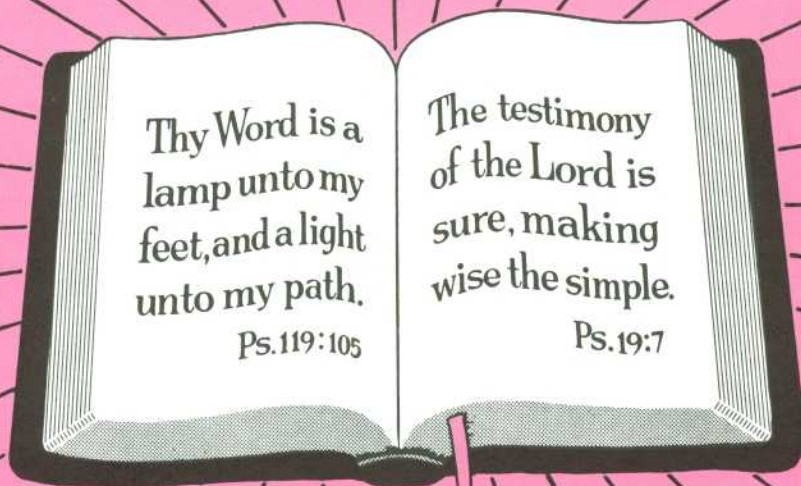


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



Wrapped in Humility

What About the News?

How To Stay Mentally Fit

Run, Run, Run!

What Difference Does Faith Make?

DOES GENUINE Christian faith really make a difference in real life? Does it actually have the power to take hold of us and set life on a new course? Or is the vocabulary of faith merely a set of powerless, pious phrases?

Questions like these are natural and need answering, for they touch the vital aspects of the life God requires. Exactly what is that life? What is its definition? its possibility? its reality?

What difference does faith make? What sort of pretension does the Church make by calling itself the communion of the saints? What is the difference between the church and any other organization? What is the difference between "him that serveth God" and "him that serveth him not"? What sets the church community apart from the rest of the world as a powerful force for God and for good?

The answer lies in none other than the tremendous power of God unto salvation that is inherent in the gospel. Nothing else in the wide world can assure life. Nothing else in the wide world can rescue from the tyranny of mortality. Nothing else can make the future sure.

This is the difference faith makes, a difference between life and death.

What has happened through the years? What is the record of the church? Has it made good, at any time, on this title? Or has nothing really changed? When we decide to serve God, are we the same people we have always been, living our unchanged lives in an unchanged world?

There is only one answer to this question: If we are, then we have no part with faith.

The question of what faith really changes within us is important from several aspects. First, it changes our outlook. It lifts our sights from the horizons of this world to the "world to come, whereof we speak." It takes our mind's eye completely off the things of the present and focuses upon what God has promised for the future.

Second, it tells us what we can—and must—be-

come. God does not want the person we *were*. He wants the person we *can become*. The Biblical picture of holiness indicates a radical altering of our life, a drastic and thorough rerouting of all our desires, ambitions, and energies; an about-face in our very existence. The apostle Paul describes it as the "new self," remade after the pattern of God's will (Eph. 4:24, JB). The apostle Peter compared it to a "newborn babe" (I Pet. 2:1-2). Always when the Christ-life is spoken of it is something new, perfect, beautiful. Over against lies, bitterness, and hostility, new hope and life have come; over against darkness, new light.

So complete will be the change, in fact, that life can never be the same again. It will create a crisis with reference to the future: without holiness, no one "shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14); hence, if we would benefit from our faith, *we must be holy*.

The Old Testament, too, presents the question: Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord and who shall stand in His holy city? It gives its own answer: Only he whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure; who pays no heed to falsehood, nor swears falsely (Psalm 24).

Israel was not allowed to substitute cultic piety for real faith—there was to be no fancied flight into feasts, holy days, and sacrifices, as if these would fulfill their duty to God. Nor is the Christian Church permitted to substitute outward acts of piety to avoid the mandate for a personal change of life. If life is not altered, if we do not progress toward a new life style, we must get ready for the Apostle's terribly serious indictment.

Nor can we take comfort in the idea that holiness comes all in one huge bundle and—suddenly—we have it! The Christian life is a growth, and it must be going on right here and now, even if it contradicts the former way of life. If there is no change, then there is no progress.

Too often we judge others hastily and overlook our own transgressions. And if our own are mentioned, we quickly point to the obvious weaknesses of all in the Christian brotherhood, recalling what James said about

(Continued on page 9)

Megiddo means

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (II Cor. 10:4-5).

We believe

—in God the Creator of all things, all men, and all life.

We believe

—in the Bible as containing the genuine revelation of God and His purposes for men, and as being our only source of divine knowledge today.

We believe

—in Christ the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was born of a Virgin, ministered among men, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

We believe

—in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.

We believe

—in all mankind as providing the nucleus from which a superior, God-honoring people shall be chosen to receive the blessings of immortal life.

We believe

—in ourselves as capable of fulfilling the demands and disciplines given us in the law of God, thus perfecting that high quality of character which God has promised to reward with life everlasting in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

We believe

—in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth will be filled with His glory, His people, and His will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Bible quotations

Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version. Other versions are identified as follows:

NEB—New English Bible

NIV—New International Version

NAS—New American Standard

RSV—Revised Standard Version

TLB—The Living Bible

TEV—Today's English Version

JB—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition

Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English

Berkeley—The Modern Language New Testament

Weymouth—The New Testament in Modern Speech

Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation

Williams—The New Testament, A Translation in the Language of the People

Rotherham—The Emphasized Old Testament

The use of selected references from various versions of the Bible does not necessarily imply publisher endorsement of the versions in their entirety.

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MEGIDDO is a way of believing and living, grounded solidly in the Bible as the reliable Word of our Creator. A total view of life, the world and the universe, it sees all events, men and nations moving together toward one God-ordained climax: the Kingdom of God on earth. This has been the plan of God since the beginning. Christ will return visibly, bodily, as King, and the governments of this world will be joined to form a totally new worldwide government. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants. This is the purpose and goal of all creation.

Wrapped in Humility

Scripture Reading: I Peter 5:1-7

HUMILITY has been called the "fairest flower that grows in the garden of virtue." Its loveliness has been dressed in many figures. It has been illustrated by the maturing grain: the riper the grain, the lower it bows its head.

The apostle Paul described humility as part of a new nature to be put on: "As God's picked representatives, purified and beloved, put on that nature which is merciful in action, kindly in heart, and humble in mind" (Col. 3:12, Phillips Translation). He besought his brethren to "walk worthy of the vocation" wherewith they were called "with all lowliness, and meekness" (Eph. 4:1-2). To Paul, humility was the mental disposition which would promote the right relationship between all the parts and the whole, so that all could keep "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

The apostle Peter had a similar esteem for the lofty virtue of humility and used yet another metaphor to describe it. He thought of it as a virtue that should be as all-encompassing as a garment; we should be wrapped in humility. "You younger men," he wrote, "must be subordinate to your elders. Indeed, all of you should wrap yourselves in the garment of humility towards each other, because God sets his face against the arrogant but favours the humble. Humble yourselves then under God's mighty hand, and he will lift you up in due time" (I Pet. 5:5-7, NEB).

All of God's servants in every age have been possessors of this holy and beautiful virtue; they have all, in the words of Peter, "wrapped" themselves in humility. They have all been clothed with this virtue which forms an essential part of the fine linen clean and white, "the righteousness of saints" (Rev. 19:7-8). As aspiring "saints," we want to follow their example. If we would someday be privileged to stand among them and share their inheritance, we—you and I—must acquire this

beautiful garment and wrap ourselves in it. We must become what God calls humble.

But before we think more about humility, perhaps we need to take a look at its counterpart: pride.

Pride, Ugly Pride

There is something about pride that is a bit hard to talk about. It makes us uncomfortable, as if to mention it were self-deflating. Humility is so much more soothing and pleasant. Even if we have it not, we want others to *think* we're humble. The story is told of an elderly bishop who was examining a class of candidates for the ministry. He asked them if they had not a strong desire for preeminence in their chosen work. They all replied, with feigned humility, that such was not their desire. Said the bishop, "Then you are a sorry lot, all of you." He went on to say that God wants us to seek greatness. "Just be sure," he cautioned, "that it is *real* greatness you are after."

But our desire for greatness is so easily self-centered and self-bound, and we are caught in the web of pride. How can we escape? Its varieties are so many and its means so devious that to completely compass the subject is impossible. Pride of place and face and grace, pride of ability, accomplishment, ancestry; pride of money, intellect, power—the possibilities are endless. We may even be proud of our humility.

In the apocryphal book of Ecclesiasticus is a text which reads, "Pride is the beginning of sin." We might add that it is also the end; in the final analysis it will be found that none but the proud have erred from the truth.

Oh, let us beware! A trait so unbecoming—and so common among the human family—who can say he is completely free of it? Let us each look to ourselves. There is no other single vice which the Bible mentions

so many times. Properly titled, pride is the universal abomination. Everyone is by nature proud of something. We can know this because the apostle Paul issued his warning against it "to every man that is among you" (Rom. 12:3). There were not a few offenders—everyone needed the warning.

Proud of Pride

Pride, ugly pride. The trouble is, we find it so much more ugly looking in others than in ourselves. Who do they think they are anyway, poor mortals of dust! we say to ourselves. Some people have even gone so far as to end their life, rather than face a loss of pride. A one-time dictator of Italy said he would rather live one day as a lion than a thousand days as a lamb. He was proud of his pride! And just an ordinary man of the street was recently heard to say of himself that he was *never* wrong. No, upon second thought, that wasn't quite right. There was one time he was wrong—it was when he *thought* he was wrong, but when the facts were all in, he was mistaken!

