

Megiddo Message

May/June, 2005

WHO IS THIS
KING OF GLORY?



THE LORD
STRONG AND MIGHTY... PSALM 24:8



A PROMISE STILL A PROMISE

If success is the most important virtue and “right” is defined as whatever works for any individual in any given situation, what is there to restrain cheating in our schools, professions, trades, and the general public?

In a book called, *The Cheating Culture: Why More Americans Are Doing Wrong to Get Ahead*, author David Callahan cites a few statistics that spotlight the growing problem:

- ◆ Applicants cheat on their resumes.
Nearly 50 percent of resumes contain outright lies.
- ◆ High school students cheat on exams.
74 percent of high school students say they have cheated.
- ◆ 90 percent of college students say they would lie to increase their chances of getting a good job.
- ◆ Executives and workers steal more than \$1.5 billion a day from their companies.

While cheating is nothing new in America, aren't these statistics telling us that dishonesty is fast becoming a way of life? What difference does it make? Doesn't “everybody do it”? Why not cheat to get ahead?

Because God says cheating is wrong. Dishonesty is wrong. Every kind of lying is wrong, even if “everybody” does it. Just think about it: If I can lie to you, then you can lie to me, and the next one can do it, and the next. What kind of communication do we have? Who benefits? Can't we see why the Bible says, “Let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’” (Matt. 5:37). Anything more is self-destructive. Anything more than this “shows that something is wrong” (NLT).

What does this mean in simplest terms? It means that I must say “yes” to my “yes,” and “no” to my “no.” In other words, I must keep my promise. If I don't, I lose.

Take an example from Scripture. The man is Jephthah the Gileadite. He is speaking to his only daughter, and he says: “...I made a promise to the Lord, and I cannot break it!” (Judges 11:35 NCV). This was Jephthah's reason why he could not do what the impulse of the moment seemed to dictate. It is my reason also. It is reason enough. I have given my word, and that is *that*!

A promise is a promise, and I must have respect for it. “I made the Lord a promise, and I can't break it.” My word is at stake, and I must keep faith with myself.

Then, too, I must keep faith with my friends. Others are depending on me to be faithful. Others are watching for my example, and are depending on me to make good. I have told

them that it is possible to live a life pleasing to God—I must show them. How can I fail them?

Then, I must keep faith with those I may have encouraged. Many of them I do not know personally, but to fail them might be a blow to their young and tender faith. Furthermore, it would put the Gospel I represent in disrepute. It would show that I myself did not really believe what I had told them.

Then, I must keep faith with myself. At best, I have not many more years to live. Life is short, and to turn back at this point would deprive me of all that I have invested in the cause of Christ. I have sacrificed and labored. I know I have more work yet to do, but considering the miles I have covered and the miles ahead, what folly to even think of breaking my promise!

I have promised, and I cannot break it.

All of the above are ties that hold me, but the combined influence of all of them is not enough. Over and above all is the one anchor that holds me steady: my personal promise to God. *I have promised the Lord, and a promise is a promise.*

This is why Jesus reminds us not to place too much confidence in anything earthly. This is why He declared, “If you want to be my follower you must love me more than your own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, more than your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:26 NLT). When Jesus said this, He was preparing His followers for the harsh realities of life. In a clash of claims, He must be first, and everything and everyone else must take a lesser place. Whatever might come, my highest commitment is to God.

Paul said the same of himself: “Everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ ... so that, somehow, I can experience the resurrection from the dead!” (Phil. 3:8, 11 NLT). He knew he could trust Christ to keep that which he had committed to Him “against that day” (2 Tim. 1:12). Paul wanted to be sure Christ could trust him.

This sense of absolute trust holds one steady when other bonds give way. But this trust must be mutual. I can trust Christ; no question. But can He trust me?

This is where I have made the Lord a promise, and I must not break it.

Because a promise is still a promise.

Will I be true? Will you? ◆

*I can
trust Christ. Can
He trust
me?*



A Purpose, a Plan, a Place, and a Time to GROW

Our great Creator has made the earth and its people with a great creative purpose in view. All are not here by chance. The Great Creator has a long range purpose in view. As the Prophet Isaiah said long ago, speaking of the physical earth, *"He created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited"* (Isa. 45:18).

This, too, is His promise, guaranteed by the certainty of His own existence: *"As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord"* (Num. 14:21).

God has planned that this Earth shall someday become an all-new world with people who have been re-made physically, for *"flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God"* (1 Cor. 15:50). These privileged people will never again experience sorrow, never suffer, never get sick, never die. And their all-new world will never be marred by evil or sin, war or strife.

Who is God choosing to be part of that new wonder-world? Jesus described them as those who are *"accounted worthy"* (Luke 20:35). What makes them *"worthy"*? Paul the apostle said that they are individuals who have patiently continued in doing right (Rom. 2:7). Jesus describes them as individuals who have kept His commands (Rev. 22:14), people who have *"overcome"* even as He Himself overcame (Rev. 3:21). The Apostle John says they are people who purified themselves even as Christ is pure (1 John 3:3).

All in all, they demonstrated their desire to be part of the new world by attaining the moral likeness of Christ—through growth.

Our part in the eternal purpose of God depends on our growth in character—our growth as individuals. God cannot and will not use us as we are. We must change; we must

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Growth is at the very heart of God's creation. A child is born and grows to maturity. A seed sprouts and grows into a tree, or a flower, or a plant. An egg cracks open, and a baby chick is on the way to becoming a full-sized fowl. In each case, a body absorbs nutrients from its environment, cells multiply, and the result is growth.

"Like Christ" is the standard of character God has set. But He doesn't expect us to reach it in one giant leap. We must grow to reach it. Little by little we must practice the Christ-like virtues. Day by day we must practice being kind, forgiving, truthful, patient, becoming more and more like Christ until we reach His moral stature.

The only way to become like Christ in character is to grow. That is why God gives us everything we need: a purpose, a plan, a place, and time.

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BACK COVER PRAYER

I Need You, Lord

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MEGIDDO MEANS...

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

WE BELIEVE...

- ♦ in God, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."
- ♦ in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- ♦ in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to

heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be King of the whole earth.

- ♦ in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- ♦ in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- ♦ in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- ♦ in ourselves as capable, with the help of God, of applying to our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

- ♦ in the promise of God, that Jesus Christ will soon return to rid the earth of all sin and suffering and inaugurate an eternal and worldwide Kingdom of peace and righteousness, until God's will is done here as it is now done in heaven.

THE HERALD AND THE KING

OUR PLANET will soon witness the greatest events in its history. For centuries God has been silent. But that silence will soon be broken by the arrival of Elijah the prophet, who comes to herald the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. "*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:...lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Then shall follow the King of kings and Lord of lords, to begin His momentous work of transforming our world into the glorious and eternal Kingdom of God.

become “*holy*” as God is holy (1 Pet. 1:15). To achieve His character likeness, we must grow in patience, in Christian love, in kindness, in courage, in faith, and every godly virtue (2 Pet. 1:5–7).

GROWING AND GROWING

We might compare our moral growth to the growth we see in nature. When we plant a seed, we do not expect to harvest fruit in a couple of days. The seed must germinate, the young plant must be nourished and grow into a tree. And growth takes time. If we plant a seed of a fruit-bearing tree, we know that given even the best of conditions, we will have to wait many years before we can expect fruit.

But we know also that in due time the plant must produce fruit. If our tree, for whatever reason, shows no signs of producing fruit when the time is right, we cut it down.

The Bible compares the life of a Christian to that of a growing, fruitbearing tree. God’s people are to be “*trees of righteousness*,” of the Lord’s own planting (Isa. 61:3). And like all other living things, they must grow. And when the time is right, they must bear the fruit of upright living.

John the Baptist came preaching, “*Bear fruits worthy of repentance*” (Luke 3:8).

Jesus said every tree is known by its fruit, and “*every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them*” (Matt. 7:19–20).

But before there can be fruit, the tree must grow. The whole process of Christian development is one of growth. God does not expect us to be full grown at the start. Just as a child must grow, so we need time to learn what God expects of us and develop a Christ-like character through the experiences of our lives. “*Laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby*” (1 Pet. 2:1–2).

We are made to grow. God designed the process of growth for all parts of His living creation. Every oak was first an acorn. Every tree, whether in the wilds of the mighty forest or the cultivated fruit orchard, was first a seed, then a shoot, then a sapling, then a full-grown, mature tree.

We are made to grow. The creative God made us for creative growth. Growth is the law of being. It is the law of life. Violate that law and you die. Break that law and you break yourself. When a child is born, there must be physical growth, and there must be mental growth. Then, if there is to be a likeness to Christ, if there is to be what God calls a “*new creature*” (2 Cor. 5:17), there must be spiritual (or moral) growth.

This last type of growth—in character—is our greatest concern. The growth process goes on as long as our life.

Want to GROW?

Want opportunities to grow in character? You can start right where you are.

- ☐ Keep an eye on your own weaknesses—with God’s help you can overpower them.
- ☐ Devise new strategies in dealing with the “old” you. Feed only the “new,” Christ-like nature, and watch it grow.
- ☐ Hold your temper—it is a great exercise for building spiritual muscles.
- ☐ Don’t be distracted by godless issues around you. Keep focused on that which will advance the cause of Christ.
- ☐ Pray for courage to turn trivial conversation into meaningful and life-changing thoughts that will spur toward the Kingdom of Christ. It will be here soon!
- ☐ Stop concentrating on your wants and your likes—instead look for something you can do for another. That will produce a growth spurt.
- ☐ Hold your tongue from saying anything thoughtless, cutting or unkind. If what you heard was from the gossip train, you may save someone’s reputation!
- ☐ Be so focused on being right with God that criticism won’t get you down—instead it will encourage further growth.
- ☐ When you feel like criticizing, look inside first—there is always room for more growth there.

Remember, your rate of spiritual growth depends on you!



Good SEED + Good SOIL + SUN and RAIN = GROWTH + FRUIT

(The Word of God) + (The “good and honest heart”) + (Real life situations and events) = (Godly thoughts and actions + A righteous character)



God has no patent on a seed, and none is pending—He doesn't need one, because only God can make that marvelous, indescribable property we call "life."

A Purpose, a Plan, a Place, and a Time to Grow

When we stop improving (growing) in character, we die spiritually.

Everyone who would attain the standard of Christ can reach it only by growing and continuing to grow, day by day, week by week, month by month, year by year. There is no other way to become a fruit-bearing tree, except to grasp every opportunity to learn a lesson, apply those lessons to our lives, and grow!

GOD PROVIDES THE ESSENTIALS FOR OUR GROWTH

God provides everything we need to grow. He gives us a place, a time and all the nourishment we need to develop into full-grown trees of righteousness, but He cannot make us grow; we ourselves must do the growing by applying our minds to His law and putting it to work in our lives.

