



# Megiddo Message

Vol. 73, No. 3

Our God Hath Promised

March, 1986



## Sanctified Thinking

**T**HINKING is a kind of living. Thinking is a part of living. To think and to be aware that we think is to be conscious; life without conscious thought is not life but only a shadow of life without value or meaning.

Thoughts are the product of our thinking, and since these are of such vast importance to us it is imperative that we learn how to think rightly.

Day after day throughout our lives our minds give silent but steady attention to the world surrounding us. We are influenced most profoundly not by the singular "unforgettable" experiences of life but by the ordinary, monotonous, unglamorous day-to-day routine. Great feats may contribute to our reputation, but habits of thought create character. The profound mental accomplishments of a man such as Einstein, for instance, had almost nothing to do with the kind of man he was, characterwise; his character was the result of the constant, undramatic, moment-by-moment activity of his mind.

If we find our thoughts—and thus ourselves—dominated by our environment, we have only ourselves to blame. The world outside can affect us only as it takes possession of our thoughts, and even then it can affect us only as we allow it to. *We* have the final say.

What we think about determines what we are; but what we think about need not be limited to the stimuli of our surroundings. We can live in a world of thought that is dictated by our surroundings; or we can consciously place particular thoughts of our own choosing in our minds and so create the thought-world in which we live. The choice is ours.

To illustrate: Imagine three men walking together through a forest. One is a poet, one a naturalist and one a lumberman. What is the thought world in which each one is dwelling?

The poet's mind races back over the centuries to the time when the mighty trees, now towering above him, were but beginning to appear as tiny green shoots from the gray earth. His mind then turns to the mighty of the world who then wore crowns and swayed empires but

who have long ago passed from this earthly scene and been forgotten.

The naturalist's world of thought is very different. He hears the sweet, hardly audible bird song that floats among the branches and seeks to discover the hidden singer; he knows what kind of moss it is that clings to the base of the centuries-old trees; he seeks out the fresh claw marks on the bark of a tree, and tells of the bear that recently passed this way. A narrow path forking off to the right tells him of other animals that pass this way.

The lumberman's world is different still. He is concerned neither with history nor nature but with the lumber. He looks until he spots the "perfect" tree, judges its diameter and height, and quickly calculates how much it will bring on the market. His world is the dull world of commerce. He sees nothing beyond it.

What is the difference between the three men? Not environment but only thought. External things and events provide only the raw material; the product of the mind depends on the dimensions of the mind that processes that raw material. Judas Iscariot and John the Beloved lived in the same world, but how different were the thought-products of their minds. The same is true of Cain and Abel, Esau and Jacob, Saul and Samuel, David and Solomon. Circumstances do not make men; it is their reaction to circumstances that determines what kind of men they will be.

What, then, should we as Christians do? The apostle Paul gives us the answer: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Having the mind of Christ means thinking His thoughts, viewing circumstances and situations as He would have seen them, from His perspective, in the light of things to come, things above, things divine.

The mind of the Christian must be trained, guided, directed, sanctified, before it can be truly a Christ-like mind. If we seek our raw material in our environment, it is the same as that of all others. But as followers of

*(Continued on page 13)*

## Megiddo means . . .

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

## Bible Quotations

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

- NEB—New English Bible
- NIV—New International Version
- NAS—New American Standard
- RSV—Revised Standard Version
- TLB—The Living Bible
- TEV—Today's English Version
- JB—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition
- Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English
- Berkeley—The Modern Language New Testament
- Weymouth—The New Testament in Modern Speech
- Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation
- Williams—The New Testament, A translation in the Language of the People

## About Our Cover

Our cover photo is of the falls at Fillmore Glen, in Moravia, New York.

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The **MEGIDDO MESSAGE** is a religious magazine devoted to the cause of Christ, and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. Official organ of the Megiddo Church. L. T. Nichols, Founder; Newton H. Payne, President and Editor. Ruth E. Sisson, Executive Editor.

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

# Our God Hath Promised

*Scripture Reading: Prov. 3:13-18*

**U**PON the pages of Sacred Scripture is inscribed many a brilliant and glowing promise—promises so exalted in nature and so infinite in scope that our finite minds can scarcely begin to comprehend them. Yes, for the little that we can do in one brief lifetime, God has promised to pay, and pay, and pay—in fact, His ability to recompense is *unlimited!*

God is seeking for His coming Kingdom the very best material from among the human family, the choicest, the select. To find and develop this very special material, He has set the highest requirements they can attain; at the same time, He has set His compensations at levels so much higher that they cannot be compared. And this is His purpose; His promises are the incentive that He uses to draw those He is seeking. God wants those farsighted individuals who can recognize real value and real worth. He wants those who have the faith to forego temporary advantages in the prospect of future rewards that are vastly greater—and at the moment invisible. He wants men and women who love life—who love it so much and desire so much of it that they are willing and anxious to do anything in their power to obtain it. He wants those who will delight to give themselves wholly and solely to a Power and a Cause above themselves. To all who will make this supreme sacrifice He has promised to show in the ages to come the “exceeding riches of his grace”—and all the delights and joys that come with those heavenly riches.

The apostle Peter describes the promises of God as “exceeding great and precious,” given that we might ultimately be “partakers of the divine nature” (II Pet. 1:3). The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthians, did

his best to put God’s promises into terms we could comprehend: “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him” (I Cor. 2:9). *All* the wonderful things that we have seen, yes. Plus *all* the most beautiful and thrilling things that we have heard, yes. Plus *all* the fantastic wonders that we can imagine either seeing or hearing or experiencing. Isn’t this enough? But no, all this does not even begin to describe the wealth of blessing that God has prepared for His own, for “*eye hath not seen*” and “*ear hath not heard*” and the mortal mind *cannot imagine* what God has laid up for His faithful children.

To the Ephesians the farseeing apostle Paul again pictured God’s ability in the superlative: “Unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.” Again he takes our minds to the limit—and beyond. God will do for us not simply *all* that we ask or think, or even *above* all, but “exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think.”

God does not ask us to serve Him merely for good wishes and good will. He does not ask us to sacrifice the pleasures and goals of this present life without thought of personal reward. Remember, Moses had respect unto the recompense of the reward; and Jesus, “for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame,” and became eligible for the highest reward. These men are our examples.

What good thing can *we* think of that we would like to have or to do? What do we want? What could we ask for? Yes, God has promised that, too!

## The Promise of Life

Foremost among the promises God has held out to His faithful children is that which is found in the right hand of Wisdom, length of days. Yes, even eternal life! It is the blessing the Lord commanded long ago, “even life

Note: *Our God Hath Promised* is available as a complete church service on cassette. Price: \$3.00

for evermore" (Ps. 133:3). But try to comprehend it: life that goes on and on and on for hundreds, millions, billions of—not *years* but *ages*! Little can we mortals in our few moments know or appreciate the meaning of that which is eternal. When we have enjoyed ten thousand centuries in that glorious new world, we will have not one second less to spend there.

The more we think about it, the more we realize how little our small, finite minds can comprehend of how very, very *long* eternity is. So accustomed are we to things that have an end, that the very thought of eternity overwhelms us.

But that new, eternal realm *shall be*, and every loyal servant of God will be part of it, for our God has promised it. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life" (Rev. 22:14). To all who "by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality," He will give "eternal life" (Rom. 2:7).

#### ... Riches

In the left hand of Wisdom is more reward—riches. Not riches obtained by greed and corruption and held in silent fear to benefit no one, but riches that will increase the happiness and pleasure of earth's inhabitants worldwide. And they will not take wings and fly away. These riches will be as enduring and as secure as the lives of their immortal possessors.

Picture the vast wealth of the world, with no more sin to mar the good that can be done. Imagine earth's resources all channeled into industries that improve and upbuild humankind; when they are no longer wasted on war and preparations for war; when the manufacture and distribution of harmful products—tobacco, liquor, illegal drugs—is suddenly terminated, and their wealth becomes available to beautify the earth and benefit mankind; when there is no more need for the legal profession, the medical profession, the insurance profession—and a dozen more—and all their facilities are at the disposal of immortal directors—think of the good that can be done!

#### ... Honor

There is yet another item in the left hand of Wisdom which we must not overlook: honor. Men take pleasure in bestowing honor upon one another. God also has honor to bestow, and in what surpassing measure! Think of being honored by the God of heaven! How can this compare with any honor men ever bestowed upon their dignitaries, their kings, or their heroes. Think

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***God is seeking for His coming  
Kingdom the very best material He  
can find.***

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of the honor of becoming a son or daughter of the Almighty Creator Himself, with the angels of heaven our own brothers and sisters! What greater inducement could God have given us to come out from a world of iniquity! (II Cor. 6:17-18).

The apostle Paul says that even now "the whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own" (Rom. 8:19, Philippians). Oh, with what ecstatic joy shall they welcome worthy earthborns into their family. John the Revelator had a preview of that delightful ceremony and heard the happy participants singing the praises of the new-borns. This was their song: "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:6-7).

#### ... No More Pain

Then there is the personal, endearing promise that touches every one of us: no more pain, no more sorrow, no more death. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. 21:4). Here is another promise that is almost more than our small minds can grasp. Think of the sorrow, the pain, the sickness in the world today. Everyone experiences it in some measure. But God's new creation will be free from *all* of it—there will be no toothaches, no headaches, no crippling disease, no old age, no hospitals, no doctors. For, "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick" (Isa. 33:24).

How wise is the Eternal God to offer this boon as a reward for faithful service. And what an incentive to diligent service! The more we see of pain, sorrow, and mortality, the more we are reminded of our need of God, and the deeper our longing for that realm where these promises shall become reality. Our mortal experiences teach us to look ahead, and to work the more intensely, with all our heart and soul and mind, that we may share in all the wonderful things our God has promised.

