from Paul's letter to the Romans to examples from the life of Paul in

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<sup>79</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 222.

<sup>80</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3c, *God's Heirs: Romans 8:1-39* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 165; Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 221; *The Keswick Week 1953*, 65; Barnhouse, *Mark*, 12.

<sup>81</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Man's Answer," Sermon, Romans 10:9-10, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, *Mark*, 96.

<sup>82</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 92-93; *The Keswick Week 1946*, 241; *The Keswick Week 1955*, 113. See also his reference to Carmichael's orphanage. Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God's Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 52.

Lystra and Antioch.<sup>83</sup> To show the blessings of God offered to Gentiles, Barnhouse layered anecdotes about Naomi, Naaman, Esther, and the woman at the well.<sup>84</sup>

Barnhouse recounted his favorite anecdote from the life of Christ, the healing of the ten lepers. He added details to help his listeners enter the scene: “Oh, how a leper must have been torn to shreds in all his emotions as his wife and his children came outside the city to him, carrying food each day, standing a few feet away, not daring to approach. He could not put his hand on his children’s heads. There were loved lips that could not be kissed, loved hands that might not he touched.”<sup>85</sup> A biblical account came alive in Barnhouse’s retelling.

Barnhouse used more than 2,100 anecdotes in the 705 sermons analyzed with an average of 3.04 anecdotes per sermon. The energy of Barnhouse’s preaching came not only from his tone and tempo, but also from the inclusion of frequent anecdotes. He worked tirelessly to make his message clear by offering numerous comparisons through anecdotes. His ability to capture truth in narrative form offers insight into Barnhouse’s preaching strategy.

### **Stories**

Barnhouse relied on analogies and anecdotes in his preaching. His stories are relatively infrequent in comparison. Some of his stories could have easily been reduced to anecdotes without losing their meaning, but some of the stories lived only in the details he added. He sometimes added introductory details that offered insight into his personal ministry history or his time spent in study. Such details helped personalize the stories. Barnhouse’s most emotionally powerful illustrations were, with few exceptions, his

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<sup>83</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Complete Salvation,” Sermon, Romans 10:9-10, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>84</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4a, *God’s Covenants: Romans 9:1-11:36*, 124-26.

<sup>85</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948*, 141.

stories.

Barnhouse used stories to explain theological terms. He defined justification using several story illustrations within one sermon: a boy who fell in the mud after disobeying his mother, a questioner challenging salvation by grace, and a kind observer replacing a broken milk jar for a crying boy.<sup>86</sup> The stories served the goal of defining and explaining the doctrine of justification drawn from his biblical text. He took an important biblical concept and made it practical for his congregation.

Some of Barnhouse's stories were constructed from anecdotes he had previously used. He taught his Keswick listeners about an encounter with a group of young people in which he used his personalized fountain pen as an object lesson. Within the story about the young people, he added an additional anecdote about when his wallet and pen were stolen in Palestine.<sup>87</sup> He had created a story for his Keswick listeners by combining anecdotes.

Barnhouse also built stories within larger stories and told the new combined stories within his sermons. At the same Keswick Convention, he recounted the privilege he had of leading a professor to a proper understanding of his forgiveness in Christ. He explained the gospel by telling the professor another story about a husband who confessed his former sins.<sup>88</sup> His sermon illustration at Keswick was a story built upon a previous story.

Barnhouse often responded in a situation of pastoral care with a brief story rather than a bare theological truth. Then he could tell the combined anecdotes in a sermon in which the first anecdote set the context and the full story explained the point.

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<sup>86</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Justification without a Cause," in *Sermons of the Century: Inspiration from 100 Years of Influential Preaching*, ed. Warren W. Wiersbe (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 148–53.

<sup>87</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 13–15.

<sup>88</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 73–76.

In another Keswick sermon, to defend the reality of total depravity, he explained how he had responded to a mother who believed in the innocence of her infant. He answered her, not with a list of biblical references regarding the doctrine, but with a story from his own daughter's behavior of lying as a young child.<sup>89</sup> Barnhouse told another story of a ship captain who came to visit him with a spiritual question. Instead of merely answering the man, Barnhouse drew three crosses on a chalkboard and distinguished between the thieves next to Jesus.<sup>90</sup> The anecdote brought the captain to faith in Christ. The story, built from the anecdote, displayed the gospel for his congregation.

Barnhouse shared the analogy of men in need of rescue with a skeptical interviewer. To emphasize the difference between an example and a Savior, Barnhouse described a plane crash in the middle of the ocean. One survivor can swim for ten minutes, another for two hours, and champion swimmer for several hours, but without rescue, all three swimmers will die.<sup>91</sup> The interviewer kept pointing back to the example of Christ for a feel-good Christmas story.<sup>92</sup> Instead of conceding ground, Barnhouse continued to press the truth of the gospel with urgency. When she ignored the biblical warnings of judgment, Barnhouse utilized his analogy: the swimmers do not need an example, but a Savior. The compelling analogy served his biblical argument with the original interviewer and then became part of the story for his congregation.

At times Barnhouse heaped story upon story. He drew a contrast in the telling of two stories of husbands returning unannounced from war. The first wife leapt into her

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<sup>89</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living* (Philadelphia: Eternity, 1951), 137–138.

<sup>90</sup> *The Keswick Week 1955*, 39–40.

<sup>91</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "God's Peace on Earth: A Farce or a Force," in *Special-Day Sermons for Evangelicals: Thirty-Eight Representative Examples of Bible Preaching on Red-Letter Days of the Christian Year and the Calendar Year*, ed. Andrew Watterson Blackwood (Great Neck, NY: Channel, 1961), 83.

<sup>92</sup> Barnhouse, "Believer Without Shame," Sermon, Romans 10:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

husband's arms while the second wife fled into the arms of another man.<sup>93</sup> In another powerful flourish, he stacked three stories to explain the biblical point. When an atheist was on his deathbed, Barnhouse, to emphasize the significance of death, asked if he could stay to watch the man die. This prompted the man to ask for an explanation of the gospel. Barnhouse continued, "A second story illustrates the same point from another angle," and then he told of a conversation with a Marine who claimed he would enter heaven because he had never committed any serious sins.<sup>94</sup> Barnhouse continued with a third story in which a fellow traveler did not know the answer to a question, so he provided the biblical answer to her. The first man was a confident atheist, the second man was a confused unbeliever, and the third woman was an agnostic. All three needed the hope of the gospel. In order to clearly explain the gospel, Barnhouse needed to diagnose their current spiritual conditions. He compared himself to a doctor diagnosing a disease, an analogy he had already made explicit earlier in the sermon. The diagnostic questions of this sermon brought D. James Kennedy to salvation via a radio broadcast and were subsequently adapted by Kennedy for use in *Evangelism Explosion* training materials.<sup>95</sup> The stack of stories forced the listener to identify with the characters and to analyze his own spiritual condition.

Barnhouse often crafted stories from his missionary visits. He began a sermon with a lengthy story contrasting two brothers in Nigeria, one a tribal chief and the other a pastor.<sup>96</sup> Then he supplemented that story with another from his African trip. In that

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<sup>93</sup> Barnhouse, *God's Methods for Holy Living*, 154–157.

<sup>94</sup> Barnhouse, "Your Right to Heaven," 1986, 65–67. The three stacked stories were also used in Barnhouse, "Silence Before God," Sermon, Romans 3:19-20, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. Barnhouse repeated the illustration in his television broadcast, "Your Right to Heaven," *Man to Man* (Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, 1955).

<sup>95</sup> Sexton, "A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse," 5; Billy Graham, foreword to *Evangelism Explosion*, by D. James Kennedy, 4th ed. (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1996), ix.

<sup>96</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4b, *God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12*, 75-76.

story, the lives of twin sisters had been spared only because of the influence of the gospel, since the pagan worldview saw twins as a manifestation of evil.<sup>97</sup> Barnhouse then added an additional story about the joy of sharing the gospel with a woman in Japan whose Buddhist upbringing offered no concept of love for God. The three illustrations captured the hopelessness of cultures untouched by the gospel.

In another sermon, Barnhouse described a thorn catching his cheek as he walked in darkness at a mission station in northern China.<sup>98</sup> The infected wound constrained him to cut short his preaching as his bandages were overwhelmed with the seeping infection. Even after it healed and a scar developed, Barnhouse continued to put his hand to his cheek. He realized that anything that came from him, like his festering wound, was dangerous to his audience so that he needed to rely upon the Holy Spirit. Even as he retained the mannerism, touching the scar in his home pulpit, he remembered, and relayed to his listeners, the need for the preacher to depend upon God's power.

Just as Barnhouse could take a biblical passage and use it as an anecdote, he also took narrative biblical passages and told them as one continuous story throughout the sermon. Twice in his Mark series, he developed the entire sermon as an imaginative retelling of the biblical text.<sup>99</sup> He lingered in the details of scenes and helped create mental images for the congregation. He invented conversations to set the stage. In other sermons, he told biblical stories with fresh details. He imagined the mother of the boy with the loaves and fish, "Well, Johnny, you must have some lunch."<sup>100</sup> Barnhouse took time in his sermons to imagine the scene with Cleopas and Jesus on the road to Emmaus,

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<sup>97</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "The Christian's Hope," Sermon, Romans 12:12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>98</sup> Barnhouse, *Thessalonians*, 22–23.

<sup>99</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Who Can Forgive Sins?" Sermon, Mark 2:1-12, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, "The Resurrection," Sermon, Mark 16, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>100</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 78.

providing greater insight into the text of Romans and the ministry of Jesus.<sup>101</sup> He recounted Paul and Silas's escape from prison by offering details about the wickedness of the jailer and then of his radical transformation: "He had passed out of death into life. . . . Though his face may have been marked with the traces of sin and though the odor of debauchery might yet have been distinguishable upon him, nevertheless his body had become the temple of the Holy Spirit."<sup>102</sup> Imaginative details created story illustrations from biblical examples.

Stories were by far the least frequently used illustration by Barnhouse. He is remembered as a storyteller, but most of his illustrations were shorter anecdotes. He told a total of only 217 stories in the sermons analyzed. He used a story in less than one third of his sermons. Barnhouse's stories captured greater attention in people's memory because of their length and emotional impact. When he used a story, he often placed great weight upon it. The most frequent position for a story was as a conclusion, which raised its memorability. Barnhouse was a master illustrator in his preaching.

### **Purposes of Illustrations**

Barnhouse's illustrations served to shine light on his text, brought principles into concrete language, helped apply his message, connected emotionally with the audience, united the preacher with the listeners, and helped motivate his listeners. Many illustrations serve in multiple ways simultaneously. Any illustration that serves application should also help motivate toward application. An illustration that connects with the emotions helps bring a deeper understanding of the text. A further sampling of Barnhouse's illustrations demonstrates how his illustrations worked.

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<sup>101</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Lord of All," Sermon, Romans 10:12-13, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA; Barnhouse, *His Own Received Him Not*, 55.

<sup>102</sup> Barnhouse, *Guaranteed Deposits*, 133.

Illustrations shine light on the biblical text. Barnhouse summarized his definition of preaching: “Preaching is the bringing together of all of the experiences of life and learning to illuminate the gospel.”<sup>103</sup> He utilized illustrations to shine light on the biblical truth. He used illustrations to serve his congregation’s understanding of the passage. He recognized that repetition of the truth could help listeners understand. Barnhouse believed the preacher “has to say the same thing over in fifty thousand ways.”<sup>104</sup>

All of the examples already cited show the power of illustrations to illuminate the text, but a further example helps highlight Barnhouse’s strategy. He included an anecdote of a firing squad. An American citizen was sentenced to death during a foreign revolution. A fellow American ran before the firing squad, wrapped the condemned man in an American flag, and warned that firing upon him would incur the wrath of an entire nation. Any shot that reached the man would pass through the flag. Barnhouse illustrated the truth that any harm that comes to a believer must first pass through Christ. Barnhouse explained his illustrative strategy: “The illustration may be trite, but it has this in its favor: it shows the meaning of the text and illustrates its point.”<sup>105</sup>

Illustrations make the abstract concrete and understandable. Barnhouse used an anecdote in which a friend had shared the gospel with a waitress over the course of two weeks. The waitress relied upon her goodness for salvation. Finally, he asked her to bring a pancake cooked only on one side. When she brought out the unusual request, he explained that from a human perspective she was like the well-done side of the pancake, but from God’s perspective she was an unpalatable mess. The friend ended his

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<sup>103</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Our Justification,” Sermon, Romans 8:30, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. See also Barnhouse, “With Him,” Sermon, Mark 3:13-19, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible.

