

SUMMER 2015 • VOLUME 102, No. 2

Megiddo Message



The way of honesty leads to life,
but there is a well-worn path to death.

– Proverbs 12:28 NEB

Holiness Does NOT Rub Off

It's an old story. Put two apples together, a rotten one and a good one. Leave them alone for a while, and what do you have?

Companionship can either be a great curse or a great blessing. Christian companionship is one of heaven's choicest blessings. But its power for good is nil unless we as individuals set our hearts in the right direction. The holy, godly character is in every sense non-transferable.

The fact is stated several times in Scripture in several different ways. The prophet Ezekiel put it in plain words: *"Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job, were in it, they would deliver only themselves, by their righteousness, says the Lord God"* (Ezek. 14:14). Again, *"'As I live' says the Lord God, 'they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; only they would be delivered'"* (verse 16). Four times in this one chapter the point is repeated. The most righteous could save only *"their own souls by their righteousness."*

The ancient prophet Haggai made the same point when trying to stir the priesthood to greater loyalty. Building around an illustration familiar to them, he asked a simple question: If a person carries sacred meat in the fold of his garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, oil or other food, does it become consecrated? "No" (Haggai 2:12). A thing could not be made holy simply by being touched against something that is already holy.

Can we miss the lesson? We may rub shoulders daily with one whose character is outstanding. But simply being very near one who is holy will do nothing to make us holy unless we follow his/her example. Mere contact or companionship with the holy does not make us holy. Being close to Jesus did not purify the heart of Judas; nor did being with the great apostle Paul make Demas a saint.

Jesus made the same point in Luke 13: *"Once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying 'Lord, Lord, open for us' and He will answer and say to you, 'I do not know you, where you are from' then you will say, 'We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.' But He will say, 'I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity'"* (verses 25–27). In other words, simply being near Jesus, or being in His presence, or even being classified as His followers, is not enough, because holiness does not rub off!

Jesus taught it again in His illustration of the two men in one bed; the two women grinding together at the mill; the two men working together in the field. In each case, *"the one shall be taken, and the other left"* (Luke 17:34–36). One shall be removed from the field of service, the other allowed to remain forever. The holiness of the second did nothing to cover the unholiness of the first.

The illustration is seen frequently between father and son. The prophet Samuel was a notable example of a holy father, but his holiness did not rub off on his sons. The same was true among the sons of Aaron. We know very little about the two oldest except that Nadab and Abihu *"offered strange fire before the Lord"*—an outright act of disobedience—and lost their lives (Lev. 10:1–5).

But this is only half of Haggai's lesson. While holiness did not rub off, UNholiness will. *"If one who is unclean because of a dead body touches any of these,"* he asked the priests, *"will it be unclean?"* (Hag. 2:13).

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*An upright,
godly character is
non-transferable.*

Front cover:
By Margaret Tremblay
Birch trees along
the long board walk
through The Black Pond
Wildlife Management,
in Henderson, NY.

WE BELIEVE...

- ★ **in God, the Creator** and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we *"live, and move, and have our being."*
- ★ **in the Bible** as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- ★ **in Jesus Christ**, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be King of the whole earth.
- ★ **in the Holy Spirit**, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- ★ **in life as the gift of God**, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- ★ **in humankind** as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- ★ **in ourselves** as capable, with the help of God, of applying to our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.
- ★ **in the promise of God**, that Jesus Christ will soon return to rid the earth of all sin and suffering and inaugurate an eternal and worldwide Kingdom of peace and righteousness, until God's will is done here as it is now done in heaven.

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 (2 Cor. 10:4–5).

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Megiddo Message

The *Megiddo Message* (USPS 338-120) (ISSN 0194-7826) is published quarterly by the Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619. Telephone: 585-436-1614. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, New York and additional offices.

Publication Staff:

Ruth E. Sisson, Editor; Gerald R. Payne, Executive Editor. Art and design by Margaret A. Tremblay; Subscriptions Manager, Donna R. Mathias.

Subscription Rate and Renewals:

One year (four issues) \$12.00. Send to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697. Or e-mail megiddo@megiddo.com. Or call 585-436-1614.

Note: For the protection of our subscribers, we do not sell, rent, lease, publish or distribute our mailing list.

Address Changes?

Be sure to notify promptly of any change in your address. Please include your old mailing label and your new address. Mail or e-mail to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697. Postmaster: Send all changes of address to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, NY 14619.

URL: www.megiddochurch.com

E-mail address: megiddo@megiddo.com

Manuscript Policy: Unsolicited manuscripts for publication are not accepted.

The *Megiddo Message* is the official organ of the Megiddo Church, Inc., founded in 1880 by L. T. Nichols. Publication was begun in 1915. Maud Hembree, Editor-in-

Chief (1915-1935); Ella M. Skeels, Executive Editor (1935-1945); Percy J. Thatcher, Editor (1945-1958); Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor (1958-1985); Newton H. Payne, Editor (1985-1997).

The *Megiddo Message* is available in microfilm from Bell & Howell Information and Learning, Serials Acquisitions, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Publishing Frequency: The *Megiddo Message* published with the seasons—Spring (March), Summer (June), Fall (September), and Winter (December).

Bible Quotations: Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version or the New King James Version. Other versions are identified as used.

The following lexicons are abbreviated as:
BDAG—Arndt, W., Gingrich, F. W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. (1996). A

Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature; **DBL**—Swanson, J. (1997). Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains; **EDNT**—Balz, H. R., & Schneider, G. (1990-). Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament; **GES**—Gesenius, W., & Tregelles, S. P. (2003). Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldean lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures; **HAL**—Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M., & Stamm, J. J. (1999). The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament; **LSJ**—Liddell, H. G., Scott, R., Jones, H. S., & McKenzie, R. (1996). A Greek-English lexicon; **LN**—Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament : Based on semantic domains; **SHG**—Strong, J. (1997). The new Strong's dictionary of Hebrew and Greek words. **THAYER**—A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (1889).

Maximum Living

by KENNETH E. FLOWERDAY

If you forgive others, you will be forgiven. If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving—large or small—it will be used to measure what is given back to you. —Luke 6:37–38 NLT 1996 Edition

Jesus' words in Luke 6:37–38 point up the need for maximum living if we are to be a disciple of His. It is a spirit which we need if we are to live an abundant Christian life.

In an eastern city a few years ago there was a campaign to raise money to build a hospital. A high-powered financial wizard was called in to conduct the fund raising. He concluded his pep talk to the solicitors who were going out to raise the money with these words: "Never suggest to anyone a minimum contribution, for a minimum has a funny way of turning into the maximum." The person reporting this incident has this to say: "The man who came to see me about the matter had learned his lesson well. He did not suggest anything that seemed like a minimum, but mentioned several sums that looked like terrifying maxima."

There is real truth in the saying that a minimum has a funny way of turning into a maximum. When applied to our service for God it is not funny but subtle and tragic. God loves a cheerful giver, and a cheerful giver would never be satisfied with giving only the minimum. When the question becomes not "What can I do?" but "What *must* I do?" one is living the minimum and not the maximum life.

There is little in the realm of life where that statement is not true. We meet it in childhood, where the question often is "How little can I do and get by?" Most children are willing to wash their faces, but that means only the cheeks and not behind the ears. They are willing to shovel the snow off the front walk, but not around to the kitchen door. They are all for the minimum.

Teachers see the reluctance of many pupils to give more than the minimum. "How long does the term paper have to be?" "Do I have to answer all the questions?" Some students never get to the boiling point. There is no intellectual bubble of doing anything for the sake of accomplishment. Perhaps bubble is a poor

word for scholarly achievement, but boiling water always seems to be water charged with animation, reminiscent of the reaction of the lame man whom



Would you leave home, friends and comforts at the call of God to live in a land unknown to you?

Abraham did! (Heb. 11:8–10)

Peter and John healed at the Gate Beautiful, leaping and praising God.

In the life of the mind the real delight comes after one passes the minimum. The words spoken of Christ, quoted from the Psalmist, were: *"I delight to do thy will, O my God"* (Ps. 40:8). His was maximum living. There was no place in His life for the minimum. That should be the password for each of us.

How poorly the minimum meets life's needs! Take the matter of food, for instance. Even where people are not starving, the minimum diet can be a dreary affair. One can exist on fruitless, starchy meals, but not in optimum health. To attain the maximum in liveliness, vitality, and vigor, one must have an adequate diet.

And take the matter of marriage and the home. There is a legal minimum that the partner in a marriage has to perform or the law steps in. But what a ghastly thing life on the minimum in the home can be—with a minimum of consideration, a minimum of honor, a minimum of sacrifice or love!

In Jesus we have the record of a maximum life. It is impossible to find any unsatisfied minimum of service in the life of Jesus. It was said of Him, *"Having loved his own,... he loved them to the end"* (John 13:1). We never hear Him say: "Well, I guess I will call it a day. I have done enough for these fishermen today."

The prophet Samuel was living the maximum life when as the last of the Judges of Israel he was rejected by his countrymen when they demanded a king. Samuel had spent his best years in the interest of the nation, and now they were rejecting him. What was his reaction? Was he hurt and resentful? Did he say, "Look at all I've done—I've given my whole life to this nation, and this is the thanks I get"? No, in spite of their inappreciation he still maintained a spirit of helpfulness. This was shown in his statement: *"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you"* (1 Sam. 12:23).

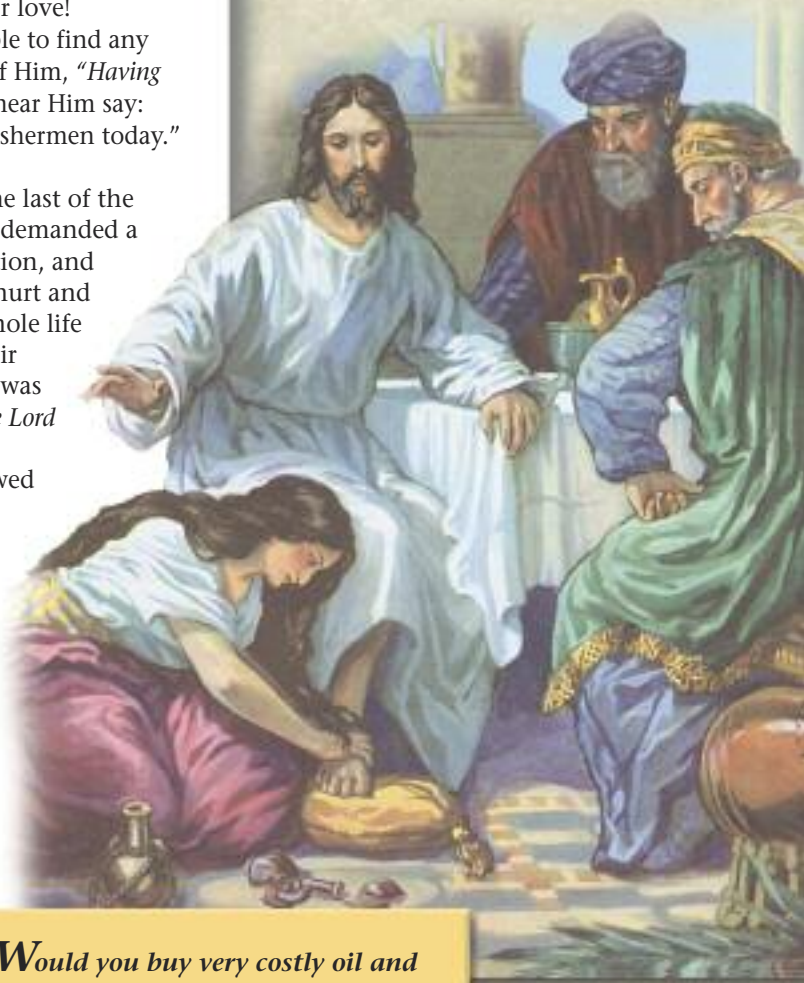
In Apostolic times the people of the Church at Galatia showed such love and appreciation for Paul's work in their behalf that had it been possible they would have torn out their very eyes and given them to him; yet he became their enemy because he told them the truth (Gal. 4:15–16). Under these circumstances did he say, "I am all through with you, don't look to me for any more favors"? No, indeed! Like Samuel he still prayed for them and continued to teach them the good and right way.

We have the clue to Jesus' attitude toward maximum living in the story of the woman who broke the alabaster box of precious ointment. When He saw what she had done He rejoiced, as if to say, "This is what I have been looking for, the spontaneous, unreckoning outpouring of the maximum gift" (Matt. 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; John 12:3). No wonder some shocked disciple said, "Go easy, sister, that stuff costs money!" But the impulsive outgoing in this Mary, expressing her gratitude and devotion, won Jesus' commendation.

OUR MAXIMUM?