First, God has given us the *desire* to grow. He has put within us something that yearns for a better life. He has given us "eternity" in our hearts (Eccl. 3:11). Along with that, He has given us His great and precious promises as an incentive to grow.

Then He has given us an *environment* which is appropriate for our growth. Environment is physical, spiritual and mental; and the spiritual and mental often present the greater problem. Why? Because people make up so much of it, and people can be as lovely as rare flowers, or as miserable and cantankerous as weeds. But either way, environment is only another way to spell opportunity—opportunity to grow in patience, kindness, consideration, forbearance, mercy, and a host of other godly virtues.

Sometimes we grow because of favorable environment; sometimes we grow because the environment is made up of resistance.

If we are determined to be flourishing trees of God's law planting (Isa. 61:3), God in His mercy and loving-kindness will not allow any circumstance beyond our control that would make it impossible for us to grow. All we have

to do is to use what He has provided us.

God has set the stage for our growth. If we do not grow, the fault is our own. We have stifled the urge within us and muffled the opportunities around us. It is as simple and straightforward as that.

If, spiritually speaking, you are a stunted and runt individual, it is because you have chosen to be just that. The solution? Change your attitude, and see every situation you encounter as an opportunity—to grow.

GROWTH, IN PRACTICAL TERMS

When we speak of Christian "growing," what do we mean in simple everyday terms?

To grow may be to compel ourselves to do something we have not yet accomplished—to adopt a new attitude of

When God looks at a life, He sees the potential. He sees what we can become.

Within a seed is a miniature of the parent plant; just so when God looks at a human life, He sees what it can be, given time, spiritual nourishment, and an environment in which to grow.

There will never be a better place or time for spiritual growth than right where we are right now. God wants us to use the opportunities we have today.

Grow where you are planted!

mind, to exercise better control over our words, to cultivate a deeper reverence for God in our hearts as we think about His power and knowledge. It may mean building new relationships, or severing old ones. It may mean nourishing new desires, or restraining forbidden ones.

Growing may mean being more patient, more self-controlled, more Kingdom-minded; it may mean changing our major concerns in life from What shall we eat? What shall we drink? What shall we wear? What does so-and-so think of me? to What does God want me to do? Growing means following Jesus and seeking first His Kingdom and righteousness (Matt. 6:25–33).

CREATED, FORMED, MADE

“Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Isa. 43:7).

The plan of God centers around people—men and women who have met the qualifications set by the Heavenly Father to be part of His finished creation. These select persons go through a special process of development. In the text of Isaiah, they are *“called,”* then *“created,...formed,...made.”*

God’s whole plan centers around the developing and perfecting of these select individuals. In Isaiah 43, the Prophet makes a remarkable declaration of God’s ongoing eternal purpose. Whom is God selecting? God replies, *“Every one that is called by my name.”* God may have been speaking to a nation, but at this point His Divine spotlight focuses on the individual, *“even every one that is called by my name.”* Here is the first step in bringing the human creation into the Divine plan: being called.

Then the next step follows quickly, a special aspect of development: *“I have created him.”* These select persons do not come about by chance, nor are they left to the blind forces of nature. They are designed, developed, *“created.”*

What is the purpose in this special process of creation? *“I have created him for my glory.”* God plans that His finished creation will glorify Him, i.e., enhance or increase His new world.

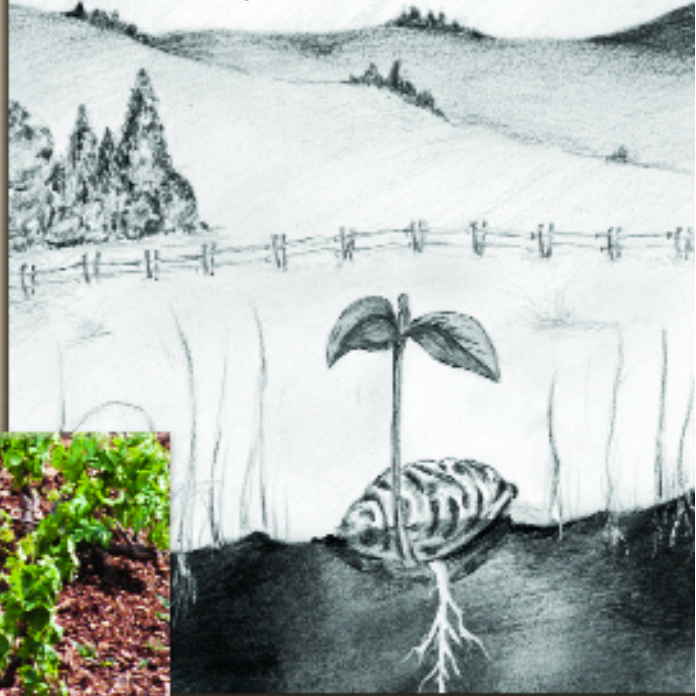
It is not a creation that comes from nowhere and goes nowhere. If we would enjoy His supreme good, we must see ourselves as God sees us and fit ourselves into His purposes. We must understand the purpose of His work and the standard by which God measures our lives.

A minister was once asked by one of his parishioners who was wishing to entangle him in questionable debate, “Tell us, doctor, what do you really think of God?” His answer was quick: “Madam,” he said, “it matters not at all what I think of God; it matters *everything* what God thinks of me.”

When we examine ourselves in the light of God’s Word, it

...and a **TIME** to grow...

Given the right conditions, the planted seed germinates—it sends roots down and a living shoot up. Growth takes time. Those who look for growth too quickly may see their sprouts wither and die, while those who allow time for strong roots to form will see their plants grow into flourishing trees.



The Christian life germinates when we read the Word of God and begin to see God at work. “Faith comes by hearing...the Word of God” (Rom. 10:17).

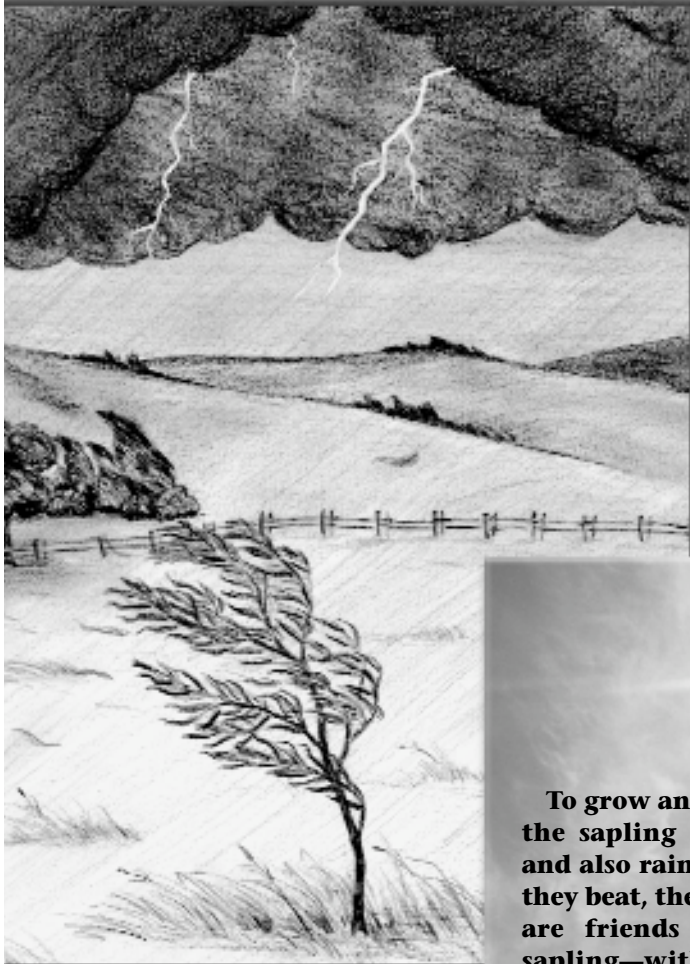
Faith grows as we read the Word of God and see its prophecies fulfilled in history.

Faith grows as we see the Bible teaching one plan of salvation from Genesis to Revelation.

Faith grows as we see and realize we ourselves can have a place in God’s plan.

**The place to grow is HERE,
and the time is NOW.**

growing...through SUNSHINE and STORM...



To grow and produce fruit, the sapling needs sunshine and also rain. However hard they beat, the storm and rain are friends of the young sapling—without them it could not grow. No rain, no growth. No growth, no fruit.

In the spiritual parallel, every sapling of God experiences periods of sunshine and also of storm. God allows trials for our growth. We learn from adversity. We grow stronger as we meet the challenges of life—with God. When the car won't start, or someone misunderstands us, or is unkind to us, or we are accused of something we did not do—these are opportunities to keep growing.

always compels us to that judgment. We come to the standard of eternity, to the balances of the sanctuary, to the measurements of God.

"I have created...I have formed...I have made." The Hebrew words behind these three terms show distinct emphasis and significance. First, *"I have created."* This term refers to an entirely new beginning. We may apply it to God's action in beginning a great work in behalf of His human family, when He starts acting on their behalf. It is, as far as each one is concerned, a new departure.

The second step is that of being *"formed."* This word indicates a process. It is a word which is used of the potter working at the wheel. He is using what already exists to make it into something better, something new.

The third word, *"made"* is a word which indicates the final result. It is accomplished. I have made; I have finished, and it is done. The Prophet looked far into the future when the plan of God would be complete. He looked also to the end of the forming he himself was experiencing, to the time when he would be *"created...formed... made."* He was looking to the time when he would eventually stand upon the earth, the finished work of God.

There is a sense in which we do the forming ourselves. We are responsible for our own work. There is another sense in which God is due the credit for forming us. We are His special creation and made by His predesigned plan. He has created us *"for his glory."* And though we must do all in our power to cooperate with that plan of creation and submit to it, all the parts of that plan—the purpose, the life, and the ongoing success—are God's.

What is the purpose of being made? I have created him, says the Prophet speaking for God, *"for my glory."* We are all familiar with this creating process. Why, then, was the Prophet mentioning it?

There was something here which should startle and awaken us, something that should catch our attention and change the direction of our lives. It is the realization of the purpose for which we are made. There is the day of our birth, and somewhere out there is the day of our death, and between these two is our period of obligation, or our opportunity. The real meaning of the interim, all that lies between, is what? Is it the amassing of wealth, the acquisition of knowledge, the pursuit of pleasure? No, it is to live for the glory of God, to do that which glorifies God, to do everything in our power to assure that we will be part of His finished, final creation.

And in this way we shall be created, formed and finally made, the finished product.