Yes, God forbids it, we know, but our actions show that we *love* our pride. Carefully tucked away in the secret recesses of our hearts, we watch over it tenderly. Every little while we give it a nudge. We coddle it, warm it, cherish it, and nurse it when it gets hurt. Oh, *when* shall we get deadly serious about the accursed thing and realize that playing with it is really akin to committing suicide on the installment plan!

Is it not written plainly enough that "Pride"—my pride, your pride, the pride of the world, *all* pride—"goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall"? (Prov. 16:18). Again, "The Lord will destroy the house of the proud" (Prov. 15:25). "A man's pride shall bring him low", (Prov. 29:23). "When pride cometh, then cometh shame" (Prov. 11:2). Also, "God resisteth the proud" (I Pet. 5:5). There is no question what God thinks of pride.

Prone to Pride

Yet we are so prone to pride. The prophet Isaiah described it when he spoke of a class of people who worship "the work of their own hands, that which their own fingers have made" (Isa. 2:8). Have we not been guilty? A piece of work that *we* have done seems to look so much better than as if someone else had made it. It has an added glamor, as if surrounded by a sort of invisible halo.

Self looms large, being our nearest of kin, and is always on the job to make a case in his own defense. He reasons: This piece of work that I have just finished

"God resisteth the proud"—there is no question what God thinks of pride.

is not only *better* than others could have made it, but I have done it in far less *time* than they would have taken. Or, this composition I have just written covers the subject adequately, without being wordy, and is the last word in lucidity; no one should criticize it. Or perhaps, I managed the sale of that piece of property better than anyone else could have. Or, I am a better-than-average driver. Or, I am more careful about my work than most people, and so make fewer mistakes. Or, I own the finest house on the street, and keep the best lawn.

The possibilities are endless, but the result is the same: a clear case of thinking more highly of ourselves than we ought to think, and the absence of the garment of humility. We may not say it; our conversation may not be heavily sprinkled with "I, King I"; but what do we *think*? Isn't it the *thought* that Paul warned us against, the man who is *thinking* more highly of himself than he ought to think?

Someone has conjectured that there is nothing the angels behold with such supreme astonishment as a proud mortal. And when we think of the angels' celestial home, their immortal associates, and their complete freedom from the thousand limitations that plague us, we wonder, too.

"Oh, why should the spirit of mortals be proud! Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud, a flash of lightning, a break of the wave, and man passes from life to his rest in the grave." When we try to imagine what the angels must be continually witnessing of the greatness and magnificence of God, of the wonders and vastness of His creative genius, the billions upon billions of worlds in galaxies without number—truly, is there any greater contradiction of terms than a *proud mortal*?

Ego and Egoism

The English noun "ego," with its distasteful inferences, carries the idea that self is the center of everything. "Ego" is literally the Greek word for "I." Webster defines "egoism" as the doctrine that everything is uncertain but the fact of one's existence. Thus ego, as it occurs in the natural man, is the sleazy side of the

carnal nature that wants to be important, whatever the price; that wants to surpass, whatever the consequences; that wants to achieve, whatever the goal. In fields of psychology it is called "the dominant impulse in human nature." The egotistic disposition, born in every child, tends to grow as the person grows. Even unimportant people want to feel important, and do little things to accent this importance. They will wear a gaudy button, don a never-seen-before uniform, wear an outlandish hat, even behave indecently or commit some crime—anything to be noticed. It is said that even Napoleon stooped to such pettiness, running his empire on buttons, ribbons, medals and titles.

This insatiable desire for a place in the sun is nothing new with modern times. We recall the pride of David, which caused him to sin so grievously in numbering Israel, to find out how great his Kingdom had grown.

We recall the pride of the mother of Zebedee's sons—or of the sons themselves! (see Mark 10:35)—who

came to Jesus desiring to be granted the highest positions of honor in Christ's kingdom. We recall the Twelve on that last night before Jesus' crucifixion; with such weighty and crucial issues at hand, there was a "strife" among them, which should be the greatest (Luke 22:24). What was Jesus' reply to their pettiness? Such "strivings" were for the officials of *this* world—"but ye shall not be so" (v. 26).

The apostle John condemns the "pride of life" as part of the world and destined to perish with it (I John 2:16-17). In the catalogue of evils that proceed from the human heart, according to Jesus, we find pride in the company of such things as fornication, theft, murder, deceit, and foolishness (Mark 7:21-23). It is an attitude totally unbecoming to the Christian. The Christian, above all people, has no justifiable reason for pride. As the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it,

Let Us Pray . . .

O Lord our God, Thou high and lofty Being who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy: from the restless movement and quickened pace of our daily lives we draw aside this hour to catch the rhythms of Thy peace. Thou, whose ways are so much higher than our ways, whose thoughts are as far above our thoughts as the heavens are above the earth, we come to Thee. We come, seeking Thee while Thou mayest be found, calling upon Thee while Thou art near.

Lord, in humble gratitude we approach Thee. Thou crownest our years with Thy goodness; every good and perfect gift that we enjoy cometh of Thee, and whatever the offering we bring, Lord, it is all Thine own. Nothing in the whole of our lives can we claim as our very own except—alas!—our sins and failures.

O Thou to whom are known the secrets of our hearts, help us to see ourselves as Thou dost see us and to dispel everything Thou canst not bless. Break through the colored windows of our too-exalted selves and make us Thine, wholly Thine. Fill, we pray, the high rooms of our souls as once Thou didst fill Thy holy temple with Thy glory, that every aspect of

our lives may be influenced by Thee and every lowly feature may radiate Thy glory.

Lord, we come confessing our sins against Thy holiness. We have thought too much of ourselves; we have worshiped the work of our own hands instead of Thee. We have suffered from hurt pride when we should have had no pride to hurt. We have put our thoughts ahead of Thine and our opinion ahead of that decreed by Thee.

We seek Thy forgiveness, O God, and a total wrapping in the garment of humility. Grant us that meekness that is exalting in Thee, that disposition of will, that set of values, that way of judging that is peculiarly Thine. Help us always to place Thee ahead of ourselves, Thy will above ours, and Thy law above our fondest earthly desire. Remind us, Lord, that we are not our own; we are Thine; and the credit for whatever we undertake is also Thine. In working, we are Thy tools. In speaking, we are Thy mouthpiece. In living, we are the instruments of Thy peace. Help us in all to be responsible stewards and wait patiently for Thy abundant honor in the world to come.

Our gracious Father, unite us this hour with Thy people everywhere, and bid us all magnify Thee. And if, as we stand in Thy presence some of our thoughts are disturbed, our preconceptions examined, our suppositions questioned, our self-confidence shaken, may we see it as Thy effort to awaken us that we may realize our weakness and make amends before it is everlastingly too late. In Thy exalted Name we pray. Amen.

why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (I Cor. 4:7).

Oh, let us each search our own hearts to see if we can uncover any sign of this hideous evil there; and let us abhor it as God does, and banish it so we may not be caught in pride's end.

Beautiful Humility

Now let us return to the beautiful garment of humility, and see what God says about it. As much as He hates pride, He loves the humble. He has no need for those who are self-sufficient and self-sustained; He seeks those who seek Him, who see their need and are willing to submit to His directings. He *loves* humility; He desires humility; He demands humility.

It is said that when God goes fishing, He lets His nets drag deep. The fish He wants are at the bottom. If you want to get caught, go down.

Humility is the first condition to be met in seeking God's favor: "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves" (II Chron. 7:14). They must be willing to listen and learn from Him.

Humility brings God's respect: "Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly: but the proud he knoweth afar off" (Ps. 138:6).

Humility brings great reward: "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life" (Prov. 22:4).

Humility is the key to a door we shall all want opened to us when we stand before the great Judge and the record of our life is examined. It will induce the mighty God to look our way with favor: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2).

Humility will bring salvation: "When men are cast down, then thou shalt say, There is lifting up; and he shall save the humble person" (Job 22:29).

Humility will bring us into the company of the great God: "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa. 57:15).

Humility is a quality that every aspiring child of God must acquire. There will be no place for any to serve before His throne who do not have it. In fact, God will never bestow anything of eternal value upon any who have not perfected this special godly quality of humility.

Is there any greater contradiction of terms than a proud mortal?

Humility Is Not . . .

There is perhaps no Christlike virtue that has been so generally misunderstood and misapplied as humility. This may seem strange, but should we not expect it, when we consider that the distance between the thoughts of God and those of men approximates the distance between heaven and earth?

To the mind untrained in the ways of God and unfamiliar with God's manner of evaluating, humility seems like a self-defeating, self-destructive virtue that takes all and gives nothing. It looked this way to the ancient Greeks among whom Paul was teaching in the first century. Their ideal of the full man left no room for what they thought of as humility—a mean-spirited, weak temperament, wholly devoid of virtue or power.

Even today this feeling toward humility prevails in many circles. It is a virtue often associated with a condition of poverty or lowness, as though our acceptability before God will improve if we *have* nothing, desire nothing, strive for nothing, and want to be nothing. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. God is not glorified by people who try to be nothings and nobodies, nor are Christians asked to act like whipped, whimpering dogs. If the facts could be known, those poor in this world's goods may be fully as proud of what they have (or what they have *not*, if they have given it up for the sake of being "humble") as those who have "everything." The criteria is not a physical state or condition; the criteria for humility is the attitude and disposition of the person involved. A man with very little may be rich in self-esteem. Poverty in itself is no virtue, and the Lord does not regard it as virtuous. He even commands that we be not a "respector of persons" (James 2:1-4). We are not to "respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty" (Lev. 19:15)—or the reverse. And neither will He. "The Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions"—and actions alone—"are weighed" (I Sam. 2:3).

Neither is true humility self-deprecating, or self-debasing. Paul says that it is the maintaining of a "sane view" of our worth (Rom. 12:3, Moffatt). To think of ourselves more highly than we ought is definitely wrong; but to think of ourselves as worthless, to wrap ourselves in an assumed garment of self-debasement

Humility is an attitude, a disposition of the will, a set of values, a way of judging.

and dejection is equally wrong. It prevents our making use of the abilities God has given us, and which He has definitely commanded us to use. Self-depreciation is not humility. It may even be a mock-humility which is only another form of pride.