### ... Eternal Strength

God through His prophet Isaiah has delivered another promise to keep us striving—eternal strength. We read: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). Eternal youth, eternal strength—how this promise should encourage us to be strong in the Lord, strong to keep our covenant with the Eternal God, strong to battle against the evils of our nature and overcome. Over and over, again and again we see the cycle repeated: birth—growth—maturity—decay. Can we even imagine what will it be to have our strength renewed and never again know weariness, or fatigue, or weakness? Instead of growing weaker with each passing year, those who "wait upon the Lord" shall "renew their strength"; as they are changed "from glory to glory" they will increase in strength (II Cor. 3:18). Never shall they have even the slightest feeling of faintness or weariness, whatever they undertake.

### ... Equal to the Angels

And there is more in Isaiah's prophecy: the ability to mount up with power as the eagle—another expe-

rience, thrilling beyond words! But God's immortal children will not be limited to the domain of the eagle. Jesus has promised the utmost, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8). Between the earth and the throne of God are myriads of glorified worlds, heavenly bodies where live the members of His heavenly family (Eph. 3:15; Matt. 6:10). Oh what will it be to be one of them!

To understand, at least in part, review what has been recorded of angels' visits to this planet. Put yourself in the place of the angel. What would it be like to be sent, as was Gabriel, to give skill and understanding to some praying Daniel? Or to strike terror into the heart of a sinful King and his company by using your hand to write in glowing letters on the wall. Or imagine the supreme pleasure you would feel to deliver to some struggling mortal a personal message from God Himself, such as: "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased."

Or imagine being chosen to join a heavenly choir whose mission is to announce to some far-off planet the birth of their King. Would not one such privilege as this repay us for everything we are called upon to sacrifice now? We might be one of those "ministering spirits," unseen, unheard, sent forth to minister to the "heirs

## *Let Us Pray . . .*

Dear Lord and Father of mankind, who hast set before us more than eye hath seen or heart can imagine, who hast called us to be part of Thine eternal family, we come before Thee this morning with hearts eager for Thy love and minds open for renewed impressions from Thy Word.

Father, with glowing hearts and expectant faces we look forward to the glorious Day, now very nigh, when faith shall be changed to sight, and all the promises of Thy Word shall become glorious reality, when earth shall be annexed to heaven and every one who lives will glorify Thy name. But help us to realize that our part in that Day depends entirely on what we are doing right now, that we must now be fitting ourselves into Thy mental and moral likeness if we would ever be made physically in Thy image. So may we work harder to eradicate every form of sin, every taint of our lower

nature, that we may be presented faultless before the presence of Thy glory with exceeding joy.

Lord, when we would seek an easier, less straightened, less difficult course, remind us that Thou hast called us to blessing and honor through difficulty. When we would choose what avoids sacrifice and suffering, remind us that only through these is faith made perfect.

Help us to be totally honest with ourselves. Make us ever more ashamed of our pettiness, our small aims, our mean ambitions, our tendency to pride, to self-will, to jealousy, to anger and self-esteem, realizing that every time we allow these propensities of the flesh to rule us, we remove ourselves that much further from Thy acceptance.

We pray Thy blessing upon Thy people wherever they may be. Prosper their work according to Thy will, and may our hearts sing for joy at the remembrance of Thy goodness, and may our lives overflow with the rich virtues of kindness, patience and love. Keep us in strength that we may serve Thee, in faith that we may trust Thee, and in hope that we may never waver but press steadily on until we have attained a place in Thy Kingdom forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

of salvation" in some distant realm, to stand by and strengthen as they are tested and tried and brought to perfection. Oh, what great things our God has promised!

The written Word tells us of many such ministrations to this earth. Do we not long to be part of them?

### **. . . Heavenly Power**

Another blessing among the promises of God is that of power—power from God: power to heal the sick, to raise the dead, to foresee future events with minute accuracy; to provide food for a multitude; to walk upon the water; to bid the waves "Be still"; to read the thoughts and intents of mortal minds. All of this Jesus could do. And the promise is: "*Greater works than these shall ye do.*"

What "greater works" can we think of? Perhaps the ability to create a world, under the direction of the Almighty, and to tender it from infancy through glorification. Is this a possibility? Remember, the promise is "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

### **. . . Happiness**

Then there is the promise of happiness. Every normal person seeks happiness, but there is no surety that they will find it in this world, and if they do chance to find it they may not hold it long.

Happiness is among the blessed promises to the saints—happiness that is sure and lasting. This happiness has two parts: the solid joy of hope that we experience even now, and eternal joy and happiness in the future.

As for happiness now, we all can testify to the truthfulness of the words: "More holiness, more happiness." In the words of the song, "there is joy in serving Jesus," even while we must abide among the perplexities and problems of this world. What happiness can equal the joy of battle and victory! To know that we are gaining in the struggle against ourselves, to know that we have hope, real hope of endless life! "Happy is the man that feareth alway"; "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God" (Ps. 146:5).

But the supreme happiness will come with the bestowing of the crown of immortality, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality" and death shall be "swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:50-57). Every inhabitant of that new world will be supremely happy. As inheritors of "glory and honour and immortality, eternal life" (Rom. 2:7)—can we imagine a greater cause for happiness?

Then there will be the happiness of meeting and greeting, friend with friend. Think of meeting the faithful

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merely for good wishes and good will.  
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who worked out their salvation under circumstances more adverse than any we have known. Think of witnessing the reuniting of friends and brethren from former times, of looking on as David meets Jonathan, or Stephen meets Paul, or Ruth meets Naomi. Think, too, of the joy of meeting the brethren of our own day and time. Then think of being introduced to Daniel, to Joseph, Abraham, Deborah, Hannah, and many thousands of others not even mentioned in the Divine Book. Think of being able to exchange thoughts with them, of what spurred us on to a full and complete surrender. Oh, what great things our God has promised!

What has God promised? Just *everything!*—everything we can ask or think—everything of life and beauty and happiness and joy and—everlasting life!

### **Promises for Here and Now**

But all the promises of God are not future. There are also promises for now, promises of daily help, guidance and strength.

Life is short and filled with disappointments. Every thoughtful man or woman wants security. We want the assurance that all will be well. But such assurance cannot be had in this world. We do not have to live long to find that we are subject to all the uncertainties of mortality. We cannot assure ourselves against disappointment, against creeping illness, against premature old age. However hard we may try, we cannot be certain that we have arranged for ourselves helpful companionship right through to the very end of our mortal life. Everything of a temporal nature is uncertain.

But is this to say that there is no assurance, that there is no strong hand to keep us from harm or save us eternally in the world to come? No indeed!

Friends and associates, once near and dear to us, may choose another course. They may decide to take a divergent road, making the gap between us and them ever wider. But this is no evidence of God's disregard for our welfare.

### **. . . Limited Temptation**

God has promised that we shall not be tempted above that which we are able to bear, and that with the temp-



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*Picture the vast wealth of the world,  
with no more sin to mar the good that  
can be done.*

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tation He will make a way of escape so that we will be able to bear our lot (I Cor. 10:13). Is not this a rich comforting promise? And can we not trust God to know us, better than we know ourselves?

#### **. . . Life in which to Work**

God has not promised us a full eighty or ninety years of physical life, the use of both hands and both feet, both eyes and both ears right through to the end. But He has promised that if sincere, our strength will not fail, that He will supply all of our need according to His riches in glory (Phil 4:19), and that we shall have sufficient of mortal life to complete our work (I Tim. 4:8). What more can we ask?

#### **. . . His "Presence"**

There is another promise that should strengthen us whatever our fortunes or misfortunes in life. It is this, "My presence shall go with thee" (Ex. 33:14). The promised presence is not of weak men, not even of

powerful men, but the presence of God through His angels. We have the promise of the providential and gracious presence of God in every time of stress or need. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them" (Psa. 34:7).

#### **. . . A Divine Helper**

We have the promise of God as a divine helper. The Psalmist said: "Behold, God is mine helper: the Lord is with them that uphold my soul" (Ps. 54:4). With God as our helper why need we fear what man may do to us? The Psalmist assures us that God is "a helper of the fatherless." "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Ps. 10:14; 27:10). Our first father is sin. We are all by nature the children of wrath, but once we change our relationship to God by learning and applying His saving knowledge, He becomes our Father, our Helper.

In Psalm 27:1, the Psalmist exults: "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" And the following strengthening words in Hebrews 13:5-6 are quoted from Ps. 27: "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. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

The flesh is strong, and the foes of doubt, discour-

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## **Just the Same Today**

*When Moses and his soldiers  
From Egypt's land did flee,  
Their enemies behind them,  
And in front of them the sea;  
God raised the water like a wall,  
And opened up their way,  
And the God that lived in Moses' time  
Is just the same today.*

*When Daniel, faithful to his God,  
Would not bow down to man,  
And by God's enemies was brought  
Before them and condemned,  
God shielded him from harm, we read,  
They had no power to slay;  
And the God that lived in Daniel's time,  
Is just the same today.*

*When Jesus came, the Lord of life,  
To save us from our sins,  
He fought against temptations,  
The victory first to win.  
The Tempter did his best against  
The Life, the Truth, the Way,  
And the Lord who conquered evil then  
Is just the same today.*

*When Peter, feared that he would sink  
Beneath the troubled wave  
The Master's hand caught hold of him,  
For Christ had power to save.  
And the One whose arm was strong to help  
Can be your strength and stay,  
For the One who lived in Peter's time  
Is just the same today.*

*And when He left this world of ours,  
He said He'd come again,  
To take His own to be with Him—  
With Him on earth to reign.  
He's coming soon to claim His own,  
The King is on His way,  
For the One who promised He would come,  
Is just the same today.*



agement, self-pity, and self-esteem are always ready to enter in and defeat us. Flesh would win over spirit if we would let it, therefore, we need God's help. So let us boldly say, "The Lord is my helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me."