Now with us there is great danger of the minimum becoming the maximum in our spiritual lives. When that happens, our spiritual advancement stops. We miss the deep power of joy of willing-hearted service for God. There is a tremendous difference between something one has to carry and something that carries one. When we leave the minimum in our service to God, we get out of the realm of obligations into the realm of joy. That is where Jesus lived. It was His *delight* to do the will of His heavenly Father.

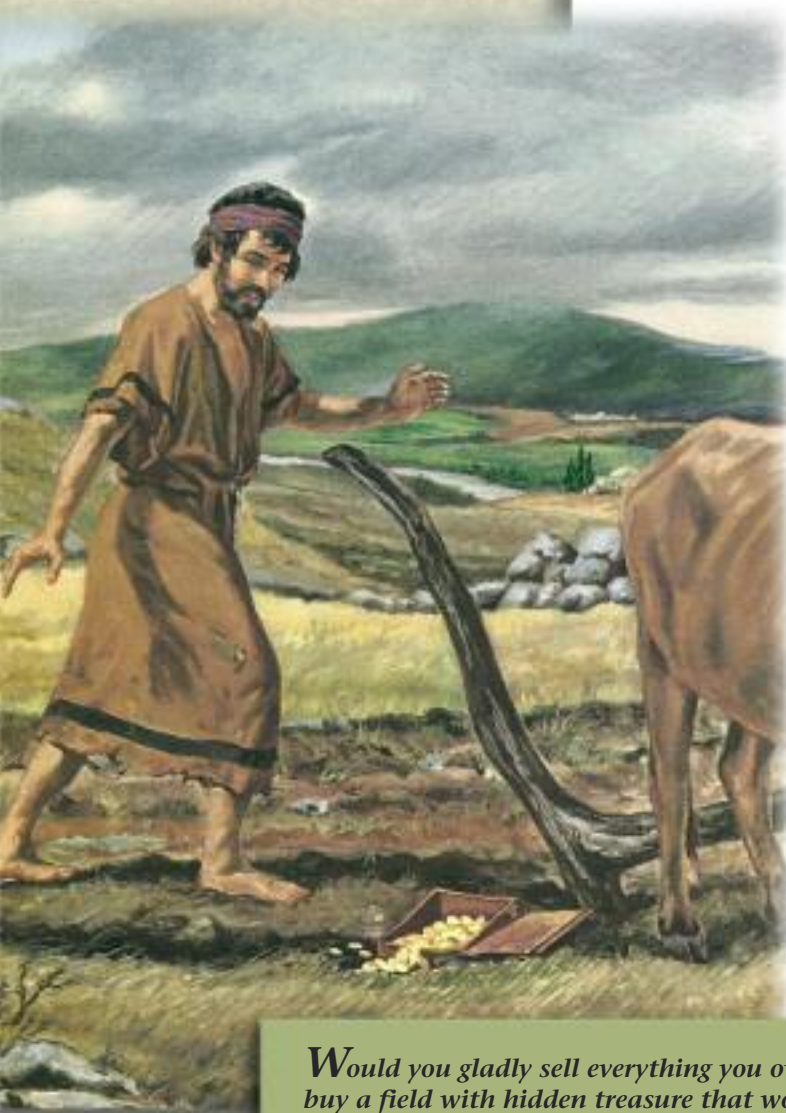
Lose your life in the service of the Lord that you may find it in the Kingdom of God.



Would you buy very costly oil and use it to anoint Jesus' feet?

Mary of Bethany did! (John 12:3–8)

*There is no place for
the minimum in the
dedicated Christian life.*



*Would you gladly sell everything you own to
buy a field with hidden treasure that would
give you a right to live in the Kingdom?*

The man in Jesus' parable did! (Matt. 13:44)

Someone has said that He always had an open door to the incoming of the Divine resources of God. His minimum was always His maximum. His best was the least He would permit Himself to offer.

A man came back from Nova Scotia some time ago, telling about the high tide. He said: "You could hear it coming. You could see it coming. You could smell it coming. The tides swept up into the bays and lifted boats that had been careened on their sides and set them off on a new level." That is a striking picture of the powers of the Christ-filled life. His message comes into life like a tide. It lifts and sets life on a new level. If we have been living on a minimum of spiritual activity, satisfied with ourselves when doing the least that has to be done, let us try changing to the maximum!

WHAT CAN I DO?

We may look out almost hopelessly on a world like ours, and say, What can I do? What impression can one unit like myself make upon the mass confusion and strife about me today? The answer is that we can be different. We can begin to help others to be different.

- ◆ We can be different in our attitude toward others.
- ◆ We can remove the selfish spirit and do to others as we would be done by.
- ◆ We can be different in our attitude toward those who differ with us.
- ◆ We can be different in the way we spend our time, not in games of idleness or entertainment but making the very most of it, acting like sensible men, not like thoughtless.
- ◆ We can do more of the right things that we have done the most of.
- ◆ We can face and eradicate everything within us that makes the kind of world we have: fear, egotism, the will to selfish power, the inability to live in harmony and honesty with people nearest to us.
- ◆ We can eradicate the personal attitudes which make for war, everything that makes us willful, selfish, isolated units bent on a plan of our own, when we ought to be a united army, working to build God's Kingdom on earth.

When we begin living on a basis of exact truthfulness with others, clearing every wrong or tense situation, being kind and thoughtful even with those we do not naturally care for, sharing life with them, we shall become a channel of God's power

and light, an example of a citizen of the Kingdom.

As fast as the days are passing, that is how rapidly we should be overcoming our besetting sins. This is easy enough to say, but too often our perverse human nature holds us in the same old rut. We go on still getting angry and irritable when something displeases us; and resentful when we should be radiant. But this cannot go on indefinitely if we would live maximum lives. Unless we get a firm hold on ourselves we will still be talking about it, and not doing, when our day of opportunity ends.

Let us become part of that army already on the march, doing things which, thanks to God, are being done, and ought to be done. Let us become God-controlled personalities, persons who, like the boats lifted by the Nova Scotia tides, have been lifted and set straight by the power of the Gospel acting and reacting on their lives.

EXAMPLES FOR US TO COPY

The Word of God provides many examples of maximum living and, sad to say, many examples of minimum living.

Speaking of maximum living the **Psalmist** said: *"Zeal for your house consumes me"* (Ps. 69:10 NAB). His plan was to do all that he could for God, and he was so earnest about it that he described it as being consumed by his zeal. He said again: *"With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commands"* (Ps. 119:10 NAB) and again: *"I hate men who are half and half"* (Ps. 119:113 Moffatt).

Paul the apostle was living the maximum life. Here is how he described his intensity: *"Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 3:13–14 NAB). And he unhesitatingly recommended that plan to every life-seeker with the words: *"Copy me as I copy Christ"* (1 Cor. 11:1 Moffatt). To the Church at Thessalonica he tendered the advice: *"Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more"* (1 Thess. 4:1 NLT). This leaves no place for minimum living.

Christ had already recommended this plan. When answering the scribe as to what is the greatest commandment of the law He said: *"...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength"* (Mark 12:30–31). This pictures maximum living at its best.

The **apostle John** was recommending maximum living when he said: *"Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward"* (2 John 8). To receive the maximum reward we must give the maximum of ourselves. God wants us to give our best, our very best.

When in the days of Isaiah the Lord spoke saying, *"Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"* The Prophet unhesitatingly answered, *"Here am I! Send me"* (Isa. 6:8). His willingness was at the maximum—he was not satisfied with any minimum effort.

FROM MINIMUM TO MAXIMUM

It is always a royal journey when we can go from the minimum to the maximum in sharing ourselves—that is, when we do it not as an obligation but of free will, as a willing offering of ourselves to God. *"For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself"* (Rom. 14:7) is a true maxim. Paul defines this journey in his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus with the words: *"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you"* (Eph. 4:31–32 NLT).

And not only is it a royal journey to go from the minimum to the maximum of living for God and each other; it is also a most rewarding journey. Jesus said: *"There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or*

Unless we get a firm hold on ourselves, we will still be talking about being an overcomer when our day of opportunity ends.



If God asked for someone to send as a messenger to His people, would you reply, "Lord, I'll go! Send me"?

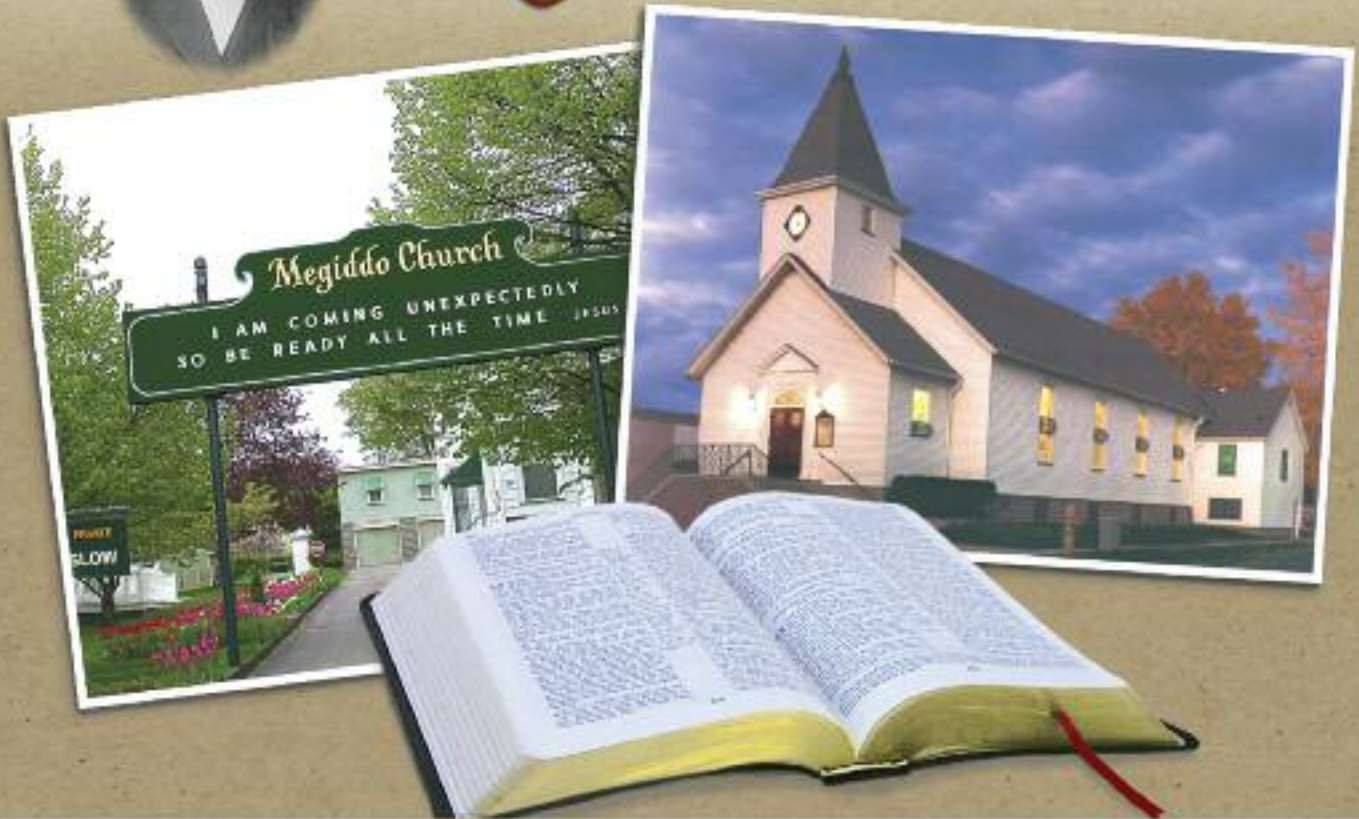
Isaiah did! (Isaiah 6:8)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

HISTORY OF



Megiddo Church



The Megiddo Church Is ...

The Megiddo Church is a small group of people deeply dedicated to a biblical world view and to the Bible as a way of life. We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of our Creator and our only source of knowledge about God and His plan of salvation for the earth.

A philosophy of life...

Because of our view of the plan of God, our first concern is not to achieve success in this world but to develop a character acceptable to God, so as to receive the eternal salvation He has offered in the Bible.

Our name "Megiddo"...

Our name "Megiddo" is taken from the name of a town in ancient Palestine. Its history spans more than 3500 years, being destroyed and rebuilt more than twenty times on the same spot. Located on a main route for travel between Egypt, Syria and Mesopotamia, Megiddo has seen more battles than perhaps any other location on earth, and is to be the staging ground for the final battle of Armageddon at the return of Christ (Rev. 16:16).

In our context, Megiddo means literally "a place of troops" where dedicated soldiers of God fight the spiritual enemies of doubt, sin, and evil in themselves, using the "sword of the Spirit which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:17).