<sup>104</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 179.

<sup>105</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The Way of Escape,” Sermon, Romans 6:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

explanation, “What you need is Christ, and Christ alone.”<sup>106</sup> Barnhouse described the waitress’s reaction: “Convinced by the force of the illustration” she immediately put her faith in Christ. As Barnhouse repeated the story, he expected his listeners to be “convinced by the force of the illustration.” The illustration made the truth clear but also served to motivate his hearers to action.

In another repeated anecdote, Barnhouse described a young woman who was the private secretary of her corporation’s president.<sup>107</sup> She responded to Barnhouse’s admonition to leverage whatever place God had sent her for the work of the gospel. The secretary noticed a lonely typist and befriended her. The specific example of the abstract concept of loving one’s neighbor served Barnhouse’s listeners as they considered concrete opportunities in their own lives. An illustration filled with concrete details allowed the congregation to see the immediate connection of the text to life. Barnhouse understood the power of illustration in service of his preaching goal of lives transformed by the gospel.

Many of Barnhouse’s illustrations served application. He argued, “The purpose of preaching the gospel is to win obedience from those who hear it.”<sup>108</sup> Barnhouse aimed his preaching at transformation and used illustrations in service of his goal. His illustrations did not merely make his points memorable; his illustrations helped change lives by making the truth real to their experience.<sup>109</sup> Barnhouse offered a story from his early ministry to help his congregation see the need for personal evangelism. As a student in France, Barnhouse walked four miles on Thursdays into a town to instruct the

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<sup>106</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Expositions of Bible Doctrines Taking the Epistle to the Romans as a Point of Departure*, vol. 3a, *God’s Grace: Romans 5:12-21* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 34-35.

<sup>107</sup> *The Keswick Week 1948*, 156; Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 3b, *God’s Freedom: Romans 6:1-7:25*, 51.

<sup>108</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4c, *God’s Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27*, 92.

<sup>109</sup> Russell T. Hitt, introduction to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Thessalonians: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1977), 10.

children.<sup>110</sup> He and a Catholic priest often found themselves walking the same road and the priest asked why Protestants object to prayers offered to saints. Barnhouse asked him if the son of the president would schedule an appointment with the president by asking a cabinet member for access. Of course, the son would go directly to the father. Barnhouse opened his French Bible and read gospel promises to the priest. The priest wrote down the references to study later. Barnhouse's story offered direct comfort to his listeners of their access to God, their Father, but it also showed them an example of evangelism. The illustration served the applicational goals of the preacher. In another example of his evangelism, Barnhouse described his conversation with another Catholic priest who then put his faith in Christ alone.<sup>111</sup> In a third encounter with a Roman Catholic priest, Barnhouse startled the man by declaring, "I am a Catholic priest."<sup>112</sup> Then Barnhouse defined his terms. He believed in the universal church and understood all believers were called holy. He used the surprising conversation starter to then share the whole gospel of faith in Jesus Christ alone. Repeatedly, Barnhouse's listeners gained practical experience for evangelism.

Many of Barnhouse's illustrations connected with his listener's emotions. Barnhouse offered hypothetical examples of the pain people face including the statement, "God had a purpose in taking your three-year-old son," only to find out later a family was visiting who had just lost their three-year-old son and found the Word directly applied to them.<sup>113</sup> As Barnhouse later recounted the full story of the hypothetical parents in the anecdote and the real parents he had met, he created a fuller illustrative story that had an emotional impact on his listeners.

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<sup>110</sup> Barnhouse, *Life by the Son*, 43–46.

<sup>111</sup> *The Keswick Week 1954*, 45–46.

<sup>112</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 4c, *God's Glory: Romans 14:13:16:27*, 86.

<sup>113</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Words Fitly Spoken* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1969), 208.

Barnhouse let stories build to their emotional climax. He concluded a sermon by recounting the Bible promise box he and his wife kept in France, a story he repeated later at Keswick and was examined above in the sample sermon. A young woman, being trained by Ruth, made her own promise box. After World War II, she was left with nothing. Barnhouse captured the emotions of the moment: “Weeping, she went into her bedroom and picked up the old box of promises which she had cherished through the years. . . . The box tipped and all the promises scattered on the bed. . . . A rush of joy and triumph came over her.”<sup>114</sup> Barnhouse leveraged the emotional moment to connect with his listeners. God’s promises remain true in all situations.

Barnhouse recounted the painful experience of his fellow minister, Robert Lamont, at the birth of his son. When Barnhouse saw Lamont, he asked, “Well, is it a boy or girl?”<sup>115</sup> Lamont answered that his son had been born with severe disabilities. Barnhouse responded, “Boy, listen to me. God has highly honoured you by allowing you to be in the ranks of those who suffer greatly.” He then extended biblical hope of God’s sovereign power by reading from Exodus 4:11, “Who hath made man’s mouth? Or who maketh a man dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind?” Barnhouse applied the text directly to Lamont’s situation. Lamont “grasped the Bible and said, ‘I never saw that before. But I believe it, I believe it.’” Barnhouse ministered to Lamont in the moment, but then used the concrete details of the encounter to encourage others. The emotional power of the illustration captured the attention of Barnhouse’s audience at Keswick and years later, in another sermon, prompted numerous letters from his radio listeners. He explained the power of the illustration in a letter to encourage Lamont: “Of course I did not identify you but I want to tell you the result of this sermon. Never perhaps have we

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<sup>114</sup> Barnhouse, *The Cross through the Open Tomb*, 94. See also *The Keswick Week 1955*, 79–80; Barnhouse, “No Separation,” Sermon, Romans 8:35, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>115</sup> *The Keswick Week 1955*, 109.

aroused more interest in mid-summer and the flood of letters that came in and the number of requests for the message showed how deeply your faith and courage in the time of need was blessed to many people all over the country.”<sup>116</sup>

In the same sermon in which he recounted the emotionally powerful story of Lamont’s son, Barnhouse concluded with the contrasting stories of two women who received notification their husbands had been killed in the Korean War.<sup>117</sup> The first woman screamed in faithless anger, “God can’t do that to me!” while the second woman poured out her soul before God in prayer. Both wives saw God’s power in the situation, but only one recognized God’s loving care. The emotional impact of the stories allowed the listeners to see God’s provision in their own moments of pain.

Because listeners are made by God, they are engaged by stories. Illustrations honor the image of God in listeners. Barnhouse confessed he used stories to help hold attention so that he could clearly explain the passage.<sup>118</sup> Illustrations allowed Barnhouse to capture attention but never at the expense of the meaning of the text. He wrote, “The man who attempts to be a sensational preacher will soon run out of sensations. The crowd may come to see an acrobat or a clown for one or two performances, but only dulled minds will take it as a permanent diet. God has given us His Word to preach.”<sup>119</sup> Illustrations were not designed merely to capture attention but to make the text understood.

Barnhouse’s illustrations show him aiming at the whole person. He targeted

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<sup>116</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Dr. Robert J. Lamont, August 26, 1957, Box 4, Folder 5, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia. See also Lamont’s recollections of the encounter, “In Memorarium: Donald Grey Barnhouse” (Tenth Presbyterian Church, November 9, 1960), 6-7, Box 10, Folder 30, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>117</sup> *The Keswick Week 1955*, 113–114.

<sup>118</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “What Is Required of Us?” Mark 12:41-44, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>119</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “Editorial: Sensational Preaching,” *Revelation*, April 1944, 143.

the intellect, emotions, and will. Barnhouse believed expository preaching reached the core of a listener. Illustrations helped Barnhouse motivate his listeners to a deeper faith and to Christian obedience. He argued, “One of the values of expository Bible study is that the preacher goes deep into the meaning of words and makes them live again with power to stir the soul.”<sup>120</sup> Barnhouse’s illustrations reached the core of his listeners and motivated them to action.

Illustrations helped Barnhouse connect with his listeners. His anecdotes and stories showed his pastoral compassion and care. Barnhouse frequently described his interactions with skeptics. He recounted hospital visits or pastoral counseling. In his commentary on 1 Thessalonians 4, he shared stories of counseling with a Bible Institute president, a visit to a mental institution, marriage counseling, and a question from a skeptic about Gandhi.<sup>121</sup> These moments of personal interaction allowed him to build a personal connection with each listener. He made application to individual situations and built trust with his listeners in his pastoral care.

Barnhouse also included stories from his family life and travels. In these emotionally charged moments, he let his listeners into his emotional and relational life. His sons noticed that he sometimes expanded the details of his family stories in order to emphasize his point. The sons “would call this trait a matter of ‘evangelical exaggeration.’”<sup>122</sup> Barnhouse shaped the illustrations for their illustrative impact.

In a powerful story, repeated frequently, he recounted the prelude to World War II in August and September 1939. He narrated his experience of travelling by train through France as soldiers were mobilized.<sup>123</sup> He was scheduled to preach in Ireland, but

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<sup>120</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2b, *God’s River: Romans 5:1-11*, 63.

<sup>121</sup> Barnhouse, *Thessalonians*, 58-62.

<sup>122</sup> David Barnhouse, “Parent Assessment,” February 17, 2012 (Kitty Barnhouse Purgason email message to author, August 31, 2019), 4.

<sup>123</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “The God of Circumstance,” Sermon, Romans 8:39, Dr.

his family remained in France where they had spent the summer.<sup>124</sup> The day war was declared, Barnhouse changed his sermon to address the reality of suffering facing his audience in Belfast. Then he needed to get his family out of France, but communication was restricted. Barnhouse hoped to send a telegram to his family to have them evacuate on an outgoing ship, but all personal messages were blocked. With no way to get the message through, Barnhouse needed to return to France. A generous friend from the meetings offered him the necessary money to retrieve his family.<sup>125</sup> Barnhouse repeated the story to show the providence of God and the assurance of salvation that believers carry.

Despite the outbreak of the war, Barnhouse chose to have his son Donny stay in England at the prestigious Winchester boarding school. Donny remained for two terms before the school required American students to depart. At the age of thirteen, Donny received instructions to cross England by train, take a ship across the Irish Sea to Dublin, and then transfer to another train across the country to Galway in order to board a ship bound for America.<sup>126</sup> When Donny arrived at the port, the ship had not yet arrived. German submarines had delayed the ship's arrival. Donny scrambled to find temporary lodging. The only spot available was a makeshift cot created by placing a large board across the top of a bathroom tub.

During Donny's stay at Winchester, his father wrote to reassure him of God's care. The private communication of a father to his son indicates Barnhouse's public confidence in the power of God matched his personal conviction. His repeated use of the illustration urging his congregation to rely on God's providence corresponded to his

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Barnhouse and the Bible, *The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals*, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>124</sup> Barnhouse, *The Love Life*, 95-96.

<sup>125</sup> Barnhouse, *Romans*, vol. 2a, *God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25*, 355.

<sup>126</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, Jr., interview by author, Paradise, PA, September 11, 2017.

personal trust during that period. In a letter to his son, Barnhouse wrote: “I must say that my mind is completely at rest about you.”<sup>127</sup> He expressed his confidence in God’s protection as he encouraged his son:

I told someone here that MATHEMATICALLY speaking, the chances were greater that you would be hurt in automobile traffic in Philadelphia, going to and fro [*sic*] Penn Charter than that you should be hit by a bomb splinter; and MATHEMATICALLY that is true. But even more than in mathematics, I trust the Lord of Mathematics, who has told us that nothing can ever touch u [*sic*] until it has passed through His will.<sup>128</sup>

In telling the story as a sermon illustration, Barnhouse brought his congregation into his family situation and strengthened his pastoral connection with his listeners. They learned confidence in God through their pastor’s faith.