Paul expressed a warm assurance of God's help when making his defense before King Agrippa. Despite the fury of his countrymen because of his acceptance and proclamation of the Christian Way, he still believed that God was with him. Listen to his words: "For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come" (Acts 26:21-22). God was his helper.

#### **... God for Our Guide**

God has promised to be our Guide. As in the Wilderness, as in the days of the patriarchs and prophets, as in the period of the expansion of the early Church, just so is God with us today.

God's ear has not grown deaf, His eye dim, His arm shortened, nor His hand weakened. But there are conditions to be met by each one who would receive His guidance. "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way" (Ps. 25:9). Only the meek will He guide in judgment, only the meek will He teach His way. And there is a reason: only the meek will be taught and guided, all others know too much. They do not need teaching.

Furthermore, we have the assurance that God's eye will be upon us if we submit willingly to His leading: "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye" (Ps. 32:8). If we are willing to make a complete sacrifice, we have the promise of continual guidance. "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones" (Isa. 58:11). We are not left on our own in the midst of trial and uncertainty. Just because the pathway ahead looks dark and devious, that is no time to grow fainthearted or discouraged, or hold back from pressing right on in the way of holiness. God still lives, and it is His determination to amply reward all whose pattern of life meets His exalted demands. And all such have the promise of needed support along the way.

#### **... "Sufficient"**

We also have the promise of sufficiency for all our needs. "And the Lord shall . . . satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like

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***All the promises of God are not future.  
There are also promises for now.***

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a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isa. 58:11). Or to use the words of the great Apostle: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). Or in the words of the Psalmist (37:25): "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

#### **... Heavenly Guidance**

Bless the Lord, the gracious promise is: "Thou shall guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Ps. 73:24). There is a rainbow with a pot of gold at its end. "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." If we accept His counsel, someday, in the glorious "afterward" we shall be received into glory.

#### **... Discipline**

As erring mortals, we need training. We need discipline. This may seem a bit deflating to admit, but that is the simple fact. We are naturally self-confident, self-assured. We think our opinion is the right one and when it comes to making a judgment on something, of course we know! But in our sober moments we know that were it not for divine guidance and a plan of life dictated from above, we should be everyone of us slaves to sin and death. But God wants to make something of us. That is why He subjects us to correction and discipline. That is why He allows trial, suffering and affliction. God does not "afflict willingly nor grieve the children of men" (Lam. 3:33). Every testing that comes to us can be used for good, for our *eternal* good, "that we may be partakers of His holiness." Jeremiah the Prophet was right when he said: "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." And he was equally aware of the process by which a man or woman could become something in God's sight: "O Lord, correct me," he prayed, "but with judgment; not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing" (Jer. 10:23-24).

#### **... Rest**

Then God has promised rest. Who could deny that a human being needs rest? Especially do we need rest  
(Continued on page 20)

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# Perfect Submission. Perfect Delight?

*"Perfect submission"  
means making not  
just the best but the  
most of every situation  
we encounter.*

THE gospel song "Blessed Assurance" has stirred many a heart. What is more welcome than assurance, to be fully satisfied that even in this the last hour of the day we still hold the faith once delivered to the saints, that even now we have hope, we have confidence, we have God. We have a solid foundation under our feet, and a future bright with heavenly promises.

But the hymn "Blessed Assurance" has another thought we may have missed:

**Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
Visions of rapture burst forth on my sight.**

Perfect submission, perfect delight. Have we thought about this very strange combination of terms? Submission and delight are not natural companions. What brings them together?

We may submit to authority if we feel it is in our best interest, but "perfect delight" in that submission is another thing. Or we may experience what we consider "perfect delight," but it is unlikely that the occasion will be one involving submission.

Submission means the presence of acknowledged authority. In our western culture, we automatically assume that when we come of age we become our own "boss," so to speak. Suddenly we are "free" men and women, "free" to make our own choices and our own decisions in life. Submission goes right against this inborn "right." Submission means that we grant to *another* the right and power to command our compliance. It means that *another* will or power is above our own, that we are not Number One in command.

Submission suggests also that we have *voluntarily* relinquished our right to position Number One. Otherwise our subordination is oppression, not submission. When we submit, we *decide* to place ourselves under authority.

In our twentieth century Land of the Free, where freedom is valued as the choicest of all commodities, where the ultimate value is, in the common vernacular, on "doing your own thing," the idea of submission sounds almost like dictatorship. Yet the law of God remains unchanged. And the laws of the universe remain unchanged. And the laws of life remain unchanged. The fact is, we are *not* in position Number One. Much as we

might cherish our guaranteed "rights," there are forces beyond our control. There are circumstances beyond our control; if we fight against them we only injure ourselves.

The rejection of authority is the direct cause of many of the problems plaguing our world at this time of the end. As the widely known Bible scholar, Carl Henry, said, "The overriding issue of the twentieth century is the crisis in authority."

There is a crisis of authority in the home, where the individual has supplanted the family as the basic unit of society.

There is a crisis of authority in the local community, where the breakdown in law and order accelerates at the same time that reports of police and parental brutality increase.

There is a crisis in social morals and moral values, where any man or woman's word is now counted as good as the next or the last. The change in philosophy has been gradual, even subtle. As one writer has said, "Our century is committed to an absolute relativism." The ultimate significance of relativism is that there can be no binding authority. In the 18th century Rousseau said that man is essentially good and restrictions make him bad. That century applied relativism to the intellectual disciplines. The 19th century applied it to religion and the arts. And now the 20th century is busy applying it to the basic structures of society: the home, the government, the school.

Consider the school. In former centuries youth were indoctrinated in what their elders considered "truth." Then came the time when this approach in education seemed too authoritative, and youth were invited to join in the *search* for truth. Today our nation has gone one step further in accepting the notion that truth in an ultimate

sense does not exist. Nothing is for sure. In American education teachers and pupils are partners in the ongoing search for "personal fulfillment." Nothing is considered right or wrong, good or bad. No authority is absolute. There is no predetermined standard of conduct. Whatever seems or *feels* "right" in a given situation is considered right.

We may not be in danger of succumbing to this philosophy, yet we

us that *our* ideas, *our* thoughts, *our* decisions are not final, that there is a higher power we must respect, one that has the authority to demand our allegiance and obedience.

There are two types of submission—one that is outward, another that is inward. Under threats of violence and punishment, many an oppressive ruler has demanded submission. This type of submission is outward, external compliance. But

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### ***Submission means the presence of acknowledged authority. Where is the "delight"?***

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cannot deny our instinct to believe in ourselves, to feel that *our* idea, *our* notion, *our* opinion, *our* judgment is superior. How easily we subscribe to the opinion of the little girl who when asked to identify her best friend, replied emphatically, "I like me!" So easily we become wrapped up in ourselves and our own small world, and overlook the greater value of submitting to authority higher than ourselves.

What says the Word of God about authority? "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers: for the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13:1). "By love serve one another" (Gal 5:13). "All of you be subject one to another" (I Pet. 5:5). "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you" (Heb. 13:17). "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh" (Eph. 6:5). Such words make us uncomfortable. They tell

the mind, the will, the desire of these unwilling subjects is unhampered.

The second type of submission is *inward*. This is the type of submission God requires. It is "obeying from the heart" the form of doctrine that has been delivered to us. It means changing our tastes and our nature, our concerns and our attitudes, and all our ways of thinking and feeling. It is a total re-directing of our lives. It is body and mind working together with God.

The Israelites had to submit outwardly to the authority of Moses and of God. But the civil law had no authority over the mind and conscience. A man could think and plan as he pleased; only his outward actions would be judged.

The law of Christ is a law of the heart requiring *inward* submission. Here is the greater challenge—with the greater "delight." The law of Moses, we will remember, demanded only outward submission, and it could give only temporal benefit. It could not "take away sin" and it could not give life. The law of



Christ *can* give life, but it requires vastly more. It requires that we be one with Christ in mind: "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." It is a law that governs what we think and feel, as well as do.

This type of submission is far more difficult than mere outward submission. How much easier if we were told every detail of obedience! How much easier to comply with

true and good and excellent and divine.

It is not automatic. But it *can* be done—with God's help. It is a thought that we associate with Sister Hembree's prayer: "Help us to learn the wonderful lesson of submission." Yes, the wonderful lesson of submission.

And there *is* delight. It is the second "perfect" word in our song that we must not forget. Along with

to know that we are actually winning, that we are making *real* our prospects of life in the world to come!

And the greatest delight is future, when "this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality," when death is "swallowed up in victory."

Here is the climax—geniune freedom, even "the glorious liberty of the children of God." Can we even faintly imagine what it will be to be free forever from all tendency and temptation to sin; to be free forever from the confinements of mortality; to enjoy the freedoms of the angels of God! Here is the ultimate, "perfect delight" that submission brings.

And will it not be worth it? Is it not worth the denial, the sacrifice, the pain, the giving up of our way in exchange for God's *higher* way?

Let us sing it again. Yes, "Perfect submission, perfect delight. Visions of rapture burst forth on my sight. Angels descending bring from above, Echoes of mercy, whispers of love." MM

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### ***The law of Christ is a law of the heart requiring inward submission.***

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an outward form. Submitting to outward authority is a test; but the real test of character is that of applying the principles we have learned to the varying situations of our lives. It may be difficult for men to submit to outward authority, but how much more difficult to cleanse our inner heart by continually "discerning between good and evil." How much more difficult to bring "into captivity every thought" and make it "obey Christ."

But only in such total submission is "perfect delight." In fact, there is no real delight except through this inward submission. As long as we resist, as long as we cling to our own way, as long as we are headstrong and unyielding, there is *no* submission—and *no* delight.