Key Dates in the life of L. T. Nichols, founder of the Megiddo Church

- 1861: Was offered an annual salary of \$1500 if he would fill the pulpit of a local church.
- 1864: Is married to Harriet Griffis
- 1864: Is drafted into the army only weeks after marriage; refuses to kill his fellowmen based on convictions of Bible teaching; when his life is threatened for his stand, he appeals to President Lincoln and is allowed to serve in the military hospital.
- 1864–1875: Studies Bible intensely, seeking correct understanding of it
- 1868–1873: Settles in Fon du Lac, Wisconsin, circuit preacher for nearby towns
- 1869: Debates publicly in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. Subject: The resurrection
- 1870: Debates publicly at Kasson, Minnesota. Subject: The Bible is all one harmonious teaching
- 1874: Relocates to McMinnville, Oregon, for opportunity to preach
- 1876: Joins Christadelphian fellowship, and establishes an active Christadelphian ecclesia; begins to contribute to *The Christadelphian*, their official publication
- 1877: Debates with Professor Campbell at Salem, Oregon. Subjects: Is man mortal or immortal by nature? Is the resurrection physical? Will there be a literal kingdom on earth? Maud Hembree (his successor-to-be) is converted.
- 1878: Publicly debates at Salem, Oregon. Subject: Is the sabbath observance binding now?
- 1880: Hosts first annual camp meeting in McMinnville for benefit of scattered Oregon members
- 1880: Discovers cornerstone Bible teaching: that one's salvation depends on knowing and obeying every command of Scripture, as expounded by Jesus.
- 1882: Travels east through Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio
- 1882: Returns to Oregon by way of California; purchases printing press in Sacramento
- 1883: Leaves Oregon, travels to Texas, then settles in Ellington, Minnesota
- 1883–1900: Serves several congregations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois as traveling circuit preacher
- 1887: Holds public discussion in Owatonna, Minnesota. Subject: Is the Mosaic Law binding today?
- 1888: Establishes church at Barry, Illinois, places church under the direction of Maud Hembree
- 1891: Makes 6-month trip by ship to England and Wales in an effort to persuade Christadelphians of his convictions about the Bible and its teachings
- 1893–1894: Travels with wife to St. Augustine, Florida in an effort to help recover wife's health; while isolated from his people, writes "General Letter to all the churches"
- 1897: Makes second trip to England
- 1901: Builds and launches steamship "Megiddo" to spread the Gospel; 90 members sell property and live on board



CHAPTER 6 PART 2

THE GREAT DIVIDE

(Continued)

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

As Nichols continued to stand firm against the opposition, the opposition grew more intense. But what were they opposing: one man's ideas (Nichols'), or the solid teaching of the Bible? Nichols was convinced—and time has amply affirmed—that the opposition was against the solid teaching of the Bible, not against Nichols himself.

Uncompromising

On the home front, Nichols maintained his adamant stand against any and all error, which he defined as any teaching not fully supported by the Bible. He was equally adamant that whatever the Bible commanded should be obeyed. In another issue of *The Christadelphian* (1880) he wrote, "The day is not far distant when all will know who are serving the Lord, and will make no compromise with error—no, not in the least. Let me say to you, I would die first. I was drafted into the army in 1864, and was severely tried; threats were made, such as they would shoot me if I did not take the gun, go on guard, etc. But I told them No, I never would take the gun. They kept me eight months, and many times tried me to see if I would not yield. But never. I would sooner die. And I would as soon take the musket and fight, as to disobey any other command. Hence, there is no such thing as getting me to compromise with error. I wrote to you some time ago, about the many errors held by the Dissenters, and because they could not get me to acknowledge them as brethren, they were very angry at me; and their wrath ran so high that one of them started to take off his coat to strike me, and many, many abominable things they have done. I truly hope you have not been influenced by them. Be that as it may, you shall have our sympathies and support, so long as you continue to advocate the pure truth."

Updated Synopsis

Criticism reached Nichols from far and wide.

To reply to the opposition and avoid misunderstandings, Nichols published and circulated in 1881 an updated summary of his beliefs which he called, "The Christadelphian synopsis of the truth."

What were the points in question?

Nichols' stand against Adamic condemnation and original sin, and against the teaching that physical death is a result of Adam's sin were at the heart of the dispute, along with the standard of obedience

The Early Travels of L.T. Nichols

This map illustrates the early travels of L.T. Nichols across the United States, with states labeled in all caps. The travel path is marked by arrows and includes the following annotations:

- 1874 Relocated to McMinnville, Oregon**: An arrow points from the Pacific Northwest region to McMinnville, Oregon.
- 1881-1882 Missionary trip to Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio**: A series of arrows points from McMinnville, Oregon, through Idaho, Wyoming, Nebraska, Iowa, and Illinois to Barry, Illinois.
- 1882 Returned via San Francisco, purchased printing press**: An arrow points from Barry, Illinois, west through Missouri, Kansas, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, and California to San Francisco.
- 1885 Left Oregon for new location. Tried Texas, then on to Minnesota**: An arrow points from San Francisco, California, north through Oregon, Washington, and Idaho to McMinnville, Oregon. Another arrow points from McMinnville, Oregon, south through California, New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and Oklahoma to Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- 500 ft. tall ship on Mississippi River**: A line along the Mississippi River indicates a journey from Minneapolis, Minnesota, south through Wisconsin, Illinois, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama.
- Texasan that with Nancy escaped injury**: A note near the Texas/Oklahoma border.

A Trip East

On the return trip to Oregon he went by way of San Francisco, where he purchased a printing press and type, which he took on to McMinnville and set up in an addition to his house. Now he could publish his own pamphlets and tracts independent of the Christadelphian organization, though he still belonged to them in name. But he also changed the name of his group by adding the prefix "true," thus "True Christadelphian" (meaning true "Christ + brother"—

—from Latin), emphasizing what he saw as the pivotal point of Bible teaching: that God will give salvation only to those who know and obey His commands¹—a teaching he stood ready to defend with Scripture.

Away with Him!

The years immediately following Nichols' presenting of the core teaching of the Bible, that salvation is only to those who know and obey every command of God, were difficult years. Applying the principles he now saw throughout Scripture did not make him friends. But firmly committed to the Bible and just as firmly believing that he had found the key to what the Bible writers taught, he could not teach otherwise.

History is replete with persecution and violence against those who dared to go against the current of popular thought. The Bible provides numerous examples of those who suffered for taking an unwavering stand for the cause of God—a righteous Abel; prophets Elijah, Zechariah, Amos, Isaiah, Jeremiah; Jesus, Paul, the other Apostles, and members of the early Church.

Nichols' presenting of the Bible teaching was considered harsh and unreasonable. The opposition ranged all the way from those who post-

¹Obedience to every command is the Bible standard, but this statement is often misunderstood. God does not ask the impossible. He does not require one to observe every command inviolate his whole life, nor does He say that a single violation condemns one forever. God has provided time for our growth in character; each must grow *"to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ"* (Eph. 4:13). And as we repent and turn from our evil ways, He promises to forgive us (1 John 1:9), and *"abundantly pardon"* (Isa. 55:6-7) until at last we are accepted and approved (Prov. 28:13).

Why the violence?

The basic reason for the violence was outright hatred from those who disagreed with his teachings—which Nichols truly believed to be the teachings of Scripture. His experience was as Jesus predicted: *"If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.... If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you"* (John 15:18-20).

And as with those who opposed Paul and his associates, feelings and fury ran ahead of common sense.

Was Nichols taking the Bible too seriously? Was he applying its commands further than God intended? Not having any direct divine help, he had no way to know. But underlying was doubtless a fear of not going far enough when eternal life was at stake. He was still in the early hours of applying the overwhelming discovery: that salvation depends on one's learning and obeying the commands of Scripture. The more he studied, the more he could see where Jesus, the prophets, and apostles taught a total dedication, a full surrender, a complete and uncompromising obedience to the laws of God. How else could one love the Lord with "all" his heart, soul, mind and strength (Mark 12:30-31), as Jesus said must be done? If one was serious about salvation, nothing in this world should stand in the way—nothing! Not family, or friend, or education, or occupation, or houses, or lands. In the words of the apostle Paul, *"neither death, nor life,... nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature"* should

be able to separate one *"from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (Rom. 8:38-39).

Bottom line: If the Kingdom is worth anything, it is worth everything!

Naturally, not everyone agreed. And not everyone was willing to let Nichols continue to preach so radical a doctrine.

The immediate issue underlying the violence seemed to have been Nichols' position on education. His opponents reported that he was against education. Actually, Nichols was opposed not to the education itself but to the public system of education. Why? Because he believed that the public system was against godliness and was pro-politics. He contended that children waste a lot of time in school due to a lack of proper incentives, and accomplish more play than study. He recommended that parents homeschool their children, or that a private instructor be employed to teach members' children.¹

As for himself, Nichols viewed all of life as a school, and expressed his desire to be learning as long as he lived.

¹When Nichols' followers were able to live as a church community some 20 years later, Nichols was responsible for setting up a private day school for the children. The school operated for the next sixty years, and graduates became responsible citizens who were often recognized for their honesty and dependability. Some graduates entered the trades, others established their own successful businesses.

THINK ABOUT IT

Nichols claimed no direct revelation or power from God; he was only the voice echoing what he could read in the Bible. Was he unpopular because he spoke the word of God? So were Jeremiah, and Joel, and Elijah. Were Isaiah or Ezekiel or Amos popular when they said, "Hear the word of the Lord"? They were not. Was Jesus Himself universally acclaimed by the religious leaders of His day? He was not.

The primary issues were to do with *how* Scripture should be applied. In other words, what must I do to be saved?

Is the Doctrine of "The Fall" Scriptural?

For centuries the cornerstone teaching of Christianity had been the "Fall of man," the belief that Adam's sin brought death and a dying nature, along with an inclination to sin, on the whole human race. If this were true, how could any be saved? It then became the mission of Christ, the one without sin, to remove the death-dealing consequences, by dying and rising from the dead. Then God could forgive us because of what Christ had done.

Nichols rejected the whole Adamic condemnation concept, based on his intensive study of the Bible, and countered with four points:

1) That the Bible does not support the idea of the whole human race being condemned because Adam sinned; rather, every individual is accountable for his own sin. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezek. 18:20).

2) That Adam's sin did not bring about a change in the nature of the human race. Physical death is part of the design of human and animal make up. Homo sapiens, along with the rest of animal creation, are corruptible, and have been from the beginning. The Bible confirms, that *"what happens to the sons of men also happens to animals; one thing befalls them: as one dies, so dies the other"* (Eccl. 3:19). Adam was mortal before he sinned and would have died natural death even if he had not sinned.

3) That Adam, being the first person under covenant with God, was the first to sin under covenant. Because Adam disobeyed he brought penal death into the world when he will be condemned at the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10) for his disobedience;

4) That since none are suffering under the burden of Adam's sin and none are born condemned, God is fair and we are able to obey His laws and grow until we attain the moral perfection Jesus commanded (Matt. 5:48), thereby qualifying for eternal life (Rom. 2:7; Rev. 22:14).

ed "soul-sleeper" signs to those who used the local newspapers to publish articles that hurled vicious lies and insults against Nichols.

During the summer of 1883, persecution took the form of violence when the cabins of a number of his followers were reduced to ashes. Nichols himself became the target of a carefully directed gunshot one Sunday morning as he was preaching in the small church his group had built in McMinnville. To the dismay of his enemies, the bullet did not cause any permanent injury. But to Nichols, the message was clear: it was time to leave town.

As soon as he had recovered sufficiently to be able to travel, he followed the advice of Christ: *"When they shall persecute you in this city, flee ye into another"* (Matt. 10:23). Making his way secretly over the mountains to California, accompanied by his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Skeels, he rested until he recovered from his wound, then set about finding a new home for himself and his band.

Traveling South, they investigated the possibilities of Texas. But they were not long discovering that here, too, was a hostile land where individuals were apt to take law into their own hands.

Turning northward they traveled on, settling in Ellington, Minnesota.

Closer to the Divide

While Nichols escaped death in the Civil war, he was now in a serious war of a different kind, one he could not escape and be loyal to his God, and one that was also imperiling his life.

The disagreement over the results of Adam's sin and the conditions God set on salvation would in time cause *the great divide*. Nichols still belonged to the Christadelphian community in name, as he tried earnestly to persuade them to see the Scripture teaching as he saw it. But the division was growing wider and wider.

Nichols viewed the God of the Bible not just as God of the past and present but as God of the future—especially of the future. This present life is as fleeting as grass, or the petal of a rose. The present is God-given time for preparing, for getting ready for the great and wonderful time coming when there will be no more death or sorrow or pain.

