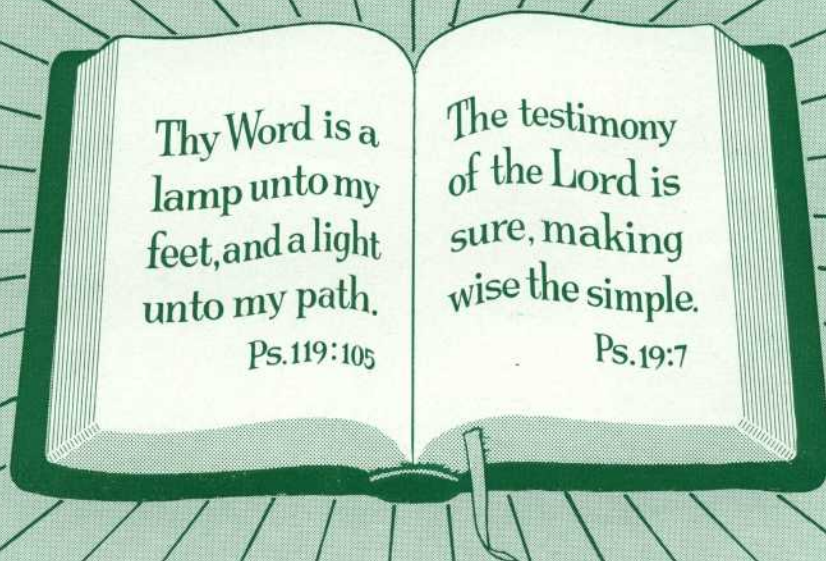


Megiddo Message

DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF CHRIST



Swallowed Up In Victory
Christ's Birth, Resurrection, Return
Drugs
The Sabbath

Megiddo Message

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A religious magazine, devoted to the cause of Christ and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. The MEGIDDO MESSAGE will

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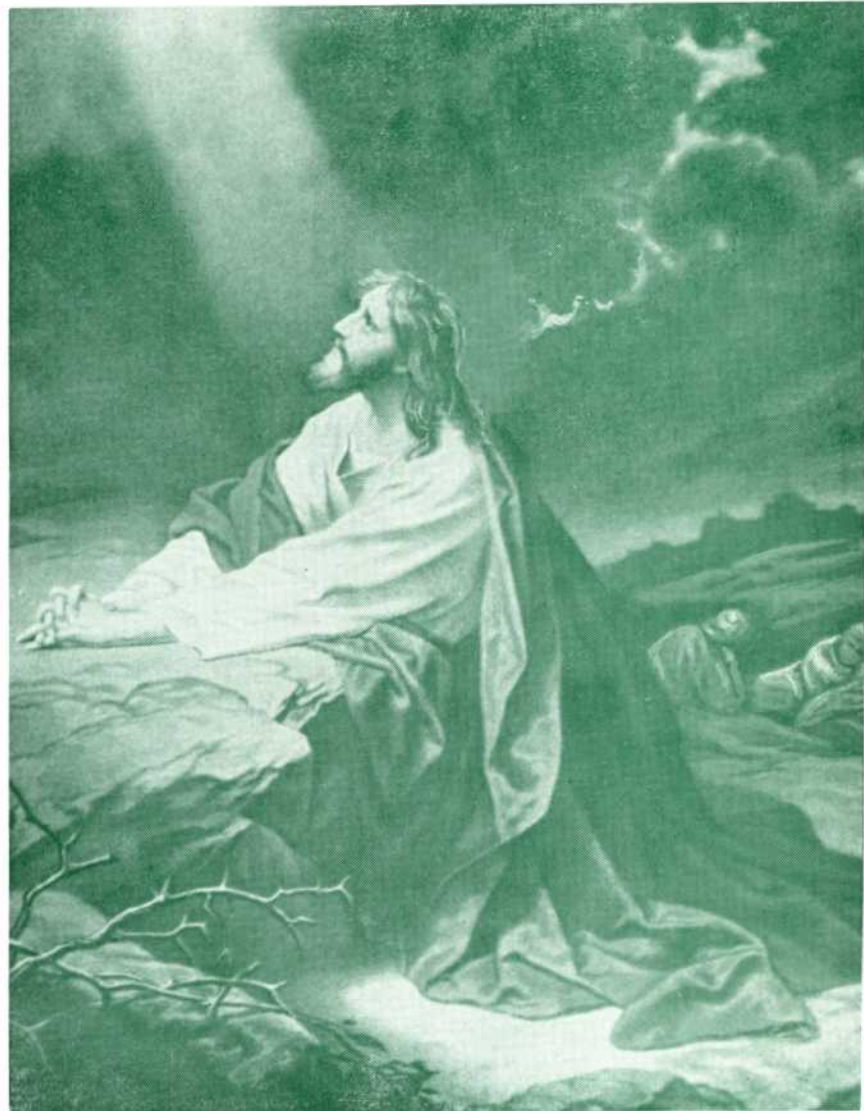
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Jesus Praying

He sought the mountain and the loneliest height,
For He would meet His Father alone,
And there, with many a tear and many a groan,
He strove in prayer throughout the long, long night.
Thy will be done.
No greater words than these
Can pass from human lips, than these
Which rent their way through agony and sweat
And broke the silence of Gethsemane
And finished His great work.

Commemorating the glorious and triumphant day of Christ's resurrection, when death was . . .

Swallowed Up In Victory!

PRAYER

O God, thou mighty Being who hast brought us to this holy morning, when we renew the memory of our Saviour's resurrection, fill our hearts with the same adoration and rejoicing that the disciples experienced on the first Resurrection morning. May nothing disturb the beauty and glory of this day; help us to keep our vision clear, our insight true, our communion with Thee pure and lovely.