This whole process of forming is not a work God does alone, nor can we do it without His help. It is a work we do in cooperation with God. Jesus expressed it in these words, *"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work"* (John 9:4). It is illustrated in the allegory in Genesis using the figure of a garden and a man called to work in the garden. The garden

represents our “field” of service, Adam represents those who are called to serve God in every age. (For further discussion and Biblical evidence on this subject, see our booklet, “*God’s Spiritual Creation.*”)

“Go,” says God to Adam, “dig this garden and keep it.” Adam was to *do* something. He was to work, yet not alone. And he was to work not *his* way but *with God*. The garden belonged to God, not Adam. Adam himself was God’s creation; and all the tools he used belonged to God. All the sun and rain to produce the growth were from God. Still Adam had a distinct part to perform; the effort was to be his.

God was not overlooking this fact. He was more than fair, for all the fruits of Adam’s labor were to be his to enjoy. Still, Adam had to remember that the garden was not his property, but God’s. And Adam himself was not free to do as he pleased; he belonged to God.

Our work of forming a character is much the same, and must be done in cooperation with God. This special forming work will go on right through the Millennium until the earth is filled with the glory of the Lord.

And so we ask ourselves today, What am I doing to work with God? What am I doing with the human life He has entrusted to me? What right have I to take this time, these days, these powers, this mind, this thought-power, this body, and use them for any other purpose than to glorify God? If I do, am I not stealing from God? Am I not abusing His property?

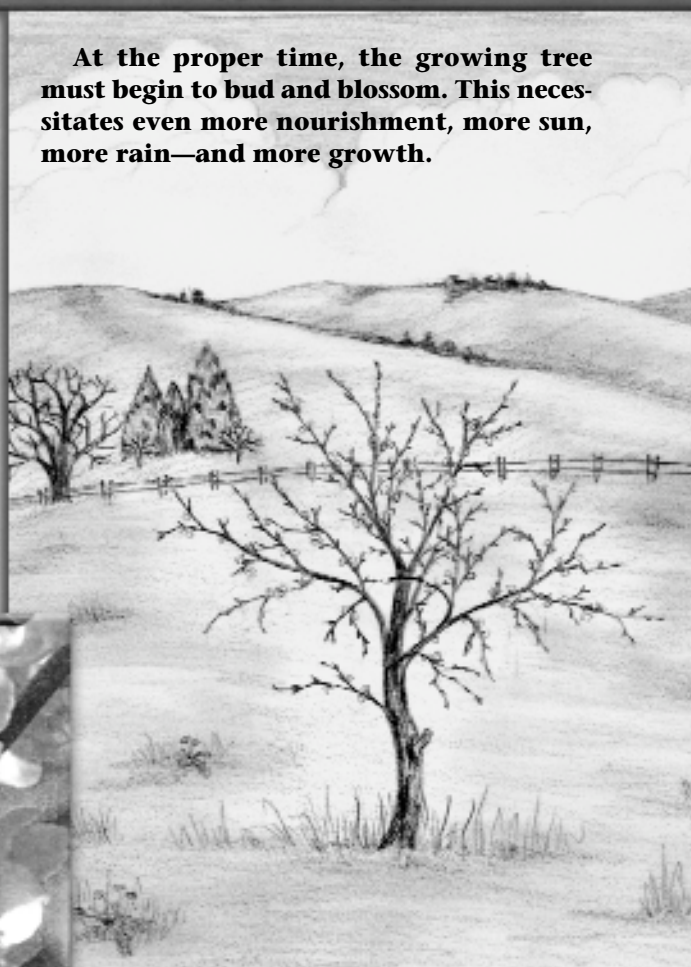
The Apostle Paul speaks of God’s creating process as a renewing, a re-creating. He says in his letter to the Ephesians (4:22–24 NLT): “*Throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God’s likeness—righteous, holy, and true.*” Here is a creating process that results in a likeness that is “righteous, holy, and true” to produce a “new nature.”

The Apostle spoke of the same process in his letter to the Colossians, where he calls it putting off “*the old man with his deeds*” and putting on “*the new man, which is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him that created him*” (Col. 3:9–10). It is a total transformation, a remaking of our lives from the inside out, with new desires, new goals, new pastimes, new values. He says it again in his letter to the Romans: “*Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed*” (Rom. 12:2 NEB). There must be a death of the old life and a creation of the new. Paul says it yet again: it is the “inward man” that is “renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16).

Or, to use another metaphor, it is God’s law of growth. We are made to grow, and we must grow until we are fully “created,...formed,...made” in His likeness. Only in this way can He use us in His eternal Kingdom on earth.

...and when the TIME is RIGHT,
to BLOOM...

At the proper time, the growing tree must begin to bud and blossom. This necessitates even more nourishment, more sun, more rain—and more growth.



The growing Christian must likewise bud and blossom—by showing visible signs of a changed life. Growth takes time, but if one is growing, there will be visible changes in every area of life. There will be a change in values, a change in interests, a change in how one spends time, money, and energy.

For example:

☐ *Where shall we go for our vacation?*

The growing Christian will answer: “Where can we go and take Christ with us?”

☐ *What shall I do in my leisure time?*

The growing Christian will answer: “What would Christ approve?”

☐ *Should I go back to school so that I can get a better job?* The growing Christian will answer: “What will give me the best spiritual advantage?”

As we grow, godliness will have more and more appeal, and the interests of this world will have less.

...and BEAR an abundance of GOOD FRUIT

To be of value to any gardener, the fruit trees must bear FRUIT. A peach tree must make peaches. A pear tree must make pears. An apple tree must make apples. If not, why waste the space? (Luke 13:7).

When the time is right, the steadily growing fruit tree reaches full maturity—and much fruit. The strength and stability of the mature tree are the natural result of all the growth that has come before.



God is looking for fruit in His people (His “trees of righteousness”). Our fruit is the visible evidence of our changed life. Our fruit shows what kind of tree we are (Matt. 7:18–20). How can we show God that we are His spiritual trees if we are all absorbed with thinking about the goals of the world, the values of this world, how much money we make, what we will eat and drink and wear, and how we will be viewed by people around us? Children of God will be thinking about spiritual concerns. “For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit” (Rom. 8:5).

God wants to see the qualities of Christ in our lives, all the fruit of the Spirit—“love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.” And He will look for a great abundance of this good, spiritual fruit.

God wants fruit—the best and the most that the tree can produce. Every tree is known—and valued—by the fruit it bears.

What the Bible says about

Spiritual Fruitfulness:

“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, **bears much fruit**; for without Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you **bear much fruit**; so you will be My disciples” (John 15:2, 5–8).

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and **bear fruit**, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you” (John 15:16).

“And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, being **filled with the fruits** of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God” (Phil. 1:9–11).

“...Walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, **being fruitful** in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10).

“Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the **peaceable fruit of righteousness** to those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:11).

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, **full of mercy and good fruits**, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace” (Jas. 3:17–18). ♦



Get Root and All!

(continued from *Happy Acres*)

On Monday morning as Paul looked out he saw bright yellow blossoms over the lawn. He slipped out of the house, and picked a handful of these dandelions and brought them to his mother.

"Flowers for you, Mommie," he announced happily.

Ann caught sight of her brother's bouquet and cried, "Oh, those aren't *flowers*, Paulie! Those are dandelions! They're *weeds*!"

Paul looked at his fistful of blossoms. "But I-I think—they're pretty. So I want to give them to Mommie."

Mom smiled at him. "They *are* pretty, Son. We'll put them in a glass of water, and set them in the window right above the sink so I can see how pretty they are while I wash the breakfast dishes."

"But, Mom," objected Ann as she took her lunch box ready to start for school, "dandelions *are* weeds, aren't they?"

"Yes," agreed her mother, "dandelions are weeds—but only because they have a habit of growing where we don't want them to grow. In some lands where flowers don't grow easily, folks would be delighted to have a bouquet of golden dandelions. Dandelions *do* have a lovely gold color—but we just have so many of them, and they grow so easily, they are a nuisance."

Then Mom turned to Paul. "What makes this bouquet most beautiful for me is that my boy brought them to me because he loves me."

That afternoon when Ann and Mark had returned from school, and had finished their after-school snack, Mom handed each of them a dandelion digging tool. The two children groaned at the sight of these tools. "Oh, Mom, do we have to dig dandelions again this spring?"

"Seems we have a new dandelion crop again," Mom replied. "We can't let the dandelions get fluffy heads or they'll spread their seeds all over the yard, and we'll have more dandelions than grass."

The lawn around the Johnson house was no small city lot in size. Now as Mark and Ann went out to dig dandelions, they were sure their yard was the biggest one in the whole country.

"Mark," said Mom, "you will work in the front yard. Ann, you will work in the back yard." Both children knew why Mom said that—if they worked together, they would get to talking so much they'd forget to work. Also they might have a misunderstanding about who dug the most dandelions.

Mark dug at the first dandelions as though he would like to cut them to bits. "You pesky things!" he grumbled at them.

After he had dug for about half an hour, he had an idea. Why dig the whole dandelion root out of the ground? Surely, if he got the green top off, that would be enough. So, instead of digging, he just yanked and yanked—and the dandelions disappeared much faster from the front lawn.

Mom came out to see how things were going. "Mark," she asked, "aren't you *digging* the dandelions?"

"It goes faster to yank them—like this," said Mark as he jerked the leaves off a dandelion, leaving the stubborn root sticking in the ground.

Mom shook her head. "I'm sorry to tell you this, but dandelions will grow if you leave their roots in the ground. So—wherever you have just pulled the leaves off now, you'll soon find a new dandelion top growing—and will have the job to do all over again."

MEMORY VERSE:

"And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men." – Col. 3:23

Ann came around the house to tell her mother, "Maybe dandelions have a lovely gold color, Mom, but I don't think they'll ever look beautiful to *me*!"

Mom chuckled. "I can understand that, Ann." Then she looked at the basket of dandelion plants Ann carried. "I'm glad to see you are getting the root and all. A poet once said, 'Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well.' That certainly is true of weeding dandelions—if we don't get *all* of the dandelions—it will soon be spreading itself all over the yard. The Bible has something to say about digging dandelions, too."

"Oh?" Mark and Ann both looked at her in surprise.

"Yes. This afternoon your job is digging dandelions. A person's job is his business. And the Bible says we are *not to be slothful in business* (Rom. 12:11). To be slothful means to be lazy or careless. In Proverbs, we are told, '*Go to the ant, thou sluggard: consider her ways and be wise: which having no guide,*



overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest'" (Prov. 6:6-8).

Mark, ashamed now, kept looking at the ground. His bright eyes caught sight of several ants, one following right after the other, always going in the same direction, up and down blades of grass, and over any obstacle in the way. He grinned good-naturedly at Mom. "There are some ants right here—for me—to consider. Those little fellows sure know where they're going. And I guess I know where I'd better get going—*digging* dandelions, not just yanking them." ♦

FAMILY DISCUSSION

Does God expect each one of us to work for a living? (Proverbs 14:23; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:12).

Can you think of people who have never worked for a living, Are these people generally *happy*?