He saw the Bible meaning different things to different people. Many interpreted Scripture for their present culture, whatever that culture might be. This fact would—and did—result in many different beliefs and shades of belief. But such a system of interpretation stymied Christian growth; believers who defined their beliefs by the culture would always remain infants, never growing to become *"a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,"* a clear mandate of Scripture (Eph. 4:13) and condition of salvation. Naturally his opponents were comfortable in their position and were violently opposed to anyone suggesting that the way to eternal life was not as simple as they supposed.

The inevitable separation was coming closer, but it was not yet. Nichols was still holding out with another appeal, and another, and another to the brethren he loved in Christ, to look closer at the Bible and study it honestly, not to prove a preconceived idea but to ask in all fairness and sincerity, What does the Bible really teach? *"What does the Lord require of you?"* then accept it, and obey it.

It was a bold and uncompromising stand, and all in the quest of salvation and a right understanding of the Word of God.

Nothing more and nothing less.

TO BE CONTINUED



Is GOD Able?

"Running Through the Rain"

She had been shopping with her Mom in WalMart. She must have been 6 years old, this beautiful red-haired, freckled-faced little girl.

It was pouring outside, the kind of rain that gushes over the top of rain gutters, so much in a hurry to hit the earth that it has no time to flow down the spout.

We all stood there under the awning and just inside the door of the WalMart store. We waited, some patiently, others irritated because nature messed up our hurried day. I am always mesmerized by rainfall. I get lost in the sound and sight of the heavens washing away the dirt and dust of the world.

The child's voice was sweet as it broke the hypnotic trance.

"Mom, let's run through the rain," she said.

"What?" Mom asked.

"Let's run through the rain!" she repeated.

"No, Honey. We'll wait until it slows down a bit," Mom replied.

This young child waited about another minute and repeated: "Mom, let's run through the rain."

"We'll get soaked if we do," replied Mom.

The youngster tugged at her Mom's arm. "No, we won't, Mom. That's not what you said this morning."

"This morning? When did I say we could run through the rain and not get wet?"

"Don't you remember? When you were talking to Daddy about his cancer, you said, 'If God can get us through this, He can get us through anything!'"

The entire crowd stopped dead silent. There was only the sound of the rain.

Mom paused and thought for a moment about what she would say. Some would laugh it off and scold her for being silly. Some might even ignore what was said. But this was a moment of affirmation in a young child's life, time when innocent trust can be nurtured so that it will bloom into faith.

"Honey, you are absolutely right. Let's run. If God let's us get wet, well—maybe we just needed washing," Mom said.

Then off they ran. We stood watching, smiling and laughing as they darted past the cars and yes, through the puddles. They held their shopping bags over their heads, but they still got soaked. Soon they were followed by a few who screamed and laughed like children all the way to their cars.

And yes, I too ran. I got wet. I needed washing.

Circumstances or people can take away our material possessions, our money, our health. We may get wet and washed, but we can still trust God to give us what we need. For He has promised, *"I will never leave you or forsake you"* (Heb. 13:5), and not one of His promises will fail. ♦

Maximum Living

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:29–30).

Give up all, and gain the hundredfold; sell out all your former hopes, ambitions, and ideals, that you may secure the pearl of great price; lose your life in the service of the Lord that you may find it in the Kingdom of God—so taught the Master.

And as we offer in living sacrifice ourselves at our best, as we sacrifice the sunny, favorable, working days of our life; when we give the maximum of effort for God, when we give the best of our talents, all of our mind, might and strength, we shall receive an hundredfold in present remuneration and enlarge the capital for eternal dividends which they shall never know who give the minimum to God—only the tired, little end of life, that which is left after they have vainly tried to satisfy themselves.

Why not make your maximum the minimum you give to God! ♦



LOT'S WIFE A PILLAR OF SALT?



Q: How could Lot's wife have been turned to a pillar of salt when she was struck dead? Doesn't this sound like another myth in the Bible?

The account of Lot's wife being turned to a pillar of salt when she looked back at the burning city of Sodom has been questioned many times by atheists and those who want to discredit the Bible. Pillars of salt of all sizes and shapes are common natural formations around the Dead Sea. Wikipedia tells of a pillar named "Lot's wife" that other sources say is almost 6 feet tall. But was she actually turned into a pillar of salt?



The formation above is a salt pillar that has been named Lot's Wife.

What might be the correct meaning of the statement that Lot's wife, for disobeying the command of the angel, was turned to a pillar of salt? (Gen. 19:26).

We have no way of being sure of the exact meaning of the term, other than the fact that she died suddenly. But Scholar George Lamsa, a native speaker of the Aramaic language (the language of the common people of biblical times) offers a logical possibility. He says that "pillar of salt" is an idiom meaning "to die of fright." This would suggest that Lot's wife had a severe emotional response to the catastrophic event that destroyed her city, what we might call a heart attack. Lamsa says people of the Mediterranean world would easily understand that being turned to a pillar

of salt was an expression descriptive of fright.

Following this line of thought, we could conclude that being turned to a "pillar of salt" means something like our word "petrified." We use petrified to mean being extremely shocked or afraid. Example: The child was petrified when he saw the snarling dog bounding toward him. But it literally means "turned to stone," as petrified wood. In a parallel figurative usage, Lot's wife, stricken by the angel for her disobedience, died of fright when she looked back.

The lesson was remembered for many years. Jesus mentioned it in connection with the need to be alert and prepared for His second coming when He said, "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32).

◆ IS A PHOTO OF A PERSON AN IDOL?

Q: Is a photograph (a picture of members of a family, or a picture in a newspaper, etc.) a disregard of God's Second Commandment? The Second Commandment is pretty direct: No "graven images."

"Graven images" were a great stumbling block to the nation of Israel as they fell into idol worship again and again. Over and over God warned them to have nothing to do with nations that worshiped idols, not to intermarry with them or even to talk about their idolatrous practices. The penalty for disobedience was severe (see Deut. 13:1-10). Why? Because God wanted their total devotion. He did not want His honor shared with any other worship. Idol worship (a graven image or any other object of worship) was a violation of their sacred pledge to Him.

The definition of "graven image" (*pesel* in Hebrew) indicates two factors: 1) that it was an "idol" or "image," and 2) that it was "made" or "set up" or "fashioned as a worship-icon as a god, or representing a god" (DBL). Isaiah's language is colorful, as he describes how these objects were made (read Isaiah 44:9-17).

A graven image was "a divine image carved from wood or sculpted from stone,...later cast in metal...in the likeness of man or animal" (HAL). A photograph or picture is not "fashioned" from wood or stone or metal, and would most likely today be for the purpose of remembrance or appreciation, not worship.

However, in another sense, any object, interest, hobby, relationship or anything else can become an idol if it is put above God. Ezekiel speaks of "idols in their heart" (Ezek. 14:3-4). ◆

On the Authority of the New Testament

Q: I have some thoughts that I would like to share with you; however I am pretty sure that you will disagree.

A: If I disagree, I have to give you Scripture to support my reason for disagreeing, or else it is just my opinion and worth just as much as the next person's opinion. We have to distinguish between 1) what is fact because it is supported by clear reasoning and evidence, and 2) what may be only my opinion or your opinion.

Q: My questions have to do with the authority of the New Testament.

I believe every one of the Eleven apostles was crushed in spirit when Jesus was murdered. The traitor killed himself.

A: Both of your statements are correct according to Scripture. They *"all forsook Him and fled"* (Matt. 26:56), and of course Judas took his own life (Matt. 27:5).

Q: The Eleven, of course, returned in spirit when Christ appeared before them, resurrected. And when gifted with the Holy Spirit, they began to preach God's Word with grit and determination.

A: Yes, their spirits were lifted when they saw Jesus alive and could truly believe He had been resurrected. What gave real thrust to their witnessing and preaching after the resurrection, though, was the experience at Pentecost, when they received *"power from on high"* (Luke 24:49), and went out to be His witnesses *"in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). The power of the Holy Spirit gave them new thrust, insight, and courage

that was evident to those who heard them speaking.

"When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

Q: I believe each of the books of the New Testament was written years after Christ was taken to heaven.

A: When you say that the books of the New Testament were written "years after Christ was taken to heaven," are you inferring that they are unreliable because of an extremely long time gap? The evidence from reliable scholarship affirms early dates for the writing of the New Testament epistles, all prior to AD 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed. Their reasoning is that the Epistles do not mention the fall of Jerusalem as an event, and if it had already occurred it would be written about, because this is the area in which the authors were writing and teaching.

Higher critics and skeptics have tried to say that the New Testament is unreliable because it was the result of legends passed on through successive generations which were not written down until centuries later. But the evidence is against their claim.

Beyond the research of modern scholarship, there is yet another reason for the early dates of writing. When Jesus told the Apostles that He was going away, He promised to send *"a Comforter"* that would bring *"all things"* to *"their remembrance"* (John 14:26), which He did send on the day of Pentecost. He provided this power so that they would be able to recall and write accurately the information that would be preserved in the form of Scripture, so that we could have a reliable source of knowledge. But this power was a temporary provision. The

apostle Paul recognized this fact when he wrote, *"Whether there are prophecies they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away"* (1 Cor. 13:8–10). When *"that which is perfect has come"* (*"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul"* —Ps. 19:7), when the written Word of God would be complete, *"then that which is in part [knowledge revealed by the Holy Spirit power] will be done away"* (1 Cor. 13:10). When Jesus had promised the power of the Holy Spirit in His parting message to them (Matt. 28:19–20), when He sent them out under the great commission, He promised to be with them *"always, even to the end of the age [Greek, *aion*]"* (Matt. 28:20). It was not a promise for all time but to make it possible for the apostles to fulfill their commission. This means all the books of the New Testament had to have been written while the Holy Spirit power was available to the authors, i.e. before AD 70. (For a more complete discussion of this subject, see our booklet, *"Treatise on the Holy Spirit."*)

God provided the power so that we have reliable Scripture to depend on. Can you even imagine how much those apostles needed that power? What would it be like to recall the whole text of a discourse you heard last week?—not to mention trying to recall the complete text accurately of something you heard a month ago, or a year ago, or perhaps something you heard under stressful conditions (for example, Jesus' discourse at the Last Supper, recorded in the book of John, chapters 14, 15, and 16). Add the task of accurately writing down something you did not even hear, such as Jesus'

prayer in John 17, or His prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. Recall that the disciples fell asleep while Jesus went aside to pray (Luke 22:46). How could they “record” the words of that prayer? Only because God was superintending the writing of the Scriptures through His Holy Spirit.

The apostle Peter commented on the fact that they (the apostles) received the commands they wrote by divine inspiration (2 Peter 3:1–2), otherwise how could they have prophesied? The apostle Paul said the same in Eph. 3, that he received knowledge by the Holy Spirit, and wrote it down so those that came after could have that knowledge by reading (Eph. 3:1–4).

We are deeply grateful that God guided the writing of Scripture so that we have a reliable source of knowledge about God and the Divine plan and His way of salvation.

CAN WE TRUST PAUL’S WRITINGS?

Q: I have a question about Paul. He was also chosen by Jesus, yet was not present at His crucifixion and had to be filled in by the other apostles.

A: Paul surely learned from the other apostles, but this was not his only source of knowledge. He also received knowledge by the Holy Spirit as he himself testified (Eph. 3:1–4). Remember, too, that he was made a minister of the Gospel by Jesus Christ personally (Col. 3:23–25), and received knowledge directly from Jesus (see Acts 26:16). The writing apostles all shared this same inspired source of knowledge because they recorded many things that they did not hear or witness, as mentioned above.

Q: If God’s Holy Spirit guided the writers of the Bible, why are there contradictory statements or mistakes in some passages of the Scriptures?

A: The totally accurate text is that which was originally written by Paul and the other inspired writers, which we do not have. What has come down to us has been both copied and translated, either of which may introduce an error. Languages often do not have

the word to convey the precise meaning or nuance of the original word, which means the translator must choose the most suitable from among a number of definitions. In this situation he/she is most likely to choose a definition in line with his/her personal beliefs. If a translator held a false belief, he could easily introduce that belief into the Scripture by his choice of definition.

Even so, the text we have in our Bibles has been confirmed to be largely free from error, as thousands of manuscripts (copies) exist, and when carefully compared, reveal very few significant differences.

The apostle Paul described inspired Scripture as being “*God given*,” and for the purpose of “*doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Tim. 3:16–17). God has inspired the Scripture to tell us about the character He is looking for in His children—the patience, the humility, the courage, the faith, the godliness—so that we can produce those good works in our lives.

Q: Paul, also chosen by Jesus, was not present at Jesus’ crucifixion and had to be filled in by the other apostles. Yet He speaks with authority in Romans 3:24–25, declaring propitiation through faith in Jesus’ blood.