O Thou who didst make the stars, and who can turn the shadow of death into the morning, we praise Thee for the resurrection of Jesus, for the certainty of His victory over pain and death. He broke the dark bars of the grave and now He lives for evermore. He is seated with Thee in Thy throne and assures all overcomers that they too will sit with Him in His throne when He reigns as King.

Give us the faith to know that every truth that is trampled down by evil, and every Christian ideal that seems to be buried in darkness will rise again. We know that right will one day prevail over wrong, and life will overcome death.

We bless and thank Thee for the helpful things Thou hast done and art doing for us. We praise Thee for the insight that we have into Thy great plan for the earth and mankind.

Awaken our minds to the glory of Jesus' resurrection. And as He conquered the shadows of the tomb, so may we overcome the evils that keep our lives from being what they ought to be. Attune our hearts to songs of victory, that we may one day be in the company of those who live with Thee in eternal joy. Inspire us to give words of encouragement, words of comfort, words of warning, helpful words, words that will build faith. And help us always to live the life that will please Thee and fit us for perpetuation in Thy eternal Kingdom.

Bless and preserve all who are striving for perfection of character, and give us strength to continue steadfast to the end, that we may share with our resurrected Lord and the good of all ages, life in the world to come. Amen.

DISCOURSE

Death is an enemy—dark, deep, determined, despicable. With imperious disdain for feelings or fears, he forces his way into our homes, having no respect for age or station in life. Few homes have escaped his terror thus far, and those for the time being only. Sooner or later death comes into the experience of all. The sleep of death terminates all human anxiety, all pain, suffering and remorse; nevertheless, to those who remain behind, death is still an enemy.

But for the committed believer in Christ, death has lost its terrors. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:55—57). The sting of death was removed with the resurrection of Christ!

The disciples of our Lord knew the defeat of death. They had felt the joy of love and fellowship with their Lord and Master. They had heard His call beside the sea, in the little villages of Galilee, at the counting table, in the open fields by day and in some home by night. They had left all to follow Him, gladly, wholeheartedly, and unreservedly. For was He not the Messiah for whom their fathers had waited long?

He came proclaiming the Kingdom of God to men; they—His apostles—were to be foremost in that Kingdom. And then—Gethsemane, the palace of Caiaphas, the judgment seat of Pilate, the dreadful cry of the mob "Crucify him," Golgotha and Joseph's tomb—the horror of these events struck with impact unmeasurable and left them reeling and writhing with pain of heart. They had believed, they had trusted, they had hoped that it should have been He who would restore the kingdom again to Israel. But He was dead. And death in their small, uncomprehending, unilluminated interpretation, meant defeat undefeatable. Their hero, their Master, their King was gone.

Perhaps Mary of Magdala more than many others regarded His death as defeat. He had brought great deliverance to her, and she devotedly ministered to His needs as He helped others. But now He was dead. With others she watched the Roman soldiers remove the body of Christ from the cross. During the last minutes of the day she helped in the hasty burial preparations. Wrapping the body in linen with what spices could be quickly procured, she gave the last tender touch. And until the silver trumpets in the temple area announced the beginning of a new day she kept vigil. For Jerusalem's citizens it was to be a festal day, the beginning of the Passover. But to Mary it meant only darkness and blackness and death. With aching heart she watched the rolling of the huge rock to the entrance of the tomb. Then there was the slow, heart-crushing retreat from the tomb. Mary of Magdala knew defeat in its blackest, deepest, bitterest depths.

As the morrow after the Sabbath drew near, Mary anticipated the dawn by hastening to the garden to give one last gesture of appreciation. At least she could bring some spices and weep anew at the tomb. The spreading light of the dawn brought no reflection to her darkened spirit. Not only was He dead, but the tomb was empty. His body was gone. What could she do?

In her anguish she stooped to peer into the open sepulcher. Two strangers were there, who inquired sympathetically, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Her words reflected her dismay: "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him." Then she was conscious that someone came near. Surely it was the keeper of the garden, and who would know better than he where they had taken the body of her Lord. "Tell me where you have laid Him," she cried, "and I will take Him away."

Through her tears and tragedy there pierced a single word: "Mary!" She was startled from her sorrow and stabbed awake in spirit by the echo of her name. It could not be—it simply could not be—but it was! It was He—the Lord Jesus Himself! He was not dead, He was alive! Death had been swallowed up in life!

Newness of Life and Spirit

Do we know the full significance of that empty tomb? Have we felt the glorious implications of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? How thrilling and challenging are the words of Paul: "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should

walk in newness of life" and "serve in newness of spirit" (Rom. 6:4; 7:6).

Evidently very few people even in Paul's day really understood the internal transformation involved in those words: "newness of life" for the daily walk and "newness of spirit" for daily service. The Apostle begins each passage relating to it with the query "Know ye not?" (Rom. 6:3; 7:1).

Since the Holy Spirit of God moved Paul to emphasize the subject, let us be sure we do not miss its potential. We must know just what this "newness of life" really is and why it is of first importance to every Christian. We must also know how we may create it in our own practical daily experience.

Indeed, this last consideration cannot be over-emphasized, for "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17). This new creation is not a matter reserved for the future; it is vital, imperative potential for the present.

We should notice first of all that both Romans 6:4 and 7:6 assert obligation: we should walk, we should serve. But this is not the "should" of burdensome responsibility. It is instead, as several of the modern translations correctly indicate, the glorious "may" of privilege. The resurrection is the divine guarantee that newness of life and service await us in direct proportion to our appropriating faith. "As Christ was raised from the dead in the splendour of the Father, so also we might set our feet upon the new path of life" (NEB).

What Is New Life?

Newness of life, in its essence, consists of that willingness and constancy of application by which we can live the very life of Jesus Christ. It means replacing our selfish, difficult dispositions with the very mind and disposition of the Lord Jesus Himself.