In another illustration of God’s provision in a difficult time with a child, Barnhouse described his trust in God’s sovereignty when his son David was hit by a car while crossing the street. The accident had left David with a fractured skull and a broken leg. Barnhouse explained that he had to learn to rest in God’s sovereignty in the face of his son’s life-threatening injuries: “I had to be brought to the place where I said, ‘Lord, he belongs to you and you’re more concerned about him than I am. You love that boy more than I do.’”<sup>129</sup> Barnhouse was content accepting whatever circumstances God sent, whether David’s death, survival with limited recovery, or a full recuperation. Thankfully, after three months in traction in the hospital and three months recuperating with family friends in Miami, David regained his health.<sup>130</sup> David was able to finish his degree at Harvard and continue his medical studies. By opening his own life to his congregation,

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<sup>127</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse to Donny Barnhouse, Jr., October 9, 1939, Box 15, Folder 5, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>128</sup> Barnhouse to Donny Barnhouse, Jr., October 9, 1939, 3. Emphasis original.

<sup>129</sup> Barnhouse, “Characteristics of Faith,” Sermon, Mark 11:20-25, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA. See also *The Keswick Week 1954*, 47.

<sup>130</sup> David Barnhouse, “A Life Changing Moment,” February 24, 2012 (Kitty Barnhouse Purgason email message to author, August 31, 2019), 3-4; “Confidential Information for the Commission and the Committee on Ecumenical Personnel: Barnhouse, David Heath, M.D.,” April 17, 1961, Foreign Missionary Files, RG 360, Series 3, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

Barnhouse helped them learn to trust God in all circumstances. Barnhouse was pastorally connected to his listeners through his illustrations.

Barnhouse's illustrations served to illuminate the text, motivated to action, and provided pastoral connection with his listeners. Through brief analogies, quick anecdotes, and extended stories, Barnhouse opened the windows to flood his sermons with light.

### **Evaluation**

Barnhouse utilized illustrations to explain and apply the biblical text. Like the messenger boy, he ran to bring the message directly to his listeners. Illustrations provided a direct path for understanding and application. Barnhouse's topical sermons drip with illustrations while his exegetical series through biblical books show a more restrained use of illustrations. He did not pile on illustrations for embellishment. He used illustrations in a restrained, but effective manner.

Barnhouse is rightly remembered as a master illustrator, but he was not seeking recognition for his preaching skills. His ministry, from his early days at Biola through his packed schedule in his later years, was motivated by a strong conviction in the power of God's Word. His illustrations served the Word. He wanted people to understand what he said because it was the very message of God. He did not distort the message of the Bible nor change it to suit the whims of his listeners, but he shined light on the message so that his hearers would understand.

Barnhouse occasionally lingered in a lengthier story, but most of his illustrative work was brief. He used simple analogies. In just a couple of lines, he could clarify the text and prevent misunderstanding. His anecdotes, his most frequent type of illustration, could encompass an entire story in a concise paragraph. Barnhouse could briefly support the point he was making or take time to build several anecdotes. He was not working to gain personal recognition but to serve the text. His preaching occasionally quoted Greek

and relied on the grammar of the biblical text, but his most frequent tool for explanation was an illustration.

Anecdotes and stories are remembered because of the impact they have on a congregation. They work on the emotions, the mind, and the will. Stories reach deeply into people's lives because all people are made by a storytelling God. Barnhouse honored the image of God by using illustrations in his preaching. Barnhouse honored the Word of God by using illustrations in his preaching. Illustrations served Barnhouse's commitment to the authority of the Bible.

## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

Barnhouse rested his ministry upon the absolute authority of God's Word. He saw the preacher's task as that of the messenger boy. The message comes with the authority of the one who sent it: "Now, do not quarrel with the one who brings this message. That would be as foolish as quarreling with a telegraph messenger who brings bad news in a telegram. If you do not like what I am saying, your quarrel is with the Lord Jesus Christ."<sup>1</sup> The image of the messenger boy ran through Barnhouse's preaching and captured his firm commitment to the Bible.

#### **Barnhouse's Commitment to Biblical Authority**

Barnhouse's call to ministry came in his childhood and was confirmed in his teenage years. His study at Biola cemented his trust in the Bible and shaped his dispensational theology. Biola also opened doors for gospel ministry through music and preaching. Barnhouse was already packing his schedule with preaching opportunities even as a student. When his graduation was delayed because he had lied and failed to turn in assignments, Barnhouse was not deterred. He knew he was called to ministry because he was compelled by the Word of God.

Princeton Seminary strengthened Barnhouse's commitment to biblical authority. While it could not shake him of his dispensational doctrines, Princeton Seminary confirmed his commitment to Reformed soteriology. God's sovereignty and the assurance of salvation offered to believers were themes through his ministry. World

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, *The Love Life* (Glendale, CA: Regal, 1973), 203.

War I exposed Barnhouse to flight and technology. He remained a constant traveler and at the front lines of communication via radio and then television throughout his ministry. When he travelled to Belgium to serve in church planting and teaching at the Bible Institute, Barnhouse took with him his unwavering confidence in God's call on his life. Even in his conflict with the Nortons and his departure from the Belgian Gospel Mission, Barnhouse did not falter in his call. He walked to the south of France with a firm conviction that God was calling him to future ministry.

When Barnhouse returned to the United States and took the pulpit of Tenth Presbyterian Church, he went with a boldness to preach. He became the first gospel preacher on the airwaves in America's third largest city. He pioneered radio ministry by buying airtime and being the first preacher with a nationwide radio ministry. His ministry expanded to include itinerant preaching and publishing. Barnhouse's firm convictions were exposed in his ecclesiastical trial when he publicly condemned the liberalism he saw among his fellow Presbyterian ministers. However, while he was a fundamentalist in his doctrinal commitments, he was not a separatist. Barnhouse criticized the fundamentalists who departed the denomination.

Barnhouse displayed his allegiance to God's Word throughout his ministry. He preached with gospel boldness around the globe. His magazine editorials showed his ongoing affirmation of biblical authority. Barnhouse's personal and professional letters show his steadfast allegiance to God's Word. Barnhouse maintained his core doctrinal commitments. His late-in-life shift was only in his ministry strategy; he did not renounce the gospel. He explained, "I have not changed my theological position in the slightest. . . . the language I used years ago in expressing my dissent was inexcusably harsh."<sup>2</sup> His writings and sermons after his 1953 New Year's Resolution evidenced his

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<sup>2</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "Statement by Dr. Barnhouse," *Monday Morning: A Magazine for Presbyterian Ministers*, December 20, 1954, 4, Box 8, Folder 13, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

ongoing core commitments. In words written in the summer of 1960, in the final months of his life, he reaffirmed his commitment to biblical authority:

Recently I ran across a Bible which I used when I was little more than a boy. On its flyleaf I had written the following: ‘Scripture is throughout from God; Scripture is entirely from God. The Bible is God speaking in man; it is God speaking by man; it is God speaking as man; it is God speaking for man; but always it is God speaking.’ I believed that then, I believe it now!<sup>3</sup>

Barnhouse maintained his orthodox theological positions during the modernist-fundamentalist controversy, but he misjudged the ongoing descent of his denomination into liberalism. His preached theology remained secure, but he underestimated the liberal trajectory of his denomination, largely because of his distance from the denomination. His shift in 1953 was consistent with his 1930s assessment of missions in his denomination; he remained in his denomination because there were genuine believers serving in all areas of the denomination.

Contemporary evangelicals, with the hindsight of another half-century, can critique Barnhouse’s ministry decisions in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy and in his New Year’s Resolution but should be careful to acknowledge Barnhouse’s personal evangelical commitments. Barnhouse failed to see the slide of his denomination into liberalism and thought his partnership within his denomination and the NCC could stem the tide, but Barnhouse never relented from proclaiming his own fundamental convictions.

Barnhouse maintained his fundamental beliefs to the end of his life. Sexton concluded that Barnhouse held fast to his core beliefs throughout his ministry.<sup>4</sup> Even with his change in temperament and strategic clarification of his willingness to work with anyone he considered born-again, Barnhouse never shifted from his core commitments.

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<sup>3</sup> Ralph L. Keiper and Donald Grey Barnhouse, *How to Study Your Bible* (Philadelphia: The Bible Study Hour, 1961), 11; See also Barnhouse, “Written by God,” Sermon, Romans 14:11, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>4</sup> Ronald Thomas Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse” (ThD diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 1984), 126.

Barnhouse affirmed “the sovereignty of God, the authority of the Scriptures, and the person and work of Christ as the only Savior and Lord.”<sup>5</sup> Barnhouse believed his ministry proved his commitment to the Bible and the gospel of grace: “Two strong, clear threads run through the fabric of his teaching: the inspiration of the Bible, and salvation by faith, through grace, plus nothing.”<sup>6</sup> Barnhouse, from beginning to end, rested upon “the absolute finality of that divine Word.”<sup>7</sup>

### **Importance of Illustrations**

Barnhouse’s preaching rested on thorough biblical study, and his strategy of illustration served his exegetical purposes. He strove for clarity and purposefully used multiple, vivid illustrations in his sermons. A major part of his success in pulpit ministry rested on his ability to communicate using illustrations.<sup>8</sup> “One of Barnhouse’s greatest assets was his ability to illustrate biblical truth with pungent, telling stories.”<sup>9</sup> His reputation was due in large part to his “unique gift for relevant illustrations.”<sup>10</sup> Illustrations provided clarity to Barnhouse’s preaching and serve as a model for the use of illustrations in exegetical preaching today.

Barnhouse’s illustrations served “to elucidate the biblical text or clarify a great Christian doctrine.”<sup>11</sup> He illustrated to make Scripture clear to the listener. Abstract

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<sup>5</sup> C. Allyn Russell, review of *That Man Barnhouse*, by Margaret N. Barnhouse, *American Presbyterians* 63, no. 3 (September 1985): 323.

<sup>6</sup> “Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse: Biographical Sketch,” April 1, 1959, 1, Box 16, Folder 1, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>7</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, “God’s Love in Christ,” Sermon, Romans 8:39, Dr. Barnhouse and the Bible, The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals, Lancaster, PA.

<sup>8</sup> Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse,” 173.

<sup>9</sup> Herbert Henry Ehrenstein, “Barnhouse at His Best: A Listening and Reading Guide for the Uninitiated,” *Eternity*, April 1975, 37.

<sup>10</sup> Paul A. Hopkins and Russell T. Hitt, “Death of Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse” (The Evangelical Foundation, November 5, 1960), 2, Box 2, Folder 18, Donald Grey Barnhouse Papers, RG 480, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

<sup>11</sup> Russell T. Hitt, introduction to Donald Grey Barnhouse, *Bible Truth Illustrated* (New

concepts become concrete in an illustration. Difficult concepts were explained in simple and understandable ways. His illustrations made truth memorable. Preachers committed to exegetical clarity should invest energy into gathering and using illustrations.

Illustrations serve the goals of exegetical preachers.

Barnhouse illustrated to prompt a response from his congregation. He wanted “to illuminate biblical truth so that men may clearly see truth and respond to it, or at least be accountable for it before God.”<sup>12</sup> The clarity of the illustration and the urgency of a well-told story confronted the listener with biblical truth. In this way, Barnhouse’s illustrations served to motivate his listeners to change.<sup>13</sup> Once a listener understood the truth and felt the weight of the truth, he or she would be in the position to respond to truth. Barnhouse used illustrations to explain his biblical points and to bring truth to bear on his hearers. His illustrations provided the path for the messenger boy to deliver God’s truth straight to the heart.

### **Pastoral Recommendations**

Barnhouse offers a helpful example for the contemporary preacher. While his ministry schedule, six days a week with nearly endless travel, does not fit the ministry of most pastors, his preaching strategy is worthy of emulation. First, he was compelled to preach by the power of the Word. Even his busy schedule was motivated by the urgency of the message. Preachers would be right to seek greater opportunities within their communities and should be willing to preach the gospel wherever a door is opened.

Second, Barnhouse’s apologetic strategy of turning his listeners’ attention to the Word remains effective. Even his image of the messenger boy continues to capture

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Canaan, CT: Keats, 1979).

<sup>12</sup> Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse,” 188.

<sup>13</sup> Sexton, “A Critical Examination of the Preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse,” 189.

the preacher's role. The messenger comes with the authority of the sender. Barnhouse could offer apologetic reasons for the authority of the Bible in his preaching, but his primary method was to bring the text to bear in the lives of his hearers. Barnhouse forced skeptics to admit that what they heard was what the Bible said. They could disagree, but they could not ignore the message they heard.