A: You are making a statement here that is based on what we would call “surface reading” of a translation of Romans 3:24–25 without checking the true meaning of what Paul was saying or comparing it to the rest of Paul’s teaching. This is an example of a passage where the translators were influenced by their wrong beliefs.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF PROPITIATION?

Q: If Jesus is our high priest and intercessor, why did Paul say that God had “set forth [Christ] to be a propitiation...”? (Rom. 3:25). Why did the apostle John call Jesus the “propitiation for our sins”? (1 John 2:2). Is Jesus both high priest and propitiatory sacrifice?

A: The Greek word Paul used in Romans 3:25 is *hilasterion*, which was literally the mercy seat, the cover of the Ark of the Covenant which was in the Holy of Holies. Under the Mosaic system, the cover of the Ark was the place where the High Priest took the blood of his own sacrifice and that of the people’s sacrifice into God’s presence.

According to The Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains, *hilasterion* is the “means of forgiveness, place of forgiveness,” which was the purpose of the mercy seat in the Holy of Holies in ancient Israel.

In Hebrews 9:5, *hilasterion* is translated “*mercy seat*” because it was in the Most Holy Place and the cherubim of glory “were overshadowing” it.

The Greek word translated “*propitiation*” in 1 John 2:2 and 4:10 is *hilasmos*, which is derived from the same Greek word *hilasterion*, meaning “mercy seat.” *Hilasmos* is also defined as “the means of forgiveness” (DBL). Even some of the commentaries that support the common belief in the doctrine of the atonement recognize that “propitiation” is an incorrect rendering of *hilasterion* and *hilasmos*, and an inappropriate term to explain the belief in Christ’s atoning death.

If in the three passages where the translators have used “propitiation” (KJV) we substitute the symbolism drawn from the Hebrew, “mercy seat,” we have a thought in harmony with Jesus being our High Priest and interceding for us before God. For Jesus truly is our “mercy seat,” our mediator, the One to whom we go for mercy, the One who takes our request into the presence of the Father, being at the Father’s right hand.

Jesus is our intercessor with the Father, not our propitiation. He is the One through whom we have access to God. And just as the High Priest obtained mercy for the sins of the people on the Day of Atonement, so Jesus, our greater High Priest, took His offering to the real Most Holy Place, even heaven itself (Heb. 9:9), where He also receives our offerings.

What is the end result of Jesus being our mercy seat? He becomes the means by which guilt is annulled, the means by which we are delivered from sin, the means of our forgiveness. He forgives our sins as we turn from them (Prov. 28:13; Isa. 55:7–8; Heb. 8:12).



CHRIST AS THE MERCY SEAT (ROMANS 3:25)

Since Jesus is our High Priest, is it not fitting that He should be our mercy seat, the One appealing to the Father in our behalf?

This is the situation Paul is presenting in Romans 3. Discussing the absolute

equality of all before God, whether Jew or Gentile, Paul explains that natural born Jews had no right to expect preferential treatment from God. All would be dealt with on an equal basis. And all come into the faith with the same animal instincts for survival. This is why Paul says (Rom. 3:9), *“Are we [Jews] better than they [Gentiles]? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written: there is none righteous, no, not one...for all [Jew and Gentile] have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Rom. 3:9–10, 23). All, Jew or Greek, start at the same point to learn about Christ.

But a bad past does not condemn one to hopelessness. In fact, God in His forbearance has chosen to overlook *“the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time his righteousness”* (Rom. 3:25–26). For this purpose He has *“set forth [Christ] as a hilasterion”**—by using the original Greek word for mercy seat, we can retain Paul’s thought without distorting his point. For new believers, as for all, Christ

is the High Priest at the mercy seat, appealing for mercy, and in this context it is so that they can go ahead and serve without the guilt of their past life holding them back.

Why does Paul say that God sets forth Christ as a mercy seat *“through faith in His blood”*? (exact word order from the original Greek). Christ’s blood represents His life-long sacrifice of Himself to God, not simply His death on the cross. Where can new believers get more inspiration than to look at the example of a life totally surrendered to God? Seeing Jesus’ life of consecration, His life of self-sacrifice, they can be inspired to go ahead and make their own *“living sacrifice”* (Rom. 12:1). In this way, Christ as the mercy seat benefits them. ♦

*A footnote on Romans 3:25 in *Wilson’s Emphatic Diaglott* reads: “The word *hilasterion* never signifies ‘propitiation,’ as it is translated in the common version; but it is always used wherever it occurs, both in the Old Testament and the New, to express the mercy seat; which was the golden lid of the ark upon which the Shechinah or cloud of glory rested, and from which oracles were dispensed. See Exod. xxv. 22; Num. vii. 3, 9; Lev. xvii. 2; Heb. ix. 5.—Im. Ver. Note.

Holiness Does NOT Rub Off CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

The answer was yes, *“it shall be unclean.”* This is why God calls us to a life of separation from all that will defile. We are to *“not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers”* (2 Cor. 6:14). *“I have separated you,”* says God, *“from the peoples, that you should be Mine”* (Lev. 20:26). Also *“Evil company corrupts good habits”* (1 Cor. 15:33), hence the command, *“Come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean”* (2 Cor. 6:17). *“Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness”* (Eph. 5:11); and *“keep [yourself] unspotted from the world”* (James 1:27). These are all Divine directives intended to reduce the amount of unholiness that all too easily rubs off from unrighteous associations and makes the inner man unclean.

From another angle, there is always the power of example. Even though we cannot claim another’s virtue and will never be condemned for someone else’s misconduct, their example may change us—for good or for ill.

And unfortunately, a bad example is usually imitated more easily than a good one.

But Haggai’s lesson is plain. It is easy to make the clean unclean. Just take an oily, greasy towel and put it with a clean, white linen towel. Now do you have two clean white towels? No. You have two dirty towels. For the clean towel will never cleanse the dirty towel, but when they touch, the clean towel will be soiled.

It is a lesson we can apply every day. Our Christian friends can help us, but they cannot *make* us holy. Holiness comes from the heart.

So beware of the unclean, for uncleanness *does* rub off! ♦

Water Wonders CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29

column of water to be lifted to the top of any tree without breaking the column.”

It is further explained that the evaporation of water from the leaves causes the sap (a water mixture) to be pulled up the tree to the top. But bear in mind that this is only a hypothesis. The fact is, no one really knows how sap reaches the top of a tree 320 feet tall!

While we can only hypothesize how this process works—and it happens all the time—our All-Wise Creator knows, and designed the tree to take advantage of His laws of nature long before any human mind even tried to figure it out! Should we not be thanking and praising Him for all He has done and is doing to make life on earth possible even now—not to mention the eternal blessings He has promised for the future? ♦

*Nothing can be
accomplished until we
take the first step.*

Take That Step!

"I have begun to give Sihon and his land over to you. Begin to possess it." —Deut. 2:31

There are many ways to handle an overwhelming task. One is to keep putting it off, hoping that God will miraculously take care of it. A better way is to take that step in the right direction. In other words, *do it*.

After forty years in the wilderness, Moses was told that it was time for the people to take possession of the land God had promised them. The first order of business was to decide what to do about a certain king named Sihon, who stood between the Israelites and the land of Canaan. God's command was: *"Begin to possess it and engage him in battle"* (Deut. 2:24). God certainly could have eliminated Sihon without anyone's help. But He commanded His people to take that first step.

The same was true when they came to the Jordan River. God could have opened a path right through and just led them along, but He told them to take the first step. The

priests bearing the Ark of the Covenant were to step in, then the waters would divide.

Difficult circumstances or broken relationships often seem to defy solution. When they persist for months or years, we feel like nothing we can do makes any difference. But the Lord says: "Begin." Take that move, speak a kind word, ask for forgiveness, pay what you owe. We have to be the initiators.

Joy lies not in attaining some distant goal but in taking the step today that will lead us toward it.

God says: I have begun to give, begin to possess it.

Isn't there some step you should be taking? Take it today.

*It's easy to procrastinate
And leave good work undone.
But such a course will bring regret
When life's short race is run.*





NAME THE MOTHER

1. She knelt before Jesus, asking that He let her two sons sit with Him in His kingdom, one on His right hand and the other on His left.
2. Name the mother who dressed her younger son in the clothes of the elder and gave him some food to take to his father.
3. This mother said to Mary, *"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb."*
4. She promised to give her child to the Lord all the days of his life, if He would bless her with a son.
5. Name the mother who said to the servants, *"Whatever he says to you, do it."*
6. Name the mother who instructed her daughter to ask the king for the head of John the Baptist.
7. This mother placed her son in an ark of bulrushes to hide him from the king.
8. This mother was cast out by her mistress together with her young son. What was her son's name?
9. Who became a mother for the first time in her old age (90-91 years old)? What was her child's name?
10. Name the mother of the child who became the "spiritual son" of the apostle Paul.

WHERE?

1. Where was the hidden treasure found by the man in Christ's parable?
2. Where did Jonah seek to go when running away from his duty, and from what port did he set sail?
3. Where was Christ's home for most of the first thirty years of His life?
4. Where was John when he wrote the book of Revelation?
5. Where did Moses flee after he had killed the Egyptian?
6. Where was Moses bidden to take off his shoes?
7. Where did the prophet Amos live?
8. Where were two disciples going on the afternoon of the resurrection when the risen Lord joined them? What was the name of one of them?
9. Where did Paul and the others on board spend the winter after being shipwrecked on the way to Rome?
10. Where did Christ suffer just before his arrest?

WHAT CITY?

1. Here Paul saw a pagan altar inscribed with *"To the Unknown God."* He used this as the basis of a sermon which he preached to the people of the city. Some mocked him, others wanted to hear more.
2. The Israelites destroyed this city, and a curse was laid on anyone rebuilding it. However, it was rebuilt, and the eldest and youngest sons of the builder died as a result.
3. This was the city of the disciples Philip, Andrew and Simon Peter.
4. Paul wrote a letter to the Christians of this city, including the words, *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."*
5. It was built by Nimrod, the hunter, and later had a population of over 120,000.
6. This city, much referred to in the Old and New Testaments, is used symbolically as the "Lamb's wife."
7. In the synagogue of this city, Jesus read from Isaiah. Those who heard Him wondered and said, *"Is this not Joseph's son?"*
8. The Ark of the Covenant was kept here until the Israelites took it into battle, when it was captured by the Philistines.
9. In this city, Ananias laid hands on Paul, and restored Paul's sight.
10. The church in this city not only received an Epistle from Paul, but also one which Jesus dictated.

ANSWERS ON PAGE 21

Dynamic or Firecracker FAITH?

Our Lord often used the commonplace to bring out eternal truths. An ordinary water well spoke to Him of *"living water ... springing up into everlasting life"* (John 4:14). In a tiny grain of mustard seed He found an illustration of the promise of the growth of His future kingdom (Matt. 13:31). In a grape vineyard with its vines and branches He saw a parable of Himself as the *"true vine,"* His Father as the vinedresser, and His disciples as branches whose chief purpose is to bear fruit (John 15:1-8). To fishermen mending their nets He gave an invitation: *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men"* (Matt. 4:19).

But to a sophisticated generation who has accomplished the remarkable feat of placing a man on the moon and bringing him safely back to earth again, or of creating a bomb so powerful that it can annihilate a vast city within minutes, there seems to be little significance to the lowly well, the grain of mustard seed, or the vine.

Speaking of this generation, a minister commented:

"Had Jesus come to our generation, what in our culture would He have used to make real for us His teachings? We can only guess. Yet we are confident that His keen spiritual insight would have found memorable meaning in objects and events to which we give little thought. I think, for instance, that He might have made significant use of the noisy manner in which we celebrate what is supposed to be Independence Day, but what for most of us is only the Fourth of July. In my imagination I can almost see Him smiling gently at our firecracker fun and hear Him speaking with discernment of our 'firecracker faith.'"

We cannot agree that Christ would "smile gently at our firecracker fun," but let us see if we have what could be called a "firecracker faith."

The dictionary says a firecracker is "a paper cylinder, containing an explosive and a fuse, and discharged to make a noise." A firecracker, then, is a small imitation of a stick of dynamite. Except for its diminutive size, the chief difference between the two is that the firecracker has only enough explosive power to make a noise, not enough to be of any

practical value. If you want to move a mountain or prepare a roadbed, you don't use firecrackers!

Do you see the meaning of "firecracker faith"? It is religion that is but a small imitation of the dynamic faith that was in Christ Jesus. It is religion that is just powerful enough to make a show, or a noise, but has no practical or permanent value.

Jesus described such faith in telling outwardly religious people of His day, *"You are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness"* (Matt. 23:27). Paul described it again when he wrote to Timothy of those who *"preserve the outward form of religion, but are a standing denial of its reality"* (2 Tim. 3: 5 NEB).