God wants us to be honest with ourselves, to appreciate what He has done for us, and to be good stewards of all we have. If we have five talents, we must face the fact and accept the responsibility—humbly, honorably, as His servant—and determine to make the very best use of what we have, knowing we shall have to give account for those five talents. If we have one talent, we must face that fact and determine to do all we can with our one talent. In neither case are we to think of the talents as something we bestowed upon ourselves, nor does their yield belong to us. It is all God's.

But we must use what we have. Remember, Jesus condemned the one talent man who feared his master so much that he carefully preserved the talent without using it. Someone might say that he was humble; but Jesus did not say so. And the possessors of the five and ten talents were not condemned for pride because they used *their* talents. What, then, is genuine humility?

Humility Is . . .

Humility is basically an attitude, a disposition of the will, a set of values, a way of judging. And when it is humility in the sight of God, it is the placing of ourselves and everything we have and are at His disposal. It is turning the entire directing of our lives over to Him, making His opinion, His law, His standard, His authority supreme in our lives. This means that we are not our own; we are His; and the credit for whatever we do is His also. If working, we are His instrument. If speaking, we are His mouthpiece. If writing, we are His pen. We are to be responsible stewards; but when we have done our best, the results—good or bad—are His. If we gain, it is His gain; if we lose, it is His loss, though He will not suffer.

This viewpoint opens to us a whole new world of opportunity. It permits us to take a purely objective

view of ourselves and our place in this cosmos and trust all to God. Our part is simply one word: obedience. When we can do this, we are on the way to being humble.

Going even further, humility means we have no right to our own opinion when it is contrary to that of God. Neither have we any right to harbor any envy or hatred against those who wrong us; for we have committed ourselves and all we have and are to the keeping of God; it is His part to recompense, and His recompense will be just.

Humility means we acknowledge that all things are working together for good, that God will triumph, that He is working out His purpose; and if we fulfill our part, we may be included.

Humility means we are clay in the hands of the potter. It is an earthy illustration, but so are we. As clay in His hands, we are being formed and shaped according to His will.

Humility has another special quality. Since we belong to God and our whole interest is to be right in His sight, we will be anxious to learn where we are wrong, where we can improve, where we can set a better example, where we can speak more to edification; and when found in the wrong, we will make every effort in our power to correct ourselves. With humility, we will be able to look into the mirror of God's law and see ourselves just as we are, see where we need to grow, where we need to shrink, and where we need to change to make ourselves right with God and with our brother.

Humility is a disposition that is willing to be led, guided, and instructed by God and those who are godly. "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Ps. 25:9). At the same time it is a cooperative and agreeable attitude toward

Humility means we are clay in the hands of the potter.

one another, as all of us work together "subject one to another" (I Pet. 5:5), all under the leadership which God provides. At the same time it is a heart-willingness to work or walk with God, which the prophet Micah stated to be God's primary requirement of men: "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy

God" (Mic. 6:8). Is it not a privilege to walk with God? And how can we apply this, except it be in our daily dealings with one another and in our service to God?

Moses and Meekness

It was written of Moses that he was "very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). A high recommend; but how did Moses show his meekness? Was there any indication that he was weak, servile, indecisive, ready to go along with anything and everything as the wind happened to blow, to be the friend of everybody? The answer is no, absolutely no. Moses was a man of strength. When the situation demanded it, he was strong in his denouncing of evil and firm in enforcing the law. Yet he always consulted the Lord and was ready to follow His directions. He was a leader, but a leader *led*. He was not following his own course; God was his leader. Only once do we read of his failing in this—when he disobeyed at the waters of Meribah and struck the rock when God had commanded him to speak to it. It was a sin against humility; he failed to honor God's command above his own impulse. But even then Moses submitted meekly to the verdict of God and bore his punishment nobly; and now he awaits the day of exaltation. We look forward to meeting this great, meek man of God.

Job and Meekness

One of the grandest lessons in humility recorded in Scripture was the questioning given the Patriarch Job by the Almighty. So exhaustive was it that four chapters of the book of Job are required to relate it. The opening paragraph of chapter 38 is a sample: "Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof?"

And by the time the Almighty had finished questioning Job, he was so humbled that he answered: "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. . . . Therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job. 42:2-3, 6). This was true humility—submission, repentance, and a willingness to let God lead.

What was the reaction of the apostle Paul as he

submitted himself in humility to God? These are his words: "Wherever I go, thank God, he makes my life a constant pageant of triumph in Christ, diffusing the perfume of his knowledge everywhere by me. I live for God" (II Cor. 2:14, Moffatt). Was there anything debasing or degrading about his life of service? Not at all; he felt it was "triumph."

Humility is not a dream; it is not a nebulous wish always just a prayer away. Humility is the natural result of esteeming God above ourselves and submitting ourselves to His leading. When we have accomplished this, we will be wrapping ourselves in this priceless garment of virtue, a part of the wrought gold that shall adorn the daughter of the king (Psalm 45) and allow us to be ushered into His presence, where we shall be exalted forever. Is it not worth the price? MM

What Difference Does Faith Make?

(Continued from page 2)

all of us stumbling in so many ways (Jas. 3:2). But we should remember that James meant this as an expression of his own earnest effort at self-mastery. He did not intend his words to be cited as an excuse for below-par performance. In fact, he meant by this to urge his readers to fuller, sterner obedience to every demand of the law of liberty, to develop a faith that demonstrates itself in everyday life and work.

God wants us actually to change, actually to be new creatures. We are to be impressed with our Lord's inescapable demands, and not to adjust them to our individual convenience. Faith must make a difference, the difference between light and dark, the difference between eternal life and eternal death, the difference between eternal happiness and eternal nonentity.

Without this difference, there is no true faith. MM

Cast of Characters

I won't is a vagrant.
I can't is a quitter.
I don't know is lazy.
I wish I could is a dreamer.
I might is waking up.
I will try is on his feet.
I can is on his way.
I will is at work.

—Selected

Unwavering Faith

*O, for a faith that will not shrink,
Though pressed by many a foe;
That will not tremble on the brink
Of poverty or woe:*

*That will not murmur nor complain
Beneath the chastening rod;
But in the hour of grief or pain
Can lean upon its God.*

*A faith that shines more bright and clear,
When tempests rage without;
That when in danger knows no fear,
In darkness feels no doubt;*

*A faith that keeps the narrow way,
By truth restrained and led,
And with a pure and heavenly ray
Lights up a dying bed.*

*Lord, may I have a faith like this,
And then whate'er may come,
I'll taste e'en here the hallow'd bliss
Of an eternal home.*

And Still She Speaks

Extracts from sermons, discussions, talks, comments
by Rev. Maud Hembree (1853-1935).



We have heard the word, and years have sped into the past with many of us, and have we improved according to our opportunity? How does it stand with us? If we have heard the words and they are to us as a pleasant song and we are not doing them, we are in a worse condition than as if we had never heard them.

We must cultivate that mind and disposition to have our delight in the law of the Lord, use our eyes and all our members in His service. One does not realize how valuable an arm or a leg is until it is broken; and what a wonderful blessing is our eyesight! What a responsibility to use all to the glory of God! When we pick up something to read we must ask ourselves, Is this to the honor and glory of God?

You will practice to become a lawyer, a musician, or a doctor, days, months and years. Is it too much to practice to be a Christian, for a life eternal, a glory that will never pass away and a beauty that will never fade and strength of intellect that will never grow dim?

If we are not willing to take up our cross and work for such a reward, the Lord does not want us.

If you are living according to the law of God, you can be happy all the day long. You do not have to have a feeling against anybody; you do not have to get angry or impatient. Whatever others do, you can be calm.

It is a great accomplishment for men and women to loathe their own evils. Take, for instance, someone you do not like. You look at their besetments and evil ways and you think they are terrible; but loathing somebody else's evil ways will not save you. I must loathe my own evil ways. I must cleanse my own heart. That is the only way any man or woman will be saved.

The mighty God of heaven does not expect to find men and women who have never sinned, for He knows the deceitful nature of humanity. But He is looking for men and women who will get up after they stumble and press forward with greater determination than ever before and strive to lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily besets. He judges by the heart.

We will be constantly walking in the footsteps of Jesus, listening to His commandments, heeding His words, if we want that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

If we put off doing the work, we will never see the Kingdom of God. We must become accustomed to doing right.

You cannot put anger away in a moment or a week. You have to practice today, tomorrow, the next day, and the next. Well, if that is too much the Lord says you do not have to do it, but you will miss the prize.

Is anything too much to do for such a wondrous prize?

The religion of the Bible is not a state of excitement; it is a calm reflection.

You will never be saved, will never gain that eternal home of peace and joy, so long as you have a root of bitterness in your heart. You must use the law of God to help you get rid of it. Only the joy before you can cause you to do this.

What About the News?

WHEN PAUL and Silas came to Thessalonica to preach the gospel, the Jews reported to the rulers of the city with the cry, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also" (Acts 17:6). Today we live in a world that is seemingly turned upside down—not by the preaching of the gospel, but by terrorists, murderers, thieves, and extortioners, not to mention a wide variety of protesters. Wars large and small engage and impoverish many nations worldwide; famine and starvation threaten large parts of the African continent.

Such events dominate the world news. If you have listened to the news on the radio lately, or picked up a daily paper and read the headlines, or scanned the index of a weekly news magazine, or noted the pictures of the starving children in Africa, you have heard of all these things and more. News commentators on radio and TV analyze every happening they consider worthy of reporting, accentuating the sensational to influence their audience. News magazines show in pictures the worst of the events of the world and dramatize the plight of the unfortunate, appealing to the emotions of the reader.