It is the practical achievement of moment-by-moment victory over our tongues, our tempers and our thoughts, producing the fruit of the Spirit in our daily lives. "For if we have grown into him by a death like his, we shall grow into him by a resurrection like his" (Rom. 6:5, Moffatt Bible).

It is the actual death to self demanded by our Lord as the basis of true discipleship, that death to sin asserted by Paul in Romans 6:10 to have been symbolized at the cross, that death by which we can identify ourselves with the Saviour and His self-sacrificing life. It is the magnificent paradox of Gal. 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me"; and Romans 12:1: "that ye present your bodies a liv-

ing sacrifice"; and II Cor. 6: 9: "as dying, and behold, we live."

Newness of spirit for service is that glorious difference between the reluctant attempt of the flesh to comply with the stern demands of the law of God, and the glad, eager desire of the re-made man to do God's will.

Every true Christian is to be a constant witness for Christ, even as our Lord Himself said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me . . . unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8). But the witnessing involved is not merely of the lips. The testimony of our everyday living is of greater importance, for "what you are speaks so loud that the world can't hear what you say."

If we would give the Word of life to others we must be very sure that *our* lives are living testimonials to the reality and effectiveness of the gospel we preach. True to the sequence of Paul's words in Romans 6 and 7, newness of life for our walk (our life, our conduct, our character) must precede newness of spirit for service (to others).

New Life—Applied

It is of fundamental importance that we apply this newness of life to our own daily experience, and that we obediently follow the path Christ has marked out.

Let us notice the words just preceding our basic text in Romans 6: "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father . . ." (verse 4). Before He could be raised He had to *die*—to lay down, by His own choice, His everyday living, the doing of the things He naturally would have done, surrendering wholly to the will of His Father (a surrender that terminated with His death on the cross), until He had developed that perfect, unspotted life which fitted Him for a place at His Father's right hand and prepared Him to ultimately become King of the whole earth. His spotless life and fearless denunciation of evil brought Him into such disrepute with the people of His time that they crucified Him. But God was displeased with their cruel act and raised Him again from the dead.

Today we observe the anniversary of the very day when He arose from death's slumber (the morning of the 15th of Abib, this year April 10). Henceforth He is alive, by His own statement (Rev. 1:18), "unto the ages of the ages."

Now to be born from above into life eternal when Christ returns to reward us according to our works, we must now be identified with Him in that death to sin: "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be

destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6). "For ye died" (Col. 3:3, ASV). God declares this as an accomplished fact, on the reality of which we are commanded to "reckon" (Rom. 6:11). Having thus been declared by God Himself to have shared our Lord's death to sin through dying with Him, thereby separating ourselves completely with our former life, we are likewise also sharers in His triumphant resurrection life.

The ultimate realization of resurrected life will be the putting on of incorruption and immortality at our Lord's return; but the newness of life which Paul describes must be our practical, daily experience even now. Who would not gladly exchange the discouraging failure and distressing ineffectiveness of our too-usual spiritual weakness for the thrilling achievements and victories in service which can be ours in Christ!

Let us look again, then, into that empty tomb. Our personal participation in the victory of that empty tomb depends upon our obedience to the direct appeals to our faith, appeals which are the logical result of the great premise set forth in Romans 6:3—10.

Life By Death

Let us examine these verses in detail. Paul is setting forth one subject: the death of the old life and the development of the new. In verse 3 he introduces the thought that we are baptized into Christ's death. This claim he regards as self-evident, and then follows the conclusion of the thought: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death." *We* have died—Christ through a lifelong sacrifice which climaxed in His literal crucifixion, we emblematically through likewise dying to sin. The decisive character of Paul's simile illustrates the decisiveness of the separation between the old life and the new.

In this manner Paul set the discussion in a moral framework. By our self-identification with Christ in His death, we have decisively passed out of the old world where the law of sin held us in its grip; we have died, so should be beyond its power and sway.

The next step in Paul's argument is a reaffirmation of the fact of the resurrection of Christ. To Paul, Christ's resurrection is not merely a historical incident; it is a decisive manifestation of God's power: Christ was raised from the dead "by the glory of the Father" (v. 4).

The early Church saw in new life beyond death the most striking of all disclosures of the splendor of God's power. Resurrected life was a wonder which only God could produce.

Moreover, we are reminded that Paul was never tempted to minimize the significance of the great events of Christ's life. Christ was Paul's champion. Christ's struggle was his struggle. Christ's sacrifice was his sacrifice. Christ's death was his death. Christ's life was his life. Paul never took Christ for granted. To him, Christ was a continual source of inspiration and wonderment.

"In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself"; and when Paul affirmed that Christ rose, he never suggested either that this was what we might expect in the case of so exalted a character, or that it merely symbolized the spark of the divine which so many people believe to be in every man. He saw the resurrection as a revelation of the power of God, and he believed that it ought to be "marvelous in our eyes." He also believed that it should have a direct bearing on our life from day to day. Because of it we should arise and "live an entirely new life" (Rom. 6:4; Weymouth Trans.).

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The Effort of Walking

Here is the keynote of Paul's discussion. The purpose of the process is that "we too might walk in newness of life" (RSV). "Too"—you will notice. The new life is one which we share with Him who also rose. Here is intimacy of our union with Christ, a union so close and so real as to affect our whole life pattern, as Paul shows even more clearly in subsequent verses. Our fellowship means the moral adventure of living a new kind of life. No apostolic writer would have questioned that it was a high adventure, nor would any have thought of it as an adventure on which we had embarked alone. We walk *with* Christ; we follow in His footsteps (I Pet. 2:21).

Even the verb Paul uses is admirably chosen to make clear the nature of our undertaking. To *walk* requires *effort*. It is also a means of proceeding from one point to another, and it presupposes that we have a goal before us. It is neither *effortless* nor *pointless*. It requires voluntary exertion, and it is something that we must do for ourselves.