But submitting is not natural. And it is not happenstance. It is a quality of character which must be consciously acquired. The responsibility rests upon each of us individually. No one is exempt. We must actually be able to command ourselves toward creative ends, to bring us to the standard of Christ, until we exemplify in real life all that is

"perfect submission" is "perfect delight." What is the delight? We know there is future delight reserved for all the faithful. But even now there is delight in submitting our ways to God. When we accept His authority over us, we in effect turn over the management of our lives to Him and let Him "direct our paths." This means *we* are freed from that much responsibility. Worry is changed into trust. Whatever happens now is *His* responsibility, *His* obligation, and we can be sure of His help in dealing with it. Should not this be a source of "perfect delight"?

There is another source of present delight. As we apply the principles of Divine law and successfully remove from our lives some of the sources of irritation, is there not a certain real delight? Resentments, jealousies, strifes, and bitterness are all disturbing—they mar our peace and happiness even now. Yes, submission to the law of God brings delight—*great* delight.

Another delight is what has been called the joy of battle and victory. What can give greater delight than

### **Two Important Words**

*THE TWO most important words in the world are "Yes" and "No." "No" is a static, lifeless word. "No" is a door-closing word. When a man says "No" to opportunities to serve, to opportunities to travel, he is closing the door to his personal growth and development.*

*"Yes" is a door-opening word. It is vital and dynamic. "Yes" opens the door to new horizons, new adventures, and new experiences.*

## Sanctified Thinking

(Continued from page 2)

Christ we are not limited to this. In the Word of God we have an infinite resource from which to draw. If we but invest the effort, our thought world can be filled with thoughts of God, of holiness, of righteousness, of the life that is to come.

This is the mental environment God wants us to create. He wills that we think His thoughts after Him; that we think about people and things as Christ would and so create a world of sanctified thought that is both inspiring and edifying.

Such sanctified thinking is not automatic nor natural. To accomplish it will require effort through every waking moment of our days, or we shall find our minds reverting to the thought-world that is dictated by our environment. To create in our minds the thought world of the higher realm will require that we consciously, constantly direct our mind to whatever belongs to God's realm. Our minds cannot be left to roam where they will—they must obey our command.

When we find that we must think of the surrounding world of people and things, we must think of them against the background of our thoughts of God. The experienced Christian never thinks of anything of this world directly; his thoughts always go first to God, and from God to some part of His creation. His thoughts are like the angels of Jacob's ladder, always ascending or descending, but never out of the sight of God. When he must think on things of earth, God always stands above, presiding over all.

The apostle Paul gives us some guidelines that we may use to detach our minds from our environment and fix them upon God. "Finally, brothers, fill your minds with everything that is true, everything that is noble, everything that is good and pure, everything that we love and honor, and everything that can be thought virtuous or worthy of praise. . . . Then the God of peace will be with you" (Phil. 4:8-9, JB).

So wrote the great apostle Paul in the first century, and the standard has not changed since. God and His law must be at the center of our sanctified thought-world before He can own and bless us as His own. MM

## Tired of Being Patient?

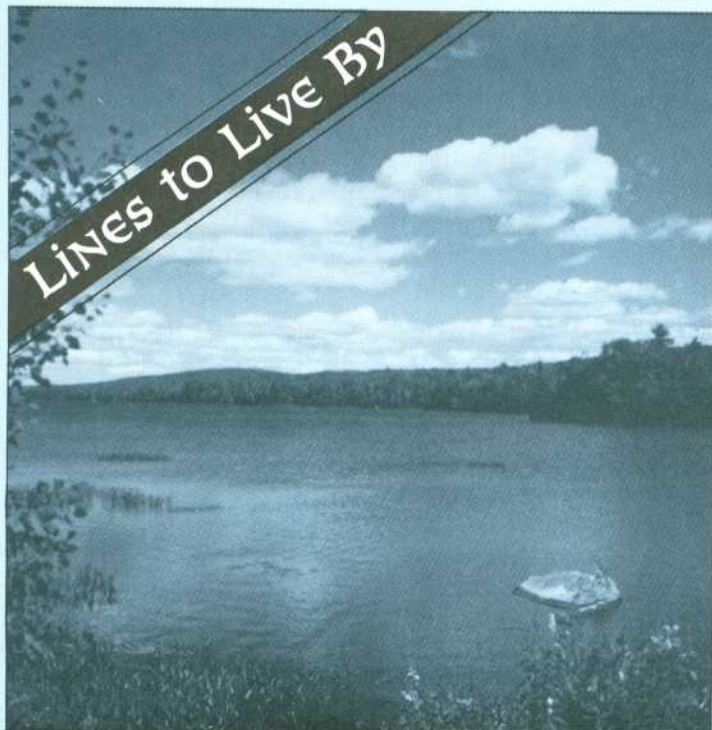
**W**HAT a possession to acquire! Millions of dollars cannot fill the heart with such satisfaction as can be gained by developing this one virtue. Night may find us tired, but if we can look back over the day and see that we have taken all patiently—what a comfort! I believe it is safe to say that we are not as tired as we would have been had we yielded to impatience. An impatient spirit places a double strain on the physical system.

It has been said that God never asks us to do anything that does not make us better for this life, while preparing for a future life. Effort enlivened by enthusiasm will bring patience to perfection. Many times we have put forth the effort and so been patient. But our effort is too apt to be intermittent instead of constant.

We might be patient time after time, but here comes an exceptionally trying circumstance. We lose our grip on ourselves, and patience is gone. It has yet to have its *perfect work* in us. We may attempt to justify ourselves with the excuse that such a situation was unusually trying. But what of it? The fact remains that our patience was not perfect; we were defeated where we should have triumphed. If our patience were never tried, how could we ever know the extent of our achievement?

The command given us in the book of James is not simply to have patience, but to "Let patience have her *perfect work*" (1:4). The requirement is patience to perfection. Nothing short of this will be acceptable to God.

—Contributed



*Time is short, and none of us know how much time we have left. May we be found using wisely our time, our strength, our talents.*

Except our hope be in the Lord,  
We sail the ship in vain,  
There is no compass but His own;  
To make the journey plain.  
Except He lead us past the shoals  
That hide beneath the foam,  
How shall we reach the harbor  
Lights of that eternal Home?

## I Wonder

*I wonder, oh, I wonder,  
As I gaze on yon azure blue,  
A curtain o'er the heavens  
Hiding my Saviour from view,  
Do I bear with patience my trials;  
Am I nearer my Lord each day;  
Do I love Him, trust Him, praise Him  
As I journey along life's way—?  
I wonder.*

*I wonder, oh, I wonder,  
As I think of God's love to me,  
How He sent His Son to teach me—  
A worthy example was He—  
Do I follow His perfect pattern,  
Am I cleansing my heart from sin,  
Have I opened wide its portals  
To let His truth enter in—?  
I wonder.*

*I wonder, oh, I wonder,  
When the mists have cleared away,  
Mists of error and of darkness  
That enshroud the world today,  
When the Lord in glorious splendor  
Shall return to claim His own,  
Will He find me watching, waiting,  
Shall I hear His words, "Well done!"—?  
I wonder.*

*I wonder, oh, I wonder,  
Do I daily strive to forgive  
Each unkind word and action,  
Do I live as He'd have me live;  
Am I patient, gentle, loving,  
Forgiving, kindhearted and true;  
Do I do unto every brother  
Just as I would have him do—?  
I wonder.*

*Search me, dear Lord, then search me,  
Try me and know my heart,  
Cleanse Thou my thoughts from all evil,  
Bid every sin to depart,  
Malice, anger, and hatred,  
All of this world and its dross,  
Fill me with Thy loving spirit;  
Help me count earth's gain but loss—  
Dear Lord, search me.  
—Contributed*



## God Heard and Answered

*Did you ask the Lord for patience?  
Did you plead for it in prayer,  
Then tribulations great befell you,  
And you thought He did not care?  
Oh, my child, He heard and answered,  
Answered full your heartfelt prayer;  
"Tribulation worketh patience,"  
That's the gem you longed to wear.*

*Did you ask Him for submission?  
Did you plead for it in prayer,  
And such sufferings great o'ertook you  
That you thought He did not care?  
Ah, my dear, He heard and answered  
That true prayer with bitter tear;  
For we only learn obedience  
By the things we suffer here.*

*'Twas unselfishness you wanted,  
So you asked for it in prayer,  
And the sacrifice He asked for  
Seemed too great for you to bear?  
Ah! He cared, He heard and answered,  
Answered full your earnest prayer;  
For we learn to be unselfish  
By the sacrifice we bear.*

*Did you ask the Lord for victory,  
Did you plead for it in prayer,  
And life's battle surged around you,  
Hid His loving face so fair?  
Ah! my child, He heard and answered,  
Answered your own prayer;  
For we learn to be victorious,  
By the daily cross we bear.*

*Did you ask to be made humble,  
And for strength its fruit to bear;  
Then the way you were tormented  
Made you feel He did not care?  
Well, my child, He heard and answered,  
Truly answered deepest prayer;  
For the humbleness He's seeking  
Comes to those who know life's care.*

*Did you pray for life abiding  
Safely sheltered in His care;  
Then He severed you from loved ones,  
Till you thought He'd missed your prayer?  
Ah! dear child, He heard and answered,  
Answered lovingly your prayer;  
For we learn the life abiding,  
If earth's loneliness we bear.*

*Ah! you asked His love He'd show you,  
Pleaded oft in earnest prayer;  
And He sent you bitter chastenings,  
Till you thought He did not care?  
Oh, dear child, He heard and answered  
In pure love your prayer;  
Whom He loveth, him He chasteneth,  
But He gives the strength to bear.*

*Transitory things these all are,  
But above there's recompense;  
Honor, glory, peace e'erlasting,  
From eternal death, defense.  
For this moment's tribulation  
Will work out for you and me  
Age-abiding weights of glory  
Throughout all eternity.*

## Points for the Month

- Week 1:** We must keep the level of our obedience at the level of our light.  
**Week 2:** If what we have is not to be all there is, we must take action now.  
**Week 3:** Never give up, . . . never, . . . never, . . . never!  
**Week 4:** Holiness is head and heart and hands under the control of God's law.  
**Week 5:** Teach us the art of saying the right thing in the right way at the right time.