Third, Barnhouse's urgency in preaching is evident in both his tone and his direct confrontation of the hearer. His preaching often gushed forth, not in constrained eloquence, but in a rush of energy. He genuinely believed the message, and his cadence and tone captured the importance of what he preached. Barnhouse also spoke directly to his listeners. He regularly pressed the believers in his congregation toward the assurance of their salvation. He wanted Christians to know the certainty of their salvation and to grasp the promises of God. Barnhouse also urged unbelievers to put their faith in Christ.

Fourth, Barnhouse made the gospel central in his preaching. He pointed to the perfect remedy found in Christ. He traced biblical themes to their conclusion in Christ. Barnhouse made Jesus Christ central in his preaching. He was not content to change a person's behavior or even to give them deeper theology. He wanted his listeners to encounter Jesus Christ and know him more deeply.

Fifth, Barnhouse's mastery of illustrations provides a template for the modern preacher. The preacher does not concede to the weakness of his listeners by offering illustrations. He recognizes the image of God and leverages people's interest in story when he communicates in images and anecdotes. The preacher is not wasting time that could be better spent on explanation. Illustrations serve explanation and often get to the truth more quickly than bare description. The preacher is not emotionally manipulative with illustrations but captures something deep within listeners by connecting with the whole person.

Barnhouse's stories sometimes took time to develop, but he skillfully used quick analogies and brief anecdotes. For the preacher hesitant toward illustrations,

Barnhouse's model offers an entry point. Listeners' comprehension increases as they gain concrete insight into the truth. Plus, the preacher knows he understands the meaning of the text himself when he can explain it using clear and simple images. Barnhouse's strategy also aids the preacher who routinely hunts for the large story illustration. Sometimes the preacher's aim is better served by a quick analogy or a simple anecdote.

All preachers would gain clarity in their communication by following Barnhouse's strategy of gathering illustrations through their daily experiences and regular reading. The modern preacher need not rely on pocket scraps, although a simple pencil and paper approach still has value, as today's preacher has ready access to electronic storage and searching tools. For the preacher who sees himself as the servant of the text, he should willingly pastor his people by bringing the truth to them in the most direct manner possible. Barnhouse's illustrative strategy affirmed his commitment to the authority of the Bible.

### **Conclusion**

Barnhouse stands as an example of a biblically-committed expository preacher. Contemporary evangelical preachers should openly and repeatedly affirm the authority of the Bible, the centrality of Jesus, and the sovereign grace of God. Barnhouse's dedication to exegetical preaching serves contemporary preachers in their commitment to biblical study, direct application, and energetic illustration.

Barnhouse hesitated when others suggested a biography of his life. In the months before his death, his colleague Keiper offered the idea of a biography:

'B,' I believe your biography would be most interesting.' Barnhouse replied, 'Ralph, if you ever attempt to write my biography, I will haunt you, I will haunt you, I will haunt you.' Keiper asked, 'What would you like me to do?' Barnhouse turned to the Word of God and said, 'What I would like you to do is to teach, preach, and live my text.' He then read Philippians 3:10—'That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death.'<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> James Montgomery Boice, "Making God's Word Plain: Tenth Presbyterian Church (1829-

Barnhouse did not want his life celebrated. He wanted his preaching to transform his listeners. He wanted to compel others to go and preach. An analysis of his preaching methods and historical context are not meant to celebrate the man but to inspire contemporary preachers to depend upon the authority of the Bible in their expository preaching.

Barnhouse aggressively fought modernism in his commitment to the fundamentals of the faith. He sought avenues for gospel proclamation through his pulpit ministry and the new opportunities provided by radio. Barnhouse's theological commitments stand the test of time even as his strategy of partnership within his liberal denomination crumbled in the years following his death. He preached wherever an opportunity was presented. He preached Christ. He made the text clear through his illustrations. Barnhouse was a messenger boy delivering God's gospel. Donald Grey Barnhouse provides a powerful witness to the effectiveness of exegetical and illustrative preaching.

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1979),” 1979, Box JMB, Folder Tenth Church - boards/documents, Tenth Presbyterian Church Archives, Philadelphia.

## APPENDIX 1

### BARNHOUSE'S 1953 NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

I have never made any resolutions at the New Year since I was a child, for I soon learned that they were in the same category as vows—there is no strength in man to keep them.<sup>1</sup> But for some weeks I have been thinking over a course of action that would be different from previous courses of action, and thought that it might be well to tell the *Eternity* family about it.

Perhaps the following lines rise out of the fact that we have recently celebrated my twenty-fifth anniversary as pastor of Tenth Church in Philadelphia. I have tried to keep busy during those years; a friend once told me that the mere recital of my activities made him tired. I must testify to the honor and glory of the Lord that He has given me grace and has sustained me at every step of the way. During those years I have preached about 400 times a year, edited twelve issues of a magazine, written several books, prepared 52 radio sermons for delivery and printing, carried on a voluminous correspondence, found a great deal of time for my family, especially in the earlier years when they most needed me, and have managed to spend several hours each day reading. Recently, also, I have had time to make some motion pictures and write scripts for several more that we expect to make.

All this has been due to the fact that the Lord has surrounded me with wonderful elders and other officers in my church and a wonderful staff in the other

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<sup>1</sup> Donald Grey Barnhouse, "New Year's Resolution," *Eternity*, January 1953. Barnhouse's editorial was printed on the unnumbered inside front and inside back covers of the magazine.

phases of my activities. And the Lord has raised up many thousands of people who have prayed for me, and through them has supplied the large sums which have made all of the work possible.

At the time of my anniversary, in the mass meeting at Town Hall, I heard the many speeches, and saw the crowd of people, and the scores of ministers on the platform. When it was my turn to make some remarks I noted that all this was one of the most humbling experiences of my life. The reason why this was so grew out of a conversation that had taken place the previous week. One of the members of the committee had come to talk to me about the meeting, and he had expressed the desire that I would sit up in the meeting and act as if I was enjoying it (It appears that at times I have been seen bowing my head and running my fingers through my hair when something in a meeting displeased me!).

Then he said to me, speaking of the committee that had worked on the anniversary preparations, "Those fellows certainly love you." I was stunned for a moment. He left my home shortly thereafter, and I walked out under the trees thinking about the statement. I knew that I loved many people, and loved many of them very dearly, but I had never thought about their loving me. My family, yes; but others . . . [ellipsis original] I remembered when I was a small boy and come to my first day of school. They kept me in the first grade for about two hours and then I was marched into the second grade. That year the first-graders hated me because I was the smart kid that had gone ahead, and the second-graders hated me because I was the first-grader that had come in to show them up by my being there. At least, I thought they hated me; and to think such a thing conditions one as much as though it were a fact. So I developed the practice of doing my work in an attitude of not caring what anybody in the world might think. And I rather carried that attitude through my life.

But that night, listening to the kind things that were being said, hearing the

testimonies of those who had been saved through my ministry, and remembering the words that had been spoken to me, "Those fellows certainly love you," I began to think that perhaps a whole lot of people did love me, and suddenly I saw that this was going to make a big difference in a lot of things. I knew, of course, that they didn't love me for anything that was from Adam, but only for that which was from Christ, but perhaps there was enough of this to let me relax in some of my attitudes. And hence this Editorial.

Early in my ministry I conceived the idea that I must strike out against all error wherever I saw it. I used only one kind of ammunition. I hit an error wherever I saw it. If it was in Christian Science, Unitarianism, or in Romanism, I swung hard. If it was in some fundamental leader with whom I was in ninety-five per cent agreement, I swung hard at the five per cent. From now on I am going to use two kinds of ammunition, and I believe that there are many cases in the latter (five per cent) class that I will just let go unnoticed. Perhaps they do not like the five percent difference in me, either!

Of course, it should be understood that there are some drawbacks to being an Editor. A man I know wrote a book some years ago and I reviewed it. I thought I was giving the book tremendous praise. But he picked out one sentence that catalogued the book at less than he dreamed it to be and he hardly spoke to me for five years! I still am an Editor, and may have to review books, and I am still going to reserve my editorial honesty, but I will surely try to underline the points of agreement and touch as lightly as possible the points of disagreement.

And I want to have Christian fellowship with a much wider circle of people. Six years ago, I wrote an address which I delivered to a body of Christians in Philadelphia on the terrible lack of unity that existed in our city among believers. I had dinner with a dozen leaders, some of whom were not speaking to each other, and did what I could to iron out difficulties. I hope that my address, and its circulation to a large number of readers contributed something to the marked improvement which exists in

Philadelphia today. Where ten years ago there were bickering factions in the spiritual life of the city, I believe that it is safe to say that there is today more spiritual unity among true believers in Philadelphia than in almost any city in the nation.

I want that unity to be extended in many different directions. I want to make my circle of Christian fellowship on the basis of the fact that a man is going to be in Heaven with me. If he is, then why not get a little closer together here and now. Give him the benefit of the doubt on the things we do not agree upon as soon as we find that we agree upon man's complete ruin in sin and God's perfect remedy in Christ. I believe that many of us have been victims of a religious McCarthyism. Just as the Senator from Wisconsin has yelled "Communist" at almost anyone to the left of center, so there are men who have yelled "Modernist" at any one [*sic*] who disagreed with them on points which are certainly secondary. Now I have a definite belief in a certain prophetic view of Scripture, but I know born-again men who have a different view. I am going to continue to believe that they are mistaken, but I am going to believe that they are honest, and am not going to allow that difference to stand between us.

Within my own denomination there are men with whom I have not had much fellowship because of ecclesiastical differences. Without in anywise changing my theological outlook, and without lowering my right to unveil, editorially, specific heresy when I find it in print, I want to move closer to many men who are undoubtedly going to be with me in Heaven, but with whom I have disagreed on denominational emphasis. Again I think the ecclesiastical McCarthyism has left its effects on the thinking of many people (Wasn't it Henry James who said that when some people think they are thinking, they are merely rearranging their prejudices?). I think, for example, of the attack that has been made from certain quarters on my denomination and upon its Board of Foreign Missions. When I toured the missions fields I came home with a report, which I am convinced was absolutely true, that the missionaries are merely the church at home

dwelling in other countries. Are there lazy ministers at home? There are lazy missionaries—but not as many. Are there liberal ministers at home? There are liberal missionaries—but not as many. And so on.

Recently I saw an attack on the denomination which stated that anyone who gave a dollar to its mission program was supporting modernism on the foreign field. From the same quarter I saw an attack on the denomination which labeled it as apostate. Then I began to do a little figuring. Just suppose—I do not present the following figures as real but use them merely as an illustration—just suppose that half the church at home should be found to be “liberal” (Some would immediately say the proportion was higher, but that would make the argument boomerang against them even more.). Most certainly the proportion of good missionaries is much higher. Even if we say that only seventy per cent of the missionaries are faithful (and again the figures are pulled out of a hat, and are loader in favor of the bitter critics), we must immediately see that no fundamental people in our denomination are supporting modernism on the field but on the figures of the critics themselves it is seen that the liberals are really supporting fundamental missionaries, for there are so many more of them in proportion. So while as an Editor of an interdenominational magazine I shall still present the needs of the faith missions, as they are called, I shall, within my own church think more of the magnificent work being done by our missionaries in the Cameroons, in Korea, in some parts of Latin America, and so on.

And when I got to thinking along these lines, I began to think of the differences between spiritual life in America and that of Britain. Over there the lines are not sharply drawn as they are here. Every man is judged by himself. This probably arises from the century-old practice of having a state church with high, low, and broad churchmen all under the same Bishops. No one could accuse a Griffith-Thomas, or a Bishop Moule, or a Bishop Ryle of being liberals. And they have their successors today

in the church that produces a Red Dean, higher critics, and Anglo Catholics. In spite of this, the witness is in no wise impaired. In fact, the existence of such sharply drawn categories makes it possible for each man to speak more freely than which he truly believes, since he knows that others will respect his right to say it, and will leave the final judgment of it to the Lord.

Some people will think that I am trying to give the Devil his due, but I want to say a word about the ecumenical movement. I read a report some months ago in a liberal paper which commented on a meeting in the ecumenical field, stating that they had come together, read reports, argued, and disbanded without doing anything. It was a perfect description of a meeting which I had attended, and which had been composed of fundamental men throughout. And I thought of the need of more unity among believers in this world today. Sometimes I think, “Don’t men realize that this is 1953 and that the H-bomb has been perfected?”