Whether we work for our living on a farm or in the city, *how* should we do our work? (*Diligently*—Proverbs 10:4; 28:19; 12:11. *Honestly*—Deuteronomy 25:15; Romans 12:17. *As to the Lord*—Col. 3:23-24.)

The above story was reprinted from *Happy Acres* by Erling Nicolai Rolfsrud. Published by Tyndale House Publishers, Wheaton, Illinois.



NOW, GATHER THEM!

What's wrong? wondered Dad as he walked toward the house. Heidi is sitting quietly on the front steps. *She doesn't sit that still unless something is wrong. And she is never that quiet unless she is sick or unhappy.*

Dad strode up the walk in long steps and sat down beside Heidi.

"My dear, Heidi!"

"Heidi did not answer.

"Well, I see you must have a big problem, Peanuts." (Peanuts was Dad's pet name for Heidi.) "Can I help?"

Heidi sighed. "Oh, Daddy, why do I do such stupid things?"

"What do you mean?"

"You know how I talk all the time. I'm such a blabber-mouth."

"You do talk pretty much," smiled Dad. "But why does that make you sad today?"

Heidi stared at the tips of her sneakers. "You know that new girl at school I told you about—Sharon?"

"Mm-hmm," murmured Dad.

"Well, we had a hard quiz today and she got 100. I guess I was jealous that she got 100 and I didn't. So I told everyone that I knew she'd cheated. But I didn't know. Inside, I didn't really think so. She's just smart. Anyway, some of them believed me. They called her names."

"And—?" Dad raised his eyebrows.

"Before that I made fun of the different way she talks. And I guess I said some other things that were not nice or true. And now—now I feel bad inside about it."

Dad nodded. Heidi did have a big problem. Suddenly Dad had an idea. He stood up and looked across the road at

the vacant lot. Near the road were many soft balls of dandelion seeds on long stems. He hurried across the street and carefully picked one of the seed balls. He walked back slowly, trying not to lose any of the fluffy seeds. Then he handed it to Heidi.

"Here, Heidi: Blow hard. See if you can blow all these seeds into the air."

Heidi took a deep breath and gave a big puff. Fluffy seeds scattered in all directions.

In spite of herself, Heidi laughed at the little parachutes she sent flying in every direction.

Dad sat down on the step again, and he and Heidi watched the seeds float away in the breeze.

"Now," said Dad, "I would like you to gather the seeds together again."

Heidi looked to see if he was serious. "Oh, Daddy! You can't gather dandelion seeds together again!"

"I know, Peanuts," agreed Father. "Anyone can scatter such seeds with a little puff of breath. But the strongest, wisest man cannot gather them up again. Just so, unkind words can easily be spoken. But you can't get them back or undo all the trouble they cause." Heidi looked around. The seeds had vanished. "But what'll I do?"

"What do you think you ought to do?"

"I think I know what I ought to do—but it won't be easy. I think I should tell Sharon and the girls that I'm sorry for the things I said."

That is what Heidi did the very next day. Afterward, when she was tempted to speak unkindly about someone, she often remembered the dandelion seeds. ♦

MEMORY VERSE:

"Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord, keep watch over the door of my lips." —Psalm 141:3 NIV

"THOU SHALT NOT KILL"?

Why does the Bible contradict itself about killing? It commands, "Thou shalt not kill," yet didn't Moses kill?

If we look closely at what the Bible says about killing, we find that taking human life is forbidden unless by direct command of God or someone speaking for God.

There were many times in the Bible when God commanded that certain persons be killed, but notice that in every instance there was disobedience, sin or idolatry. He gave the command to King Saul regarding the wicked Amalekites (1 Samuel 15:3). When the Israelites were about to enter Canaan under the leadership of Joshua, God commanded a complete removal of the inhabitants because they were idol worshippers (Num. 33:51-53). In fact, the Lord Himself promised to be with the Israelites and help them as long as they obeyed Him. *"Joshua said, 'By this you shall know that the living God is among you, and that He will without fail drive out from before you the Canaanites'"* (Joshua 3:10).

But the taking of human life by one's own initiative is clearly and repeatedly condemned. The sixth commandment was *"You shall not murder."*

Besides being one of the Ten Commandments it is clearly in line with Bible teaching. Jesus, the night He was betrayed, told the overanxious Peter, *"Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword"* (Matt. 26:52). Peter had just struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his ear, thinking he was defending Jesus, but Jesus condemned Peter's violent action and even showed His disapproval by miraculously replacing the ear.

When Moses killed the Egyptian, it is quite evident from the text that he knew he was doing wrong because the text reads (NLT), *"After looking around to make sure no one was watching, Moses killed the Egyptian and buried him in the sand"* (Ex. 2:12). If he had no conscience about it being wrong, why would he have been concerned about being seen? And when he realized the next day that he had been seen and that his crime was known, he knew immediately that he would be prosecuted if he should be cap-

tured by Pharaoh (Ex. 2:14-15; 4:16).

To escape punishment for killing the Egyptian, Moses fled to far away Midia. He became a stranger in that strange land, separated from his home and family. Forty years went by before God called him to deliver the Israelites.

Hebrews 11 comments on Moses' leaving Egypt in these words, *"It was by faith that he left Egypt without fear of the king's anger; he held to his purpose like someone who could see the Invisible"* (Heb. 11:27 NJB). He may have known that his purpose would be to deliver his people, but he was not to take the matter into his own hands but to wait God's time. With this in mind, he could leave Egypt behind and return only if God sent him for that specific purpose.

□ Jesus Christ not God?

I was raised in a church that believed that Jesus Christ was God. I read in one of your magazines that your Church believes Jesus is not God. Is that true? In John 20:28, Thomas refers to Jesus as his Lord and his God. Can you explain this?

When we think of God we think first of the Great Creator, the Eternal, Everlasting God, the One in whom we *"live, and move, and have our being"* (Acts 17:28). This is by far the most frequent application of the term in Scripture.

But there is another. When the Lord was commissioning Moses to go and deliver His people from Egypt, He appointed Aaron to be the *"spokesman unto the people: and he shall be...to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God"* (Ex. 4:16). God was not speaking of Moses as an almighty being, but only of one in authority. Aaron was to serve in the position of speaker, and Moses was to have the authority behind the words spoken. There was no suggestion that Moses was going to take the place of the God of the universe.

One of the names given to Christ by the prophetic utterances of both Isaiah (Isa. 7:14-15) and the angel Gabriel (Matt. 1:23) was Immanuel, which means, *"God with us."* This is the role Christ will fill in the future in relation to His people when He returns to take over

the government of this world. This special role of Jesus was prophesied in Revelation 21:3-4, *"Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them and they shall be His people, God himself shall be with them and be their God."* "God" was with them, and dwelling among them will be Christ, the Son of God, bearing the name of His Father and the Eternal King of the earth, the supreme ruler of this planet in that day.

Speaking of Christ as *"Immanuel, God with us,"* Thomas could say to Jesus with all reverence, *"My Lord and my God!"* humbly acknowledging Jesus' authority, and knowing that Jesus was then victorious over death and destined to be earth's Eternal King.

The writer of Hebrews was giving Jesus the same level of honor when he said, *"Your throne, O God, is forever and ever"* (Heb 1:8). Christ's future Kingdom, His throne, will be over the whole earth, and it will be forever and ever. In that position, Christ will be "God" to the inhabitants of this planet, "God with us."

Belief in the trinity as it is widely accepted, composed of Father, Son and Holy Ghost as co-eternal, co-existent, and co-substantial, did not become a teaching of the Christian church until more than three centuries after Christ. The word "trinity" is not even found in the Bible. The Bible does not uphold any idea of a triune Godhead composed of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The Bible teaches one Supreme Being called "God," (Deut. 6:4), who is the Creator of the universe. Jesus Christ is His Son, and did not exist until born of the virgin Mary (Gal. 4:4).

We firmly believe the Bible does not teach that Jesus was God. Jesus prayed to His Father, He always spoke the words of His Father, He prayed that His disciples and He could be one as He and His Father were one (John 17:21-22), and when He was crucified, the universe was not without a creator. And when the time was right, God raised Him from the dead, and Jesus ascended to be at His Father's right hand. All of these facts are amply confirmed by Scripture. ♦

For more evidence on this subject, send for our Bible Study, *"The Trinity Mystery."*

FAITH *in Action*

Bible Text: Acts 18: 1-11

1 After these things Paul departed from Athens and went to Corinth.

2 And he found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla (because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome); and he came to them.

3 So, because he was of the same trade, he stayed with them and worked; for by occupation they were tentmakers.

4 And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and persuaded both Jews and Greeks.

5 When Silas and Timothy had come from Macedonia, Paul was compelled by the Spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ.

6 But when they opposed him and blasphemed, he shook his garments and said to them, "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

7 And he departed from there and entered the house of a certain man named Justus, one who worshiped God, whose house was next door to the synagogue.

8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

9 Now the Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, "Do not be afraid, but speak, and do not keep silent;

10 for I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city."

11 And he continued there a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.



When Claudius Caesar Ruled...

Claudius Caesar was emperor in Rome from AD 41 to AD 54. At first he was tolerant of the Jews, but later he expelled many of them for rioting. Aquila and Priscilla were among those forced to leave. When Paul came to Corinth, they had just recently arrived from Italy.

Paul had something in common with them—a trade and, most important of all, a living faith!

by RUTH E. SISSON

FROM PAGAN ATHENS TO CORRUPT CORINTH

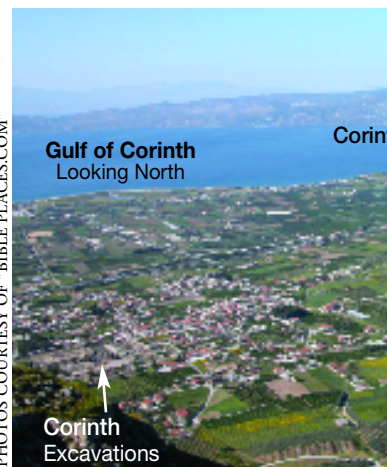
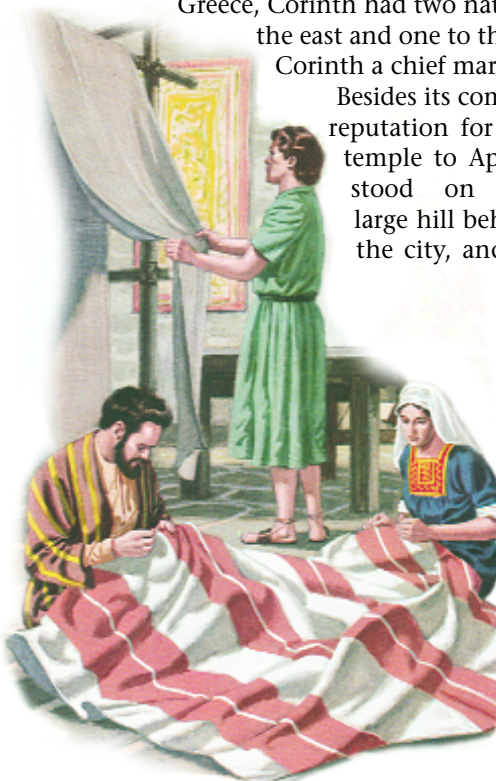
Work, Home and Friends in Corinth

 READ ACTS 18:1-11

While the universities might attract one to the city of Athens, in Paul's day Corinth was the political capital of Greece. Corinth was also a thriving commercial center. Located on an isthmus connecting southern and northern

Greece, Corinth had two natural harbors facing two seas, one to the east and one to the west. This strategic location made Corinth a chief market city between Asia and Italy.

