

A stable center point in a high-speed age

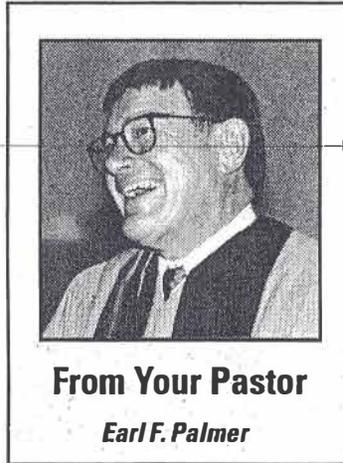
It was Blaise Pascal who said, "nothing stays put for us." Was he on to something about us? What a description of the high-speed century 2000 we now are getting used to. Everything seems to be briefer than before. Job opportunities are opening up because of new technology at the fastest rate we can remember, and that means that people change jobs after shorter tenures than before; people move a lot, too.

The question I want to ask is this: How do we find a settled and stable center point for our lives and our families when speed, changes and opportunities for transition are the norm not the exception?

I have three suggestions that come from the Bible:

Of first importance is the Living Center of the Bible. The center pointed to in the Old Testament by anticipation and the New Testament in witness is Jesus Christ.

If I have a growing discipleship relationship with Jesus Christ, the signing bonus/salary and benefits I receive are three stabilities: *faith* that trusts Christ in the present; the *hope* that counts on His faithfulness for the future and the *love* Christ gives here and now that flows in and around my life with



forgiveness for failure and motivation for life choices. These three are steady markers, and keep me focused when everything else is fast and changeable.

Of next importance throughout the Bible are the people in and around my life. I have worth because of Christ and so do all the others I meet. When Peter was discouraged his friends stayed with him; he needed them because he

was designed by the Master Builder to have friends.

This is where the Christian fellowship of the church plays its stabilizing role in our lives. I have never met a lone Christian. Every Christian I meet is helped in his/her faith journey by other ordinary believers.

My advice is this. Relate to people as if you are going to know them for the rest of your life. Put roots down wherever you are. Even though the job you now work at may be brief, think in your mind of the relationships as permanent. This alone will stabilize and anchor your life. Go to church every week and visit with the people you meet. Find a place to serve, a place to study, a group of people who will pray for you and you for them.

Of third importance is a way of looking at time itself that makes you a steward of time and not a victim. The fourth commandment helps us here. This is the six days-one day command that teaches us to look at our life in terms of one week after the other and then to steward our time toward a rhythm of the week between work and rest, play and study, time alone, and time with others. It is the rhythmic week that is the stability of life, not a year or month or day.

Is everything fast? It may seem that way but each day is still 24 hours and each week still seven days. There are solid stabilities and we can find them. No one can do this for us but it helps to know that Jesus Christ who is the Lord of all time is also the Shepherd Lord of the seven.