We are reminded that Christianity is "a way of walking, not a way of talking." We should "walk in newness of life." No phrase could more fittingly express the exhilarating wonder of "living by dying." By walking in newness of life we leave behind the old world of disheartening ineffectiveness. Instead of our shabby record of repeated failure, we can begin to discover for ourselves the meaning of true success.

Let us also note a parallel between the glory of the Father, which is the effective cause of our resurrection (as it was of Christ's), and the newness of life in which we are to walk. See how God displays the wonders of His grace. The new life is a life that has been touched with a reflection of the glory of the Father, that same splendor that brought about the resurrection of Christ. The new life is radically different from the old. So definite was the break that a man had to tear himself up by the roots. So complete was the change that it meant nothing less than beginning life all over again. Contrast is the decisive thing, and it can be illustrated in a number of ways; but among them will certainly be the glory of the new as opposed to the gloom of the old.

"Yield Yourselves"

We are to "reckon" ourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God—by faith, since God has declared it so (verse 11). We are to refuse sin's dominion in our bodies, in any of its appeals to the lusts of

(Continued on page 26)

Thirsting for God

Suppose we could strip our religion right down to its barest essentials—what would we find?

I don't mean to ask, What is the barest minimum of belief, or can we sum up in a short sentence the heart of the Christian faith. I mean the motive, the impulse, the drive in a man's soul which underlies and produces a life of faith.

A very religious man once wrote about people who were "patrons of religion rather than religious men and women." What we want to think about is that basic quality of soul which distinguishes the genuinely religious person from the mere *patron* of religion. What is it? What is the very essence of personal religion?

The forty-second psalm is one of those intensely personal portions of Scripture which, so to speak, X-rays the soul of man and shows what is at its center. It pictures the soul whose religion is genuine.

The Psalmist begins by word-painting a picture from the world of nature—a world which has become very real to him. He depicts a deer standing alone among the rocks in the uninhabited wilderness. It is the dry season. The ravines are arid, and the springs are waterless. The deer stands there, apprehensive, its eyes full of fear, its tongue parched with thirst. And it pants desperately for water, for it knows that in water is life.

That, says the Psalmist, is a picture of his life now. *That*, he cries out, is the condition of his soul.

"As a hart longs for flowing streams, so longs my soul for thee, O God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."

"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." That is the cry of the Psalmist when his personal faith has been stripped right down to its barest essentials. Gone are the trappings of religion. Gone is the familiar pattern for the practice of religion. Gone is everything which is merely on the surface. Only the soul's thirst remains. "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God."

So easily do we become content with a religion which is merely on the surface! We tend to think that it is really not necessary to get under the rind to get the fullest goodness out of our religion. Modern man seems to prefer this unsatisfying type of religion, which is mainly a matter of outward and obvious forms and observances.

The exterior religion may be quite pleasant to you, if you happen to have a taste for that sort of thing.

To go through the motions of religion more or less regularly is not too disturbing to the even tenor of life. It is not too upsetting to have to make a few pious gestures from time to time. It is not too costly, in terms of time and effort and money, to practice the religion of the surface quite successfully.

But how durable is surface faith? Will it stand up in the storms of life? What remains when the trappings are torn off and faith is stripped right to its essentials: a soul thirsting for the living God, or a complete blank?

"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." That indicates the fundamental difference between deep and genuine faith and the shallow surface faith. That is the ground and source of personal religion. That is the heart of living faith!

If our heart thirsts for God, there will be a marked difference between our former life and our new life in Christ. Those about us will know it; we will live every day so that all will know what our religion is without our advertising it by word of mouth.

It is so easy to allow the things of God to become secondary. With each passing day we should become more deeply concerned with these spiritual things. Our longing for that "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which He offers will be so intense that it will be the theme of our conversation and the paramount subject in our thoughts. We will not be so filled with enthusiasm over business or some temporal proposition that a volume of words will flow from our lips and then remain inarticulate when weightier matters of God are mentioned. Nor will our speech be punctuated with jesting and joking or the telling of stories not edifying. The slang of the day which is so prevalent in almost every strata of society will be noticeably lacking. And of that evil so common to all humanity, we will remind ourselves, "Anger resteth in the bosom of fools." We will not allow ourselves to become complacent with the evil around us, but do all within our power to avoid witnessing the degrading sights of a world grown brazenly corrupt.

I know that it is not easy to examine our own personal religion. Our motives and intentions and practices are so mixed that it is not inappropriate to use the word "homogenized" to describe our personal religion. Nevertheless, we all should make an earnest effort to probe into the ground and source of our personal faith. Don't take your religion for granted. Examine it. Test it. Take it apart. Overhaul it as it needs overhauling.

"My soul thirsts for God, for the living God." I trust that we will momentarily examine ourselves until we can sing these words as we prepare to greet our Lord at His return. ● ●

Christ

HIS BIRTH

"We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth."

IN OUR troubled world of today, some six hundred million persons of more than two hundred major denominations and innumerable sects profess allegiance to Jesus Christ.

It is certain that there is a sound historical basis for Christianity. A writer of note has truly said, "I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has that one solitary life."

Yet in spite of these realities, familiarity with His life and teachings convinces us that amid the vast confusion of so-called Christian sects, and the world-wide lip-service paid to His name, the real, the historic Jesus Christ has been lost. Lost, because His nature and personality are invariably misrepresented; lost, because His mission is misunderstood; lost, because His moral and prophetic teachings are everywhere rejected; lost, because creedal differences and racial and political hatreds make a mockery of Him who said, "I and my Father are one," and who prayed of His followers, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."

Certain it is that this is not the Christian era. If we ever discover the real Jesus Christ, it will not be in a religious world which has become a veritable Tower of Babel, but in the sacred Volume which reveals all we know of His life and work and the meaning of it all—the Bible.