Out in China I once met a Christian leader and happened to ask him what church he belonged to. As well as I can remember he replied, with a wry smile, “I am a Swedish-American Lutheran of the Augustana Synod.” And twenty-five miles away another Chinese Christian might have been led to the Lord by the missionaries of the Missouri Synod; and should they not take Communion together because someone in the Mississippi Valley was not in accord with someone else? There is tremendous need for unity on the foreign fields, and any attempt to divide along American lines is a sin that will bring sharp censure at the judgment seat of Christ.

And I would be dishonest if I did not recognize that some of the things that have been accomplished by the National and World Councils are truly magnificent achievements for the Lord Jesus Christ. Take for example the work that has been done among the hundreds of thousands of refugees—Arabs from Israel, Bulgars in Turkey, North Koreans in South Korea, DP’s [displaced persons] in Western Europe. More than

cups of cold water have been given in the name of the Lord Jesus, and in this every believer who feels himself loved by the Lord Jesus Christ, must rejoice.

I could go on for several pages more, and may at some future time. There may be a few of my readers who will not like what I have written. I assure them that there is no deviation whatsoever in what I have written through the years. In fact, I believe that the love of Jesus Christ must mellow a man, and that the Holy Spirit who dwells in me is the same Holy Spirit that dwells in all who have been born again, and that He *must* move to draw us all toward the Lord Jesus [emphasis original]. It is my prayer that I may humbly follow His leading and put no barriers that He has not placed Himself. In this same Spirit I have had good fellowship with men who might be called extreme in their adherence to some doctrine, such as that which fosters so-called manifestations of the Holy Spirit. When we talked together I found that we had Christ in common. It was wonderful.

I am trying to think ahead. Is it possible that a few Russian bombs may drop on one of our great cities in the next few years? Is so, working side by side in the rubble, I shall hope to call out on a Sunday morning, “Let all who believe in the Lord Jesus come here . . . [ellipsis original] I have a loaf of bread, and I am going to tear off a small piece and remember Him. I will pass this loaf around the crowd, and let all who will take his portion, so long as he knows his portion is Christ.” And it would be good if we didn’t have to wait until the bombs fall . . . [ellipsis original]

END

APPENDIX 2

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN GENESIS

Table A1. Sermon illustrations in Genesis

Genesis	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
1	2	1	—	3
2	1	—	—	1
3	2	4	—	6
4	4	2	—	6
5	2	1	—	3
6	2	2	—	4
7	1	2	—	3
8	—	—	—	0
9	1	1	—	2
10	—	2	—	2
11	1	2	—	3
12	2	3	—	5
13	—	2	—	2
14	—	—	—	0
15	4	1	—	5
16	1	—	—	1
17	2	—	—	2
18	4	—	—	4

Table A1. Sermon illustrations in Genesis—*continued*

Genesis	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
19	—	2	—	2
20	—	1	—	1
21	1	1	—	2
22		1	—	1
23	2	2	—	4
24	2	—	—	2
25	—	—	—	0
26	—	2	—	2
27	2	3	—	5
28	—	3	—	3
29	1	1	—	2
30	—	—	—	0
31	—	1	—	1
32	2	2	—	4
33	1	—	—	1
34	1	2	—	3
35	—	—	—	0
36	—	—	—	0
37	2	1	—	3
38	—	—	—	0
39	1	—	—	1
40	—	—	—	0
41	1	—	—	1

Table A1. Sermon illustrations in Genesis—*continued*

Genesis	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
42	—	—	—	0
43	—	—	—	0
44	—	—	—	0
45	1	—	—	1
46	—	1	—	1
47	—	—	—	0
48	1	—	—	1
49	1	2	—	3
50	—	1	—	1
Totals	48	49	0	97
Averages	0.96	0.98	0.00	1.94

APPENDIX 3

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN MARK

Table A2. Sermon illustrations in Mark

Sermon	Mark	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Introduction to the Gospel	1	2	2	—	4
Jesus the Servant	1:1	1	2	2	5
The Baptism of Jesus	1:9	—	1	—	1
The Temptation of Christ	1:12-14	2	—	—	2
A Day in the Lord's Life	1:21-34	1	2	—	3
Our Compassionate Savior	1:35-45	1	—	—	1
Who Can Forgive Sins?	2:1-12	—	—	1	1
Sabbath Made for Man	2:23-28	1	2	—	3
With Him	3:13-19	2	1	—	3
Spiritual Discernment	3:20-30	1	1	—	2
Parable of the Sower	4:1-21	—	—	—	0
Parable of the Lamp	4:21	—	—	—	0
The Farmer and His Crops	4:26-29	2	2	—	4
Healing of the Demoniac	5	1	2	—	3
True Faith vs. Unbelief	6:5-6	—	2	—	2
Temptation	7:14-23	1	4	1	6
Christ's Healing Power	7:31-37	3	2	2	7

Table A2. Sermon illustrations in Mark—*continued*

Sermon	Mark	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Why Christ Had to Die	8:27-33	—	4	—	4
True Road to Greatness	9:33-37	—	3	1	4
Who Is Against Us?	9:38-41	1	1	—	2
The Existence of Hell	9:43-48	1	1	2	4
Salted with Fire	9:49-50	2	—	—	2
Importance of Marriage	10:1-12	1	—	—	1
Importance of a Child	10:13-16	—	7	—	7
The Rich Young Ruler	10:17-27	3	1	—	4
Stewardship	10:28-31	3	4	1	8
The Jerusalem Road	10:32-34	2	1	—	3
The Lord Has Need of Thee	11:1-11	—	2	—	2
Cursing of the Fig Tree	11:12-14	—	1	—	1
Characteristics of Faith	11:20-25	—	4	1	5
Prayer: How and Why?	11:24-26	2	4	—	6
Christ, the Only Way	12:9-12	3	3	—	6
Caesar's or God's	12:13-17	2	1	—	3
Life After Death	12:18-27	1	—	—	1
The First and Great Commandment	12:28-34	3	3	1	7
Who Is Christ?	12:35-40	1	1	—	2
What Is Required of Us?	12:41-44	1	4	2	7
See That Ye Be Not Troubled	13:7	2	5	—	7

Table A2. Sermon illustrations in Mark—*continued*

Sermon	Mark	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Second Coming	13	2	1	—	3
The Resurrection	16:9	—	—	1	1
Totals		48	74	15	137
Averages		1.2	1.85	0.38	3.43

APPENDIX 4

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN JOHN

Table A3. Sermon illustrations in John

Sermon	John	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Marks of Sonship	1	4	3	—	7
He First Found His Brother	1	—	3	—	3
The Life of the Party	2	—	2	—	2
Understanding New Birth	3	3	2	—	5
“Come See a Man . . . !”	4	2	4	—	6
Lessons in Worship	4	4	3	—	7
“Moses Wrote of Me”	5	2	—	—	2
“Something for Nothing”	6	5	3	—	8
John Bunyan’s Text	6	—	—	2	2
I Am the Light of the World	8	3	1	—	4
Restoring Sight to the Blind	9	—	4	—	4
Ripples on the Shore of Your Life	11	2	3	—	5
The Challenge of the Cross	12	—	2	—	2
Art Not Thou Also One of His Disciples?	13	—	8	1	9
Another “Strengthen-Wither”	14	5	6	—	11

Table A3. Sermon illustrations in John—*continued*

Sermon	John	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Troubleshooting Ineffective Prayer	15	2	3	—	5
A Divine Love Affair	17	3	7	3	13
The Lord’s Prayer	17	4	8	1	13
The Christmas Story Before Pilate	18	2	3	—	5
He Died That Day	19	—	4	2	6
God Put You Here “On Purpose”	20	4	2	1	7
The Four <i>Comes</i>	1-21	1	6	1	8
Totals		46	77	11	134
Averages		2.09	3.50	0.50	6.09

APPENDIX 5

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN ACTS

Table A4. Sermon illustrations in Acts

Sermon	Acts	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Power of the Holy Spirit	1:8	3	5	—	8
God Sent Him to You First	3:26	2	3	—	5
First Called Christians	11:26	2	2	—	4
Jesus and the Resurrection	17:18	—	4	—	4
Take Heart!	27:20-25	3	4	—	7
Totals		10	18	0	28
Averages		2.00	3.60	0.00	5.60

APPENDIX 6

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN ROMANS

Table A5. Sermon illustrations in Man's Ruin: Romans 1

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Point of Departure	1	3	3	—	6
Bondslave and Apostle	1:1	3	4	2	9
The Gospel of God	1:1-2	2	2	1	5
The Man Christ Jesus	1:3	3	5	1	9
Jesus Christ, Jehovah God	1:3-4	1	3	—	4
The Trinity	1:1-4	2	4	—	6
Grace and Apostleship	1:5	2	4	1	7
To the Saints	1:6-7	3	2	1	6
The Communion of the Saints	1:8-9	2	6	1	9
A Church Conspicuous for Its Faith	1:8	4	3	—	7
Unanswered Prayer	1:9-10, 13	3	2	1	6
The Human Spirit	1:9	2	2	—	4
Strengthened by Faith	1:11-13	2	3	1	6
Debtors	1:14-15	2	5	2	9

Table A5. Sermon illustrations in Man's Ruin: Romans 1—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Not Ashamed	1:16	8	4	—	12
To Every One That Believeth	1:16	4	5	—	9
God's Righteousness	1:17	4	6	—	10
The Just Shall Live by Faith	1:17	5	1	1	7
Life by Faith	1:17	1	4	1	6
The Wrath of God	1:18	2	3	—	5
Wrath Revealed	1:18	4	2	1	7
Power and Godhead	1:19-20	3	5	—	8
The Path of Degradation	1:21	2	5	1	8
The Ways of Death	1:22-23	6	5	1	12
God Gave Them Up	1:24-27	3	7	—	10
A Reprobate Mind	1:28-31	3	4	—	7
The Depth of Sin	1:31	2	5	1	8
Totals		81	104	17	202
Averages		3.00	3.85	0.63	7.48

Table A6. Sermon illustrations in God's Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
No Excuse	2:1	2	6	—	8
No Escape	2:2-3	2	5	1	8
Misers of Wrath	2:4-5	6	3	1	10
Patient Continuance in Well Doing	2:6-10	3	4	1	8
Contention and Disobedience	2:6, 8-9	2	3	—	5
No Respect of Persons	2:11	2	9	—	11
Eternal Choice	2:12	2	5	—	7
Not Hearers but Doers	2:12b-13	1	4	—	5
God's Standards Manifest	2:14-15	2	4	1	7
Judgment Coming	2:16	3	5	—	8
The Charge Against the Orthodox	2:17-23	1	2	—	3
The Power of Faith in Life	2:24	2	6	—	8
Circumcision	2:25-29	3	2	—	5
The Oracles of God	3:1-2	1	4	—	5
The Faithlessness of Man	3:3-4	2	2	—	4
The Black Background of Sin	3:5-6	—	3	1	4
Righteousness Without Works	3:7-8	—	6	2	8
All Under Sin	3:9	7	4	—	11

Table A6. Sermon illustrations in God's Wrath: Romans 2:1-3:20—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
As It Is Written	3:10	2	4	—	6
The Lord Looked Down	3:10-18	4	4	1	9
Man's Lost Condition	3:12	6	2	1	9
The Poison of Asps	3:13-14	4	4	—	8
Destruction and Misery	3:15-17	1	8	1	10
Indifference to God	3:18	2	3	—	5
Silence Before God	3:19-20	2	3	3	8
None Justified by the Law	3:20	5	1	1	7
Totals		67	106	14	187
Averages		2.58	4.08	0.54	7.19

Table A7. Sermon illustrations in God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
But Now	3:21	1	2	—	3
Righteousness Without Law	3:21	2	5	—	7
Witness of the Prophets	3:21	1	6	—	7
Unto All	3:22	1	6	1	8
Upon All	3:22	3	6	1	10
Implanted Righteousness	3:22	4	3	1	8
No Difference	3:22	—	6	1	7
Falling Short	3:22-23	2	2	1	5
The Glory of God	3:23	—	9	—	9
Justification without Cause	3:24	—	2	3	5
Redemption	3:24	1	6	—	7
The Mercy Seat	3:25	1	7	—	8
The Blood of Christ	3:25	—	5	1	6
God's Name Vindicated	3:25	—	1	1	2
Just and the Justifier	3:26	1	4	—	5
No Pride in Heaven	3:27	1	5	—	6
Boasting Excluded	3:27-38	2	4	1	7
Two Families, Two Fathers	3:29-31	—	2	—	2
The Law Established	3:31	2	3	—	5
Abraham's Faith	4:1-2	—	2	1	3
The God of Abraham	4:3	1	4	—	5
Serpent in the Wilderness	4:4-5	2	2	—	4