How does all that you learn leave you feeling? angry? fearful? depressed? helpless?

Do you listen to reports about the latest in nuclear armaments and then worry that the world will disintegrate in a giant Hiroshima? Are you frightened by the massive buildup of armaments that makes the news almost daily? Are you horrified at our gargantuan national debt wondering who will ever pay it? Are you concerned that the conflicts smouldering in other parts of the world may reach our shores and engulf our nation? When you hear of the hunger and starvation in other parts of the world, do you worry that we as a nation might face hunger and want?

What should be the attitude of the Christian concerning today's news? Should we allow the news we

hear in the morning to upset our day? Or should we simply close our eyes and ears and ignore it, and act like trouble didn't exist? Should we shudder at every act of terrorism, fearing we may be next? Should we join those who demonstrate against nuclear weapons? Or should we prepare for the worst and build a well-stocked storm cellar for our protection?

What should be the Christian's attitude toward the world news? We as true Christian believers need not fear the outcome of world events. God has not given up control of this world; He has not given the helm to man, but is simply allowing world events to take their course. We sing,

*This is our Father's world,
Oh, let us ne'er forget
That though the wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet!*

Even though this is hymn book, it is nonetheless according to His Word, and it is true! At this point in time, man is in control, but this does not mean that God is not still sovereign. We can be sure that He is working out His purpose, and though at present He allows men to exercise their authority, in the end His plan will prevail and Christ will rule the world.

We need not live in fear that the world will be destroyed by bombs, for God will not allow it. According to His Word, "The earth abideth forever," and we believe it. We should interpret the news in the light of the Word of God and not on the biased opinion of reporters, columnists and analysts whose interpretations are often slanted by their own ideas. We do need to be informed, but we need not know all the details. Our modern-day mass media provides more than we need to know; we do not have to be bombarded with news from all sides. We do not have to spend the evening reading the newspaper; we do not even have to burden ourselves with the evening news on TV; we can get all we need from a five minute radio broadcast.

Our time is better spent studying the Bible to learn the real significance of the world news.

We cannot simply close our eyes and ignore what is happening in the world around us; on the other hand, neither can we let it depress us or drive us underground into a storm cellar, for world events form an integral part of God's plan. We should rather let it drive us to the "storm cellar" God has provided, the strong tower of faith in the Word of God, and learn to interpret the news in its proper light, the light of the Word. In its proper perspective, the news will give us faith that the Bible is indeed the Word of God; it has been proved convincingly by fulfilled prophecy and the events of today are simply further proof of its divinity.

We should look at many of the events of the day as fulfilling the prophecies made by Jesus and the apostles of what we should expect in the last days. Paul's prophecy was explicit: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come" (II Tim. 3:1). And that time is here; these are perilous times. Because we have been pre-informed, we should expect bad news in the last days. The Great Apostle did not say that evil men would get better and better; rather, the prediction was that "Wicked men and charlatans will make progress from bad to worse, deceiving and deceived" (II Tim. 3:13, NEB), a condition noticeable in our day.

It is not for us to offer solutions to the problems of the world, for they are not ours to solve. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life." We must leave them to those in authority. Paul commanded that we should be subject to the "higher powers. . . . for the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1), and he also exhorted Timothy to offer prayers and give thanks "for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:1-2). Peter likewise advised submission "to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers" (I Pet. 2:13-14). Without some force controlling evildoers, he knew—and we know—things would be a lot worse!

No matter how bad things seem now, we know that at the time of Christ's coming it will be worse, for there will be "a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation, even to that same time." But if we belong to God we need not fear, for God has promised that His people will be protected. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge," was the promise of God through the Wise Man (Prov. 14:26). God has not only promised a place of refuge but also the protection of His angels to

deliver those who fear Him (Ps. 34:7), and also that "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

What does God's Word have to say about the news in our day? The Bible does not mention all the world's present-day problems specifically, but it does give us guidelines that tell us what we should do in the face of all the bad news. Jesus Himself said, "Portents will appear in sun, moon, and stars. On earth nations will stand helpless, not knowing which way to turn from the roar and surge of the sea [of nations]; men will faint with terror at the thought of all that is coming upon the world; . . . And then they will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with great power and glory. When all this begins to happen, stand upright and hold your heads high, because your liberation is near" (Luke 21:25-28, NEB). At such a time as this we will see the fulfillment of the first phase of God's program of coming events: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of great and dreadful day of the Lord: . . . lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

When we hear of political uprisings and terrorist attacks and our unbelieving neighbors wonder what will happen next, we need not share their hopelessness. This is the time for us to look up, and hold up our heads for we know that our redemption is near. We know without doubt that God will not allow a worldwide conflagration that will destroy the human race. If inclined to worry as do others, we must remember this is still God's world; He is silent now, but He is still sovereign and He ever will be. And in due time, He will take control. For,

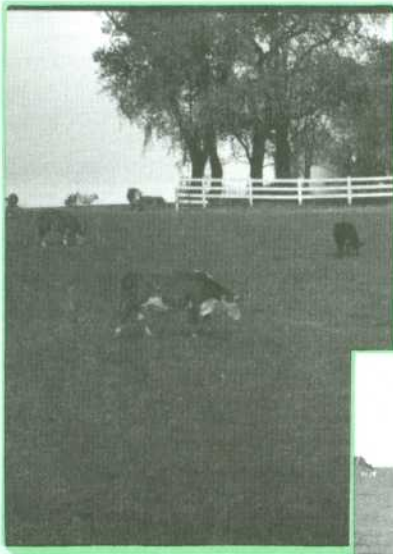
*This is our Father's world,
Soon glorious 'twill be;
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done
Through all eternity.*

Yes, the world news may be bad; wars and strife may continue; terrorists may set off bombs, and hijackers may commandeer airliners, but we can tune out all the bad news and tune in God's Good News. And from it we learn that there is a better day coming when there will be no arms race, for there will be no need for arms; there will be no armies, for all the earth will be one nation. God's Kingdom shall come; His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We live in anticipation of that good news.

MM

"If you preach and act not accordingly, you seem to propose to me an impossibility."
—Selected.



Lines to Live By

Responsibility

*Thou that in life's crowded city art arrived, thou knowest not how—
By what path or on what errand—list and learn thine errand now.*

*From the palace to the city on the business of thy King
Thou wert sent at early morning, to return at evening.*

*Dreamer, waken; loiterer, hasten; what thy task is understand:
Thou art here to purchase substance, and the price is in thine hand.*

*Has the tumult of the market all thy sense confused and drowned?
Do its glittering wares entice thee, or its shouts and cries confound?*

*Oh, beware lest thy Lord's business be forgotten, while thy gaze
Is on every show and pageant which the giddy square displays.*

*Barter not His gold for pebbles; do not trade in vanities;
Pearls there are of price and jewels for the purchase of the wise.*

*And know this—at thy returning thou wilt surely find the King
With an open book before Him, waiting to make reckoning.*

*Thus large honors will the faithful, earnest service of one day
Reap of Him; but one day's folly largest penalties will pay.*

—Selected

God First

"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. . . . O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. . . . Harken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O Lord; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up. . . . Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."

In my bedroom hangs this motto,
And its place is near the door,
So that it will e'er remind me,
God, all else must be before!

Never do I cross the threshold
Than the motto seems to say—
"Just a word with God, thy Father,
Ere thou goest on thy way."

When I'm dressing in the morning,
As I see it hanging there,
It reminds me of my duties,
Help for which I seek in prayer.

Duties, burdens, worries, troubles,
All may come to me this day;
How can I prepare to meet them?
How, I ask, except I pray!

When I plan fresh undertakings,
Then the motto seems to say,
"Don't in thy own strength begin it;
First of all about it pray!"

When I'm ready, dressed for walking,
Perhaps with little time to spare;
Still I cannot leave my bedroom,
When I see the motto there—

Till I kneel for just a moment,
And in earnest, secret prayer
Place myself and all my doings
In my Heavenly Father's care.

Nightly, too, the motto speaketh,
When for rest I would prepare;
Then it whispers its sweet message,
"First thou must meet God in prayer!"

Yes, "God First!" must be our motto
If we would succeed each day;
Wish we all our ways to prosper?
Then about them we must pray.

Dear friend, won't you have this motto
Put up in your room as well;
That to you its own sweet message
It may daily, hourly, tell?

Yes, let "God First!" be your motto,
Let it help you to prepare
For life's duties, cares and pleasures,
By a word with Him in prayer.

I have told you how it helps me;
It will help you, too, I'm sure;
Fruit through it will be abundant,
Fruit which ever will endure!
—Selected.

Week 1: Be sure you are progressing, let no one stand still; be certain you are marching right straight up the hill.

Week 2: Remember the past to improve the present.

Week 3: Proper practice brings perfect results.

Week 4: A day hemmed with prayer rarely unravels.

How To Stay Mentally Fit

Eight essential requirements for mental health by Elden M. Chalmers*

WE ARE responsible to God for all that we have—including all the physical and spiritual aspects of our lives. To do our best in the spiritual life for God, we must give proper care and thought to our physical lives. —Editor

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (II Tim. 1:7). There was a time when psychiatrists and clinical psychologists were doubtful that religious experiences could contribute to a sound mind. At least one study in the late fifties suggested that there was no difference between the incidence of mental illness among the general population and the incidence among church people. And some studies suggested that the clergymen of at least two denominations ranked below the general population average in mental health.

More and more, however, mental-health workers are distinguishing between “healthy religion” and “sick religion.” It has become clear that people who are chronically guilt-ridden suffer emotional disorders to varying degrees. It has also become clear that a strong, healthy conscience that calls sin by its right name and orders the life in harmony with God’s principles can actually bring healing to a disordered mind.