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## Can You PREACH What I PRACTICE?

**“PRACTICE** what you preach!” snapped Harvey, weary and disgusted at the yawning “practice gap” between what his roommate professed and what he practiced.

To us it is a well-known phrase and a timely admonition.

This “practice gap” is not peculiar to our age. Was not Jesus disgusted with the “practice gap” of the scribes and Pharisees when He said to His listeners: “And of course you should obey their every whim! It may be all right to do what they say, but above anything else, *don’t follow their example*. For they don’t do what they tell you to do. They load you with impossible demands that they themselves don’t even try to keep. Everything they do is done for show.”

Paul was also disgusted with the practice gap. He said: “You are so sure of the way of God that you could point it out to a blind man. You think of yourselves as beacon lights, directing men who are lost in darkness to God, you think that you can guide the simple, and teach even children the affairs of God, for you really know his laws, which are full of knowledge and truth. Yes, you teach others . . . then why don’t you teach yourselves? You tell others not to steal . . . do you steal? You say ‘Don’t pray to idols’ and then make money your god instead. You are so proud of knowing God’s

laws, *but you dishonor* him by breaking them. No wonder the Scriptures say that the world speaks evil of God because of you.”

Do *our* lips and lives agree? Or are we among those who are guilty of maintaining the “practice gap”? Our actions should be in harmony with our words. But even a casual observation shows that we do not always practice what we preach, and—let’s not fool ourselves—our brethren and the world see the difference.

Suppose our pastor started preaching what we practice. How would the sermons sound?

What are we doing in our daily affairs that might cause anyone to think or say, “You really practice what you preach”?

There is no such thing as *living* our faith without it showing in our daily lives. Those who beheld the apostles “took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” These men were ignorant and unlearned in the eyes of the scribes and Pharisees, but the strongest, most unanswerable defense of Christianity is a Christian man. We can prove Christianity to others only as we confront them with the undeniable evidence of a Christian character.

Paul deeply realized the importance of a godly example when he wrote to Timothy: “Do not give

anyone a chance to despise you because you are young; but in your words and in your conduct, in love, in loyalty and in purity show yourself an example of what believing people should be.” Timothy was to silence criticism by godly conduct.

Arguments and verbal defenses cannot silence criticism; conduct can. We must live in such a way that all will see that the charge is false.

If we want others to know what our religion can do for them; we should let them see what it has done for us; for we can preach a better sermon with our *lives* than with our lips.

Those about us look at us in our daily transactions to see what we mean on Sunday. What kind of a sermon am I writing? Without qualms could you preach what I practice? Let’s see:

A very trying situation arises . . . do I let that beautiful quality—patience—have its perfect work?

Someone disagrees with me sharply, or criticizes me. What is the sermon’s content—simmering anger? sharp retort? or do I remember Ps. 37:8 and make the sermon read, “returned kind words and thoughtful”?

Another is preferred above me. Do I remember that “jealousy is as cruel as the grave” and go out of my way to be kind to the one preferred?

A friend stops by for a casual chat. Does the sermon read, "that which was good to the use of edifying, ministering grace unto the hearers," or do I forget my high calling and join in an exchange of bits of gossip, or—God forbid it—slander?

I am in the doctor's office. I pick up a popular magazine. I realize immediately that its contents are not

the most edifying. What is the sermon I preach?

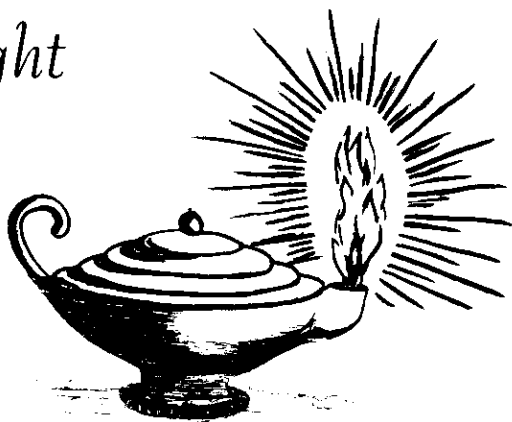
Can you preach what I practice within my family circle? Am I thoughtful, kind, loving and forgiving, or am I rude, selfish, irritable or resentful when I feel I have not received my just dues? Am I scrupulously honest in every particular, or does my conduct vary to mesh

with those I am with?

Everyone preaches something. We preach discouragement or hope, anxiety or confidence, fear or faith. We should be like our Master who went about doing good. So often we are content with just going about.

Are we letting God's truth fulfill its holy mission in our lives? Are we  
*(continued on page 18)*

## One Little Light



**J**ESUS commissioned each of His disciples to be lightbearers.

How well are we fulfilling this commission? Are we letting our light shine in a dark world? We may think our own light to be of small consequence, but do we ever stop to think of how many candles can be lighted by one little candlelight?

There is an ancient fable about a lighthouse keeper who took a little candle out of a drawer one night, lighted it, and began to ascend the long, winding stairs. "Where are you going?" asked the candle.

"Way up high to the top of this tower," answered the man.

"And what are you going to do there?"

"I'm going to guide the ships to safety," came the reply.

"This lighthouse is located at the entrance to the harbor, and some vessels far out on the stormy sea may be looking for its beams even now."

"Alas, no ship could see my light," said the tiny wick. "It is so very small."

"Your light may be small," said the man, "but keep it burning brightly and leave the rest to me."

When he arrived at the top of the lighthouse, he took the little taper and used it to set aflame the great lamps that stood ready with their polished reflectors behind them.

We can learn an important spiritual truth from this story. The Lord has given to each of us certain talents. The Bible says that He divides "to every man severally as He will" (I Cor. 12:11). We readily admit that not all believers are equally gifted, but everyone has the ability to shine with the light of God's love and truth.

Many, like that little candle, may be limited in their sphere of influence. But if they are faithful to the Lord, their words and deeds may be used of Him to ignite a flame of enthusiasm in the hearts of others with greater abilities. They in turn will shine with an intensity that reaches far and wide.

Don't underestimate the impact your life can have for Christ. **JUST SHINE WHERE YOU ARE!**

One **LITTLE** light in a dark place can serve a **GREAT** purpose!

*O please, let me be like a candle, dear Lord,  
Quietly shedding its light,  
Perhaps in a limited sphere unsung,  
But making the pathway bright  
For those whom I know will be coming my way,  
Needing a ray of light;  
Then letting them go with a hope afire  
And a faith that can conquer fear.  
O let me be like a candle, dear Lord,  
Through all of my earthly day,  
Just shining each hour that somebody near  
May see You and find the way!*



alert to make and keep it the driving force of our existence, or does it occupy the back seat? Is it just an outward ornament, or are we letting it get into our bloodstream, changing our nature, thereby making us over into new creatures?

Is our life an inspiration to others? Can others actually see that God's law of light has touched our heart because of our transformed character?

What success are we having in coming out from the world with its foolishness and folly . . . remember, someone is reading our sermon. Is it our inmost aim and object to make ourselves His prized possession?

Christians are transmitters. We are constantly broadcasting by our actions. Since we are all preachers, how very careful we should be of the message we proclaim. Someone is watching us, and if we have a "practice gap" how is our influence affecting his or her spiritual life? Are we guilty of weakening another's faith? No man can live unto himself; he is constantly leaving an example for better or for worse.

As soon as we take upon ourselves the name of "Christian," every deed becomes an advertisement of Jesus Christ. We owe it to our God, our nation, our community, ourself to be an effective representative of truth and righteousness.

After a long searching look at self can we truthfully say we are preaching patience, meekness, unselfishness, humility, nobleness of speech and action, purity of thought and deed? Remember what others have said:

*"I'd rather see a sermon,  
Than hear one any day,  
I'd rather one would walk with me,  
Than merely tell the way.  
The eye's a better pupil,  
And more willing than the ear;  
Fine counsel is confusing;  
But example's always clear.  
The best of all the preachers,  
Are men who live their creeds,  
For to see good put in action,  
Is what everybody needs.  
I soon can learn to do it,  
If you'll let me see it done,  
I can watch your hands in action.  
But your tongue too fast may run.  
The lectures you deliver,  
May be just and right and true;  
But I'd rather get my lesson,  
By observing what you do.  
I may not learn the precepts  
That you are glad to give,  
But there'll be no mistaking  
HOW YOU ACT AND  
HOW YOU LIVE."*

Character requires an endless amount of forethought in the selection of good intentions, right motives, self-control and ideals which only divine wisdom can inspire. If we make a profession only, God will have no use for us; for then we will be more interested in *appearing* right than in actually *being* right before God.

In the great day of Final Account, when life's inner aims and motives are revealed, we shall appear as we really are and not as others may have thought we were.

So once again let me ask the question: If you preached what I practice, would I want to be there to hear it? MM

## If Only I Could See . . .

WHAT a wonderful God we serve, one who is able to create universes and life upon them. We see wonders and miracles around us every day, and one says, "I would believe if only I could see a miracle." What folly! to ask for something that is right before your eyes daily.

Then there are the things which we cannot see so easily. There is a spider that breathes air, yet lives its entire life below the surface of the water. It comes to the surface of the water and catches a bubble of air on its hairy abdomen, where its breathing holes are, and submerges. He goes about his business under the surface of the water, with his miniature diving bell in place. When he decides to dine, he makes several trips to the surface, and brings down air and builds up a large bubble of air on the branch of a plant. When it is large enough for him to enter with his food, he begins to dine. The large bubble is necessary not for the purpose of breathing but so that the water does not wash away his digestive juices. He always travels with his abdomen bubble in place.