Table A7. Sermon illustrations in God's Remedy: Romans 3:21-4:25—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
For the UnGodly	4:5	2	2	1	5
They Whose Iniquities Are Forgiven	4:6-7	3	2	—	5
Sin and Iniquity Gone	4:7-8	3	4	1	8
Abraham's Example	4:9-10	—	3	1	4
The Steps of Faith	4:11-12	1	—	—	1
Faith Apart from Law	4:13	1	1	—	2
Sure Inheritance	4:14-16	2	2	—	4
Things That Are Not	4:17	1	2	—	3
God Who Quickens the Dead	4:17	1	4	—	5
Alive from the Dead	4:18	—	2	—	2
The Nature of Abraham's Faith	4:19	2	3	1	6
The God of Abraham	4:19-20	—	5	1	6
Strong in Faith	4:20-21	3	3	1	7
The Progress and Growth of Faith	4:22-23	2	2	—	4
Delivered and Raised	4:24	—	2	1	3
Totals		46	129	19	194
Averages		1.24	3.49	0.51	5.24

Table A8. Sermon illustrations in God's River: Romans 5:1-11

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Our Seven-fold Justification	5:1	3	—	—	3
Peace with God	5:1	1	7	—	8
Access	5:2	2	3	1	6
Christ the Way	5:2	1	4	—	5
Standing in Grace	5:2	3	5	—	8
Hope of Glory	5:2	1	7	2	10
Hope in Death	5:2	1	13	—	14
The Present Hope	5:2	1	3	1	5
Glory in Tribulation	5:3	4	3	—	7
God's Purpose in Human Suffering	5:3	4	2	—	6
Exemplary Suffering	5:3	—	3	—	3
Steadfast Endurance	5:3-4	1	4	—	5
The Sources of Hope	5:2-4	3	4	—	7
The Breath of God	5:5	3	5	—	8
Born into God's Family	5:5	2	1	—	3
The Believer in Christ	5:5	—	3	—	3
Christ in the Believer	5:5	—	5	—	5
A Finished Work	5:5	—	5	1	6
Love Poured Out	5:5	3	5	—	8
Anchored Within the Veil	5:5	—	6	—	6
Christ Died for the Ungodly	5:6	1	3	—	4
In Due Time	5:6	1	3	—	4

Table A8. Sermon illustrations in God's River: Romans 5:1-11—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
God's Love Commended	5:6-8	1	8	—	9
Saved from Wrath	5:9	—	3	—	3
His Enemies	5:10	—	3	—	3
Reconciliation	5:9-10	—	4	—	4
Power of Resurrection Life	5:10	—	3	—	3
None Like Unto Our God	5:11	1	4	—	5
Totals		37	119	5	161
Averages		1.32	4.25	0.18	5.75

Table A9. Sermon illustrations in God's Grace: Romans 5:12-21

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Adam Versus Christ	5:12-21	1	1	—	2
The Original Man	5:12	1	3	—	4
The Fall of Man	5:12	1	1	1	3
Sin and Death	5:12	3	3	1	7
Sin Before Law	5:13	—	4	—	4
All Sinned in Adam	5:13	1	4	—	5
Adam, Type of Christ	5:14	1	1	1	3
Much More the Grace of God	5:15	2	4	—	6
The Rock in the Desert	5:16	3	2	1	6
Reigning in Life	5:17	2	3	—	5
Abundant Supply	5:17	3	7	—	10
Justification of Life	5:18	—	2	1	3
Practical Righteousness	5:19	1	3	—	4
The Obedience of Christ	5:19	—	2	—	2
The Law Entered	5:20	—	1	—	1
Ministry of Condemnation	5:20	2	4	—	6
Abounding Grace	5:20	1	8	1	10
Infinite Grace	5:20	2	1	1	4
The Pure Doctrine of Grace	5:20	3	—	1	4
God's Motives for Grace	5:20	—	5	1	6
Grace Manifested in the Saints	5:20	2	2	—	4

Table A9. Sermon illustrations in God's Grace: Romans 5:12-21—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Only Answer	5:20	3	3	—	6
The Reign of Grace	5:20-21	1	4	—	5
Grace Versus Sin	5:21	1	2	—	3
Life in Christ	5:21	—	2	—	2
Totals		34	72	9	115
Averages		1.36	2.88	0.36	4.60

Table A10. Sermon illustrations in God's Freedom: Romans 6-7

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
A Call to Holy Living	6:1	2	2	—	4
The Touchstone of Faith	6:1	1	2	—	3
God Forbid	6:2	1	3	—	4
Sin's Horror	6:2	—	2	—	2
Baptized into Jesus Christ	6:3	1	1	—	2
Eternal Identification	6:3	—	2	1	3
Circumcision and Growth	6:3	1	5	—	6
Christ's Own Baptism	6:3	2	3	—	5
Conflict and Triumph	6:3	—	5	1	6
Into Christ's Sufferings	6:3	—	2	—	2
Pardon for Sin and Newness of Life	6:3	2	2	—	4
In His Burial	6:4	1	4	2	7
Resurrection Life and Power	6:3-5	—	3	—	3
Heaven Here and Now	6:3	—	2	1	3
Intercessory Prayer	6:3	—	1	—	1
All Spiritual Blessing	6:3	1	4	—	5
His Coming Glory	6:3	—	—	1	1
Ruling with Him	6:3	1	3	—	4
The Christian Walk	6:3	1	4	—	5
Power of His Resurrection	6:4	4	3	—	7
The Same Plant	6:5	—	4	—	4
Victory with Christ	6:5-6	3	1	—	4

Table A10. Sermon illustrations in God’s Freedom: Romans 6-7—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Living in Triumph	6:6-7	3	—	—	3
A Crisis and a Process	6:8	5	1	—	6
One Sacrifice	6:9-10	—	3	—	3
Present Victory	6:9-10	1	2	—	3
The Way of Escape	6:11	1	4	—	5
Victory in Christ	6:12-13	1	1	1	3
Yielded Lives	6:13	2	3	1	6
Free from the Law	6:14	2	3	—	5
Lifted Above	6:14	2	2	—	4
The Nature of Grace	6:14	—	2	—	2
The Believer’s Position	6:14	1	3	1	5
Choose Your Master	6:15	2	2	—	4
Christian Love	6:17	1	5	1	7
Christian Doctrine	6:17	1	3	—	4
Obedience from the Heart	6:17	2	1	—	3
Slaves of Righteousness	6:18-22	3	1	1	5
His Unspeakable Gift	6:23	—	1	—	1
The Liberty of Grace	7:1-4	2	1	—	3
Christian Marriage	7:2	—	1	1	2
The Story of Hosea	7:2	1	2	—	3
The Love of God	7:2	1	1	—	2
Divorce and Remarriage	7:2	—	5	—	5

Table A10. Sermon illustrations in God's Freedom: Romans 6-7—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Salvation, then Sanctification	7:4	1	—	—	1
Fruit unto God	7:4	—	4	1	5
The Essentials of Christian Conduct	7:4	2	3	—	5
Impotence of the Law	7:5	5	1	—	6
New Life for Service	7:6	2	—	1	3
Sin and Law	7:7-8	3	2	—	5
Paul's Struggle with Sin	7:9-11	3	3	—	6
The Vindication of the Law	7:12-13	1	—	1	2
Paul's Carnality	7:14	—	—	1	1
Conflict with Evil Within	7:12-13	1	—	—	1
Paul Delivered from Sin	7:24	2	1	—	3
Three-fold Deliverance	7:24-25	—	1	—	1
The Triumph of the Believer	7:25	—	1	1	2
Totals		72	121	17	210
Averages		1.26	2.12	0.30	3.68

Table A11. Sermon illustrations in God's Heirs: Romans 8

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Now No Condemnation	8:1	3	2	—	5
No Possible Condemnation	8:1	—	1	—	1
Set Free Romans	8:2	2	1	1	4
The Weakness of the Flesh	8:2	2	2	1	5
True Nature of Christ	8:3	2	2	—	4
Perseverance of the Saints	8:3-6	1	2	—	3
Walking After the Spirit	8:4	2	—	1	3
Two Kinds of People	8:5	5	—	—	5
Religion of the Flesh	8:5-6	—	3	—	3
Exhortation of Christian Living	8:6	2	1	1	4
Life and Peace	8:5-6	2	—	—	2
Flesh in the Believer	8:7-8	1	1	1	3
Perfection of Position	8:9	—	4	—	4
Dust or God	8:9	1	2	—	3
Righteousness Imputed	8:10	2	1	1	4
Present Triumph	8:11	4	—	—	4
Christian's Obligation	8:12-13	2	1	—	3
The Sin unto Death	8:13	—	4	—	4
Real Life	8:13	2	1	—	3
True Sonship to God	8:14	—	3	—	3
Sons of God	8:14	2	3	—	5
Brothers in Christ	8:14	—	6	—	6

Table A11. Sermon illustrations in God’s Heirs: Romans 8—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Led by the Spirit	8:14	2	3	—	5
How to Know God’s Will	8:14	1	4	1	6
God’s Leading	8:14	2	5	—	7
God’s Sufficiency	8:14	5	4	—	9
Centered in Christ	8:15	2	4	—	6
The Spirit of Adoption	8:15	2	4	—	6
Father and Son	8:15	1	4	1	6
Witness of the Spirit	8:16	5	—	—	5
The Responsive Heart	8:16	2	3	1	6
Full Assurance on Sonship	8:16	3	2	—	5
A Sure Inheritance	8:17	3	6	—	9
Joint Heirs	8:17	1	2	—	3
Suffering and Glorification	8:17	1	1	—	2
Suffering and Glory	8:18	2	—	1	3
God in Control	8:19-21	1	2	—	3
Waiting for the Adoption	8:22-23	1	2	—	3
Divine Healing	8:23	—	2	—	2
Redeemed Bodies	8:23	—	—	1	1
A Life of Hope	8:24-25	6	5	—	11
Spirit’s Help in Prayer	8:26	4	2	—	6
How to Pray	8:26	2	1	1	4
Growing into His Likeness	8:26	2	1	2	5
Beyond Divine Expression	8:26	4	2	—	6

Table A11. Sermon illustrations in God's Heirs: Romans 8—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Prayer That Must Be Answered	8:27	3	1	2	6
The Plan of God	8:28	—	2	—	2
We Know	8:28	2	1	—	3
All Things	8:28	—	4	1	5
The People of God	8:28	3	4	—	7
God's Foreknowledge	8:29	3	1	—	4
The Image of His Son	8:29	3	1	—	4
God's Call	8:30	1	2	—	3
Our Justification	8:30	2	2	—	4
Our Glorification	8:30	3	4	—	7
A Trumpet Call	8:30	1	2	1	4
God is for Us	8:30	3	5	1	9
Perfect Salvation	8:32	1	2	—	3
Safe Forever	8:33	2	1	—	3
Christ in Our Place	8:34	3	2	—	5
At His Father's Right Hand	8:34	1	2	—	3
No Separation	8:35	3	2	1	6
Suffering for Christ's Sake	8:36	—	3	—	3
Sheep That Conquer	8:37	4	1	—	5
Where are the Dead, Part 1	8:38-39	—	4	—	4
Where are the Dead, Part 2	8:38-39	—	1	—	1
When Believers Die	8:38-39	2	2	1	5

Table A11. Sermon illustrations in God’s Heirs: Romans 8—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
No Separation	8:38-39	4	5	—	9
Life Cannot Separate Us	8:38-39	3	7	—	10
Our Omnipotent God	8:39	—	3	—	3
The God of Circumstance	8:39	1	1	1	3
The God of Judgment	8:39	1	2	—	3
Neither Height nor Depth	8:39	2	4	—	6
God’s Love in Christ	8:39	4	1	—	5
Totals		142	171	22	335
Averages		1.92	2.31	0.30	4.53