Besides its commercial importance, Corinth had a reputation for its wickedness and immorality. A temple to Aphrodite, goddess of love and war, stood on the large hill behind the city, and its



PHOTOS COURTESY OF "BIBLE PLACES.COM"

Gulf of Corinth
Looking North

Corinth
Excavations

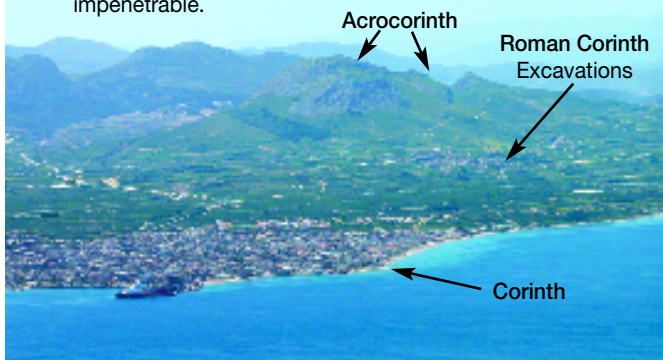
immoral worship supported at least a thousand temple prostitutes. While most ancient cities along the seacoast had their immoral side, Corinth outdid them all. So noted was the city for its licentiousness that in classical Greek, to “*act the Corinthian*” meant to practice fornication.

What would Paul want in a place like Corinth? Could he expect to find an audience there for a strictly moral religion? The answer was yes! Some had a heart for something better, and Paul was seeking these. When Paul came to Corinth he immediately found an audience for his message.

1. When Paul came to Corinth, he found two people who had only recently arrived there. What were their names, and what did he have in common with them? (18:2-3) _____
2. Were these two people already believers? Why or why not? _____
3. What did Paul say about the strong resolution he brought to the city of Corinth? (1 Cor. 2:1-2) _____
4. Where did he go to find an audience? (Acts 18:4) _____
5. What would most likely separate the Jews from the pagan worshippers in Corinth? (18:4) _____

Acrocorinth

Adding to the strategic advantage of the city's location, the spectacular fortress of Acrocorinth overlooked the city from nearly 2000 ft. (600 m) above sea level, and was said to be impenetrable.



Acrocorinth

Roman Corinth Excavations

Corinth

Phoebe in Cenchrea

I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also. (Romans 16:1-2 NKJV).



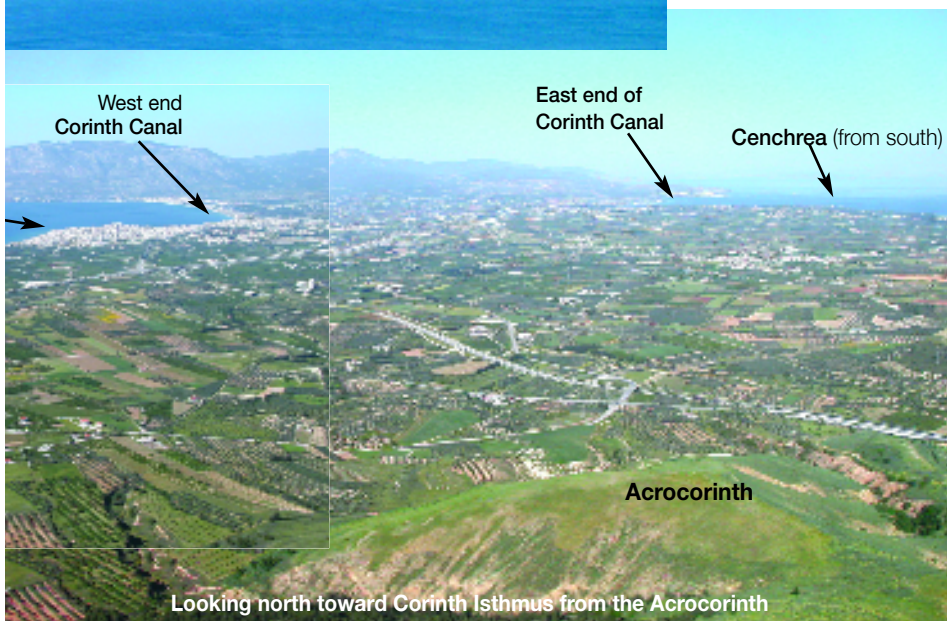
Insight

Not Too Lofty to Work

Work? Who wants to work! That is the attitude of many people today. But it was not the way the Apostle Paul viewed work.

Paul's enemies could make many accusations about him. But one thing they could not say. They could not say he was lazy. And he was no take-all-you-can-get man. He wasn't looking for the state to support him, or the Church, or anyone else. He believed in earning a straight, honest living with his own hands. He accepted gifts from his beloved Churches, but he did not want to be a burden to them. On the contrary, he worked so that he could help them (Eph. 4:28).

What did Paul do? He had a trade that went with him wherever he went: tent-making. Even in Corinth, a wealthy city teeming with all kinds of excitement and industry, Paul set up his tent-making shop. What were his goods for sale? Tents, cloaks, curtains, hangings, and whatever anyone could make out of heavy goat's hair cloth.



West end
Corinth Canal

East end of
Corinth Canal

Cenchrea (from south)

Acrocorinth

Looking north toward Corinth Isthmus from the Acrocorinth



A closer look

Making Tents and Friends

While Paul made tents, he also made bonds in Christ. In the city of Corinth, he met a man and his wife—Aquila and Priscilla—who also made tents!

So what did Paul do? He lived with them, worked with them, and made tents with them. And in between, he preached the Gospel.

Some in the big city may have scoffed. What, a preacher who actually worked with his hands?! But Paul was not the “normal” preacher. People of God, he said, should “*work in quietness and eat their own bread*” (2 Thess. 3:10, 12).



Insight

When Plan A Fails, Try Plan B

What do you do when Plan A doesn't work? You go to Plan B. This is exactly what Paul did at Corinth. Paul's custom when traveling was to locate the synagogue and begin by appealing to the Jews there. When he did this in Corinth, he was successful for awhile, "*persuading both Jews and Greeks*" (18:4).

Then—as usual—it all changed.

When Paul found the Jews opposing him, what did he do? Did he try to shout down the opposition? No, he quietly said, "*I will go to the Gentiles.*"

Actually, he went next door, into the house of one named Justus, a Gentile "*who worshiped God*" (18:7). And who came to hear him but Crispus, the leader of the very synagogue that ousted Paul! (18:8). Crispus also became a follower of Christ—he was one of the few Paul baptized (1 Cor. 1:14).

Maybe Plan A hadn't failed completely after all!



Insight

You Mean, Paul, You Were Afraid?

All of us get tired. All of us get worried. All of us get discouraged. Even Paul.

Luke does not give us the details, but something happened that made Paul fearful and discouraged. We know this because "*The Lord spoke to Paul in the night by a vision, 'Do not be afraid Paul, but speak, and do not be silent; For I am with you and no one will attack you to hurt you; for I have many people in this city'*" (18:9–10).

We do not know that he complained, but he was human. And God knew that he needed strengthening.

So at the precise moment, the vision came, saying clearly to Paul, "*Do not be afraid...for I am with you and no one will attack you to hurt you.*" He would be safe.

Just think what this message meant to Paul, the one who had been stoned, beaten, chased, maligned, and falsely accused. He would be safe in Corinth because as the Lord said, "*I have many people in this city.*"

As a result, Paul continued there 18 months, "*teaching the word of God among them*" (18:11).



Shops The northern agora may date to the 1st century A.D. It had 40 units which served as shops or commercial offices.

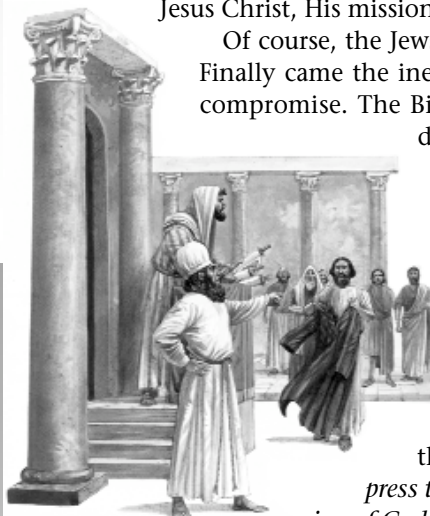


Ancient Agora (marketplace)



Corinth being an important commercial center, there was likely a large Jewish synagogue there. Paul, following his usual custom, went first to speak in the synagogue, where he wasted no time proclaiming his message about Jesus Christ, His mission, and His coming Kingdom.

Of course, the Jews were not pleased with Paul's enthusiasm. Finally came the inevitable uprising against him. Paul did not compromise. The Bible says he "*shook his raiment,*" a visible demonstration of what Jesus meant when He said to impenitent, hardhearted Pharisees: "*You will die in your sins*" (John 8:24).



Silas and Timothy Arrive

No doubt the arrival of Silas and Timothy gave Paul much-needed support. As a result, Paul threw himself with even greater zeal into preaching. He was single-minded for Christ. As he wrote to the Philippians later, "*This one thing I do...I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*" (Phil. 3:14).

6. Who listened as Paul preached in the synagogue? (18:4) _____

7. Who came shortly from Macedonia to join Paul? (18:5) _____

8. When the Jews in the synagogue opposed him, where did Paul go to find an audience? (18:7) _____

Paul resolved from this point forward to spend his energy in behalf of Gentiles who were willing to be taught.

Paul's podium was waiting—and right next door to the synagogue! Here a Roman named Titius Justus was ready to open his house to the missionary. (Some scholars have suggested that this may be the Roman name of Gaius, possibly the "*Gaius, mine host*" that Paul greeted in Romans 16:23 and one of the few Corinthians he personally baptized. See 1 Cor. 1:14.)

Paul, Silas and Timothy were not the only ones to leave the synagogue when the Jews wanted Paul out (18:8). Crispus, the chief elder of the synagogue, left also and "*believed on the Lord with all his house.*" He was also one of the few that Paul said he personally baptized (1 Cor. 1:14). The loss of their leader may have shaken other Jews to come next door to the meeting in the house of Justus. Luke tells us, "*Many of the Corinthians hearing believed and*

were baptized" (18:8). The zealous Apostle was well compensated for turning from his Jewish family to the more open-minded Gentiles.

