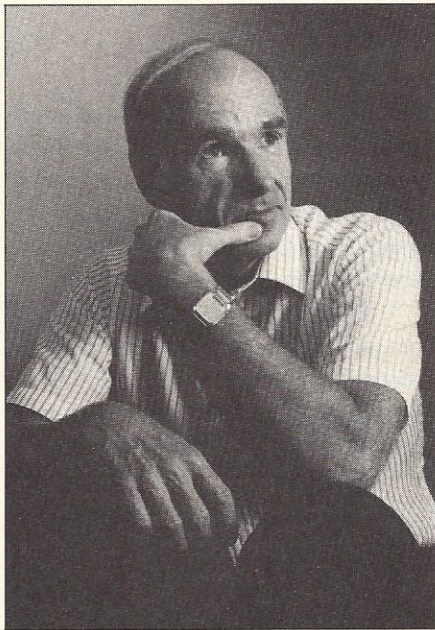


PROFITABLE FELLOWSHIP



Every pastor I know feels it is important for pastors to fellowship with each other. Every time I sit down with other pastors I am strengthened and renewed. I enjoy time with my peers—be they pastors of superchurches or storefront missions. I enjoy sitting down with priests, seminary professors, missionaries and evangelists. It makes no difference whether they are liturgical, evangelical or Pentecostal. Fellowshiping with other shepherds makes me a better man.

I do a lot of it. Once a year, usually in the fall, I fly out to Arizona to meet with about 100 pastors in a remote retreat lodge. In the winter I join Doug



Murren and Jerry Cook to lead a pastors' retreat in the Seattle area. Every May I try to meet with a group of 50 Catholic and Protestant leaders at a Catholic retreat center near St. Louis. I attend the annual Idea Exchange for bigwigs, and I serve as president of the National Leadership Conference which hosts 1,500 pastors every year at Ridgecrest, North Carolina. I am a founding trustee of the Charismatic Bible Ministries which draws 6,000 pastors for a June meeting at ORU in Tulsa. And in February of this year I will speak at James Robison's pastors' conference which draws 15,000 to Ft. Worth.

Each meeting, the shepherds tell me, is like an oasis in the desert. But you cannot live at an oasis. Pastors, at least those who can afford it, come

to these meetings and absorb all they can. They leave with their briefcases bulging with tapes and printed materials for they know they are often going to be on their own until the next conference. The local ministerial associations simply do not meet the need. And unless you live in a city like Phoenix that has a man like Hal Sacks who is called to minister to pastors, or Orlando where Benny Hinn's monthly pastors' luncheon meets a real need, your fellowship may be limited to denominational meetings or occasional chance encounters with another pastor in town. The unfortunate truth is unless pastors "pull aside" in a retreat setting, they seldom fellowship with one another.

I want *Ministries Today* to become your bimonthly pastors' retreat—in print. God has ordained this magazine to help fill the gaps in your life: to inform you, to equip you, to give you new insight. Unlike magazines which readers flip through until they find something interesting, I envision every reader sitting down in a quiet place with MT—and thoroughly reading every article, every ad. In short, I take my new position as a sacred trust, dedicating my life and these pages to equip ministers to lead—to equip leaders to minister. **M**

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