Table A12. Sermon illustrations in God's Covenants: Romans 9-11

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Israel Set Aside	9:1-3	2	2	—	4
Willingness to be Accursed	9:3	1	1	—	2
The Privilege of Israel	9:4	1	1	—	2
Oneness of Believers of All Ages	9:4	3	1	—	4
Power - Spiritual and Temporal	9:4	1	2	—	3
Israel's Glory	9:4	2	2	—	4
Messiah, God and Man	9:5	1	1	—	2
The Sovereignty of God in Election	9:6	—	2	—	2
God's Righteousness	9:14	1	2	—	3
Salvation is of God	9:16	2	2	—	4
God's Sovereign Will	9:17-18	1	3	—	4
God, Judge of the World	9:19-24	—	2	1	3
Election	9:21	—	—	1	1
God's Power and Grace	9:22-24	2	2	—	4
A Short Work	9:25-29	2	2	—	4
The Power of Negative Theology	9:30-33	—	2	—	2
Paul's Heart Desire	10:1-2	1	3	1	5
Two Kinds of Righteousness	10:2-3	3	2	—	5
Christ, Our Righteousness	10:3	1	3	—	4

Table A12. Sermon illustrations in God's Covenants: Romans 9-11—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Change of Administration	10:4	2	4	—	6
Righteousness of Faith	10:5-7	—	5	—	5
The Word We Preach	10:8	1	4	—	5
Man's Answer	10:9-10	1	5	2	8
Confession of Faith	10:9-10	2	7	—	9
Confession of Faith (cont.)	10:10	1	5	—	6
Complete Salvation	10:9-10	1	4	—	5
Believer Without Shame	10:11	2	3	1	6
Lord of All	10:12-13	—	3	1	4
Call on His Name	10:13	7	2	2	11
Reaching Sinner	10:14	2	3	—	5
Plea for Missions	10:14	1	8	—	9
How Beautiful the Feet	10:14	2	4	1	7
Disobedience and Unbelief	10:16	2	4	1	7
Faith and the Word	10:17	4	6	—	10
The Heavens Declare	10:18	—	4	—	4
Salvation for All	10:19	2	3	—	5
God's Arm Outstretched	10:20-21	4	6	—	10
God's People Not Cast Off	11:1	1	5	—	6
Men's Hearts Hardened	11:7-10	—	3	1	4
Gentile Blessings	11:11-15	4	4	—	8
Restoration for Israel	11:12-15	2	4	—	6
Grafted into the Olive Tree	11:16-18	2	6	—	8

Table A12. Sermon illustrations in God's Covenants: Romans 9-11—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Gentile Domination	11:19-22	1	5	—	6
Israel to be Restored	11:23-24	5	4	—	9
Israel's Deliverance	11:25-29	—	1	—	1
The Mercy of God	11:30-32	1	2	—	3
The Mind of God	11:33-36	4	2	—	6
Totals		81	156	12	249
Averages		1.65	3.18	0.24	5.08

Table A13. Sermon illustrations in God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Foundation for Christian Ethics	12:1	5	3	—	8
Christianity is Christ	12:1	1	5	—	6
Living Sacrifice	12:1	1	6	—	7
Dominated by the Spirit	12:1	2	5	1	8
Intelligent Worship	12:1	4	3	—	7
Christian Non-Conformist	12:2	2	4	—	6
How God Transforms the Christian	12:2	2	2	—	4
Triumph	12:2	4	5	—	9
Humility: Evidence of Consecration	12:3	3	6	—	9
What is the Church	12:4	1	3	1	5
The Church and the Churches	12:5	1	6	1	8
Fellowship of Gospel	12:5	1	1	—	2
Members	12:4-5	—	2	1	3
Diversity of Gifts	12:6	2	5	—	7
Prophets, Deacons, Teachers	12:6-8	2	5	—	7
Church Leadership and Training	12:6-8	2	1	—	3
Exhortation and Liberality	12:8	4	6	—	10

Table A13. Sermon illustrations in God's Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Administration and Compassionate Care	12:8	3	3	1	7
Love, the Great Indispensable	12:9	4	4	—	8
The Hatred of God	12:9	3	2	—	5
Goodness in Action	12:9	2	2	1	5
Love of the Brethren	12:10	1	6	—	7
The Christian's Business	12:11	1	5	—	6
The Christian's Hope	12:12	—	2	3	5
Christian in Adversity	12:12-14	5	1	—	6
Christian's Prayer Life	12:12	1	5	1	7
The Normal Christian	12:13-15	3	3	—	6
Importance of Christian Oneness	12:16-18	1	4	—	5
Christian's Vindication	12:19	1	3	—	4
Christian and His Enemies	12:20-21	3	1	1	5
Whence Comes Authority	13:1	2	2	—	4
Who Has Priority	13:1-3	1	6	—	7
What Price Revolution	13:2-3	2	3	—	5
Who Rules the Christian	13:3-4	—	5	1	6
The Church and Race Relations	13:5	1	1	2	4

Table A13. Sermon illustrations in God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Conscience - Nature and Origin	13:5	3	3	—	6
What are Our Obligations	13:7	1	7	—	8
The Christian and Debt	13:8	2	3	—	5
Consider One Another	13:8	2	3	—	5
The Law of Love	13:9-10	3	4	—	7
Does God Say When	13:11	—	2	1	3
The Folly of Setting Dates	13:11	1	4	—	5
It is Later Than You Think	13:11	1	1	—	2
Red Sky at Night	13:11	2	3	—	5
Our Future Salvation	13:11	1	4	—	5
Earth’s Darkest Hour	13:12	2	4	—	6
Two Days	13:12	1	—	—	1
Works of Darkness	13:12-14	3	2	—	5
Clothed with Christ	13:12-14	3	3	1	7
Doubtful Disputations	14:1	—	4	2	6
Not Robots but Sons	14:2-3	3	1	—	4
Answerable to God Alone	14:3-4	—	4	—	4
History of the Sabbath	14:5-6	—	1	—	1
Lord of the Sabbath	14:5-6	1	2	—	3
Sabbath in New Testament	14:5	3	—	—	3
The Day of Resurrection	14:5	1	2	—	3

Table A13. Sermon illustrations in God’s Discipline: Romans 12:1-14:12—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Believer and the First Day	14:6	—	4	—	4
Our Sabbath Rest	14:5	—	4	—	4
The Badge of Christ	14:7-8	1	4	—	5
Christ, Lord of All	14:8-9	2	2	1	5
The Coin with Two Sides	14:10	4	1	—	5
Judgment for Every Man	14:10	5	4	—	9
Is Forgiveness Enough	14:10	—	4	1	5
Written by God	14:11	3	2	—	5
Jesus and the Scriptures	14:11	2	1	1	4
Open Book, Open Eyes, Open Mind	14:11	2	5	—	7
Inspiration of Scriptures	14:11	4	2	—	6
Martin Luther’s Bible	14:11	2	1	1	4
The Oath of God	14:11	5	2	1	8
Every Knee Shall Bow	14:11	—	4	—	4
Every Tongue Confess	14:11	—	4	—	4
Chastening of the Lord	14:11	3	1	—	4
Deliberate Disobedience	14:11	2	4	—	6
Accounting to God	14:12	1	5	1	7
Totals		140	237	24	401
Averages		1.89	3.20	0.32	5.42

Table A14. Sermon illustrations in God's Glory: Romans 14:13-16:27

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Christian Conscience	14:13	6	5	—	11
Persuaded by Christ	14:14	5	3	—	8
Christian Liberty	14:15-16	3	2	—	5
What is the Kingdom	14:17	1	2	—	3
Kingdoms of This World	14:17	—	2	—	2
The Spiritual Kingdom	14:17	—	3	—	3
Parables - Secrets Revealed, Part 1	14:17	3	2	—	5
Parables - Secrets Revealed, Part 2	14:17	1	3	—	4
Parables - Secrets Revealed, Part 3	14:17	2	2	—	4
Christ's Future Kingdom on Earth, Part 1	14:17	2	1	—	3
Christ's Future Kingdom on Earth, Part 2	14:17	1	1	—	2
Not Rules, but Righteousness	14:17	2	1	—	3
What the Kingdom is Today	14:17	7	3	—	10
Favor with God and Man	14:17	3	5	—	8
Peacemakers for Christ	14:19	2	3	1	6
Responsibility for Christ's Flock	14:20-23	1	3	—	4

Table A14. Sermon illustrations in God's Glory: Romans 14:13-16:27—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Bearing with Others	15:1-2	3	2	—	5
The Debt of Love	15:3	2	4	—	6
No Greater Love	15:3	3	3	—	6
Christ and the Scripture	15:4	—	2	—	2
Encouragement of Scriptures	15:4	6	6	—	12
Lessons in Living	15:4	1	3	2	6
Like-minded in Christ	15:5	1	3	—	4
When God is Glorified	15:5-6	1	4	—	5
Israel's Greatest Teacher	15:8	—	3	—	3
Let the People Sing	15:9-11	2	4	1	7
Hope of the Gentiles	15:12	2	3	—	5
Greatness of God	15:13	3	5	—	8
When Faith Rejoices	15:13	3	4	—	7
The Blessed Life	15:13	4	4	—	8
Do You Really Believe	15:13	4	5	—	9
Blessed by Triune God	15:13	1	3	—	4
Power of Holy Spirit	15:13	2	1	—	3
Marks of Goodness	15:14	1	8	—	9
Faith that Knows	15:14	1	3	—	4
Art of Admonition	15:14	3	3	—	6
Serving as Priests	15:15-16	1	5	1	7
Proper Pride	15:17-18	6	5	—	11

Table A14. Sermon illustrations in God's Glory: Romans 14:13-16:27—*continued*

Sermon	Romans	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Obedient Heart	15:18	2	6	—	8
Words and Works	15:18	—	4	—	4
Signs and Wonders	15:19	2	3	—	5
Missionary with a Vision	15:19-20	3	7	—	10
When God Interferes	15:22-24	3	3	—	6
Stupidity of Stubbornness	15:25	2	2	—	4
The Grace of Giving	15:25-27	—	5	—	5
In the Fullness of Blessing	15:29	—	2	1	3
Praying for One Another	15:30-33	3	2	—	5
Springs of Refreshing	15:32-33	1	7	—	8
The Greatest Benediction	15:33	4	4	1	9
The Great Amen	15:33	3	5	—	8
Grace of Hospitality	16:1-2	1	5	1	7
Apostle Who Did Not Forget	16:3, 5- 16	3	4	—	7
Dividing the Flock	16:17-18	2	3	—	5
Joy of Obedience	16:19a	3	3	—	6
Wise unto Goodness	16:19b	6	8	—	14
Bruising of Satan	16:20	2	6	—	8
Little but Great	16:22-23	3	8	—	11
Established and Strengthened	16:25a	1	3	—	4
Totals		133	214	8	355
Averages		2.29	3.69	0.14	6.12

Table A15. Sermon illustrations in Romans as a whole

Romans volume	Number of sermons	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Romans 1	27	81	104	17	202
Romans 2:1-3:20	26	67	106	14	187
Romans 3:21-4:5	37	46	129	19	194
Romans 5:1-11	28	37	119	5	161
Romans 5:12-21	25	34	72	9	115
Romans 6-7	57	72	121	17	210
Romans 8	74	137	149	20	306
Romans 9-11	49	81	154	12	247
Romans 12:1-14:12	74	140	237	24	401
Romans 14:13-16:27	58	133	214	8	355
Totals	455	828	1405	145	2378
Averages		1.82	3.09	0.32	5.23

APPENDIX 7

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN THESSALONIANS

Table A16. Sermon illustrations in Thessalonians

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in chapter
1 Thess 1	1	4	2	7
1 Thess 2	3	6	—	9
1 Thess 3	1	3	—	4
1 Thess 4	2	7	—	9
1 Thess 5	2	8	1	11
2 Thess 1	—	2	—	2
2 Thess 2	—	1	—	1
2 Thess 3	—	1	—	1
Totals	9	32	3	44
Averages	1.13	4.00	0.38	5.50