In a generation in which anxiety and depression, tension and frustration, and the unsolvable problems of nature and society are mounting, more and more people are asking the question, “How can a person stay mentally fit in a stressful age?” Here are eight essential ingredients for achieving the best mental health:

1) **REGULARITY.** Establishing rhythmic habit patterns helps minimize the needless expenditure of nervous energy. Much energy is consumed when a person

is trying to make up his mind about what he should do. A well-planned schedule for regular times for rising, personal devotions, chores, meals, study, physical exercise, work, relaxing diversion, and sleep can save a lot of energy when well established in your daily life. Your nervous system operates in rhythmic cycles very easily and naturally. When disruption is allowed to become characteristic in the life, less and less energy is available for times of special stress.

Stresses are common to our society, and they demand fresh expenditures of nervous energy. It is important to have a reserve supply available for these times. People who do are the ones who typically weather the pressures of modern life without any emotional scars. One psychologist reports, “In my clinical practice, I have never yet found an emotionally disturbed person who has practiced regularity in his meal schedule, for instance, or in very many of the other recurring responsibilities of life.”

And so, re-examine your daily program. Keep a record of what you do and when you do it, every day for two weeks. See how regular you are in your timing and sequencing. Decide what you want to change to be more in keeping with your priorities. Then set up that new program of regularity. You may have to change it two or three times until you find a schedule that best fits your situation and your priorities. But when you do, stick to it until you have established your rhythmic habit patterns for these recurring events.

You may do some things only occasionally, and that’s fine. They need not become part of the habit structure of your life. But regularity in the activities that recur or should recur on a regular basis will greatly conserve your nervous energy for the stressful days and even for new, creative adventures.

2) **BALANCE.** Mental fitness is absolutely dependent on the balanced exercise of your brain. Current research reveals that although the entire brain is often mobilized for varied tasks, each kind of task depends

*Published in *These Times*, November, 1979. Used by permission.

more heavily upon the exercise of a particular area of the brain—the hypothalamus for eating and drinking functions; the right hemisphere for music appreciation, spiritual exercises, and spatial-orientation tasks; the left hemisphere for sequential ordering and most mathematical functions.

Moreover, we often use the area of the brain that comes easiest for us to use. This is the case for students and many of the rest of us. Students often resist studying subjects that do not come easily for them. Subjects that we are not interested in are usually those that come harder for us. Yet these need to be studied equally with those that come easier.

Aside from balanced study efforts, we all need to insist on practicing balance in all of our activities. Get out of narrow ruts; expand your horizons. Always selecting from the good, the pure, the lovely, the true, the honest, the things of good report and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8), but practicing all of these good things in balance. Avoid the extremes. Avoid developing a one-track mind.

3) **GOOD NUTRITION.** Good nutrition is absolutely essential for the best mental health. Some people born with a healthy set of nerves can eat poorly and get by, but even they would do much better with good nutrition. Others born with more fragile nerves must be especially careful to eat nutritious meals, balanced in the basic four food groups—carbohydrates, proteins, fats, and minerals.

Sugars require certain B vitamins (particularly B1) for proper metabolizing. The B vitamins, essential for healthy nerves, are found in the complex carbohydrate foods, such as whole grains (wheat, corn, millet), which also need these vitamins for proper metabolizing.

4) **SELF-DENIAL.** In personality measurement, self-indulgence and self-centeredness provide the hub around which mental disorders develop. The personality becomes soft and unable to take the stresses of life. Our nervous system will always become weaker when self becomes the center of our interests. No wonder Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself" (Matt. 16:24).

Each day, focus on serving others without regard to receiving anything in return. Make your focus the lightening of another's burden, the brightening of another's life. Get your joy and satisfaction in life from seeing others made happy by what you do for them. Instead of demanding affection and attention, give attention and show appropriate affection to others. When you feel lonely, get out and do something for someone else.

Practice denying yourself some of those little frills or extras that anyone can do without. You shouldn't deny

yourself of the same thing each time, naturally, but you could deny yourself something else the next time, and so on. But don't be like the fellow who said he was denying himself watermelon (which he liked) when there were no watermelons available!

5) **CHEERFULNESS.** Practice smiling from inside. Practice optimistic thinking—viewing every obstacle as an opportunity for climbing to greater heights. "Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations" (Jas. 1:2), knowing that these very trials will polish and perfect your character by pointing out any weaknesses you may have. You can then take these to Jesus to let Him give you of His strength to be an overcomer (1 Cor. 15:57).

There is abundant research attesting to the fact that sober, serious-minded people are more prone to developing emotional disorders than are cheerful, optimistic people. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5:8) is a text some of us remember so well that we forget passages such as, "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Prov. 17:22); "He that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Prov. 29:18); "These things have I spoken unto you, . . . that your joy might be full" (John 15:11).

God does not ask us to develop a reckless spirit of careless joviality. But neither does He ask us to be so serious-minded and sober that we act as though we must carry a load of care around with us everywhere we go. And nobody likes to be around someone who casts a shadow over him. Cheerfulness is absolutely essential in order to be mentally fit.

6) **TRUST.** Many people worry about their future. They worry about their bills, their marriage, their family, and their job. They worry about almost everything. Instead we need to practice trusting God.

Be faithful in little things. Do with your might what lies nearest at hand—what you can do—and look to God to fulfill His word to you. He has promised "that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28). He has said, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). And David assures us, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Ps. 37:25).

Worry burns up a lot of nervous energy and soon eats away on the nervous system. Memorize the specific Bible verses that promise God's care. Fix them in your mind, and repeat them many, many times until they have become a part of your being. They will leap out whenever you need them. Remember, "as he think-

eth in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7)—and if you practice the habit of thinking God's promises, you will be a person full of faith and trust.

7) **SELF-DISCIPLINE.** Plan your work and work your plan! It is easy for anyone to operate by impulse and not by plan, to do what comes to mind on the spur of the moment, to be easily distracted by another person, to do something other than what he had planned to do, and to procrastinate because he doesn't feel like doing something he should do at the time.

However, to develop self-discipline, you need to write down some goals you want to reach, including long-range goals. Have goals for life, then for the next year, the next month, the next week, and even tomorrow. Make all of these goals work for you—to help you reach your long-range goal. Develop the habit of *doing it now* instead of later.

8) **RELAXATION.** How many muscles do you tense up when you are reading your lesson assignment or working on the job? Can you do the same task using fewer muscles? Check on yourself even as you read this article. Are the muscles at the back of the neck tight? How about your upper arm? your jaw? Many people tense muscles that don't need tensing for adequately doing what needs to be done. Practice relaxing those muscles you don't need.

Tension burns up energy needlessly and increases your proneness to emotional problems. So practice relaxing.

These eight simple ingredients will help you to stay mentally fit in daily life, where the challenges are real and the pressures can mount. Make these ingredients a regular part of your daily life, and enjoy life to the full. Remember, "God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind" (II Tim. 1:7).

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The Constant Challenge

I would like to give all the credit and thanks to the Great Creator, God, for giving me that measure of insight to see within myself the source of trouble that was causing my problems. We have been instructed through the Word of God that the things of this life are vanity. The Preacher alerted us to this fact, yet it takes experience, suffering, and a great deal of discomfort before the lesson(s) sink into our being. On the other hand, I am extremely thankful that our Father in Heaven is a God of wisdom and will be long-suffering with us until we overcome the lower side of our nature and become truly spiritual.

I do not intend to demean what this world has to offer, but it is exactly as Christ said, if we should gain all that this world has to offer and lose our eternal life in the Kingdom, then what have we really gained? Nothing!

To have our spiritual eyes in sharp focus at all times is a constant challenge. If we allow ourselves the pleasure of random thinking, a taste here and there of this world and its ways, *then we are in very serious trouble*. The demands of the Father and Christ are absolute and unchanging; we *must* be perfect in our spiritual outlook and health, we *must* cleanse ourselves of any taint of this world.

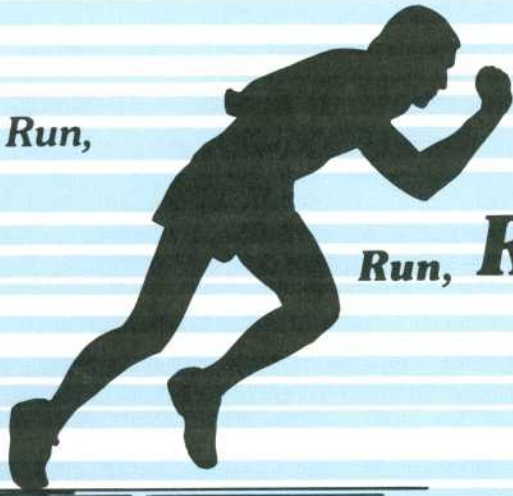
You have to be constantly on guard and in complete control of your faculties if you would keep the darker side of your human nature from displaying itself. Death to the "Old Man" is a very, very painful matter. Not allowing your interests and wishes to be manifest in even the smallest of daily events requires diligence and heroic effort.

This life is real and the battles unseen by the world are just as real, and all are being recorded by the angels to be read before all who stand in Judgment. Will ours be a beautiful story of overcoming and steady achievement, or just a rerun of one of countless others who tried and failed?

I truly thank the Father for His grace, mercy, and patience with me. He will forgive me when I demonstrate that I am an overcomer. —Contributed

Run,

Run, **Run, Run, Run!**



MARATHON running has been popular for centuries. Originally it was a footrace of 26 miles, named "marathon" after a messenger's run from the city of Marathon to Athens to announce the victory of the Athenians over the Persians in 490 B.C. Since that time any endurance contest has been called a marathon. In recent years the sport of Marathon Racing has become especially popular, in large part due to the interest in jogging or running for exercise.

Not many years ago streets and highways were reserved for motor vehicles and about the only persons seen running down a city street were children chasing a ball. But in recent years this has changed and people of all ages and both sexes, conscious of the physical benefit of the activity, are to be seen running both in big cities and in small country towns. Running singly, it is usually for their health, to keep their bodies in top physical condition, to relieve the stress of everyday life; or it may be just for the joy of running. Running in large numbers, they are usually running to win or to raise money for some organization.