What wonders are around us every day which we do not see.

Are we really expected to be so simpleminded as to believe the spider dreamed up this process all by himself, and set out to develop the necessary skills to accomplish it on his own?

Any evolution that exists, is run and controlled by God, not the blind forces of nature running wild.

*Contributed*

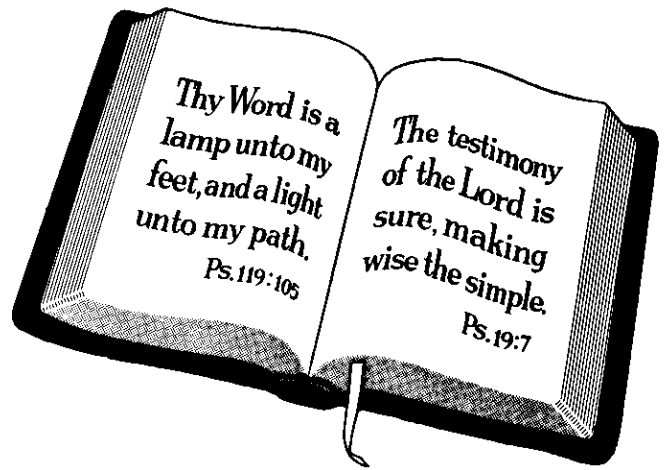
## Blessed Showers

Once there lived an old woman who was always so cheerful that everyone wondered at her.

"But you must have some clouds in your life," said a visitor.

"Clouds?" she replied, "why of course; if there were no clouds, where would the blessed showers come from?" -Selected.

# The Books of the Bible



*The great Jehovah speaks to us  
In **Genesis and Exodus**;  
**Leviticus and Numbers** see,  
Followed by **Deuteronomy**.  
**Joshua, Judges** sway the land,  
**Ruth** gleans a sheaf with trembling hand,  
**Samuel and the Kings** appear,  
Whose **Chronicles** we wondering hear;  
**Ezra, Nehemiah**, too,  
And **Esther** strength of goodness show;  
**Job** speaks in sighs, **David** in **Psalms**;  
The **Proverbs** teach to scatter alms.  
**Ecclesiastes** then comes on  
And the sweet **Song of Solomon**.  
**Isaiah, Jeremiah** then  
For **Lamentations** takes his pen.  
**Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea** write,  
Then **Joel, Amos, Obadiah**.  
Next **Jonah, Micah, Nahum** come,  
And lofty **Habakkuk** finds room,  
While **Zephaniah, Haggai** call,  
Rapt **Zechariah** builds his wall,  
And **Malachi** with garments rent,  
Concludes the ancient Testament.*

***Matthew and Mark, and Luke and John**,  
The Holy Gospels wrote anon,  
Describing how the Saviour gave  
His life, His all, Himself to save;  
**Acts** tells how the church did grow,  
In every place where they did go;  
The book of **Romans** teaches all*

*How they may live as did St. Paul,  
Holy, chosen by the Lord,  
Obeying His most holy Word.  
The Apostle, in **Corinthians**,  
Instructs, exhorts, and disciplines;  
**Galatians** shows that living faith  
Must be sustained by actions brave.  
**Ephesians and Philippians** tell  
How Christians ought to act to all;  
**Colossians** bids us live to God  
And to each other, in the Lord.  
In **Thessalonians** we are shown  
That Christ will come from Heav'n alone;  
In **Timothy, and Titus**, too  
Is holy law for each to do.  
**Philemon** marks the heavenly love,  
Which only thoughtful Christians know;  
While **Hebrews** sets the earthly stage  
With lessons deep from Moses' age;  
**James** teaches without righteousness  
Faith is a vain and lifeless thing;  
St. **Peter** points the narrow way  
In which the saints are led each day;  
**John**, in his Epistles well  
On love divine delights to dwell;  
St. **Jude** gives dreadful warnings fast  
Of judgment, death and vengeful wrath;  
While **Revelation** prophesies  
Of glory that shall rend the skies  
When Christ the glorious King shall be  
O'er all the earth and land and sea.*

—Selected

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## Our God Hath Promised

(Continued from page 9)

from sin. Sin is a burden; it is a heavy yoke, too heavy for a sensible man to carry. But it is a burden we pick up every time that we refuse to submit to God's way. The Patriarch Job showed himself a man of keen insight when he said: "I have sinned; what shall I do unto thee, O thou preserver of men? why hast thou set me as a mark against thee, so that I am a burden to myself?" (Job 7:20). "I have sinned," therefore I am a "burden to myself." How often we have been a burden to ourselves because we were determined to have our own way regardless of the consequences, because we were determined to carry along a load of sin, hence were heavily burdened. Jesus said: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30). Rest from sin is ours for the taking. Let us be wise enough to take it.

If we rest from sin now, God has promised us *eternal* rest, rest from labor and toil, rest from the worry, frustration, and turmoil associated with our mortal existence. Rest from pain, sickness and suffering; rest from the fear of a cessation of life. The promise is: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." But a warning goes with it: "Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Heb. 4, verses 9 and 1). Let us beware lest, like the children of Israel, we miss obtaining that promise by our indifference and obstinacy.

### ... Peace

God has promised us peace. We read in Isa. 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." What peace comes with having our minds stayed completely on God! What peace in knowing that whatever comes to us, it is for the best, that we can use it as a stimulus in our spiritual life. If we sustain financial losses, if we experience ill health, if our Christian duty demands that we spend our time in activities other than we would naturally care to engage in—and cuts us off from doing the things that we naturally would like to do—and we do it willingly and gladly in hope of the great reward, what peace of mind it brings. There is no peace like it in all the world.

Oh, how we should praise God for the promises He has given us, and they are not ambiguous; they are not

beclouded with doubt; they are spelled out with much detail. Peter spoke expectantly of them in these words: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls" (I Peter 1:3-9).

Most important of all, we have the assurance too that God will be true to His Word, that "there hath not failed one word of all that He has promised." Because Elijah has not yet come as Christ's forerunner, is no sign that he will never come. Because God's long spell of silence has not yet been broken is no sign that He will never again speak upon earth. The day of the Lord *will* come. In the years before the birth of Jesus, believers in the divine promise lived in expectancy their entire lives, and many died before it was fulfilled, but some lived to see it. When the right time arrived, the Messiah was born. Just as surely we know that God's promises for these last days will be fulfilled. Christ will come. His promise cannot fail.

Do we say, I want these promises"? Then let us *work*, work as we have never worked before, concentrate every day, every hour, on forming that perfect character God requires, and all these promises shall be ours to enjoy together. For, "He is faithful that promised."

*Father, in the hope of the unspeakable bliss that can be ours, help us to rejoice and be glad, and accept with gratitude all the discipline that the narrow way brings into our lives, believing fully that these light afflictions, "which are but for a moment," are working "for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."*

*In the name of Him who is our King, our Saviour and our Lord we pray. Amen.*

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**Tomorrow's blessings depend on our willingness to do God's will today.**

### Inner Cleansing

WHATEVER our sins, they separate us from God and must be forsaken so they can be forgiven. The sins of a wrong disposition must be purged. Wrong actions must be confessed so they can be forgiven; wrong attitudes must be surrendered so they can be cleansed. The sins of wrong conduct bring condemnation, and must be blotted out; the sins of wrong desires must be removed.

In these days when there is so much concern about pollution of the air, water, and food, our greatest concern should be centered on pollution of the heart.

If we surrender everything to God, we will cleanse from our lives everything that is

## Every Day, Every Day

foreign to His nature. This eliminates the root of bitterness, the false center of selfishness, and the center of moral infection that poisons our dispositions. It takes away the sickening chaos that comes from conflicting loyalties, the constant instability of divided motives, and the insecurity that comes from conflicting purposes. This inner cleansing purges all selfishness, all un-Christlikeness, all worldly-mindedness.

### Joy and Tribulation

*I am exceeding joyful in all tribulation (2 Cor. 7:4).*

The Romans ground their grain with a heavy roller called the *tribulum*. Hence experiences that grind us down and press us out are called tribulations. Every person, whether a Christian or not, encounters these situations. The difference is that the grinding leaves the non-Christian ground down, discouraged, and distraught. The Christian, however, can come through these times gloriously victorious, supremely enriched, even joyful.

The Lord does not propose to deliver us from all grinding, but He does disclose to us a way to profit by these untoward circumstances. In the natural world, the grinding separates the husks and hulls from the golden grain. The waste materials are eliminated and the nourishing product is preserved.

In the spiritual realm, the same thing happens. Tribulations can remove the unusable, the undesirable, and the unbecoming aspects of our dispositions. We emerge from these testing times with something we could not have received any other way. The result is conducive to exceeding joy and blessed hope.

It is natural to have tribulations, but it is supernatural to turn them into tabulations that mark our growth. Tribulations bring pressure, but God turns it into a thrust power that elevates us to higher ground. They give us the background for climbing to new heights with the Lord.

"Everyday with Paul," by Mendell Taylor. Copyright 1978 by Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City; used by permission.



## The Lord Needs YOU!

**"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?  
Then said I, Here am I; send me"**  
—Isaiah 6:8

**W**HILE living in this world of change and uncertainty in a time like this, surrounded by a universe almost too vast for us, beholding from our detached position the play of titanic forces and the swift unfolding of mighty events, with nothing we can do about it, we must guard against a distorted perspective. We must watch lest we accept our personal insignificance in this great scheme of things as a fate rather than a challenge, lest a sense of futility and uselessness overpower us and we mutter, "what's the use?" This mood is as old as it is destructive. More than two hundred years before Christ, a Jewish sage recognized its dangers and warned against it in these words:

"Say not, who shall remember me from on high? In such a multitude I shall not be known, for what is my soul in such an immense creation?"