Doubtless the move next door angered the Jews, but Paul was unstoppable. In one place or another, the Lord's work would go forward.

"Don't Be Afraid"

At the same time Paul's mission in the house next door to the synagogue may have appeared successful, Paul himself may have been struggling. Was he doing right? Was this what the Lord wanted him to do? Everywhere he had gone, the Jews had opposed him, often violently. And Paul was human. He did not like being falsely accused, imprisoned, beaten, and threatened, any more than any of us would.

9. At this critical point, how did the Lord come to the aid of His "chosen vessel"? (18:9-10) _____

Fears were natural, and Paul needed strengthening. Just think what this God-given vision meant to Paul at this moment: *"Don't be afraid! Speak out! Don't be silent! For I am with you, and no one will harm you because many people here in this city belong to me"* (18:9-10 NLT).

Paul did not have to worry about ill consequences of his preaching in Corinth. No one was going to drive Paul out, at least for the time being, because God wanted him there. No wonder he could write to the Romans later, in this same spirit: *"If God be for us, who can be against us!"* (Rom. 8:31).

What encouragement!

The result: Paul stayed in Corinth for the next eighteen months, searching out those who would listen, and teaching them the word of God (18:11).

When the Opposition Failed

 READ ACTS 18:12-17

Why did the Lord give Paul the extra encouragement to stay in Corinth? He knew Paul would have enemies who would attempt to drive him out.

The scheme was devious. About that time Rome appointed a new gover-

Bible Text: Acts 18:12-17

12 When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat,

13 saying, "This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law."

14 And when Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio said to the Jews, "If it were a matter of wrongdoing or wicked crimes, O Jews, there would be reason why I should bear with you."

15 But if it is a question of words and names and your own law, look to it yourselves; for I do not want to be a judge of such matters."

16 And he drove them from the judgment seat.

17 Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment seat. But Gallio took no notice of these things.



Insight

A New Scheme

The determined Jews would not let Paul alone. When the governor changed, they were ready for a new assault: new man, new opportunity.

And while the new governor was still getting used to his job, the Jews thought they could use him to end Paul's ministry in Corinth.

So one day when Paul was preaching, some Jews arrested him and dragged him to the judgment seat in the presence of Gallio, the new governor. Their charge: *"This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law"* (18:13).

It was a nicely dressed half-truth, carefully planned to set Gallio against Paul.

But Gallio was not to be taken off guard. He could see through their scheme instantly. *"I see no crime here,"* he said. *"And the problem has nothing to do with Roman laws. It's only a matter of interpreting Jewish laws and teachings. You take care of the matter yourselves. All of you out of here!"* And Paul was released.

What was the message to Paul? That God was indeed with him, that he did not need to be afraid. *"For I am with you, and no one will attack you to hurt you."*

God was true to His word. Always.

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Corinth Erastus inscription context:

Near the agora, an inscription was found that mentions a man named Erastus, who laid the pavement at his own expense. This inscription almost certainly refers to the Erastus who Paul described as the treasurer of the city in the Epistle to the Romans.

"Gaius, my host and the host of the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, and Quartus, a brother" (Romans 16:23 NKJV).

Erastus was also Paul's helper (Acts 19:22). Paul mentions him some years later as staying in Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20). Wouldn't we like to know more?



Did you know...

About Gallio

Gallio was well known as a just administrator, but after serving only a short time as proconsul (governor) of Achaia, he had to return to Rome, due to illness. His brother Seneca was a Stoic philosopher who provided guidance for the young Nero.

PHOTO COURTESY OF "BIBLE PLACES.COM"



Corinth bema (judgment seat):

The Roman tribunal where Paul was dragged before Gallio has been uncovered in the center of the agora at the site of ancient Corinth. This was the bema, where Roman officials would appear before the public.

From an inscription found at Delphi, historians are able to date Gallio's proconsulship to between 51 and 52 A.D. The inscription mentions riots in Achaia (Corinth was the capital of Achaia) and Gallio's name.

"When Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews with one accord rose up against Paul and brought him to the judgment seat, saying, 'This fellow persuades men to worship God contrary to the law'" (Acts 18:12–13).

nor of the area named Gallio. This gave the Corinthian Jews an idea. A new governor could take legal action against Paul and get rid of him. The innocent and unacquainted Gallio would be a perfect tool in their hands. They could pretty much set him up to make a logical decision—in their favor, and against Paul.

Wrong. The scheming Jews miscalculated badly. Gallio was nobody's fool, as they soon found out, nor was he to be taken off guard. And when the Jews banded together and dragged Paul before the governor as a malefactor, expecting the governor's support, they instead received his rebuke. Paul didn't even have to defend himself. For just as Paul was about to open his mouth, Gallio took the floor.

10. What was Gallio's statement to the Jews? (18:14–15) _____

11. What was Gallio's size-up of the Jews' issue with Paul? (18:15) _____

12. What action did Gallio take? (18:16) _____

13. Who ended up being the object of the Jews' furor at that time? (18:17) _____

When Gallio was appointed proconsul for Achaia, he was sent to Corinth, the capital of the Roman province of Achaia.

Mob rule was out of control, and Gallio determined to have nothing to do with it. By refusing to take up the case against Paul, Gallio actually helped Paul's cause. Had he accommodated the Jews by ruling against Paul, such a judgment would have been a great handicap to Paul. Gallio's verdict would be followed as a precedent by many Roman magistrates in the empire. ♦



Gulf of Corinth (looking south toward Corinth)

to be continued



Corinth Diolkos: (slipway)

Because of the distance around the Peloponnesus and rough seas at the southern tip, the ancients used a slipway called the Diolkos to drag light ships across from one gulf to the other. They would remove the cargo from the ship, drag the ship and cart the goods across the Isthmus, and reload the ship with the cargo on the other side. The cargo of larger ships was transferred to ships waiting on the other side. Part of this road, built in 600 B.C., is still visible on the western side of the isthmus.

Background of Corinth Canal

In the 6th century B.C., Periander first conceived of the idea to dig a canal through the isthmus to connect the Corinth and Saronic gulfs. The project failed, as did later attempts by Greek and Roman rulers, but a road called the Diolkos was constructed around this time.

Nero actually started operations on a canal in 66-67 A.D.; he made the first strike at the land using his golden pick. Work was conducted by Jewish prisoners, but was interrupted by an insurrection in Gaul. The project was abandoned when Nero died.

Corinth Canal Today (below)

From 1882 to 1893, the French School investigated these beginnings of a canal and cut their own canal across the Isthmus along Nero's route. This canal is too narrow for most of today's cargo or cruise ships.



Corinth Canal from the East



Corinth Canal viewed from the East



Corinth Canal west end viewed from the north



Did you know...

Corinth Isthmus from the north

The ancient city of Corinth was one of the major commercial centers of the ancient world, being perfectly situated at the narrowest part of the isthmus. The isthmus was a level piece of limestone four miles wide connecting mainland Greece with the southern peninsula (Peloponnesus). Corinth had a port on either side of the Isthmus—Lechaion on the Corinth gulf (to the west), and Cenchrea on the Saronic gulf (to the east).

During ancient times, the two ports were connected by a slipway called the Diolkos (see top left illustration). Today the Corinth Canal has replaced the slipway.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF "BIBLE PLACES.COM"

East end of Corinth Canal

Corinth Canal (4 miles long)

Acrocorinth

Corinth Excavations

West end Corinth Canal
(see larger view above)

Lechaion

Gulf of Corinth
Looking South

Corinth Isthmus panorama viewed from North:

Wonder Desert Beetle

The Stenocara beetle harvests water from fog

Imagine that you are in the desert. It hasn't rained for hundreds of years and you are desperate for water. What do you do? The *Stenocara* beetle manages this situation all the time!

The Namib desert in Africa is about the driest, hottest place on earth.

So hot that lizards have to dance from foot to foot to keep their feet from being scorched!

So hot that a scientist studying heat survival techniques photographed a locust that had been instantly fried when it landed on the sand. But in the same photograph, three dark-winged beetles were happily feeding on the carcass, completely unperturbed by the extreme heat. What was their secret? Their great Designer made those beetles with special heat-shock chemicals inside



Stilt-like legs of the *Stenocara* beetle minimize contact with the hot sand.

their bodies which allow them to endure the extreme heat without suffering heat exhaustion. Plus their almost spherical bodies, about two centimeters in diameter, are suspended on thin, stilt-like legs, which have minimal contact with the hot sand. Less contact, less heat.

What about the water problem? Even a beetle needs water to survive. Where does it find water in a desert where it hasn't rained in anyone's memory?

The only source of water in that hot desert is in an incredibly fine fog that

sweeps off the Atlantic about once a week, carried by high winds. At night, when the desert cools, some of the water in the fog will condense. This is just enough water to sustain the life of some types of insects.

Harvesting Fog

How does one harvest water from fog? The *Stenocara* beetle living in the Namib desert, survives, thanks to the special God-given equipment it carries on its back! Yes, this beetle knows just how to harvest water from fog!

Have you noticed how water condenses on the inside of the windows in your home, or in your car? The beetle uses a similar method of water gathering.

Scientist Andrew Parker took on the task of discovering the beetle's secret of survival.

Chemically testing a dead beetle, scientist Parker discovered that the beetle's back is composed of fused wing covers. These wing covers are made of bumps visible to the naked eye. But under an electron microscope each bump, no larger than a human hair, is seen to be made up of many tiny mountain ranges. The mountain peaks actually attract water. In between the peaks are waxy-coated val-

leys that repel water. "This made us realize that the beetles' unusual mountainous back wasn't just for decoration," says Parker. "And since wax repels water, we thought this structure must have something to do with collecting water."

Observing the beetles further, the scientist found that when the fog blows in, the beetles tilt their bodies into the fog-laden wind (Where did they learn to do this!). As the fog passes across the beetle's back, tiny droplets form on the peaks. Once the microscopic drops are large enough, they roll down into the waxy valleys, where they continue to grow in size. Eventually the droplets roll off the beetle's back into a tiny channel that directs the water right into the beetle's mouth, and Mr. Beetle gets a drink of water!

What fantastic stroke of evolution developed this wonder of interacting parts so the lowly beetle could drink in the desert?

Who but an All-Knowing Creator could design such an ideal apparatus, so that a fog that blows across the desert with gale speed several mornings a month could provide enough moisture for the beetle to live?

Shouldn't we exclaim with Job of old,

Scientist Andrew Parker took on the task to discover the beetles' secret of survival. He used an infrared camera to create thermal images of the beetles, to see if they had heat reflecting shells. His study was interrupted when he discovered a different structure sitting on top of the beetles' heat reflector—a special surface for collecting water from desert fog.