Never have our lives more desperately needed dynamic faith than at the present time. Our Lord stands before our very door. We are pressed for time, and no weak, faltering faith, no outward show will accomplish the gigantic task that still remains.

The apostle Paul reflected the spirit of dynamic faith when he wrote, *"Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brethren, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but one thing I do, forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 3:12-14 RSV).

"The upward call of God in Christ Jesus" is still heard today by those with ears to hear, those willing to be led by God's Word to new victories over evil. Each new height of moral character or spiritual insight brings to view challenging horizons of yet-to-be-conquered territory. God still gives to those willing to be changed a vibrant, transforming, dynamic faith.

How is our faith? Does it thrill our being to realize we hold the pearl of great price, the knowledge by which we may gain for ourselves the riches and pleasures of eternity, yet that knowledge is not a driving force in our lives?

Are we enthused about the change God's Word brings

into the lives of others but that does little or nothing to change us? Is ours a firecracker faith, a thrill, an escape, a release, something exciting that happens outside us, which we can watch with little personal effect?

Do we say and do what we know will place us in good standing with our Christian friends while our heart lacks genuine sincerity?

Is our faith like the firecracker, flaring briefly, making a show and a noise, then dying away without effecting any real change in our lives?

To use another simile, having a firecracker faith is the same as being inoculated with a mild form of religion so that we are immune to the real thing.

Ezekiel observed this type of people in his day. Of them he wrote, *"So they come unto you as people do, they sit before you as My people, and they hear your words, but they do not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their hearts pursue their own gain. Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them."* They appeared to be reverent; they even said, *"Come, and let us hear what the Lord has said"*; but they lacked that dynamic faith that makes lukewarm believers glow white-hot. They did not want to do the things commanded them (Ezek. 33:31–32).

We want to see God change the world, but that change must begin with you and me as we allow His Word to change us. Do we want to be entertained but not enlisted? Do we seek a religion that is comforting but not challenging, thrilling but not transforming? Is any of our religion an outward show, an effort to appear better before others than we are?

If such has been our attitude in the past, if our faith has no more power than a firecracker, small wonder it has not moved the mountains of sin that hinder our progress. As Jesus described the throngs that followed Him, whose only concern was to appear righteous before men: *"These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me"* (Matt. 15: 8).

On the other hand, how mighty is the faith of those who recognize the need for personal change, whose faith is dynamite! Call the roll of great believers whose lives have count-

ed for the Master, and you will find that their dynamic faith sprang from a continuing surrender of self in obedience to the law of God. *"Follow me,"* said Jesus to Andrew and Peter, *"and I will make you"* They would become what they were not, fishers of men. As they followed Him, they did indeed become *"fishers of men,"* and more. They became men above men, humble, daring, loving, leading, giving, serving, growing men and women whose one aim was to be pure in heart.

HOW Dynamite?

How shall we acquire this living, dynamic faith? By applying ourselves to the law of God with the same fervor we would use if seeking for silver and searching for hid treasures. To obtain it, search. To retain it, practice!

Strong, dynamic faith is vital. It may be possible for our works to outrun a faltering faith for awhile; but inevitably we lose speed to the point where the best we can hope for is to hold our own, then merely to slow down the rate of deterioration until at last we arrive at the ignominious end of our hopes and all that we might have been. Without faith it is impossible to please God or to accomplish anything else of outstanding value.

The author of the book of Hebrews was feeling the dynamic thrust of strong faith when he put this strong appeal to his brethren: *"Let us strip off everything that hinders us, as well as the sin which dogs our feet, and let us run the race that we have to run with patience, our eyes fixed on the source and goal of our faith"* (Heb. 12:1–3 Phillips). Nothing less than faith that is dynamite can give us the power we need to reach that goal.

Right will triumph as by our surrender to a loving God, who become godlike in thought and action. Such faith is also the hope of our becoming holy, even as He is holy. It is well to be interested in what our faith can do for us; but our greater need is for what God's Word can do to us, in us, and through us.

Not until the cycles of eternity begin to unroll before us and our minds are expanded to comprehend the *"things which God hath prepared for them that love him"* (1 Cor. 2:9) will we know fully the power and rewards of dynamic faith. ♦

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 19

NAME THE MOTHER

1. Mother of James and John (Matt. 20:20–21, 10:2)
2. Rebekah (Gen. 27:15–19)
3. Elizabeth (Luke 1:39–42)
4. Hannah (1 Sam. 1:9–11)
5. Mary, the mother of Jesus (John 2:4–5)
6. Herodias (Matt. 14:6–8)
7. Jochebed the mother of Moses (Ex. 1:22–2:3; 6:20)
8. Hagar. Ishmael (Gen. 21:9–10; 16:15, 19, 21)
9. Sarah. Isaac (Gen. 16:1; 17:17)
10. Eunice, the mother of Timothy. (2 Tim. 1:2, 5)

WHERE?

1. In a field (Matt. 13:44)
2. To Tarshish, and from Joppa (Jonah 1–3)
3. Nazareth in Galilee (Luke 2:39–40)
4. He was a prisoner on the isle of Patmos (Rev. 1:9)
5. To the land of Midian (Ex. 2:15)
6. At the burning bush (Ex. 3:1–5)
7. In Tekoa (Amos 1:1)
8. To Emmaus; one of them was Cleopas (Luke 24:1–18)
9. On the island of Melita (Malta) (Acts 27–28:1)
10. Gethsemane (Mark 14:32–46)

WHAT CITY?

1. Athens (Acts 17:22–32)
2. Jericho (Josh. 6:26, 1 Kings 16:34)
3. Bethsaida (John 1:44)
4. Rome (Rom. 1:7, 6:23)
5. Nineveh (Gen. 10:8–11, Jonah 4:11)
6. Jerusalem (Rev. 21:9–10)
7. Nazareth (Luke 4:16–22)
8. Shiloh (1 Sam. 4:3–11)
9. Damascus (Acts 9:10–18)
10. Ephesus (Eph. 1:1, Rev. 2:1)

GO FOR A SERENITY WALK



The Difference
God grant me the serenity
to accept the things
I cannot change;
the courage to change
the things I can;
and the wisdom to know
the difference.

I PROMISED THE LORD...

When we moved into our new home, we were given a present of a wall plaque with the Serenity Prayer on it. We have this plaque in a prominent place. It is a constant reminder and it has become a way of life, but we hope that it will be something that we always accept as a grateful privilege and never take for granted.

EDWARD SHAYLER

We often take the feeling of serenity to be a living requirement, but it can be elusive and something that we are unaware of in our life. Serenity must be earned and should be a constant companion for the Christian.

I had become accustomed to living without it for much of my life simply because spiritual things interfered with my social system. They hindered my social progress and presented what seemed to be an obsta-

cle to my final goal of success. Everyone in my world at that time knew that SUCCESS was a large bank account and many, many possessions, someone who could parade himself well in the society page.

What happened? I found myself going backwards in the fast lane. This is a very lonely road to take even if it is filled with others doing the same thing, and makes Jesus'

prophetic statement correct (Matt. 7:13-14): "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Once we start the wrong way, it

becomes a difficult proposition to make a 180-degree turn. The first problem encountered is habit, and because we have made our life revolve around our ambitions we must change our ambitions. The longer we delay, the harder it is to concentrate our attention on the fault. It becomes a retraining process, and we find that we have lost our *serenity*.

I had come to a place in my life where I realized I had to make that 180-degree turn, but I had no idea that my stiff-necked attitude also needed a complete overhaul. Then one day (it was Saturday) the person I was working for insisted that I attend the usual Saturday night drinking party. I tried to explain to him that I was changing my habits. The more I tried to explain this, the more he insisted. This dilemma caused me to have a near panic, and I phoned a man for advice. This man was a minister's son who had also left his spiritual life behind, but who had recovered a lot. And here was his advice: GO FOR A SERENITY WALK.

For the first time in years I decided to stand still and listen. But since I hadn't the faintest idea what he was talking about, I said, "How do I do that?" His answer was, "Put one foot in front of the other and say the serenity prayer." I said, "What will I do when I finish that?" And he said, "Put one foot in front of the other and say the serenity prayer."

Well! it sounded rather ridiculous, but I had come this far, and I was desperate. Anyway, I decided to try it. So I went, not caring what the people on the street were thinking. There was a graveyard just a few blocks away, so I went there and sat on a tombstone for some time repeating the serenity prayer, and finally the words became meaningful. Suddenly I felt a calmness, and it became apparent that the only way I could change anything was to continue with my first resolve, which meant there might be a price to pay. And since I had asked God for help I had better try to change things and accept the consequences.

I went back to work and met my employer who asked where I had been. I answered by saying, "Mr. Fenning, you will never know." Shortly after that, my friend came and we left and went home, where I explained to my wife the circumstances and she told me how pleased she was that I had stuck to my decision. Unfortunately, Mr. Fenning and his son committed suicide individually sometime later (after I had left his employment).

I have never lost faith in the power of that prayer and its meaning. Almost every word in it—Serenity, Prayer, GOD, Grant, Accept, Cannot, Change, Courage, Wisdom has a deep meaning.

Serenity, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is "clear, fair, calm, weather; clearness and stillness of air and sky; tranquility of mind, temper and countenance."

Prayer as defined in the Analytical Concordance is: "To

petition, entreat, grace, make supplication, intercede, to judge self."

These are two of the qualities that my wife and I try to keep daily and we find that it leads to one of the most beautiful feelings that we can hope to have and a promise that we are all given in Psalm 119:165: "*Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.*"

While writing the above, we had the pleasure of listening to a church message, "The Grace of Contentment." This message tells me that contentment can be the direct result of serenity and peace. Great men have written in the records of a wonderful way of life and have given us this advice:

Luke 3:14, "*And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.*"

St. Paul in Phil. 4:11: "*Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*"

St. Paul in 1 Tim. 6:8: "*And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.*"

St. Paul in Heb. 13:5: "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*"

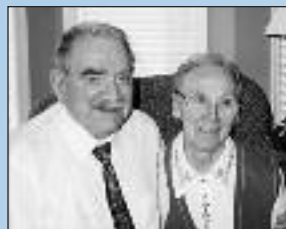
3 John 10: "*Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church.*"

St. Paul in 1 Tim. 6:6: "*But godliness with contentment is great gain.*"

When we read what has been written here, we realize that we have a long way to go to achieve true, godly serenity, because those past habits keep surfacing, but with determination all things are possible.

In Romans 8:38–39, St. Paul said, "*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

This could be the fulfillment of the serenity prayer. ♦



EDWARD SHAYLER lived with his wife Lorna in Calgary, Alberta, Canada until their decease in 2011. Their home was always open to Christian friends, and they were eager to share their daily Bible Study time with anyone who was seriously seeking God through a better understanding of His Word.



WHEN THE UMPH IS GONE

Todd had been admiring his cousin's trumpet playing for many months. In his eyes, 18-year-old Andrew was an accomplished trumpet player, and the idea of playing a trumpet kept popping into Todd's mind, even at the most unlikely times. He just couldn't seem to forget it. If Andrew could do it, why couldn't he? In his dreams Todd pictured himself marching in the band and making all those beautiful sounds. The more he thought about it, the more he wanted to do it.

Of course, Mom and Dad knew about Todd's dream, and Dad also knew a teacher who lived nearby.

So when Todd approached his parents with the idea, they were prepared. "Mom," he said, "I really would like to play the trumpet—like Andrew does."

"Why do you want to play, Todd?"

"Oh, I think it would be a lot of fun. I could play in the marching band at school, like Andrew did, and travel with them. They went to some terrific places. Maybe I could also play in our church programs. I just want to make music."

Mom smiled: "I really enjoyed the clarinet when I was your age. But, Todd, it takes time and work. Are you ready for a lot of hard work and practice?"

"I'll think about it," said Todd as he went off to

play with the boys, but the next day he brought up the subject again, this time with his father.

"Dad," he began slowly. Dad thought he knew what was coming. "If I learn to play the trumpet, then some day I can play in the band like Andrew does, right?"

"Yes, Todd, but do you realize there is a lot of hard work and practice between the time you begin and the time you play in the band?"

Todd was ready this time. "I don't mind, Dad. I've thought about it. It won't seem like work because I really want to do it. I want to play a trumpet like Andrew."

"You understand, Todd, that if your mother and I get you a trumpet and pay for your lessons, it will be up to you to practice regularly."

"And without complaining," added Mother, who suddenly appeared.

"That's right," agreed Dad.

Todd's reply was immediate. "I'll do it! Really, I will! I promise. May I start right away?"

"So you are willing to give up some of your precious summer time to practice the trumpet?" queried Dad with a smile.

"Sure am!"