This poses a fair question, and one which cannot be answered without consideration. Just what *is* our soul in this immense creation? For how much do we, as individuals, count?

In the first place, it would be well for us to come down to earth and keep our feet on the ground, so to speak, in our thinking. At the same time let us meditate on the vastness of the God we serve and the immensity that is His to enlarge our sphere of possibility. Let not the thought of the infinite dishearten or discourage us as we see our worthlessness against such greatness; rather let it awaken in us a realization of the reality of the great God we serve. This may be mentally exhausting, but it will give us the thrust power we need to be all-out for Him and His. Let us ponder the unponderable enough to be overwhelmed with awe and reverence, enough to make the Prophet's message meaningful, that God's thoughts are as much above ours as the heavens are above the earth. Let us expand our minds to their finite limit to realize anew our finitude and our need to

trust totally in Him whom we know will do as He has promised.

At the same time, let us realize that at the present moment there is a point beyond which finite minds cannot go. Try as we may, we cannot comprehend infinity.

Even the finite world of our experience is beyond our ability to know fully. We shall have to trust God to help us with both the finite and the cosmic. And if we serve well in our limited sphere, then someday God will open to us infinity.

We need not think of the infinite realm of God's creation as a world of fancy, far removed from reality. It is God's universe, His creation, His realm, His sphere of knowledge and activity, a very real and tangible realm into which we have been born and in which we have been offered eternal membership. Shall we refuse this offer because we cannot comprehend it?

In the meantime, while striving to qualify for this membership, let us occupy our mind with the task at hand, the obligation that is ours this moment. This was the message of Jesus in all of His preaching. He never bewildered His hearers with intricate philosophies or flights of fancy, but His illustrations and parables were of familiar, homely things, such things as our minds can lay hold of. A stranger to metaphysical speculation, He nevertheless knew the mind of man better than the greatest of worldly psychologists, and He fitted His gospel to its abilities and its needs. "The Word was made flesh"—eatable and assimilable. He recognized the fact that "the sense of uselessness is the severest shock which the human organism can sustain"; which is but another way of saying that "lack of something to feel important about is almost the greatest tragedy a man can have."

The desire to be or feel important, one of the

strongest drives in human nature, is not in itself ignoble. In fact, when properly used, it is a highly desirable, even indispensable characteristic. Without it, no one would deny himself the satisfactions of this world to gain the greater glories of the world to come. This lawful desire moved the Master Himself. For the joy that was set before Him He endured the cross and despised the shame (Heb. 12:2); and that joy was a position of importance, a throne. Throughout His ministry He was always laying His hand on unlikely people, saying, You are needed, and so He awakened in them a transforming respect for the importance of their own lives. No longer were they a jumble of atoms, lost in a universe too big for them; now they were integral parts of a divinely planned whole.

God wants us to have a good opinion of ourselves—but we must deserve it. We can be kings and priests for eternity, or we can be less than nothing and vanity; the matter rests entirely in our own hands. It is perfectly true that there are many useless individuals in this world, many of whom would never be missed. It is also true that no man, be he ever so significant, is indispensable, which is fortunate in view of our mortality. Certainly the work of the world has been done in the past—but by whom? Not by the philosophers of gloom but by people who got busy and *made* themselves needed. The world *has* to have people like that. While the quitters were wailing of their own futility, *they* were working, and happy in their work because they had found their place in this great scheme of things.

God needs us, humble and inadequate though we may be. That is, He needs us if we will make ourselves needed. The Plan of the Ages cannot operate without us; or someone to take our place. It depends on and consists of human integers—not ciphers, but integers. The “why” of it is none of our business, but it is our good fortune. We certainly could not better the Plan. The Eternal needs men and women of exactly the right type, a type which does not exist in nature but which can be developed from the raw material which exists in each of us. It is a compliment of the highest order that we have been called into this work; it shows we have it in us, if we will develop it. God will have His men, regardless of time. He can wait; He has waited nearly six thousand years for men and women He needs to rule in the age to come. God will have His men, regardless of our success or failure, just as the world’s work will be done, regardless of the attitude of the masses. If we fail, we injure ourselves most of all. The Eternal’s need is not so great that He will accept sub-standard materials.

Yes, brethren, we are needed. We *can* be important.

There is so much we can do, here and now, to help others and prepare ourselves for the great change so soon to come. If doing our work well there will be no time for moods of depression. After all, the cure of every evil is *faith*.

The germ and root of every good thing is *faith*. Let us have faith that God is using us to His glory, and let us so employ our days and hours that this need will continue, that throughout eternity we may be in union with Universal Life, belonging to Him, having a part in His purposes, being a trustee of His commissions, having access to His available power and sharing His glory, world without end. The world and worlds yet uncreated will always need us if we are faithful workers, for there will always be work to do. “Men wondered at,” the Prophet called these needed individuals (Zech. 3:8). This is a dignity, an importance, a significance worthy of investing our lives in.

“No man is useless while he has a friend,” said a famous writer. True as regards this life, but how much more significance it lends to our existence to have Jesus for our Friend! We can have Him, but there are conditions: He chooses His friends with care. “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you” (John 15:14). No man worthy of the name would betray or disappoint his friends. May we not fail the Friend who has made us stewards of His wonderful, saving Truth.

May the Lord depend on you?

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## Great God . . .

MAKE me decent, orderly, appreciative, useful, courageous and kind, in the work of this day.

Let me not weaken myself by anger, cheapen myself by boasting, or play the fool by lying.

Give me to remember that there are others in the world besides myself, and that they have feelings and needs just as I have.

Teach me to observe the rules of courtesy; to come through defeat victorious and out of victory unspoiled.

For my own sake and for the sake of my comrades, keep me wholesome and cheerful, but if the evil of error should grip me at times, grant me the good sense to go quietly alone until the impulse to act wrongly shall have passed.

And at the end of each day bring me to my bed with a knowledge that greed and malice and envy and hatred have played a lesser part in my thinking; that my weariness is the result of well-doing, not of wrongdoing. Amen.

## ● The Passover Memorial

*"We have our memorial meeting weekly on Sundays, you have yours annually. Would you please comment."*

By "memorial meeting" we assume that you refer to what is sometimes called the "communion service" or the commemorating of the Last Supper, when Jesus partook of the cup and the bread with His disciples.

Our church observes this annually as an anniversary of an event which Jesus commanded should be perpetuated, as a memorial of "the same night in which he was betrayed" (I Cor. 11:23).

We do this in view of Jesus' own words, as quoted by Paul, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:25).

This was, of course, not the beginning of the Passover remembrance. The Jewish people, following the law of Moses, had been accustomed to observing the Passover night, the fourteenth of Abib, as a remembrance of their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage; the observance for them was strictly commanded (see Exodus 13). Jesus, too, had been raised in this tradition and kept it. And it appears that in the year of His crucifixion Jesus still wanted to keep it with His disciples. For this reason, and knowing what lay ahead for Him, He called them together for the observance a day earlier than was the custom, "before the feast of the Passover" (John 13:1). In doing this, He gave the event a new date and a new meaning for us, hence what we call the "New Passover," or "the Lord's Supper."

The New Passover has special significance for us for three reasons: 1) because of its roots in the remembrance of the great Deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, which reminds us of our deliverance from the bondage of ignorance and sin; 2) because of the direct command that we observe Jesus' New Passover (I Cor. 11:25); and 3) because of the deep spiritual meaning of this New Passover to us.

In obedience to the command, "This do in remembrance of Me," we partake of the emblems. The observance signifies for us the making/renewing of our covenant with God. For Jesus that Last Supper was a time

of complete consecration. He went out to suffer, to surrender Himself totally to the will of His Father, even unto death.

By renewing each year the memory of His consecration, we consecrate ourselves to the completing of our sacred task. The memorial is for us the most solemn event of the year. By partaking we, like Jesus, agree to "eat" and "drink" *all* of His spiritual bread and wine in our lives. We agree to eat and assimilate "every word of God" (the bread) and to pour out our life blood (symbolized by the wine) in total obedience as did Jesus our perfect example; to suffer the death of all our naturally sinful ways. It is a total commitment, even to death.

The annual nature of the event seems to be well established by the fact that the Jewish Passover was the annual observance of the anniversary of the night of deliverance; and the New Passover was Jesus' substitute for (and extension of) the familiar observance.

Also, we should observe that Jesus apparently had no anticipation of repeating the service with His disciples before He ascended, even though He knew He would be among them for a significant period (forty days), for at the time of the Last Supper He said to His disciples, "I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29).

This is not to say that a more frequent enactment of the communion ceremony is wrong; however, a more frequent enactment could not be done as a true anniversary of the event. An anniversary can occur only once each year.

## ● Declaring the "Righteousness of God"

*"In your atonement book you explain Romans 3:25. You re-arrange it to mean 'set forth in his blood through faith a propitiation'. The text is not very clear. Who has the faith, Christ or us? Could you explain that 'righteousness of God' verse again? The whole Christadelphian theory of the atonement is based upon the concept that Jesus, by His death, declared the righteousness of God."*

The order of words in the original languages of the Bible always sounds unnatural to us when translated literally and often raises significant questions as to the meaning intended. Even in the English language, changing word order can alter the meaning of the sentence.

Unfortunately, Romans 3:24-25 is not among the clearest of Bible passages. And the popular ideas associated with the atonement only serve to cloud our thinking even more.

But approaching the text from the context of Romans 3 and without any pre-assumed ideas of atonement, let's see what it says.

First, we should observe that Paul is addressing this Epistle to Jewish believers, to inform them that the Gentiles share equally with them in the benefits of faith. This was not an easy lesson for the Jews—even Jewish believers in Christ—to accept, and Paul found it necessary to impress it in many ways and from many viewpoints.