Jogging around the block may be done for pleasure, but marathon running is work, hard work. It means

running when you can hardly put one foot ahead of the other. The feeling has been graphically told by a runner. He says in part:

"The first mile was almost euphoric . . . but after a mile and a half or so, the joy began to fade. By two miles, whatever pleasure there had been in all of this was totally gone. From then on, it was sheer drudgery. . . . There is one thing and one thing only that kept me going: before I started, I had agreed to finish. My body was spent, my mind screamed, 'Quit!' But the choice had been made back when the gun went off. The issue was not open for renegotiation. There were no options, no short cuts. In inexpressible agony, I kept on running. . . . I can barely remember crossing the finish line."

The young man quoted above relates the advice given by the coach before starting the race, words he carried with him through life—and which we may well apply to our own lives as Christians. "What I am asking you to do today is to finish the race," said the coach. "If you don't plan to finish, then I don't want you to start. Simply stay where you are when the gun is fired. But if you start, then you will finish. You may slow down, but you will not

quit. Once you start, I want you to cross the finish line—no matter what."

These words may well be taken as a paraphrase from Jesus' own statement of the Christian life: "He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt. 24:13). The Christian life is a race, and it is indeed a marathon, not just a run around the block. And it is a race that we mean to win. It is not to be entered lightly, for the course marked out is as long as life itself. We have been given a set of rules, and we must abide by them if we would compete in the race. And once on this course, it is fatal to turn back; to qualify for the prize we must finish. "*No matter what!*" Only "he that shall endure unto the end" shall be saved.

There are three basic components in any race: the start, the race itself, and the finish. To win you need to complete all three. The same is true of the Christian race. For the Christian there is no starting gun, but there must be a starting point, a point of decision. When John the Baptist came preaching the message of repentance, many of his hearers asked: "What shall we do?" Later, the young man came to Jesus asking, "Master, what good thing

shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" The apostle Paul, blinded on the Damascus road, asked, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" At a later time it was Paul's turn to answer the question of the Philipian jailer, "What must I do to be saved?"

In each case, there was something for the individual to do. Paul's answer to the jailer is much misunderstood: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house" (Acts 16:30-31).

make a great start, be the fastest in the race for the first mile, but if you fail to run the last mile, the rest of your effort counts for nothing. It is the *finishing* that counts.

Those who make a start at a fast pace are, to borrow a simile from Jesus' parable, like the good seed sown on stony ground which springs up quickly but withers away in the heat of the day for lack of moisture. They heard the word with joy, but the impression was not deep enough. They failed to run the last mile.

crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize" (I Cor. 9:24-27, NIV). For him it was not just a leisurely run, but a fight to the finish line.

This great runner set his heart on obtaining the crown that would last forever, and in the end he knew that it had been reserved for him. His name is written in the Book of Life, together with the other heroes of the faith. "There is in store for [him] the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to [him] on that day—and not only to [him], but also to all who have longed for his appearing" (II Tim. 4:8, NIV).

Jesus, our Perfect Example, has already crossed the finish line as have the other faithful mentioned in Holy Writ. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Heb. 12:1-3, NIV).

It is all a matter of keeping at it. In other words, run, run, RUN! MM

"Once you start, I want you to cross the finish line—no matter what."

Those looking for an easy way to win the race see this as an escape, a chance to win by simply acknowledging Jesus as Saviour, hence the many who make a "decision for Christ" at much publicized evangelistic meetings. But more than a simple acknowledgment of faith in Christ is needed to run the race. Like the marathon, it takes work, real work between the start and the finish. Old ways, old habits, old ambitions must be replaced by ways, habits and ambitions befitting the new life. And all must be done "on the run."

If we would win in this all important marathon, our whole life's effort must be redirected. Deciding to run is but a beginning; the greater part is making the decision stick. As in the marathon race, there may be a flush of enthusiasm at the start, a lively run for a short distance, only to be followed by a more leisurely pace as the race wears on. But the goal is not reached by the decision to run; it takes perseverance all the way to the finish line. You might

In a literal marathon, the first runner to cross the finish line is the winner. Only this year the top runner in the Olympics Marathon competition had to take second place to another who after a race of 26 miles crossed the finish line just three seconds sooner! No such disappointment awaits those who compete in the race for life. In the spiritual marathon, *all* who cross the finish line will receive the reward. All who enter the race *can* be winners, if they "endure unto the end."

Sound simple? Not at all. Not even the great apostle Paul took for granted his ability to run to the end. He feared lest after he had started others in the race, he might lose his own crown. These are his thought-provoking words as recorded in his first Letter to the Corinthians:

"Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a

Are we getting our walking signals in life from God, or from the world? Are we breaking His laws to keep step with them?

The Promised Land

TO THE Children of Israel the passage over Jordan and entrance into the Promised Land meant the end of their weary trials and marches. In this new land flowing with "milk and honey," they could prosper and enjoy all temporal blessings according as they served the Lord their God.

The Promised Land to which we journey will extend eternal blessings to all who are privileged to enter. The aches and pains of mortality, disease, accident and even death itself shall be no more. Life shall be unending. It is a land worth striving for, since no such blessings can be attained in this life.

In spite of these promises it is sad to note how easily we lose sight of that Promised Land. It is not always the big things or some wilfully sinful acts that cause us to lose out. It may be some one little thing that we desire at the moment. This one thing, because it is the center of our affections, will obscure the worth of that future home and thus may cause us to grow weary in our march toward it. The riches of this world, the pleasures, or the cares of this life are other hindrances. If we place too much attention on them, the future will look distant.

We need not be in open rebellion as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, nor does ours need to be the transgression of the ten unfaithful spies. Murmuring and complaining will shut us out; and so will a lusting to satisfy our fleshly appetites and cravings.

Like Joshua and Caleb, we can go right on and enter the Promised Land. It is only a matter of obedience to the commandments of God. Only obedience will buy the ticket by which we shall gain admittance to that Promised Land.

—Contributed.

Self-Denial Week

THIS YEAR, the week beginning Sunday, February 3, will be the annual observance of self-denial week for the Megiddo Church congregation and all scattered members and friends who wish to observe it with us.

During this week we will limit ourselves to three articles of food at each meal. Selection will be made from simple, plain, common foods, varied each meal as desired. We shall refrain from all specialties, all cookies, pastries, desserts, and fancy foods.

In observing this week, we will be following the pattern set by God's people in all ages. The Christian life is a life of discipline and self-control, and if we cannot deny ourselves in things material how can we perform the real, inner denials of the spirit life that will bring us to the stature of Christ?

The entire obligation of the sincere Christian centers around self-control. There is no other way to make our lives pleasing to God, except through the exercise of control. We must learn to control our words, control our thoughts, control our emotions, control our feelings. This is the only way we can follow our Perfect Example, who could say that He did always those things that pleased His heavenly Father. Jesus' achievement was the fullest mastery of self-control; may ours be the same.

Announcing . . .



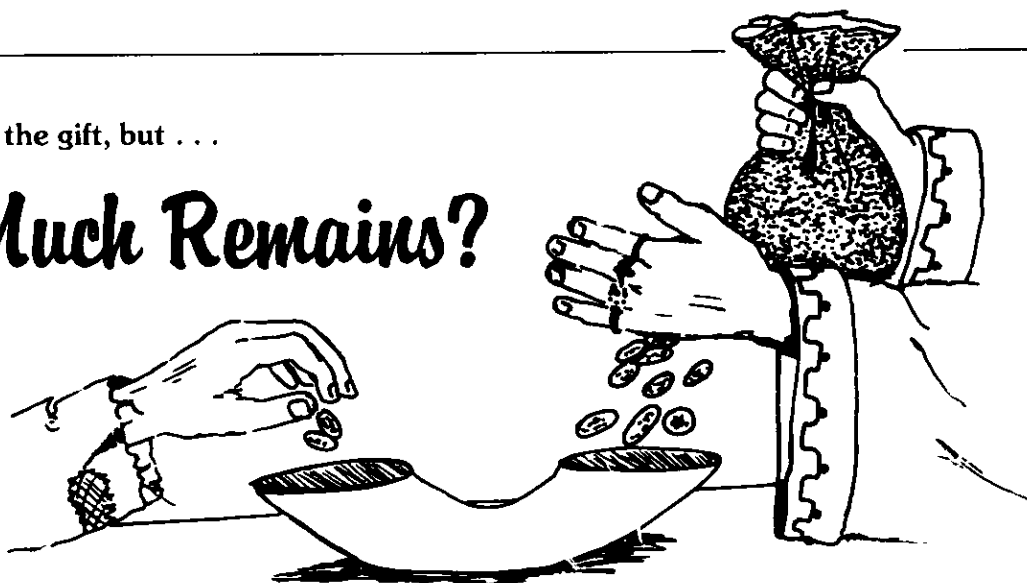
This year the members and friends of the Megiddo Church will welcome the beginning of another sacred New Year on the evening of March 21, 1985, and extending through March 22, Bible time being measured from "evening to evening" (Lev. 23:32). The ancient Hebrew pattern, according to the law God gave to Moses, was to begin the New Year with the month "Abib," which is the month beginning with the first new moon following the spring equinox (March 20, this year). The first new moon occurs this year on March 21.

This day has double significance as we commemorate the beginning of a sacred year and also the birth of our great coming King.

Distant members and friends, plan now to join us for this sacred season. New Year services and programs will be held on March 21 and March 22. The anniversary of the Lord's Supper will be on Tuesday, April 2, and the Resurrection on April 5.

It is not always the gift, but . . .

How Much Remains?



IN THE court of the temple at Jerusalem sits the Master, bowed with weariness. He has paused to rest, having uttered His final denunciation of the scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites in an eight-fold and scathing "Woe."