APPENDIX 8

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN REVELATION

Table A17. Sermon illustrations in Revelation

Revelation	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
1:1-3	8	2	—	10
1:4-8	5	2	—	7
1:9-20	—	2	—	2
2:1-7	3	3	—	6
2:8-11	1	5	—	6
2:12-17	3	5	—	8
2:18-29	1	4	—	5
3:1-6	1	5	—	6
3:7-13	1	1	—	2
3:14-22	2	4	—	6
4:1-5	1	1	—	2
4:6-11	—	1	—	1
5:1-7	1	2	—	3
5:8-14	—	2	—	2
6:1-2	3	—	—	3
6:3-8	2	1	—	3
6:9-11	1	2	—	3
6:12-17	3	4	—	7
7:1-8	1	—	—	1

Table A17. Sermon illustrations in Revelation—*continued*

Revelation	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
7:9-17	—	2	—	2
8:1-5	1	—	—	1
8:6-12	2	3	—	5
8:13-9:12	1	5	—	6
9:13-21	1	—	—	1
10:1-7	—	2	—	2
10:7-11	1	1	—	2
11:1-2	1	—	—	1
11:3-12	—	2	—	2
11:13-18	3	2	—	5
11:19-12:6	—	2	—	2
12:7-10	1	2	—	3
12:11-17	—	2	—	2
13:1-10	—	2	—	2
13:11-15	1	3	—	4
13:16-18	1	2	—	3
14:1-5	1	—	—	1
14:6-8	1	3	—	4
14:9-13	1	4	—	5
14:14-20	—	4	—	4
15:1-16:1	—	1	—	1
Totals	53	88	0	141
Averages	1.33	2.20	0.00	3.53

APPENDIX 9

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN TOPICAL SERMONS

Table A18. Sermon illustrations in His Own Received Him Not

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
He Came to His Own: The Jews	1	—	—	1
The Constitution and the Kingdom	1	3	—	4
Is the Sermon on the Mount for Today?	—	2	—	2
Christ and the Law	1	2	—	3
Christ's Great Crisis	3	2	—	5
The First New Word: Woe	1	3	—	4
The Second New Word: Come	2	4	—	6
Christ and the Sabbath	1	1	—	2
The Third New Word: Gentiles	3	2	—	5
Devil or God?	1	3	—	4
Jesus Answers Back	1	—	—	1
When Men Thought Christ Crazy	—	1	—	1
The Day of Parables	—	—	—	0
The Last New Word	—	2	—	2
Totals	15	25	0	40
Averages	1.07	1.79	0.00	2.86

Table A19. Sermon illustrations in *Life by the Son*

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Assurance	8	7	3	18
Knowledge	4	8	3	15
Cleansing	7	9	1	17
Walking	5	12	1	18
Lessons from Drunkenness	2	3	1	6
Totals	26	39	9	74
Averages	5.20	7.80	1.80	14.80

The sermons in *Life by the Son*, 1939, were also published as *The Keswick Convention 1938: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1938). They are included in Table A24, “Sermon illustrations in sermons from Keswick,” but are counted only once in the total for sermons analyzed. They are only counted once in the totals in Table A26 and once in the totals of Table A27.

Table A20. Sermon illustrations in Guaranteed Deposits

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in chapter
Guaranteed Deposits	3	8	—	11
God's Deposit	3	2	—	5
The Provision for Sonship	2	1	—	3
The Marks of Sonship	3	3	1	7
Separated Christians	3	1	1	5
Good Works and How to Have Them	—	4	—	4
Paradoxes of the Christian Life	6	5	—	11
God's Command to Believe	3	1	—	4
Some Do Not Believe	2	3	—	5
What We Were and What We Are	1	4	1	6
Where We Were and Where We Are	—	3	—	3
What and Where We Shall Be	2	3	—	5
Totals	28	38	3	69
Averages	2.33	3.17	0.25	5.75

Table A21. Sermon illustrations in God’s Methods for Holy Living

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
The Power of Bible Study	6	12	1	19
The Power of Christ’s Love	5	5	1	11
The Power of the Blessed Hope	4	12	2	18
The Power of the Spirit	2	8	1	11
Totals	17	37	5	59
Averages	4.25	9.25	1.25	14.75

The sermons in *God’s Methods for Holy Living*, 1951, were previously published as *The Keswick Convention 1936: Notes of the Addresses Revised by the Speakers* (London: Pickering and Inglis, 1936). The sermons are included in Table A24, “Sermon illustrations in sermons from Keswick,” but are counted only once in the total for sermons analyzed. They are only counted once in the totals in Table A26 and once in the totals of Table A27.

Table A22. Sermon illustrations in The Cross through the Open Tomb

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
Risen from the Tomb	1	4	—	5
Jesus the Risen Christ	1	3	—	4
Identified with the Risen Christ	1	5	—	6
Knowing the Risen Christ	3	9	—	12
The Gift of the Risen Christ	1	5	—	6
Our Unique Christ	1	1	—	2
The Indispensable Christ	4	1	—	5
The Surrendered Christ	2	2	1	5
The Exalted Christ	—	2	—	2
The Promises of God	5	6	1	12
Falling into Grace	3	4	—	7
The Scales of God	1	4	—	5
Paid in Full	4	1	1	6
God's Command to Believe	2	1	—	3
Marks of Sonship	5	3	—	8
Marks of the Christian Walk	5	5	—	10
Marks of True Confession	3	3	—	6
Marks of True Devotion	—	—	1	1
Totals	42	59	4	105
Averages	2.33	3.28	0.22	5.83

Table A23. Sermon illustrations in individual sermons from compilations

Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
When God Laughs	3	3	—	6
God's Peace on Earth: A Farce or a Force	3	1	1	5
Your Right to Heaven	2	3	3	8
Justification without a Cause	3	2	3	8
Totals	11	9	7	27
Averages	2.75	2.25	1.75	6.75

Table A24. Sermon illustrations in sermons from Keswick

Year	Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
1935	Whom God Struck Dead	3	5	—	8
1936	The Power of Bible Study	6	12	1	19
1936	The Power of Christ's Love	5	5	1	11
1936	The Power of the Blessed Hope	4	12	2	18
1936	The Power of the Spirit	2	8	1	11
1938	Assurance	8	7	3	18
1938	Knowledge	4	8	3	15
1938	Cleansing	7	9	1	17
1938	Walking; The Day-by-Day Christian Life	5	12	1	18
1938	Lessons from Drunkenness	2	3	1	6
1946	Fallen into Grace	2	6		8
1946	The "Geography" of the Heavens	6	5	1	12
1946	Access into the Heavens	1	6	1	8
1946	Heaven Now	2	8	1	11
1946	Spending Our Inheritance	4	5	1	10
1946	The Struggle and the Rest of Life	3	10	1	14
1948	Baptized into Christ: Meaning of the Term Baptism	2	7	1	10
1948	Baptized into Christ: Into His Election, Virgin Birth, and Circumcision	2	5	1	8

Table A24. Sermon illustrations in sermons from Keswick—*continued*

Year	Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
1948	Baptized into Christ: Into His Election, Virgin Birth, and Circumcision	2	5	1	8
1948	Baptized into Christ: Into His Increase, Baptism, Temptation, and Ministry	2	14	—	16
1948	Baptized into Christ: Into His Ascension and Glorification	—	8	—	8
1951	The Second Coming of Christ	3	9	—	12
1951	God’s Sample Man: The Holiness and Sovereignty of God	8	5	—	13
1951	God’s Sample Man: The Growth of a Soul	4	3	—	7
1951	God’s Sample Man: Stars and Sacrifice	8	3	—	11
1951	Earthquake in the Soul	3	4	—	7
1951	God’s Sample Man: The Breath of God	5	3	—	8
1953	Righteousness Without the Law	4	5	—	9
1953	The Glory of Christ Our Lord	2	8	—	10
1953	The Righteousness of God	7	6	1	14
1953	The Holy Breath of God	8	7	—	15

Table A24. Sermon illustrations in sermons from Keswick—*continued*

Year	Sermon	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermon
1953	Reigning in Life Through Christ	4	4	1	9
1954	The Sin of Christians	3	8	1	12
1955	Great Themes of the Gospel: Relationship to Christ in Regeneration	9	8	1	18
1955	Great Themes of the Gospel: Assurance of Eternal Life	9	11	1	21
1955	Great Themes of the Gospel: The Christian's Resources	6	15	2	23
1955	Great Themes of the Gospel: The Sovereignty of God	4	7	3	14
1955	Great Themes of the Gospel: The Enthronement of Our Lord Jesus Christ	9	6	—	15
	Totals	166	267	31	464
	Averages	4.49	7.22	0.84	12.54

APPENDIX 10

SERMON ILLUSTRATIONS IN TOTAL

Table A25. Sermon illustrations in all Bible books analyzed

Table	Sermon series	Number of sermons	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermons
A1	Genesis	50	48	49	0	97
A2	Mark	40	48	74	13	135
A3	John	22	46	77	11	134
A4	Acts	5	10	18	0	28
A5	Romans	455	828	1405	145	2378
A6	Thessalonians	8	9	32	3	44
A7	Revelation	40	53	88	0	141
	Totals	620	1042	1743	172	2957
	Averages		1.68	2.81	0.28	4.77

Table A26. Sermon illustrations in all topical sermons analyzed

Table	Series	Sermons in Series	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermons
A18	His Own Received Him Not	14	15	25	0	40
A19	Life by the Son	5	26	39	9	74
A20	Guaranteed Deposits	12	27	38	3	68
A21	God's Methods for Holy Living	4	17	37	5	59
A22	The Cross through the Open Tomb	18	42	59	4	105
A23	From compilations	4	11	9	7	27
A24	From Keswick	28	123	191	17	331
	Totals	85	261	398	45	704
	Averages		3.07	4.68	0.53	8.28

The "From Keswick" sermons in this table exclude *Life by the Son* and *God's Methods for Holy Living* since they are already counted as their own series.

Table A27. Sermon illustrations in all sermons analyzed

Table	Sermons	Number of sermons	Analogy	Anecdote	Story	Total in sermons
A25	All Bible books analyzed	620	1042	1743	172	2957
A26	All topical sermons analyzed	85	261	398	45	704
	Totals	705	1303	2141	217	3661
	Averages		1.85	3.04	0.31	5.19

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## ABSTRACT

### ONLY THE MESSENGER: DONALD GREY BARNHOUSE'S ILLUSTRATIVE PREACHING AS A COMMITMENT TO BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2019  
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This dissertation answers the question of how Donald Grey Barnhouse's sermon illustrations served his homiletical commitment to the authority of the Bible. Illustrations communicate truth "by the shortest route and in the quickest time."

Chapter 1 states the thesis. While Barnhouse remained within the increasingly liberal Presbyterian Church through his ministry, he did not abandon his fundamental commitments. Despite a strategic shift in ministry partnerships during the last decade of his life, Barnhouse remained faithful to biblical authority throughout his ministry.

Chapters 2 and 3 explore Barnhouse's theological commitments. Chapter 2 surveys his theological training and his early ministry. He faced ministry challenges and ecclesiastical trial. His training and ministry confirmed his reliance upon the authority of the Bible.

Chapter 3 examines Barnhouse's lifetime of ministry. Barnhouse's evangelical priorities were challenged by his New Year's Resolution of 1953 which revealed his broader willingness to partner with others within his increasingly liberal denomination. The chapter offers evidence of Barnhouse's continuing commitment to evangelical theology to the very end of his ministry.

Chapter 4 turns attention to Barnhouse's homiletical strategy based on his own descriptions and an analysis of his published sermons. He considered himself a

messenger boy who came with a message from another. Barnhouse's use of illustrations served his exegetical priorities by making the text clear for listeners in contrast to the strategy of Harry Emerson Fosdick.

Chapter 5 examines the role of sermon illustrations to illuminate a text. The chapter explores the biblical and cultural context to affirm the importance of sermon illustrations and offers a theological and practical framework to analyze Barnhouse's sermon illustrations.

Chapter 6 analyzes the illustrative strategy through Barnhouse's published sermons. His preaching is full of analogies, anecdotes, and stories. Illustrations serve his purpose of expounding the text. Each of Barnhouse's published sermons is examined to identify the importance of illustrations in his preaching.

Chapter 7 offers conclusions on the main research questions. Barnhouse maintained his theological orthodoxy throughout his ministry and his sermon illustrations serve his commitment to Scripture's authority. Barnhouse considered himself only the telegram boy delivering the message.

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