"Remember you'll still have your chores to do," reminded Mom.

"I know. When can I start?" Todd was ecstatic. "I'm ready to go!"

"Well," laughed Dad. "First we'll have to see about finding you a trumpet. We have a teacher in mind."

The arrangements were made, and within the next week Todd had his first lesson. It was great! After a few tries, he was actually making some pretty good notes, all on his own.

Todd was excited about the lessons, and even about the practice time. There was something new every week: new sounds, new notes, new things to learn, new pieces to play. And he really liked his teacher.

But after a couple of months the newness began to wear off. The daily practice became a drag. School started. Todd wanted to spend his free time riding his new bicycle or working on the computer.

"Todd, remember when you wanted to learn

HEAVENLY FATHER, help me to remember that I will reap what I plant. I want to reap Your blessings, so help me use my time and my talents wisely and to Your glory. AMEN.



the trumpet, you agreed to practice,” reminded Mom.

“I know, Mom,” he whined, “but I don’t have time now.”

“Todd, if you plan wisely, I think you could find time for both your bicycle and your trumpet.”

But Todd only wanted to ride his bike. Practicing was no longer any fun. “I don’t want to play the trumpet anymore,” he announced. “I want to quit it right now.”

“Well, Todd,” Mother said firmly but kindly, “that is not an option right now. You need to go to this lesson today, because your teacher is expecting you. We want to be dependable, don’t we? Besides, your father has paid for all your lessons this month,” she went on, “and your teacher has reserved that time for you. Go to your lesson today, Todd, and tonight when Dad comes home we’ll talk about it.”

Before evening came, Mom called Dad at work and explained what Todd wanted to do. Together they decided that it would be unwise to let Todd quit the trumpet just because he was excited about his new bicycle and didn’t want to practice anymore. They knew that if they let Todd quit right then, they were teaching him that it is all right to quit in the middle of any project or task when it becomes less than exciting; or that it is all right to make decisions based on how you feel at the moment, without considering the long-term results.

That evening when they sat down with Todd, they first gave Todd a chance to tell how he felt. “I understand,” Dad began, “that you are thinking about quitting the trumpet.”

“Yes, Dad.”

“Todd, why do you think you would like to quit?”

“Dad, I don’t have time for everything I want to do, and it isn’t fun any more. I would rather ride my bicycle and do other things.”

“So you feel that if you practice the trumpet you don’t have time for other things?”

“Yes,” Todd responded dryly.

“Well, this is something we need to consider carefully. You know, Todd, it isn’t a good idea to make quick decisions.”

“I know, Dad.” Todd countered. “But I decided I wanted to play the trumpet, so now I can decide to quit it.”

“We know it was your decision to play the trumpet,” his father said very quietly and kindly, “but we have to think about *why* you decided to do it, and what will be the long-term results of quitting it. Do you really want to practice being a quitter? If so, you need to have a really good reason for it, because if you quit, that means that all the work you have put into it, and all the money we have spent for you on the trumpet and the lessons is just thrown away. Does riding your bike have more long-term benefit than learning an instrument? We want to help you consider your decision carefully.”

Dad continued, “Many things in life take years of careful planning and work before we get the final rewards of our work. You remember the stories from my plumbing apprenticeship days. I had to do some pretty dirty jobs, but I stuck with it, and I’ve always been thankful I did, because that persistent attitude led to the wonderful job I have now.”

“And Todd, think about your mother. It’s not easy to keep up with four active children all day long. And aren’t we glad she doesn’t quit when she feels like it? You see, son, part of growing up is learning to stick at something even when you feel like quitting.”

“I know, Dad,” admitted Todd.

“We have a plan,” Dad continued in a tone that Todd knew didn’t leave him any options. “I want to make an agreement with you. It is this: You go to every lesson and practice every day for the rest of the school year without complaining, as you agreed to do when you started. At the end of that time, if you still want to quit, you may.”

Todd was pleased with the arrangement. June seemed a long way off, but at least it had an end!

Meanwhile, Todd’s mother helped him plan his afternoons. She showed him how he could have time both to ride his bicycle or use his computer and also practice his trumpet. Todd remembered the agreement, that he must practice and he must attend his lessons without complaint to be able to make his own decision at the agreed time.

By the end of the third month, Todd was seeing the results of daily practice and feeling better about the trumpet lessons. The teacher had the students playing in a contest,

***Quitters are losers.
Winners are those who
persevere.***

and Todd was doing really well—because he was practicing diligently. Also he was now a part of a small band which he and a friend had organized.

When the time to decide came, Mom and Dad could guess what Todd’s answer would be. The last day of school, Dad called Todd into his office and asked him if this was the time to quit the trumpet.

With a grin Todd answered. “If everyone can put up with all the noise and you and Mom are willing to pay for my lessons, I don’t want to stop for anything. The contest is only a few weeks away, and I just might win it!”

Todd did win in the contest—not first place, but he felt sure he could next time if he tried harder. Now the trumpet was fun! It was a challenge. He also discovered that by planning his time he still had time for other things.

Todd did not realize it then, but he was learning a valuable lesson: don’t quit just because you feel like it.

The more you put into something, the more you will get out of it. Quitters are losers. Those who persevere are the winners.

Jesus made this same point. “*He who endures to the end shall be saved*” (Matt. 24:13). ♦

THE BEST KIND OF LOVE

An Old Fashioned Story—

What a perfectly splendid day we will have!" cried Davy Jones, waving his spoon in sheer excitement.

The three brothers, Davy, John, and Pryce, were eating their breakfast of thin broth and bread in the old kitchen of the Pen-y-Bryn Farm. In the summer some of the rooms were rented to visitors.

It was about the middle of a very hot summer now. The hay harvest was nearly over, and the fields left bare were dry and brown. How to get sufficient water for the cattle was becoming serious.

The son of one of the Pen-y-Bryn lodgers—a boy about the same age as Davy—was in the kitchen talking to them while they breakfasted. Something very unusual was about to happen. The lads were looking forward to a day in the park with one of the neighbors whose son and heir had come of age. The event was to be celebrated by a huge entertainment, and all his tenants and their families were invited.

Farmer Jones's three sons were also invited, and the son of the people then staying at Pen-y-Bryn was, by special invitation, also to be of the party.

All were very much excited, and talked and laughed noisily as boys are sure to do under such circumstances.

The conversation was interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Jones, a pale, delicate-looking woman, who sank into a chair for a moment, sighing wearily.

"You lads will have to wash and dress yourselves without my help this morning," she said. "Your father is busy with his last field of hay; there is food to be cooked for the men as well as the visitors' meal to be seen to. I have some washing I must do too. And there is the water for the cattle that must be drawn from the river. How am I ever to get through all the work I am sure I don't know."

Again she sighed, exhausted in the great heat.

"Never mind us, Mother, we will take care of ourselves. Don't worry about that," cried Davy, cheerfully. "Come along boys," he called.

Davy and John were the first to make their reappearance.

"Are we all right?" they asked together.

Mother was back in the kitchen by this time, busy with her washing. "Very good, boys," she answered, looking them over from top to toe. "Just mind your manners and be good lads."

They promised, each giving her a sounding kiss. They were always very loving to Mother.

"Wish us a good day, Mother dear!"



THE LAST PAIL HAD NOW BEEN HANDED UP.

"I do my boys, with all my heart. But where are Master Walter and Pryce?"

"Not ready yet, I suppose. Tell them we have gone, we want to be off. And, mind you, Mother, don't work too hard."

"Don't work too hard," she muttered to herself, with another long sigh. "How is that to be helped, I wonder?"

Just then, the visitor they all so politely called Master Walter rushed in.

"Where are the others, Mrs. Jones?"

"Davy and John have gone on, leaving word you were to follow," was the reply. "Pryce must not be ready yet."

"Silly owl! I must run and hurry him up," and out rushed Walter as excitedly as he has entered.

A short time after, to Mrs. Jones' surprise, Walter and Pryce appeared, both dressed in working clothes.

"Oh, Pryce, what are you thinking? Your brothers started long ago, and you are not even dressed yet."

"I am thinking not to go at all," answered Pryce, good-humoredly, "and Master Walter decided to stay and keep me company."

"But why, why?" she cried quite bewildered.

"You'll find out by and by, Mother. It is nothing wrong that keeps us at home," said Pryce, with a mysterious, yet roguish expression on his rosy face. And beckoning to Walter, he went off into the yard.

Carrying the water for the farm use was really a toilsome business. It had to be brought from the river that flowed along the foot of the hill on which the farm stood. A donkey cart containing a barrel and some tin pails conveyed the water up the steep stony road from the river to Pen-y-Bryn, but before this could be accomplished, the donkey had to be led down to the river, the barrel filled, and the donkey had to be led up again—sometimes with more than a little coaxing.

Still vexed at Pryce's strange behavior, Mrs. Jones was bending over her tub when she heard the rumble of wheels outside. Looking up she caught sight of the donkey cart, followed by her stay-at-home boys, turning through the yard gate.

"I can't believe my eyes!" she exclaimed. "Dear, dear little Pryce! He has given up his pleasure to carry the water for me."

Tears of joy gushed from her eyes at knowing what a kind, unselfish son she had, and she returned to her work with a lightened heart.

Down by the river the two companions were perfectly happy. Pryce had led the donkey into the shallow water at the edge and was standing in the cart emptying into the barrel the pails of water which Walter handed to him from his station knee deep in the cool river.

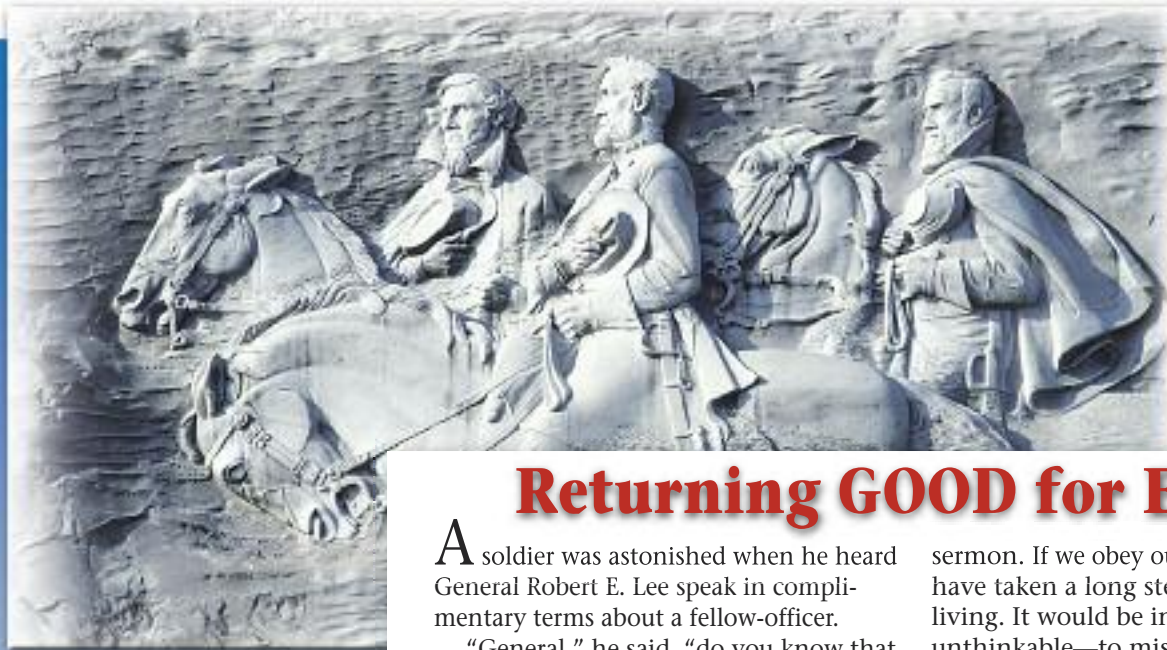
"I have the best of it, Pryce," he remarked, "I feel as cool as a cucumber. It is just lovely standing in this water."

"It is right you should, Master Walter, since you were good enough to stay home and help me."

The last pail for the barrel had now been handed up, and Walter was resting his arm on the shaft of the cart. "You think a great deal of your mother, don't you?"

"We all do," was the reply. "We all love her dearly."

"But your kind of love is the best," said Walter sturdily. "You try to help her." ♦



Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you.

—Matthew 5:44

Returning GOOD for EVIL

A soldier was astonished when he heard General Robert E. Lee speak in complimentary terms about a fellow-officer.

"General," he said, "do you know that the man you spoke so highly of is one of your worst enemies, and misses no opportunity to slander you?"

"Yes," said the general, "but I was asked for my opinion of him, not his opinion of me."