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise."

It is no doubt true that we could work out our salvation with no knowledge of the circumstances of the beginning of the Incomparable Life. Yet we

are thankful that these circumstances are a matter of revelation and record. God does not deprive us of beauty—He floods us, surrounds us with it—and the age-old story of the Nativity adds a beauty and sweetness to the Gospel without which we should feel infinitely poorer.

Christ's birth was not that of a God made flesh—the primary point on which nominal Christianity diverges from the truth of the Scriptures—but of a human child, miraculously conceived but completely man, to be proved and tempted in all points like His brethren. Of His family we know little. His mother was mistress of the first Christian home and gave us the first Christian song. The references in Scripture all point to a woman of soul purity, of lowly obedience, of simple faith. Fittingly the discerning God chose her to be the mother of His Son, although He never once commanded or sanctioned the superstitious worship which is paid to her by so large a portion of the "Church Universal."

The familiar, ever-lovely story of angels, shepherds, and manger, need not be repeated here. For, after all, it was but a necessary beginning. Had the Holy Child never progressed beyond His holy childhood, His life would have been wasted. Infancy can be a tender and beautiful thing, but character is developed and tested in the sterner years of manhood.

Of His early life nothing is known, except for the well-known incident of the Passover visit to Jerusalem at the age of twelve. It can only be supposed that He was subjected to the natural influences of a religious and morally superior Jewish family of the time, of synagogue and school, of a village at once quiet and yet close to the thronging traffic on one of the great thoroughfares of that age; and finally of the work of a carpenter, for such He was, until fully prepared for His public ministry.

SURRECTION RETURN

"Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age."

It is not the purpose in this article to review in detail the earthly ministry of our Lord. That has been done many, many times, and still we turn to the Gospels for the story at its best. Regarding the purpose of His earthly mission, so-called Christianity has made the second of its basic errors. Contrary to popular belief, He was not sent to cancel an ancient and unjust debt by the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of the whole world, but His purpose was to work out His own salvation and to teach His people a way of salvation and leave a perfect example of life. Nor did He seek to establish a purely spiritual kingdom which was to spread and grow in the hearts of men until the angels' song should be fulfilled. The Kingdom of Heaven, which was the central theme of His preaching, was to be literal, tangible—and far future. It was "at hand" in the person of its King, but far off in point of its actual establishment.

This was not what the Jewish nation of His day wanted, any more than the Gentile world wants it today. When their dreams of temporal restoration were shattered, the high moral tone of His teaching and His constant and insistent demand for absolute honesty, sincerity and purity, had no attraction for the masses, and His following melted away. His Messianic claims, together with His disregard for the forms and taboos which encrusted the national religion, gained Him the active enmity of the leaders and led to His tragic death on the cross.

From the beginning it is clear that Jesus conceived of His work, not as that of a rabbi, nor even as that of a prophet, but as nothing less than the Messiah foreshadowed and promised to the people of God in the Old Testament Scriptures. When the high priest challenged Him under oath to confess

His kingly claims, though He had been silent against all the fabricated charges of His trial, against this challenge—fundamental and essential as it was—He could not hold His peace, and His admission of the claims was His own death warrant.

The final act in the great drama of this wonderful life was carried out at a place outside Jerusalem, called Golgotha, or Calvary. Here Jesus, the sacrifice of His own will perfected, was crucified between two outlaws; and before the sun set on that day of infamy His tortured body was laid in the rock-hewn sepulcher of Joseph the Councillor, and with it all the hopes of the little band who had best understood His teachings and followed Him from Capernaum to Gethsemane. This was—for them—the deepest of despair.

"Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen."

The Resurrection is one of the facts which history will not down. After reviewing the evidence dispassionately, disbelief in the miracle would seem far more difficult than belief. No plausible explanation of the facts—of the empty tomb; of the reports and convictions of the disciples, who claimed to have seen and talked with Jesus in human form, especially of the case of Paul; of the change in their feelings and the revival of the work begun by the Teacher; of the consequent foundation of the Christian Church—has ever been given except that of the record: that after His death Jesus entered by physical resurrection and later ascension upon a new course of life and a new course of activity. Without the resurrection as well as the life and death of Jesus, true historical Christianity could never have come into existence; by it He became the Founder of the Church and the dominating personality of the ages.

As the rays of the sun that first Resurrection changed night into day, for those who would believe, the Resurrection turned darkness into everlasting light. It can be said that Hope itself was nailed to the cross, buried, and Hope rose again, to spring eternal in the hearts of men. God is not and never has been a God of the dead, but of the living. The miracle of that far-off morning is our assurance that death, inevitable as it is, need not be the end; that if we share our Example's death to sin, "we shall grow into him by a resurrection like his."

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Of His final Judean ministry, an encyclopedia tells under the caption, *Closing Period*. How little man knows! It is true that, even to His closest followers, that last journey to Jerusalem was apparently the beginning of the end; in the perspective of history we see that this dramatic chapter, culminating in the Ascension, was the end of the beginning. For at this point the preliminary phase gives way to reality, when in the presence of His Father He receives His crown of immortal life and glory. His self-mastery complete, His worth proved, He enters into His reward, which means not eternal rest but a mightier work to do. His kingly training now begins in earnest, under immortal instructors. "As I also overcame," He said in His last message to men, "and am set down with my Father in His throne."

What a schoolroom! What would we give to know the details of the schooling He has enjoyed these nearly two thousand years? What would we give for a glimpse of the glory which surrounds Him as He studies in some far-off, unknown, heavenly world?