The Master is seated over against the treasury where the multitudes are dropping their gifts. Conspicuous among them are the wealthier donors as they ostentatiously offer their gold and silver. Raising His eyes, perhaps from a reverie of sorrow, Jesus at a glance grasps the whole significance of the scene. At the moment, a poor widow is offering her little contribution—two mites. The lips of the rich contributors curl with scorn at the presentation which is the lowest legal minimum. Perhaps she shrinks from giving so trivial a gift when the rich men around her are lavishing their gold.

At this moment the Master speaks to His disciples. He is pleased with the faithfulness and self-sacrificing spirit of the gift. He wishes to teach forever the great lesson that it is not how much is given, but how much remains behind. The offering of this widow in her pauper condition was far greater than that of the wealthiest Pharisee who had contributed his gold. The Master speaks: "Verily I say unto you, That this

poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury: for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living."

Nineteen hundred years separate us from this touching episode of old. Only years after this the temple was destroyed, as was prophesied. But the lesson remains, laden with significance and fraught with deep spiritual meaning.

"It matters not how much is given, but how much remains behind."

In all of Jesus' life and teaching, material images were but vehicles for deep spiritual thoughts. And here, vastly more is implied than the offering of literal gold and silver. This literal occurrence in the temple court served to illustrate, as it were, the Alpha and the Omega of the life of a Christian, which is full surrender, complete sacrifice, entire consecration.

It matters not whether we have two mites, or two hundred mites to cast into the treasury of God. It matters not whether we have one talent or ten to be used in the service of the Lord. The vital consideration is, When we have made our offering, *how much remains behind?* If, out of two hundred mites, we

offer one hundred and ninety-nine; if from ten talents we bring nine, then that poor widow's offering is greater than ours.

THROUGHOUT the Scriptures no truth is more plainly taught nor more repeatedly emphasized than that the Almighty demands our all. It is "all that a man hath." In the words of Jesus as He cited and reinforced the old law, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy strength" (Mark 12:30).

In the words of James, "Remember that a man who keeps the whole Law but for a single exception is none the less a law-breaker" (Jas. 2:10, Phillips).

In the words of the apostle Paul, "Make not provision for the flesh." Bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (Rom. 13:14; II Cor. 10:5).

In the words of Jeremiah the prophet, "Thoroughly amend your ways and your doings" (Jer. 7:5).

From these and numerous other passages we can learn the divine principle, that our consecration is but partial as long as one mite is withheld, one law broken, one provision reserved for the flesh, one thought not brought into captivity.

When Ananias brought the price of the land and laid it at the Apostles' feet, Peter's question was not, How much is given, but, *How much remains behind?* The disastrous result of Ananias' reservation for the flesh, together with that of his wife Sapphira's, is recorded for our warning among the tragedies of the Day of Salvation. When the rich young man came to the Master, bringing his wealth of deeds according to the Mosaic law, Jesus shot through his very soul with the piercing question, *How much remains behind?* The young man went away sorrowful, for his love for his great possessions surpassed his love for Christ. He was not willing to give up "all" for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake.

The parable of the goodly pearls would have had a vastly different conclusion had the merchant man, upon finding the pearl of great price, been reluctant to make the required payment in full. The store set upon the pearl was "all that a man hath." If in selling out to the Lord he had chosen to retain for himself the most minute possession, such as a spark of jealousy or a fiber of sensitiveness, the choice pearl would never have been his.

When Abraham ascended Mount Moriah to sacrifice unto the Lord, he brought with him his *all*. *Nothing* remained behind. Abraham had much to give, a beloved son and heir, of whom it had been promised, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." But the command came, "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, . . . and offer . . . for a burnt offering." Swiftly Abraham reared the altar, laid upon it the wood, bound the precious sacrifice and laid that loving treasure upon the altar. Then he staggered at the promise of God? faith failed? hope fled? Never, no never! "Against hope" he "be-

lieved in hope, . . . He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, . . . being fully persuaded that, what (God) had promised, he was able also to perform" (Heb. 11:17-20). And he stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. It was enough! The offering was complete. Every mite had been cast into the treasury of God.

The history of God's saints of old is rich and radiant with such experiences. In the record of the past we can read the biographies of great men who made great sacrifices for God and truth. There is a

***"It matters not
how much is given,
but how much
remains behind."***

Joseph who saved a nation from starvation, a Moses who emancipated a race from slavery, a Joshua who led the armies of Israel from victory unto victory in the conquest of the seven nations. Whole chapters and in some instances an entire book is required to relate the noble achievements of their illustrious lives. But the glorious tapestry of the ages, of which they form the very warp and woof, would be incomplete without an occasional trace of a slender golden thread. Interwoven here and there throughout the pattern we catch a glimpse of a life less spectacular, but none the less sublime. And we are grateful for the beauty which the sight affords.

The story of the poor widow is told in four short and comprehensive verses, but it is enough to awaken our interest and revive our

spirits. It may be that in the book of remembrance treasured away in the heart of God, we shall find pages which describe in glowing detail the poor widow's inner beauty of character exemplified by giving her all to God.

It may be that, like the poor widow, we have but two mites to cast in unto the offerings of God. It may be that our position is that of staying "by the stores" (I Sam. 30:24, Moff.) while others march forth to the battle front with gleaming banners and shining shields. It may be that we have but one talent to use in the service of the Lord. What are we doing with our two mites? What are we doing with the one talent? The Lord does not ask ten mites if we have but two. He does not ask five talents if we have but one, but He does ask "*all that a man hath.*"

Yes, after we have made our offering, *how much remains behind?*

Have we given our thoughts to the Lord? Is our all on the altar? In all the varied scenes of life, do we seek to do our best? Anything short of our best, "our all," is less than the poor widow's offering and will not be acceptable. The lowliest duty performed, the simplest prayer uttered, the humblest note of praise ascends to the throne of God as a sweet savor if the whole heart is in it.

There is nothing mechanical in service which is our best. Much to the contrary, our best service requires interest, enthusiasm, pressure. It requires the mobilizing of every latent power within us. It demands our entire mind. We wait in vain for some imaginary phantom to infuse life into our torpid faculties and breathe inspiration into our sluggish spirits. If we hope to arrive at our best in service and in consecration to God we must awaken

(Continued on page 27)

• Holy Spirit Today?

"Why don't you believe that any man or woman possesses the power of the Holy Spirit today?"

You are correct in stating that we do not believe any man or woman today possesses the power of the Holy Spirit. Some of our reasons are the following:

The prophet Joel in chapter 2 forecasts two "rains," a former and a latter. Verses 28-30 show that this "rain" is the pouring out of God's Spirit. "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth."

The terms "former rain" and "latter rain" imply two separate and distinct outpourings with a "dry" season between. Peter on the day of Pentecost confirms this prediction by quoting the prophet Joel. He indicated two outpourings of the Holy Spirit, a former outpouring at Pentecost—"this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel" (v. 16)—and a later outpouring at the coming of Christ in the last days: "it shall come to pass in the last days." The specifying of two rains, a "former" and a "latter," requires a time between when the Holy Spirit power would be lacking.

While Joel used the expression, "It shall come to pass afterward," Peter specifically applied the prophecy to the time of the second advent by the use of the term "last days"—"it shall come to pass in the last days"—and followed by describing events that will take place at that time. "I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood and fire, and vapour of smoke: the sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and notable day of the Lord come" (Acts 2:17-20). The last phrase of this verse is clearer as translated in the *New English Bible*: "before that great, resplendent day, the day of the Lord, shall come." Peter was speaking of the grand Millennial Day, not the Battle of Armageddon.

This prediction is confirmed by other Scriptural writers.

Jesus in Matthew 17:11 said, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things." We believe that the most important of the "all things" which Elijah will restore is the Holy Spirit power.

The apostle Paul assures us that "to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge . . . ; to another faith . . . ; to another the gifts of healing . . . ; to another the working of miracles . . . ; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues" (I Cor. 12:8-10). In the days of the apostles, some possessed one gift of the Spirit and others possessed another gift of the Spirit. One had one part and another some other part.

Now the question is, What was to happen to this "part" arrangement? Was it to continue, or was it to cease? Paul tells us in I Corinthians 13, "Charity never faileth but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge [by Holy Spirit power], it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophecy in part. But when that which is perfect is come [the completed word of God (Ps. 19:7) 'the law of the Lord is perfect'], then that which is in part shall be done away . . . And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

During Bible times, the people did not have the complete Bible as we have it today. Their only source of knowledge was the Holy Spirit which made known God's will through the Prophets, Apostles and Jesus. When God's Book was completed, there was no further need of the Holy Spirit. Nothing can be added to or taken away from this Book until God breaks His silence and again becomes active openly in the affairs of men.

If you still feel confused by the many claims being made for "divine healing," speaking in "tongues," glossolalia and "miracles," consider this: During the days when God's power was operative there were no failures. There was one instance before the day of Pentecost when the disciples could not heal the lunatic and

Jesus came to their rescue. But the man was healed. In Matthew 12:15 we read that "Great multitudes followed him [Jesus] and he healed them all." Compare that with the power of any so-called divine healer today and there is just no comparison. No one today would go into a hospital and attempt to heal all the patients. No one today would attempt to replace a severed ear, or a finger, arm or leg. No one could restore the hearing of a person whose eardrum had been ruptured. The fact is that no one today can perform a miracle that you can see with your eyes.

To claim a power and to demonstrate that power are two entirely different things. As someone has said, "You can fool some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time." But you cannot fool God or those who trust His Word.

• Rich or Poor?

"Wouldn't it seem that countries whose people live in poverty would be much more ready to accept God's truth than those who have wealth and everything they want in this world? It would seem to me that the people in America would not respond nearly as well to the true gospel as people who are oppressed and live in poverty."

Your conclusion certainly seems logical, although we have no way of knowing. People who are more satisfied with life as they know it will surely not be as eager for a change as those who have known hardship and privation. Also, history has shown that ease and luxury breed contempt of law, lack of initiative, indolence, ingratitude and sloth.