Lee's kindness is an inspiring illustration of returning good for evil. Now that is not easy to do. That is why Jesus spoke about it in Matthew 5, in His first

sermon. If we obey our Savior in this we have taken a long step toward virtuous living. It would be inconsistent—even unthinkable—to mistreat someone we have just remembered in prayer, and that is what Jesus says we should do: *"Pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."*

Abraham Lincoln once said, "The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him your friend."

Let's be like our Lord and return good for evil. Returning good for good is natural; returning good for evil is Christ-like. ♦



Water Wonders

Did You Know...?

- ✓ ...that pure water consists of only two different atoms, two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen attached to each other at an angle of 105°?
- ✓ ...that a single drop of water contains 1,700,000,000,000,000,000 (1.7 quintillion) molecules?
- ✓ ...that the earth is a closed system—there is no more freshwater on earth now than there was thousands of years ago?
- ✓ ...that water is the most plentiful substance on earth, covering 70 percent of its surface?
- ✓ ...that there are 326 million cubic miles of water on earth?
- ✓ ...that every living thing needs water to live, and every living thing is made of at least some water?
- ✓ ...that water is the only nutrient needed by the body every day?
- ✓ ...that during a lifetime, you'll drink about 16,000 gallons of water?
- ✓ ...that dehydration can cause fatigue and you may not even know you are dehydrated?
- ✓ ...that water is the only substance on earth found naturally in three forms—solid, liquid, and gas?
- ✓ ...that it is estimated that 3,400 cubic miles of water are locked within the bodies of living things?
- ✓ ...that in the United States, approximately 500,000 tons of pollutants pour into lakes and rivers each day, our primary source of potable water?
- ✓ ...that approximately 1,000 gallons of water are required to grow and process one pound of food we eat?

<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?eu=25071&tocid=0>
<http://getawaytips.azcentral.com/plan-vacation-grand-canyon-redwood-forest-1570.html>

What could be simpler than water? Pure and plain, water consists of only two different atoms, two parts hydrogen and one part oxygen, abbreviated H₂O.

But there is nothing simple about water.

Can you imagine that just *by chance* its three atoms (2 hydrogen and 1 oxygen) are attached to form an angle of 105°? As with many of the tiniest parts in nature, this fact is no accident but a clear evidence of intelligence behind it. Although water is simple in structure, the physical and chemical properties are extraordinarily complex. And we have no way to create more water to add to our earth's supply. Earth is a closed system, which means that the water supply is constant; it does not increase or decrease.

Our Creator saw fit to provide us with an ample water supply, but if we abuse it, contaminate it and waste it, shortages will occur.

Pure water is odorless, tasteless and almost colorless. Viewed at great depth, it has a tint of blue. But pure water is rare in nature. Due to its ability to dissolve substances in large amounts, water combines with a variety of other elements even as it falls from the sky. Heavy rain and fog are our Creator's arrangement for cleansing the air we breathe, as well as replenishing our water supply. As water percolates through the soil and rocks, larger contaminants are removed from it. Even muddy water can become crystal clear by the time it reaches the deep underground aquifers.

But the water as it filters through layers of rock and soil is doing more than just leaving behind large particles it accumulated from the air. It is reacting with minerals in the soil and rock which, in turn, combine with acids, metals, and a variety of elements, producing what myriad varieties of plants and ani-



imals need to reproduce and flourish.

Some of the rainwater that flows into shallow wells, lakes and streams may not be completely filtered and may contain other substances, such as sewage, industrial waste, large amounts of nitrogen compounds and chlorides from human and animal waste. Yet, rivers provide the major source of potable (suitable for drinking) water—which is only about 1/10,000 of 1% of earth's water supply (only about 300 cubic miles of earth's 326,000,000 cubic miles of water). The ocean consists of 97% of earth's water which, of course, is not suitable for human consumption, yet the composition of ocean water is delicately balanced to support a tremendous variety of plant and animal life which could not live in fresh water—another of God's provisions for life on earth.

“Wonder” properties of water

Water exists in three states: solid, liquid and gas. Under normal atmospheric pressure (14.7 lbs. per square inch), pure water freezes at 32° F, boils at 212° F, has maximum density at 39° F, and unlike most liquids, expands upon freezing. It also evaporates, adding moisture to the air. While we give little thought to these properties of water, it is because of these properties that life exists. Boil water, freeze it, drink it, or pour it out, the properties of water (as well as its quantity) remain unchanged.

Suppose that water, like most other liquids, became more dense when changed to a solid (frozen). Lakes in colder climates would be frozen solid, and all the little living creatures in the lake would die—because the water, as it froze, would sink to the bottom. But because water as it freezes becomes *less* dense, ice floats as it forms, making an insulating layer on top of the water which helps prevent heat loss, and allows life to thrive beneath it.

And since water evaporates easily as air passes over it, we have natural air conditioning, as well as precipitation to water our crops and replenish the earth's underground water supply.

How does water climb?

Have you ever wondered how water manages to climb to the top of trees like the giant Redwoods, for example, that towers over 300 feet into the sky?

As water evaporates from the leaves, water is drawn upward to replace it. But how? A water pump, using even a perfect vacuum cannot pull water up more than a little over 30 feet. That leaves about 270 feet to go if a perfect vacuum could be formed—which it can't in a tree.

Is water by some means pushed to the top by pressure? It has been calculated that this would require a pressure of about 100 lbs. per square inch. Think what that kind of pressure would do to the bark on the tree! Even a combination of vacuum and pressure still comes far short of moving water from ground level to the top of the tree. Yet by some means water climbs the entire distance, or the tree could not grow to that height.

Not only must the water get to the top of a tree but it must carry all the nutrients a tree needs as it climbs.

Scientists have explained that the process of water climbing upward in a tree is done by capillary action, that this special process is possible due to water's singular properties of adhesion,¹ cohesion² and surface tension.³ These terms are all very closely related, and all have to do with how the molecules bond together. But none is a total explanation of what happens.

The *Encyclopedia Britannica* explains:

¹**adhesion:** steady or firm attachment—*Merriam-Webster Collegiate dictionary*. This property would be similar to glue.

²**cohesion:** the act or state of sticking together tightly—*Merriam-Webster Collegiate dictionary*.

For a demonstration pour some water in a shallow container. Then hold two hollow tubes (with a significant difference in diameter) upright in the liquid. Notice that the water will rise up in the tubes above the water level of the container. Notice also that it rises higher in the smaller tube. If these same hollow tubes are held upright in mercury you will notice a complete absence of this property (cohesion). As a matter of fact the mercury will be pushed downward instead of rising up in the tubes.

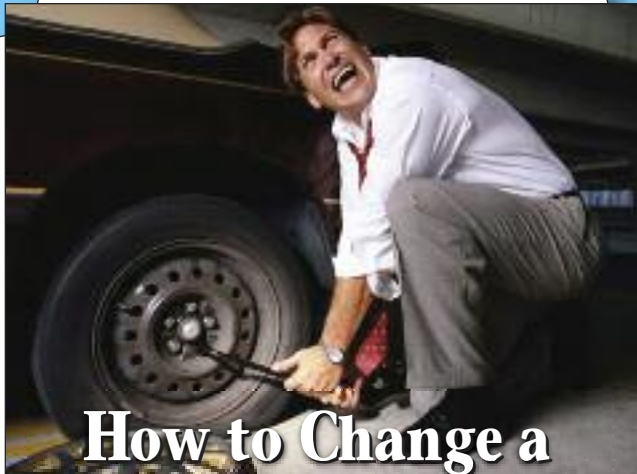


How does water climb to the top of the Giant Redwoods—some over 320 feet high?

The “upward movement of sap in trees is...called the transpiration-cohesion hypothesis....The forces of cohesion between water molecules and the forces of adhesion between water molecules and the walls of the vessel cells [have a tensile strength of at least] 440 pounds per square inch. This is high enough to permit a thin

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³**surface tension:** the attractive force exerted upon the surface molecules of a liquid by the molecules beneath that tend to draw the surface molecules into the bulk of the liquid and makes the liquid assume the shape having the least surface area—*Merriam-Webster Collegiate dictionary*. An example of this can be seen by putting a drop of water on your counter-top: Notice how the water seems to stack up instead of spreading out. Or carefully place an ordinary paper clip or a double-edged razor blade (old type of blade) on the surface of a dish of water. It remains on the surface of the water (surface tension), but it is not floating. Push it down. When it breaks the surface tension, it will sink rapidly.



How to Change a FLAT ATTITUDE

A wrong attitude is like a flat tire; it needs to be changed before you can get anywhere.

Step One: Pull over and stop. Stop and admit that your attitude is wrong and needs changing. As you do this, try to specifically pinpoint what about your attitude is wrong and why you have it.

Step Two: Jack it up off the ground. Lift that attitude to God in prayer. Let Him help you set up some reasonable goals for yourself in changing your attitude. The more you trust and depend on Him to keep you from falling into the same old patterns, the sooner you will be able to make the change.

Step Three: Remove it and replace it with a new one. Replace the wrong attitude with a right attitude. Right attitudes come from thinking on things that are true, honest, just, pure, upright and lovely (Phil. 4:8).

Step Four: Lower it back in place. Get ready to put that good attitude into practice. Try to imagine all the different areas of your life that your "new" attitude will change. Do a Bible study on the new attitude and seek specific guidelines for using it.

Step Five: Now start the engine and take off! But be sure that you are headed the right direction. And avoid places that could give you another flat attitude.

Continue on to your destination. Do not be hearers of the word only, but doers also (James 1:22), and *"Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass"* (Ps. 37:5).

If your Faith doesn't affect your hands, feet and heart, it isn't Christianity.

Having your name on the church role does not make you a Christian any more than owning a piano makes you a musician.

*Knowledge is knowing a fact.
 Wisdom is knowing what to do with that fact.*

What counts is not the number of hours you put in, but how much you put into the hours.

Moses and Abraham were not great in the beginning, they were made great by the discipline of their faith.

Adversity is never pleasant, but we may learn lessons from it that we can learn in no other way.

Small deeds done well are better than great deeds^{only} planned.

Too often opportunity knocks, and is gone.

*Gossip is like an egg,
 when it is hatched it has wings.*



Forming Habits

*Man is a creature of habits, 'tis sure;
Without them the species would not long endure;
From morning till night they are there to direct,
Though often their presence we can not detect.
We rise in the morning, and put on our clothes,
According to habit, statistics disclose;
And through the day's journey, at work, or at play,
The forces of habit we're bound to obey.*

*We cultivate habits that spring up as weeds,
Oft times without thought to the source of the seeds;
And frequently find, ere the stalk has grown high,
A poisonous plant, now reluctant to die.
We try a thing once, just to get all the facts,
Then do it again, as our guard we relax;
Till soon, ere we sense it, our fort has been stormed,
And we go to defeat, as a habit is formed.*

*A habit respects neither person nor age,
Descending alike on the fool and the sage;
The difference comes in the habits acquired,
For many are not all that could be desired.
And he who is wise will discover in youth
The best ones to form are connected with Truth;
The habits that help him in reaching his port
Are those that the person of wisdom will court.*

*Good habits are not very hard to acquire,
And that is the goal to which all should aspire.
Just start to obey the commandments of God,
And walk in the path that the Patriarchs trod.
The lower emotions resolve to control,
The anger, and envy, that poison the soul;
Then cultivate meekness, the pureness of heart,
And help to give virtue (or courage) a start.*

*So bear this in mind, as you go on your way,
Check up on your garden of habits today!
Determine to weed out the ones that defile,
The low, and the groveling; the sensual and vile.
Then, as you uproot them, replace every one
With habits that show a new life is begun;
Far happier now you will be, and in time
You'll share in eternity's pleasures sublime.*

—Liot L Snyder

An EGOTIST is a person
who is always ME-DEEP in conversation.

O God Our Father,...

*Equip us with these gifts today which will help us live
right today and every day:*

- ♦ Grant us the faith which makes it possible to please You, which believes that You are and that You will reward each one who diligently seeks You, and not doubt.
- ♦ Grant us the hope **found** in Your Word which remains unshaken, even in the darkest hour, and won't turn to despair.
- ♦ Grant us the loyalty which will be true to You even though all others deny You, and which will not stoop to compromise.
- ♦ Grant us the purity which can resist all the seductions of temptation because Jesus said "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

Arm our wills with Your strength and our hearts with Your love, so that we may become more and more like our Master and Your Son, in whose worthy name we pray. AMEN.



As the Waters Cover the Sea

*"For the earth will be filled
With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD,
As the waters cover the sea."*

— Habakkuk 2:14

God is working His purpose out as year succeeds to year;
God is working His purpose out, and the time is drawing near
Nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea!

All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed;
Vainly we hope for the harvest tide till God gives life to the seed;
Yet nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God
As the waters cover the sea!

—Arthur C. Ainger