"I would seek God, and to God I would commit my cause—who does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things without number" (Job 5:8–9). Who but our Creator and Designer knows how to provide for all His living creatures? Can we not thank Him, and trust Him to provide for our needs now, and even to make us able to keep on living—forever! "This is the promise He has promised us—eternal life" (1 John 2:25).

The same great, all-wise Designer is holding the gift of eternal life for all His children who meet His standard of upright conduct. *"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14). ♦*

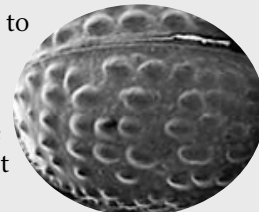


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THE BEETLE'S METHOD WINS!

By standard methods, a one meter square sheet of plastic in a desert environment collects about three liters of water per day. However, in a studio experiment which copied methods learned from the Stenocara beetle, a one meter square sheet of plastic collected three liters of water in just twenty-five minutes! The grooves in between repelled the water down to containers below the plastic.



Pretty impressive—but would it ever have been thought of if the Stenocara beetle hadn't been doing it first?

See http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/eurekatv/hightech_stenocarabeetle.shtml.

Human hands have already started to copy the Stenocara beetle—with great success. They have designed prototypes based on the beetle's water-collecting methods that have collected "several times more water than any conventional netting methods."

"Animals are master engineers, so we copy them," says scientist Parker.

We would like to rephrase that statement and say God is the Master Engineer, who has marvelously engineered intricate systems for the survival of His creatures. We should thank Him, as we copy His master works.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 25

MEET FAITHFUL ABRAHAM

1. Ur of the Chaldeans. (Gen. 11:31–12:1)
2. They settled for a period in Haran, and only continued their journey after the death of Terah, Abraham's father. (Gen. 11:31–32)
3. Abraham's original name was Abram. (Gen. 17:5)
4. Lot, Abraham's nephew, the son of his deceased brother Haran. (Gen. 12:5, see also Gen. 11:27–28)
5. Shechem. (Gen. 12:6–7)
6. He and his household went down into Egypt. (Gen. 12:10)
7. The land was unable to support the herds and flocks of both Abraham and Lot. (Gen. 13:5–11)
8. 1) *'I will make of you a great nation.'* 2) *'In you all families of the earth shall be blessed.'* 3) *'I will bless those who bless you and him who curses you I will curse.'* (Gen. 12:2–3) 4) *'All the land which you see [the land of Palestine] I will give to you and to your seed for ever.'*

PICTURE: Hagar bore Ishmael to Abraham. (Gen. 16:1–3 & 15)

- (Gen. 13:14–15) 5) *'I will make your seed as the dust of the earth.'* *'Look toward heaven and number the stars...so shall your seed be.'* (Gen. 13:16, Gen. 15:5)
9. Lot was living in Sodom when he was taken prisoner. To save him Abraham took a force of 318 of his own servants, together with those of three Amorite allies, and defeated the forces of the four kings of the East. (Gen. 14:12–16)
 10. Melchizedek met Abraham as he returned from the battle, and brought out to him bread and wine. (Gen. 14:18)
 11. God asked him to offer up his son Isaac as a sacrifice. (Gen. 22:1–2)
 12. Abraham was 86 years of age at the birth of Ishmael. (Gen. 16:16)
 13. *"Walk before me and be thou perfect."* (Gen. 17:1)
 14. Abraham was 100 years of age when Sarah bore to him his son Isaac. (Gen. 21:1–5)
 15. Abraham asked God not to destroy the

- city if even as few as ten righteous could be found there. (Gen. 18:20–33)
16. Sodom was destroyed by fire and brimstone. Lot and his two daughters were saved. (Gen. 19:24–25 & 30)

SERMON ON THE MOUNT

1. Matthew 5:1 to 7:29
2. c - *poor in spirit* (Matt. 5:3)
3. a - *peacemakers* (Matt. 5:9)
4. d - *merciful* (Matt. 5:7)
5. b - *meek* (Matt. 5:5)
6. a - *pure in heart* (Matt. 5:8)
7. d - *mourn* (Matt. 5:4)
8. d - *which are persecuted for righteousness' sake* (Matt. 5:10)
9. c - *which do hunger and thirst after righteousness* (Matt. 5:6)
10. c - *light* (Matt. 5:14)
11. c - *salt* (Matt. 5:13)
12. a - *glad* (Matt. 5:11–12)
13. d - *looks on* (Matt. 5:28)
14. c - *heaven* (Matt. 6:19–20)
15. b - *heart* (Matt. 6:21)

History of

Megiddo CHURCH



- ◆ Founded in 1880 by L. T. Nichols
- ◆ Located permanently in Rochester, New York, in 1904
- ◆ Incorporated: 1958

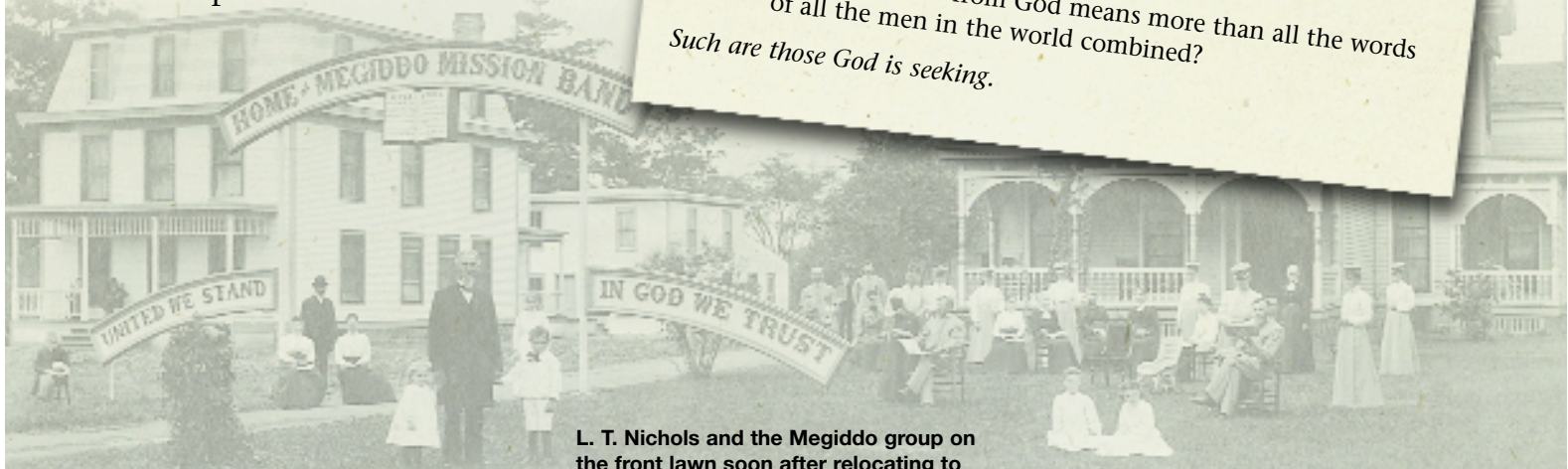
Where are those

who cannot be bought;
whose word is their bond;
who put character above wealth;
who put truth above popularity;
who put fact above opinion;
who are larger than their vocations;
who are honest in small things as in great things;
who make no compromise with error or wrong;
who sacrifice personal advantage for a cause they
believe in;

whose ambitions are not centered around their own selfish
desires;

who refuse to compromise "because everybody does it";
who are true to their commitments through good report
and evil report, in adversity as well as in prosperity;
who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning, and
hardheadedness are virtues;
who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for right even when
it is unpopular;
who can say "no" with emphasis although all the rest of the
world says "yes";
to whom one Word from God means more than all the words
of all the men in the world combined?

Such are those God is seeking.



L. T. Nichols and the Megiddo group on
the front lawn soon after relocating to
Rochester (about 1906)

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

- 1844:** Born in Elkhart, Indiana
- 1849:** Nichols family relocates to frontier state of Wisconsin, where life was rugged and difficult.
- 1854:** Young L. T. (age 10) attends Christmas party, where Santa Claus' false face falls off, revealing Deacon Graves—starts him questioning fundamentals of religious beliefs.
- 1855:** L. T. is carrying Bible to school, studies and talks to classmates during recess. Vows that he will never lie or steal, or take the name of God in vain, or use tobacco or alcoholic beverages
- 1864:** Is married to Harriet Griffis
- 1864:** Is drafted into the army only weeks after marriage; refuses to kill his fellowmen based on convictions of Bible teaching; when his life is threatened for his stand, he appeals to President Lincoln and is allowed to serve in the military hospital.
- 1865–1875:** Studies Bible intensely, seeking correct understanding of it
- 1869:** Debates publicly in Wrightstown, Wisconsin. Subject: The resurrection
- 1868–1874:** Settles in Fon du Lac, Wisconsin, circuit preacher for nearby towns
- 1870:** Debates publicly at Kasson, Minnesota. Subject: The Bible is all one harmonious teaching
- 1874:** Relocates to McMinnville, Oregon, for opportunity to preach; holds annual camp meetings for followers
- 1877:** Debates with Professor Campbell at Salem, Oregon. Subjects: Is man mortal or immortal by nature? Is the resurrection physical? Will there be a literal kingdom on earth? Maud Hembree (his successor-to-be) is converted.
- 1878:** Publicly debates at Salem, Oregon. Subject: Is the sabbath observance binding now?
- 1880:** Discovers cornerstone Bible teaching: that one's salvation depends on knowing and obeying every command of Scripture, as expounded by Jesus.
- 1882:** Travels east through Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio
- 1882:** Returns to Oregon
- 1883:** Leaves Oregon, travels to Texas, then settles in Ellington, Minnesota
- 1883–1900:** Serves several congregations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois as traveling circuit preacher
- 1887:** Holds public discussion in Owatonna, Minnesota. Subject: Is the Mosaic Law binding today?
- 1888:** Establishes church at Barry, Illinois, places church under the direction of Maud Hembree
- 1891:** Makes 6-month trip by ship to England and Wales in an effort to persuade Christadelphians of his convictions about the Bible and its teachings



CHAPTER 2: A CONFIDENCE BROKEN

When L. T. was only five years old the Nichols family loaded their wagons and headed West to the frontier state of Wisconsin. The dried bones of livestock, an occasional broken wagon and a mound of stones marking a grave were mute and stern reminders of the hazards of travel in the mid 1800's.

Little L. T.'s mother, Emmeline Dunbar Nichols, was an able leader and teacher in her own right. A Christian according to the Campbellite-Restorationist tradition, she diligently taught its principles to her children by song and story. L. T. was an eager student and had complete confidence in the lessons he received at home and in church, until....

It was Christmas Eve 1854 when L. T. was 10 years old. His mother instructed her children, "Hang up your stocking. Santa Claus is coming tonight, and he will leave you some presents."