God is absolutely fair in doing this, Paul says. God is absolutely righteous in choosing His candidates for salvation from either Jew or Gentile. All is on the basis of individual merit. The Jews have no prior right, "but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34-35).

The efficacy of the law of Moses is gone for ever. "By the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified in his sight" (Rom. 3:20). "Now the righteousness of God without the law [of Moses] is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (3:21-22). The "righteousness of God" is "upon all them that believe"—whether Jew or Gentile, there is "no difference."

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Whether Jew or Gentile, all are, in the beginning, sinners. (This was probably another "shock" to Jews, who tended to think of the Gentiles as "sinners," but not themselves!)

"Being justified freely by his grace [God's mercy, forbearance, kindness, in revealing His law] through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

"Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Rom. 3:24-25).

The central issue is God's forgiving or "remitting" of "sins that are past." And how is this accomplished?

It is conceivable that the Jews wanted the past sins of the Gentiles retained—and of course, their own, forgiven. But Paul is saying that God has declared His

absolute fairness, His righteousness, in sending Christ to be a "propitiation" or "mercy-seat," as rendered in Wilson's Diaglott; a mediator, or point of contact (I Tim 2:5) for both Jew and Gentile, "through faith in his blood."

The term "his blood" refers to Christ's total sacrifice of Himself, the sacrifice which every believer must make. And the "faith" is not God's, and not Christ's, but that of the petitioning believer seeking forgiveness. Before we can receive any mercy or forgiveness from Christ or have Him petition God in our behalf, we must have faith, for "without faith it is impossible to please him" (Heb. 11:6). Christ can intercede for us only in proportion to the measure of our faith. The responsibility is ours. However, the thought has been advanced that this faith we must have is not "in his blood," as the translation of the text might suggest, but faith in God and His righteousness. We can have faith only in a being, it is not possible to have faith in a concrete object. The phrase "in his blood" is more likely part of the phrase preceding, i.e., "whom God hath set forth . . . in his [Christ's] blood"—in recognition of His total commitment, His full surrender of Himself.

The thought of the passage might be phrased as follows: that when we—Jew or Gentile—put our faith in God and seek Him, God, in His mercy and forbearance, shows His justice in freeing us from the guilt of our evil past, not holding it against us but letting us start with a clean page. He can do this because He has sent Christ to act in our behalf, as our mediator, and our perfect example, and we are accepted on the same basis as was He, as we make the same total sacrifice He made.

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## Remember ABIB!

THE ABIB season begins this year with the new moon of April 9, placing the observance of Abib First on April 9, 10.

Members and friends of the Megiddo Church will observe the day with appropriate services of prayer and praise, in remembrance of the birth, life, and future destiny of Christ, and in welcoming the beginning of another sacred year.

Thirteen days later (Abib 13, this year on Monday evening, April 21), we will commemorate the anniversary of the Lord's Supper. The morning of April 24 (Abib 15) will be observed as the anniversary of Christ's triumphant Resurrection. Pentecost falls 50 days later, or June 12 this year.



## Finding Happiness

We can see that we are living near the end of man's rule on earth. Let us not permit the dead weight of the commonplace daily routine to act as a drag on our feet in this narrow way.

Obedience changes the stubborn heart to one of pliable willingness. And as we tread the path of obedience we shall find rest after restlessness, and peace for our troubled hearts. Hearing brings a limited amount of satisfaction but in the way of obedience we continually discover springs of delight as well as stores of provisions, fountains of delicious satisfaction of being right with God and in union with His will.

Happy are all who perfectly follow the laws of God. Happy are all who search for God and always do His will.

*Newfoundland*

D. T.

## Shocked

I would like to receive more of your monographs, "Understanding the Bible."

I recently received a set and after the first shock, I now am getting some good information on the Bible.

This is something I really need. My story is not new. At 55 years of age I left the church in which I had been raised to find out for myself what the Bible really does say.

*New Mexico*

F. F.

## Keep Awake

In these days of crowding responsibilities and numbing indifference to any requirement of God, we must keep awake and keep grasping for every crumb that will stimulate our minds to Christian thinking. God is long-suffering toward those who will turn completely from their sins.

*Georgia*

S. J.

## Light Bearers

We sing "Help us, O Lord, Thy light bearers to be," because if we are to shine for Him in that future age, so soon to come, we must have the light in us. Jesus was found always trying to please His heavenly Father. Whatever God's will for Him, He was found trying to please. He went about His Father's business and not His own.

It is good that we of like precious faith can communicate with one another without fear of persecution, and we can speak and sing of His wonderful promises all the day long. O, who shall separate us from the love of Christ our Lord?

We must be more concerned with being right than with seeming to be right because angels are watching. Are they not writing a record of our conduct each and every day and will make a report of it to the heavenly Father whether it is good or bad. We should want and strive to be brilliant lights in this world where all is so dark and dismal.

*Mississippi*

R. S.

## By Overcoming

We have to overcome the ways of the flesh with the works of righteousness and truth. It is the overcoming that will make us into the new creatures so well pleasing to God. The good fruits of the spirit will make us worthy overcomers to sit down with Christ in the Kingdom of God.

If our lives are truly becoming new, vibrant with this glorious hope, we can look forward to sharing in that promised inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

*Australia*

A. B.

## God Sees All

It is now far into the night, the "Bright Day" is nearly here. The Lord will soon be returning to reward the faithful children, and shall we be ready to meet Him? Have we laboured willingly and well in His vineyard? Have we overcome all our evil ways? Have we stopped trusting in our own ways and put our trust in the Lord? If we live in the fear of the Lord we shall overcome all our faults and this as we know is a must, if we hope to receive the great gift of life everlasting.

When God entered our life we discovered that to succeed spiritually, we have many things to learn. We learn that God's ways are not our ways, nor our thoughts His thoughts, His being much higher than ours as the Heaven is much higher than the earth; we also discover that all our natural ways are unclean in His sight. We may be able to cover our thoughts and deeds from the world, but we cannot hide anything from God. He sees all, no matter what we do.

*South Wales*

M. S.

## It WILL Happen

If there ever was a time to hurry and run, it is now, before the Lord comes and sends His army over the nations. To be safe in that time of trouble we must run, to try and escape. The average person says "That won't happen here." But it *will* happen.

*Iowa*

G. M.

## Having the Key

Yes, we have the key to knowledge. May we handle it right. God's all-seeing eye is over us. May we love Him in obedience now.

*Nebraska*

M. M.

### Another Chance

I have no greater joy than to know that we walk in faith and truth. These are our hope, that we may enter into that rest which our Lord has promised to the faithful.

We are happy to know that if we stumble and fall He will pick us up and give us another chance to start climbing again until we become perfect.

We know that these are perilous times just like the apostle Paul said they would be in the last days. There are many pits: unthankful pits, unholy pits, covetous pits. We must be most watchful as we go along our pilgrim journey in faith, hope and love.

Virginia

M. P.

### Every Day Special

Every day of the year is a special day to me. It gives me another day to be working for that eternal home, and hardly a day goes by but what I think of Brother Nichols. Just think, where would we be, if it had not been for him working to show us the path to life?

Some read the Bible over and over just for their own satisfaction, but never understanding really what they have read. They don't want to know any different and want to enjoy life just as it is. They do not realize that the wisdom of this world is all foolishness with God.

The light shines out so clear while the rest of the world lie in darkness. The Lord will give us time, if we use it as we should.

Iowa

E. T.

### Very Careful

We find we have to wash out all untruths and learn and do what the law of God requires. We know we will have temptations as long as life lasts, so we should be very careful to be on guard at all times.

South Carolina

H. C.

### Appreciative

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Mississippi

D. C.

## ■ FINALLY, BRETHREN

## “Lord, Don’t Inconvenience Me”

*When I have a convenient season, I will . . . (Acts 24:25).*

**W**E ALL remember Felix and his “convenient season”—that never came. But what of ourselves? Have we never put off something until a “convenient season”?

This brief line reflects a deep-rooted and far-reaching philosophy, one which says, “I am favorably disposed to the consecrated life, provided that it does not interfere with my personal ambitions and desires. Lord, don’t inconvenience me. I realize that eventually I may have to submit to inconvenience, but not now.”

These are the words of a fool, whatever other name the speaker may have. They are the thoughts of a procrastinator.

Briefly summarized, the excuses for putting off the “so great salvation” are usually: I have no time right now, or, I have no place in my life for God. Something else is more important. I have another god that must be considered ahead of the God of heaven.

Though we may not choose to think of it this way, the tragic truth is that most of us worship other gods. With our lips we recognize the true God, but in reality He is not alone at the top of our list of concerns. In the

truest sense, we worship whatever holds top priority in our thinking and planning. If anyone or anything usurps this place from God, we are idolators.

We may say to ourselves, I know the Bible is right; God’s way is the right way; and I’ll follow—when it’s more convenient. It is as if we said by our actions, Stand by, Lord. I expect to need Your services someday!

Under such terms God becomes simply a matter of convenience, a moral crutch to hold up a rapidly disintegrating standard.

Let us awake, and give heed to God’s ultimatum: “Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols” (Ezekiel 14:6). God must have *first* place in our hearts and lives. If we cannot grant Him first place, He has no place at all.

God’s cause will not wait for our convenience. His times are fixed. Our time is *now*. If any message in the Bible is clear it is that *now* is the only divinely recognized time for us to act upon eternal issues.

Believe now. Surrender now. Consecrate now. *This* is your most convenient season.

MM

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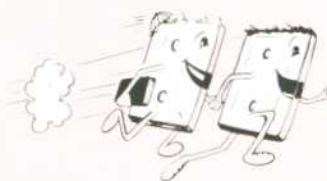
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