

EDITORIAL

Opinion and memory combine to convince me that some years are better than others. Two sobering years stand out for me personally and in particular: 1975, when my fourteen-year-old son Glenn suffered an aneurysm and required over five hours of delicate brain surgery to save his life; and 1984, when two pit bulldogs attacked me and shredded my right forearm almost beyond recognition. Such experiences, though fleeting overall, profoundly affect one's life for months and years afterward.

But what kind of year was 1990? To borrow a phrase from Frank Sinatra, for me personally and in particular "it was a very good year." Glenn sired Nathan Isaac Youngblood and, in so doing, made Carolyn a grandmother and me a grandfather for the first time. During the annual meetings of the Baptist General Conference in Cincinnati my daughter Wendy and her husband, Daryl Morrissey, were presented to the assembled delegates as missionary candidates to Thailand. 1990 was also the tenth anniversary of the beginning of my work as associate editor of and contributor to the *New International Version Study Bible* (the most significant writing project that I have worked on to this point), the twentieth anniversary of the beginning of my work as a translator-editor of the *NIV* (the highwater mark of my professional career to date), and the twenty-fifth anniversary of my teaching ministry at Bethel Theological Seminary (seventeen years in St. Paul, eight years in San Diego). In addition, as a result of building projects and subsequent relocations it was my privilege in 1965 in St. Paul to move my office from the old campus to the new and then to do the same thing in 1990 in San Diego, twenty-five years later.

At the tender age of eight years, I was attending a junior-church service one morning at Lorimer Memorial Baptist Church on Chicago's south side. Something that the speaker, Mrs. Esther Everard, said on that occasion touched my heart, and I went forward at the invitation. Deacon Leo Hull took me to an inquiry room and explained the plan of salvation to me. I turned my life over to the Lord Jesus Christ, and Pastor I. Cedric Peterson baptized me at Lorimer in 1940 on Easter Sunday morning. Last year, by the mercy of our great God, I celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of my new birth.

On Sunday night, April 22, 1990, Lorimer Memorial Baptist Church (now located in Dolton, Illinois) concluded its commemoration of its centennial year. Fifty years earlier and more, its loving pastoral staff and caring people had faithfully witnessed not only to me but also to my extended family, and within a few short months nearly every family member was swept into the kingdom of God. Coming from all over the United States,

everyone who could attend (including my parents, Bill and Ethel Youngblood) was at the evening service on April 22. My uncle Arne led the singing, my aunt Evelyn played the piano, my uncle Carl and aunt Joan sang a duet, and I had been asked to reminisce a bit and to give my testimony at a banquet the previous evening. My uncle Ramon and aunt Eleanor, whom I had not seen for many years and who had invited the rest of the members of our clan to Lorimer fifty long years ago, were also in attendance. And who was the speaker at the hundredth anniversary service on April 22? I. Cedric Peterson, still hale, hearty, and able to stir the souls of his hearers after many years of retirement.

Serendipitously, 1990 also turns out to have been the best year in ETS history in terms not only of membership in our Society but also of registration and attendance at our annual meetings. It also marks the first time that we added a sentence to the wording of our doctrinal basis. Finally, it was the fifteenth anniversary of my service as editor of our *Journal*.

Even as I write these thoughts at the beginning of 1991, the future seems rather bleak. Allied forces are flying thousands of sorties over Iraq and Kuwait; banks are joining savings and loan institutions on an ever-worsening slide into financial collapse; rock stars and museum exhibitors continue to provide new highs (or lows) in obscenity and pornography. It would be easy indeed to fall prey to despair.

But as radio commentator Paul Harvey has said, "In times like these, it helps to recall that there have always been times like these." I therefore welcome you to a ministry of accentuating the positive as we begin the final decade of the second millennium. *JETS* celebrates the new year with Bob Thomas' call to holiness and Tom Oden's invitation to consensual exegesis, both in the current issue. Alister McGrath's exposition of the linkage between doctrine and ethics (coming in June) and his setting forth of Jesus as the quintessential moral example (September) are only two of the treats in store for all of us in 1991.

A footnote: Kudos to the United States Postal Service for its encouragement to us, and to our advertisers for their confidence in us, as we open yet another chapter in the ongoing ministry of *JETS*.