**"Why Father! Old
Santa Claus is only
old Deacon Graves!"**

That evening the family went to the church where there would be a Christmas tree, the first L. T. had ever seen, and "Santa Claus was to come down the chimney. Papa told me so, Mama told me so, and I thought it was so if they

said so," he wrote as he recalled the experience in later years.

"We listened, and pretty soon we heard him coming down the chimney! Soon he crawled out, and we saw the pack on his back. We all saw him and he was really Santa Claus! An odd-looking fellow. He began jumping around, and pretty soon he stumbled and his false face dropped, and it was old Deacon Graves!"

Young L. T.'s confidence was betrayed. His parents, teacher, even the preacher had seriously taught him the Santa Claus fable. "Why Father! You're not teaching me the truth; old Santa Claus is only old Deacon Graves!" And then he thought further, "Why are these preachers teaching us lies!" When he went to the Bible, young L. T. could not find one reference about Santa Claus. It was all a lie!

Never again would he believe a religious teaching unless he could find proof in the Bible. This resolve remained with him the rest of his life.

From time to time a circuit rider (itinerant preacher) held services in the local school house. Before services began, the preacher would tuck his sermon in the large pulpit Bible. Then when the audience came in and were seated, he would spread his hands upward and in his lengthy prayer would say, "O Lord, send the Holy Spirit to enlighten thy servant, for he knoweth not what to say to this people." Young L. T. questioned to himself, "Was the minister being truthful? Was he honest?" The answer was not long in coming. One



Life on the Frontier

Emmeline Dunbar Nichols
(mother of L. T.)



L. T. Nichols

Hattie Griffis
L. T.'s school mate whom he married at age 19, and who was his lifelong companion.



Ella Nichols
L. T.'s youngest sister by 14 years. She later married Henry Skeels and both were staunch supporters of L. T.'s work.

day some mischievous boys slipped away with his sermon notes, and that day the last sentence of his prayer was literally and shamefully true—he indeed “knew not what to say to this people”!

L. T.'s mother taught him to respect the Bible and revere God. He was already beginning to search. And the more he studied, the more he saw errors being taught as truth, and the greater his commitment to the Bible grew. He noted their errors, and determined not to repeat them. At the age of 11 he made a solemn vow to God that he would never touch liquor or tobacco, never commit an immoral act, never be dishonest in any way, or mar his speech with profanity or obscenity.

Young Nichols did not hesitate to speak out against any teaching that he believed contradicted Bible teaching. In Leroy, Wisconsin, facing 27 ministers, he told them they were all on the wrong track; that the thoughts of man are vanity. “If we cannot read what we believe in the Bible, we should let it alone. The Lord means just what He says, and unless we keep His commandments, He will not save us. The moment you say, ‘You need not keep every commandment’, you need not keep any. If you open the way for one thought of man, you have let in the whole train of evils.”

Of course, they did not like to hear such words from a teenager. What did he know anyway! They tried to silence him. But no matter what the threat, he would not yield.

When L. T. was still in his teens, someone, observing his speaking ability and enthusiasm, offered him a salary of \$1500 dollars a year to fill a pulpit of a local church. Considering that a skilled laborer in 1860, such as a carpenter, earned little more than \$300 a year, the offer of a \$1500 salary would have been very appealing. His father, a sick man, was working for very low wages, his mother was earning a small income sewing shrouds for funerals, and his own wages were very low. But without hesitation, Nichols declined the offer.

Why? Because he saw that the hired servant must please those whose bread he eats, and he determined never to have his integrity shackled by money. Like the Apostle Paul, he would preach the gospel without charge (1 Cor. 9:18). Like the prophets of old he would remain free to speak the truth as he found it in the Word of God, whether they would hear or refuse to hear.

As L. T. approached manhood, his mother pleaded with him to be more orthodox. “Throw these ideas away and go to college and fit yourself to be somebody in this world.”

But young L. T. already had other goals. “No, Mother” he replied, “I would rather follow what God has to say.” He had observed that seekers after worldly riches and fame all go to one common place, the grave; they all would be laid to rest and forgotten. He was determined to do something better with his life.

A New Chapter

Harriett Griffis, attending school with Nichols, found the serious, studious L. T. amusing. As she observed his exemplary conduct and courage to stand for what he believed, her ridicule gave way to admiration and love, and on October 15, 1864, Harriett Griffis became the wife of her childhood schoolmate.

Nichols commented in later years that it took his last dollar “to tie the knot.” According to the custom of the day, a boy belonged to his father until age 21, to repay the parent in part for his childhood care. Since Nichols was married at age twenty, his small savings went to his father as a cash settlement for the remaining year of his minority.

Yet even though they were poor, young L. T. and his new bride had youth and health, and looked forward eagerly to a long and happy life together.

But a dark cloud was on the horizon that would severely test Nichols' faith. ♦

to be continued



When Abraham's wife Sarah remained childless, she gave Abraham her maidservant, so that he might have a child through her. What was the name of this maidservant and what was the name of her son?


MEET FAITHFUL ABRAHAM

1. Which town and country were Abraham and his wife first called to leave?
2. Where did they settle temporarily on their journey, and what happened there?
3. What was Abraham's name before it was changed by God?
4. A third member of Abraham's and Sarah's family accompanied them into Canaan. Who was he, and what was his relationship to Abraham?
5. Where did Abraham build his first altar to the Lord?
6. Abraham soon encountered a famine in the land. What action did he take to survive?
7. Why did Abraham and Lot separate?
8. God made several "exceeding great and precious promises" to Abraham. Can you name three of them?
9. Lot was taken prisoner by a confederation of four kings from the east. Where was Lot living when he was captured, and what did Abraham do in response?
10. Who met Abraham on his return? What was his name, what special office did he hold, and what did he give to Abraham?
11. God's great test of Abraham's character and faith had reference to his son. What did God ask Abraham to do?
12. How old was Abraham when this son was born?
13. When Abraham was 99 years of age God made His covenant with him. What command did God give to Abraham at this time?
14. How old was Abraham when the son promised to him by God was born to Sarah? What was the name of this son?
15. When God told Abraham that he was about to destroy Sodom because of its wickedness, what was Abraham's response?
16. In what way was Sodom destroyed? Who were saved from its destruction?

FROM THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

1. The Sermon on the Mount can be found in which book?
2. "Blessed are the _____: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - a. meek
 - b. merciful
 - c. poor in spirit
 - d. pure in heart
3. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall be called the children of God."
 - a. peacemakers
 - b. merciful
 - c. meek
 - d. pure in heart
4. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall obtain mercy."
 - a. meek
 - b. peacemakers
 - c. poor in spirit
 - d. merciful
5. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall inherit the earth."
 - a. pure in heart
 - b. meek
 - c. merciful
 - d. peacemakers
6. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall see God."
 - a. pure in heart
 - b. poor in spirit
 - c. merciful
 - d. peacemakers
7. "Blessed are they _____: for they shall be comforted."
 - a. which do hunger and thirst after righteousness
 - b. which are persecuted for righteousness' sake
 - c. that weep
 - d. that mourn
8. "Blessed are they _____: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
 - a. which do hunger and thirst after righteousness
 - b. that mourn
 - c. that weep
 - d. which are persecuted for righteousness' sake
9. "Blessed are they _____: for they shall be filled."
 - a. that mourn
 - b. that weep
 - c. which do hunger and thirst after righteousness
 - d. which are persecuted for righteousness' sake
10. "Ye are the _____ of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid."
 - a. hope
 - b. joy
 - c. light
 - d. blessed
11. "Ye are the _____ of the earth."
 - a. strength
 - b. pepper
 - c. salt
 - d. foundation
12. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding _____: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."
 - a. glad
 - b. self-satisfied
 - c. joyful
 - d. none of the above
13. Christ speaking on the law of adultery said: "But I say unto you, That whosoever _____ a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
 - a. seeks
 - b. gazes at
 - c. observes
 - d. looks on
14. Where should we lay up our treasures?
 - a. in a bank
 - b. in our house
 - c. in heaven
 - d. in a safe place
15. "For where your treasure is, there will your _____ be also."
 - a. mind
 - b. heart
 - c. faith
 - d. trust

answers on page 21



*A freshly grafted
young and eager branch,
restless,
trying a new life,
yet striving to be
what I dreamed
I might have been had not
the graft been made;
striving to be myself,
or someone great—*

*I felt the pruning shears
And gone was what I
longed for most!
O how I prayed
that I might be free to
grow and bloom
on my own.*

*Yet wisely, Lord,
You denied me the freedom
to become
what I might have been—
a tumbleweed
or a piece of kindling.*

*I am the true vine,
and My Father is the vinedresser.
Every branch in Me that does
not bear fruit He takes away;
and every branch that bears fruit
He prunes, that it may
bear more fruit. —John 15:1*

A gloomy face or a chilling look are out of character for a Christian's face.

It pays to keep your feet on the ground, but keep them moving.

God still speaks to those who take the time to listen.

To forgive heals the wound, to forget heals the scar. May each sun find us with something accomplished by way of moral growth. We may not be able to leave for others a heritage of wealth or fame, but we can leave a shining example of character worthy of emulation.

*Forgiveness is a funny thing.
It warms the heart and cools the sting.*

Falling down doesn't make you a failure, but staying down does.

The greatest power for good is the power of example.

When you have been wronged, a poor memory is your best response.

*Getters generally don't get happiness; givers get it.
They simply give to others a bit of themselves:*

*A thoughtful act,
A helpful idea,
A word of appreciation,
A lift over a rough spot,
A sense of understanding,
A timely suggestion.*

But oh, how much happiness that giving brings!

Happiness is an inside job.

You can't have a better tomorrow if you are thinking all the time about yesterday.



The Lord didn't burden us with work. He blessed us with it.

Most of us pray for more things than we are willing to work for.

Problems should be more than faced; they should be attacked.

No one who is thoroughly occupied has ever been known to be miserable.

Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.

Greatness is not found in possessions, power, position, or prestige.

Conversation is an exercise of the mind, but gossiping is merely an exercise of the tongue.



I Need You, Lord

*All through today, help me be
Quick to praise, slow to criticize;
Quick to forgive, and slow to condemn;*

*Grant that I may maintain all through today
Complete control over my temper,
that I may do nothing I will later regret;
Complete control over my tongue,
that I may speak no hasty word;
Complete control over my thoughts
that I harbor none which will dishonor You.*

*Give me today
Strength to conquer every temptation which comes to me;
Strength to do every task which is assigned me;
Strength to shoulder every responsibility which is laid upon me;*

*Give me
Wisdom to know when to speak, and when to keep silent;
Wisdom to know when to act, and when to refrain from action;*

*Don't let me let myself down today, Lord.
Let me not hurt or disappoint those who have confidence in me.
I want to make everything I do fit for You to see,
and everything I say fit for You to hear.
Let me never forget the hope You have set before me.
I need You, Lord. Amen.*