However, there are a few other aspects of the subject which we might think about.

The Biblical ideal, as expressed by King Solomon, is "Give me neither poverty nor riches" (Prov. 30:8). Undoubtedly the majority of those who serve God in any age have been in this category. This is in accordance with the Biblical principle that "not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (I Cor. 1:26). God is seeking the "poor of this world, rich in Faith." But "poor in this world" may be a relative term. God is seeking those who are not satisfied, those who want something better than the best that they can obtain here, and who are willing to submit to His disciplines and obey His laws.

Actually, one's status or financial position in this world has nothing whatever to do with his or her possibilities within the plan of God. God will not accept a poor person any quicker than one who has everything he could wish for. Nor will He favor the rich above the

poor. God is not judging men and women by their "success" in this world. "Having" or "not having" this world's goods gives one neither an advantage nor disadvantage in the sight of God.

God is looking for character. He is looking for the good and honest heart, the person who is future-minded, who is not satisfied with the best this world can offer and who longs for something better, and who is willing to invest this present life in procuring the better. He is looking for those who are farsighted, who are willing to forego present benefits in the prospect of future rewards. He is seeking heart-qualities—integrity, fairness, uprightness, mercy and humility. He is seeking those who are willing to submit to His laws, giving up their own ideas of right and wrong. Whether the person lives in poverty or wealth makes no difference.

In any case, those attracted by the call of God in all ages have been very, very few.

Some people think that the poor are naturally more "righteous," that they have less pride, have more "natural faith" and less self-confidence, are less strong-willed, and have more "natural humility." Such conclusions are difficult to prove, and history has shown that oppressed people released from oppression are often as cruel and merciless and proud as their oppressors had been. Rich or poor, all have the same nature, the same tendencies, the same basic desires. They are just as selfish, just as arrogant, just as sure of themselves, just as self-willed, and just as unbelieving and disobedient as any others.

Simply stated, the fact is this: that no one likes to be told what to do. No one likes to take advice and follow the directions of another. The poor are not spoiled by the pleasures of having wealth, but it is very likely that if they had the opportunity, they would be no better.

The presence or absence of material possessions is not a factor with God. Abraham was rich; Jeremiah, as far as we are told, had nothing to call his own. Yet both served God acceptably. The apostle Paul was highly educated; Peter and John were "unlearned" fishermen; yet both served God ably.

The Bible says, "The heart"—any human heart, whether rich or poor—"is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. Who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9).

Wealth may tend to make people more satisfied and feel less need of God. Those having less in this world may more readily listen to God. But what they have does not change in any way their standing in the sight of God. Said Jesus, "Blessed are the poor in spirit"—those who see their spiritual poverty and want the true riches. Only such will receive God's blessing. MM

Resolved

With determination I am resolved to press on, to increase the growth of character, for only perfection of character will fit us for perpetuation. How wonderful it would be. Nothing should be too hard for us to do to make ourselves worthy to enjoy for eternity all of God's most precious promises.

It is raining today and the wind is making a howling noise, reminding me of John 3:8 (NEB). It "blows where it will; you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from, or where it is going. So with everyone who is born from spirit." Yes, it truly would be very wonderful to be worthy to travel with the freedom of the wind, which I imagine, would indeed give the greatest possible pleasure.

God has shown us so many wonderful things to increase our faith, so may we "observe his statutes all divine" and keep His precepts, that we may be worthy.

South Wales

R. B.

On to the End

We do appreciate a helping hand to give us strength to continue steadfast in the narrow way. God provides it by means of others who are able to give us the lift we so often need. Without doubt we have all been thankful for someone who has helped us along in some way. The encouragement is a stimulus to stir us into remembrance of the comfort and counsel of the Lord, to help us grow stronger in good works which please Him.

But we know God's promises are sure and our faith must remain true and steadfast; so we must not and cannot give up hope. If we do

not continue to labour on, we will never see the glorious light at the end.

Life is not one straight, smooth road, as each one of us has experienced. But as we overcome each trial, each problem, we are made stronger to press on. We read in Prov. 24:16, "A just man falleth seven times and riseth up again." He is not defeated or discouraged.

We will never reach the end of our tunnel if we have a defeatist attitude or try an easy way out—our own way. God has set the rules, together with the reward; it is for us to obey.

What a wonderful expectation is before us, with God's Word of rich and precious promises. The earth shall no more be ravaged by evil-doers. The knowledge of the Lord shall be worldwide and the earth at peace. "The law shall go forth from Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

Australia

J.B.

In the Battle

It is a great blessing God has bestowed upon us to be in this battle for truth, to overcome all evil with good, to gain a life that will never end. "The Lord has done great things for us; whereof we are glad. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Ps. 126:3, 5).

Let us be determined that we will think right, speak right, and do right every hour of every day. "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked" (Eph. 6:16).

Newfoundland

D. T.

... But for Hope

Thank you for the *Megiddo Magazine* and letters which have come so regularly to my post box and which I have greatly appreciated for the spiritually uplifting words of hope and encouragement in these difficult and dangerous times in which we live.

Sometimes I would have been finished had it not been for the Hope that is in Christ—His love, His strength and His care. But by the grace of God we have survived, and to Him be the glory for our survival.

I am in total agreement with your words of hope and faith in God's love and care and our need to be vigilant in these times.

New Zealand is known as a South Pacific "Paradise" and certainly the scenery and nature and snowcapped mountaintops overlooking vast plains which are farmed and cultivated by market gardeners and sheep farmers, is wonderful to behold; yet even here in this so-called "Paradise" we have political corruption in high places and many exposures over the past ten years; likewise, many prophets and religious groups and cults and some highly prosperous living in settlements not very far from Christchurch with their false "Christs" which God warns us in such times as these would deceive even "the very elect."

The world is indeed in a sad state and your warnings are indeed timely in sounding forth the Words of Life that men and women might have the opportunity of turning away from these things that would destroy not only the body but the soul also.

New Zealand

W. D.

Obituary

Floyd C. Fleming

On December 29, 1984, we met to pay our last respects to a friend and brother of our Rochester Congregation, Floyd C. Fleming. Brother Fleming made his decision to join the church group in 1931, after being deeply impressed by the powerfully logical and Biblical preaching of Rev. Maud Hembree.

Brother Fleming was an able public speaker and actor, and took leading roles in church dramas as long as he was able. A member of the Progressive Brothers, he made his latest "letter visit" in August, and during his active years went on several extended missionary trips to visit interested brethren.

Brother Fleming is survived by one brother, Reginald Fleming, of Spencerport; one niece, Mrs. Wynona Kapica, of Rochester; one nephew, Clifton H. Fleming, of New Braunfels, Texas; and four nephews in Arizona.

.....

"How we should rejoice to know we can be workers together with God, that glorious Being who has promised blessings beyond all that has ever entered into the mind of man to conceive. He has offered this to induce us to put away our own thoughts and desires, and accept His thoughts which are so much higher, grander, and nobler than ours. His thoughts make us better and happier for this life and fit and prepare us to receive in the world to come eternal life, with riches, honor and pleasures for evermore. Then there will be no more weariness, no more sickness, no more pain, no death, or evil of any kind.

"We can be sure that God will do on His part, if we will but do on ours. We cannot get along without Him, but He can—and will—get along without us, unless we make ourselves worthy of living in that future Kingdom.

"The work can be done, it has been done, and it *must* be done by us if we are to live eternally with the faithful of all ages. It all rests with us what the answer will be."

—by Floyd C. Fleming

Progressive Letter for August, 1984

How Much Remains?

(Continued from page 23)

every energy within, and then compel those energies to act intensely.

Today's best can be bettered tomorrow, and so on through all the days and weeks to come. The most effective and rapid method for bettering our best is to intensify our gaze upon the goal, the reward, the end of the matter, the result of giving to God all that we have and are. Herein lay the secret of Jesus' success. He kept His eyes set as flint upon the joy which was set before Him. And His achievement is left on record as an incentive to us. With nearly every command contained in the Holy Oracles is given an incentive to aid in observing the command.

His example shows us that the execution of the command depends upon a knowledge and remembrance of the results obtainable for obedience. Work requires stimulus, and God has given it abundantly. For example, with the command to be not weary in well doing we are promised, "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not." With the command to become pure in heart is given the proffered blessing, "They shall see God." Apart from the commands, many other "exceeding great and precious promises" stand out as brilliant luminaries throughout the Scriptures. For instance, "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Upon these promises, the result of obedience, we must rivet our mind's eye in order to render unto God the full faithfulness He deserves.

Furthermore, we can better our best by intensifying our gaze upon the reward. The object of our gaze is intensified, vivified, magnified by looking through the telescope of faith. A telescope confirms what is seen with the naked eye, and brings before the sight innumerable additional objects. So the telescope of faith confirms the promises already noted, and brings to view manifold more.

For nearly six thousand years prophets and sages have been foretelling future events. Throughout the ages numerous short-term prophecies have been fulfilled; we witness the fulfillment of prophecy upon prophecy pertaining to the latter days, proving to us without the shadow of a doubt that our telescope of faith is a divine mechanism, and the objects revealed shall shortly become reality.

As our vision of the reward becomes sharper, all our powers are put into concerted action, the whole glowing countenance, the whole breathing frame. Every motion every muscle, every nerve and sinew is united as we pour into the treasure of God our best.

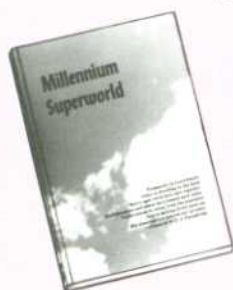
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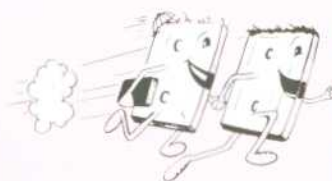
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