We cannot know, we cannot even surmise or imagine; yet we shall know, if faithful to Him, some glad day, by and by. For both the knowledge and the glory will come to earth, borne by the returning King, to be shared with all who have made themselves worthy. Our hope, and the hope of the world, is in Christ alone: not a shadowy, sorrowful, sentimental figure out of the past, nor yet a sacrificed divinity, but the real Christ, the glorified Christ, the returning Saviour and King.

It might seem at first thought almost a demotion to leave the presence and the throne of the Father for the task of cleaning up a sadly bedraggled minor planet and ruling it eternally. But the second thought assures us that this is His place,

this is His destiny, the work for which He was born so many years ago, and for which He has been training. For the immortals where He now dwells He can do little or nothing; for earth's groping, stumbling, perishing millions He can do much. Humanity needs Him as never before, and He will not fail their need.

The day and hour of the Saviour's return is wisely hidden from us, yet we believe with all our heart that it is near, even at the very doors. Maranatha—the Lord is coming! When that Day dawns earth has had time enough; the firstfruits are ripe for the harvest; the wickedness of a world-wide Babylon, fully-ripe, cries out for the sharp sickle of the cleansing judgments of God. It is the beginning of an end.

A new order must be instituted. This will be a work of subjugation, elimination, and education. The proclamation will go forth: "Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come." The chief obstacle to the establishing of the Kingdom of Christ, the unjust rulers and the incorrigible element, must be forcibly removed by the Battle of Armageddon. Then will follow a campaign of universal education in which trained instructors will traverse the entire earth, informing the inhabitants of the New Order. All who survive the judgments of God shall have a part in that righteous, peaceful reign of a thousand years under officers of peace and exactors of righteousness.

Now we see through a glass, darkly; we strive to place things in their proper relationship, and the God who looks down with compassion on our fumbling efforts gives the light we need and wisdom for the way. We honor Jesus our King with the best that our small hearts and stammering tongues can give; but we shall never know the full splendor of that Incomparable Life until the tapestry of history is turned over and we see, perhaps with some surprise, the completed design in all its dazzling beauty. Then, and in a grander, wider, deeper and higher sense than we have imagined, we shall see the place in the divine pattern of the Babe of Bethlehem, the Man of Galilee, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, Messiah and Son of God. ●●

From a reader—

Happiness comes from striving, doing, loving, achieving, conquering, always something positive and forceful.

Timely Topics

THE SUBJECT of drugs is one of universal interest. There is scarcely an issue of a daily newspaper or magazine which does not contain an article or reference to it.

Like so many substances available to mankind, drugs can be either a blessing or a curse. The use of drugs to alleviate pain and disease is as old as man himself. For centuries, in fact, as recently as one hundred years ago, the selection of chemicals, herbs, roots, plants, leaves or bark for treatment was based largely on tradition, superstition, religious beliefs, magic, trial and error, or just plain guesswork.

Drugs

Even with the sophisticated knowledge applied today, who can be sure that these same determinants do not occasionally govern prescriptions today (our apologies are extended to the many honest, conscientious physicians whose industry and services have been such a blessing to humanity).

The therapeutic use of drugs and medicines has made life more pleasant, lessened suffering and lengthened life immeasurably. Their use and prescription is the providence of the medical profession and outside the scope of this article.

In an entirely different classification is the alarming use of drugs in civilized countries as an avenue of "escapism," especially among the young. Thousands of useful lives are being lost to society because of the widespread use of marijuana, hashish, opium, heroin, the barbituates, the amphetamines, methedrine (speed) and the like. Many of the drugs which produce physical dependence are derivatives of morphine, which is extracted from opium, which in turn comes from the poppy. A few of these drugs are codeine, meperidine, methadone and heroin. The latter is sold illegally throughout the world. Opium eating is practiced widely in Iran and India. Opium smoking is confined mainly to China, Indonesia and India. The use of opium produces physical and mental deterioration, shortens life and reduces a person's overall capability.

In the United States, as well as in the greater part of the civilized world, the possession of opioid drugs is forbidden by law. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*, opioid drug addiction has been

a significant problem in the United States for more than a century.

Other drugs which may or may not produce physical dependence (authorities disagree) include cocaine, derived from coco leaves and chewed by Indians in several South American countries; also cannabis products such as marijuana, hashish, etc., which are widely smoked or chewed in Africa, Asia and America. It is these hallucinatory drugs which have become such a problem among the upper-class student group in America today.

What has caused this shocking deterioration in morals among the young people of our land? There is no one easy answer. There are many, many contributing factors. Let us investigate a few.

1) *A lack of religious instruction in the home.* Too often even if religion is present in the home, it is either downgraded or completely negated in college. The fact of a Supreme Being governing this universe is continually challenged, and His plan for the re-made man or a re-made earth is denied, ridiculed or ignored.

2) *Extreme parental permissiveness and an absence of discipline.*

Children are growing up with no sense of responsibility. In affluent homes, everything they desire is provided. Work and chores for children is almost non-existent.

Here the old saying, "An idle mind is the devil's workshop" is apropos. The mother of Charles Manson, the leader of the drug addicted hippie cult who committed such atrocious crimes in California recently said that her worst mistake was an over-indulgence that became a law of life to her son. "If Charles wanted anything, I'd give it to him. My mother did too. . . . If Charles wanted money to go to the pictures, he'd come and get it from me, and then he'd get it from his grandmother, and from my sister, too. He never had to do anything to earn what he wanted."

3) *Poor example.*

If children see their parents indulging in alcoholic beverages, drinking to excess, or even moderately; if they see their parents and older acquaintances acquiring the "pill" habit, taking one pill to put them to sleep and another to pep them up, is it any wonder that they experiment with "pot" and "grass" and "speed"? Their parents have acquired a drug habit—why can't they?

4) *Broken homes.*

Home life disrupted by divorce, quarreling, arguing, or—almost as bad—bickering parents, is a great cause of frustration to children. Paul's advice as outlined in the book of Ephesians is the foundation of a happy family relationship:

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. . . . Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it. . . . Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and thy mother; which is the first commandment with promise. . . . And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (5:22, 25; 6:1, 2, 4). Diligent application of these principles is sure to result in a happier home, less frustration among children—and less evil influence.

5) *The entertainment media.*

Commercial broadcasting and film production must share a large part of the blame for filling young minds with evil at an age of life when they are most impressible. Lurid films, violent television shows and suggestive lyrics of songs being televised and recorded by such organizations as the "Rock" groups all contribute to moral laxity.

6) *Improper education.*

Left-wing college faculty and other proponents of the idea that morals are a matter of opinion and that the only fact is the result of personal experience are influencing many young people to the lowest level of life. And those who like Dr. Timothy Leary openly encourage the use of drugs as a mind-expanding experience and deride the Bible as the Word of God, do incalculable harm, leaving the young to flounder on a sea without chart or compass.

The evidence is certainly conclusive that the drug traffic is a terrible evil, disastrous to the addict, criminal for the pusher, and a blot on society as a whole.

For the Christian it is unthinkable.

While the Bible does not use the word "drug," the third definition of its verbal form is "to surfeit." Jesus warns against surfeiting and drunkenness in Luke 21:34, "And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares."

The child who grows up under the most morally constructive influences finds adjusting to the adult world difficult. And today, in a world of so many temptations and corrupting influences, the person who would bring his body and mind into subjection to the law of God requires the keenest mind and healthiest body he can maintain. The accomplishment would be an utter impossibility with a mind dulled by drug intoxication.

Said the apostle Paul, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God? . . . If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of

God is holy, which temple ye are" (I Cor. 3:16, 17).

The latest findings on the effects of marijuana as reported in the *U. S. News and World Report* is that it may cause injury to the brain. One thing is certain: the drug addict is not living a pure and holy life, and that is the requirement for all who would live with Christ in His future kingdom on this earth.

Another aspect of the drug problem is the fact that the selling, possession or use of drugs is illegal. The distribution of drugs is often in the hands of organized criminal elements, whose disregard for law is alone a serious crime. The problem is so widespread and so complex that only the coming of Christ with divine power will ever put a stop to its abuse. In the interim, the Christian will adopt the policy of not once yielding to the temptation. ●●

BE FORGIVING

Every time young Chester disobeyed his father, he had to drive a nail into a certain post in the back yard. The post was about full of nails when Chester decided to reform. Then for each act of obedience Chester was allowed to pull out a nail.

When the last nail was removed, Chester looked at the post in dismay.

"What's the matter, Son?" his father asked. "Aren't you glad the nails are all gone?"

Chester wrinkled up his nose. "But Daddy," he complained, "the holes are still there. And they're so ugly."

"That's the unpleasant part about the wrongs we do." Father's voice was *very* serious. "Each one leaves a scar." ●●

We Commemorate

At this sacred season of the year, the members of the Megiddo Church will observe two deeply significant days of the Bible Year.

The evening of Wednesday, April 7 (Abib 13), will be the anniversary of the New Passover instituted by Jesus. At this time we will partake of the Lord's Supper, the bread and juice of the grape, symbols of our renewed covenant with God to surrender completely to God, to suffer the death of our old nature, to die with Christ in prospect of someday living with Him.

And then, on the morning of the fifteenth of Abib, April 10, we will meet to commemorate the triumph of the Resurrection, the day when Christ rose victorious over the grave and death, remembering that because He lives, we too may live. ●●

UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

"Study to shew thyself approved unto God."

The Nature of Man

THROUGHOUT the New Testament the inward struggle that every Christian experiences, that struggle between right and wrong, between the lower nature and the higher, is dramatized as a life-and-death conflict. The life of the "old man" must be taken; the old nature must die so that the new nature can grow.

Every man or woman striving to live the higher life experiences this conflict between his best and worst self. It is the warring of the two most extreme forces within a man: the aspiration to reach upward toward God, and the inclination to cling to the dust level. One force is superior, upright, spiritual; the other, subtle, insidious, and earthly. All future glory is conditioned upon the outcome of this struggle.

We shall conclude our study of the nature of man, with his "moral nature," following our outline:

III. The Moral Nature of Man

- A. The Nature of Man Described
- B. The Rebellious Nature of Man
- C. The Conflict of the Two Natures
- D. God's Demand for Change

What we are classifying as the "moral" nature of man is that nature over which we are the whole and sole masters. It is that for which we are responsible; its growth, its development, its direction is within our power to transform into that holiness of character that God delights to honor.

Paul summarizes all aspects of the conflict between flesh and spirit under one word: tribulation. This word is as much a part of the true Christian's life as breath is of natural life. Without tribulation or trouble, there can be no perfection of character; and without perfection, no hope of eternal life.

III. THE MORAL NATURE OF MAN

Human nature is naturally sinful. Sinfulness is to man what fierceness is to the lion and what gentleness is to the lamb; it has been the nature of these beasts from the beginning. Likewise, the sin-

ful nature of man is as old as the individual, as old as the race of which he is a member.

Nature as used above, according to Webster's Dictionary, is the "fundamental character, disposition, or temperament of a living being, usually innate and unchangeable." It is also described as "a life-giving or health-giving force in an animate being; the qualities, characteristics, properties, organs and functions that together make up the vital being of a human being or other organism." In a further definition Webster says: "the congenital nature of men is evil, the goodness in them is acquired." This fact we find to be true, and it is supported by God's Word. Sin and evil come naturally; goodness has to be acquired by effort.

A. The Natural Man Described

The "natural man" is a figure of speech used to describe the sinful human nature which is common to us all. It is man as he is by nature, contrasted with man as he may become through effort. Paul, the principal writer of the New Testament, uses different contrasting pairs of adjectives to describe the natural man. These include: the old man and the new man; the carnal man and the spiritual man; the natural man and the spiritual man, or the man of the flesh and the spiritual man. The adjectives "old," "carnal," and "natural" describe man in his natural state, before his conversion; while "new" and "spiritual" describe man after he has changed his nature. We will study the characteristics of the "old," "carnal," or "natural" man.

1. Characteristics of the old man. Paul's styling of the natural man as the "old man" best describes man in his natural state; the state of the believer before receiving the Word, before he was regenerated. We learn from the Scriptures that the old man:

a. Is Corrupt. "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22). Newer translations make the meaning of this passage clearer: "You are to rid yourself of the old nature with your previous habits, ruined as it is by deceitful lusts" (Berkeley); "That leaving your former way of life, you must lay aside that old human nature which, deluded by its lusts, is sinking towards death" (New English Bible).

b. Is the servant of sin. "But God be thanked, that ye [who were] once the servants of sin, . . . have obeyed from the heart . . . being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17, 18).

c. Is deceitful. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). For this reason the Prophet also says: "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (10:23).

d. Walks as the world walks. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, [followed the evil ways of this present age, NEB] . . . among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others" (Eph. 2:2, 3). Notice Paul's use of "we all"—he includes himself.

e. Walks as other Gentiles walk. That the "old man" had previously been as other men is made clear by the command of Paul that we "henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Eph. 4:17). Peter also made this point clear: "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, . . . wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess . . ." (I Pet. 4:3, 4).

2. Characteristics of the carnal man. The carnal man is also the old man or man as he is by nature. All of the characteristics of the "old man" could also be applied to the "carnal man." Newer translations render the **carnal man** as the **lower nature**, or **worldly-mindedness**. Paul gives a vivid description of the carnal nature in Romans 8.

a. The carnal mind is hostile to God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (vs. 7, 8). The "flesh" represents the "old man," the lower nature.

b. The carnal mind is interested in the things of the flesh, the lower nature. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (vs. 5, 6).

c. The carnal man is sinful. Paul, speaking of his own battle with sin, said: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh, [lower nature]) dwelleth no good thing: . . . For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do" (Rom. 7:18, 19). It is the evil, which comes naturally, that is represented by the carnal or fleshly mind. The entire seventh and eighth chapters of Romans should be carefully studied; Paul had to fight the

same battle against sin that we today must fight.

d. The carnal man does not grow spiritually. In I Cor. 3:1—3, Paul is reproving his Corinthian brethren for their lack of spiritual growth—an indication that they are yet carnal. He also cites "envying, and strife, and divisions" among them as evidence of their lack of spiritual growth. The carnal man is man ruled and dominated by fleshly desires as opposed to the spiritual demands.

3. Characteristics of the natural man. The "natural man" is man ruled by his own naturally evil desires, man "having no hope, and without God in the world," man "in bondage under the elements of the world" (Eph. 2:12; Gal. 4:3). The "natural man" is rendered "**worldly-minded**" by Berkeley.

a. The natural man looks on the things of God as foolishness. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). The "natural man," like the "carnal man," is not allowing God to control his life; he is "worldly-minded" rather than spiritually-minded. He does not keep his spirituality at high tide.

God's servant James pictures the "natural man" as seeing himself in a mirror (seeing his faults) then promptly forgetting how he looks and doing nothing to correct his sinful ways (Jas. 1:23, 24).

B. The Rebellious Nature of Man

The nature of man has been sinful and rebellious from the beginning. We read that "Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell" because the Lord preferred the offering of his brother Abel (Gen. 4:4, 5). When God decreed the flood He "saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (Gen. 6:5, 11). The marginal reference for "every imagination" reads: "Or, the whole imagination; the Hebrew word used signifies not only the imagination, but also the purposes and desires."

1. Man's rebelliousness. God raised up a deliverer and brought the children of Israel out of Egypt, performing many miracles before them. Yet only a few months passed and they rebelled against the Lord (Numbers 14), and because of their rebellion they were caused to wander in the wilderness forty years. Moses reported their rebellion in Deut. 1:26: "Notwithstanding ye would not go up, but rebelled against the commandment of the Lord your God."

The prophet Ezekiel was sent to speak "to a rebellious nation that hath rebelled against me [the Lord]" (Ezek. 2:3). Isaiah pronounced a "woe" upon "the rebellious children, . . . that take counsel, but not of [the Lord]" (30:1).

2. **Man is born to trouble.** The patriarch Job recorded that "man is born unto trouble," and that he is "of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 5:7; 14:1]. Jesus said that it is "from within, out of the heart of men" that all the thirteen evils proceed. Man brings the trouble upon himself: He is not tempted by God, but he sins as a result of being "drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" (James 1:13-15).

C. The Conflict of the Two Natures

We know from our own experience that the life of a Christian is one of continual conflict. This conflict is as old as the plan of God. When the woman in the garden was first tempted to disobey she resisted; but as she allowed her naturally sinful nature to rule, she broke the commandment. Today it is the same conflict: the old man, the carnal man, the natural man, our lower nature, the man of the flesh wars against the new man, the spiritual man. There is a desire to do good, but there is also a constant pull downward. This conflict is vividly portrayed in Scripture.

1. **The conflict between the two natures.** Paul gives us a description of this warfare in Romans 7: "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (vs. 21, 22, 23). Paul was no exception; he found it a struggle to do good. This struggle he described also as keeping his body in subjection (I Cor. 9:27), striving for mastery (II Tim. 2:5), pressing for the mark (Phil. 3:14), and fighting the good fight of faith (I Tim. 6:12).

2. **The carnal mind vs. the spiritual mind.** Again we go to Paul: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. . . . For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 7:14; 8:6, 7).

In Romans 8 Paul identifies the "carnal mind" with the "law of death," while the "spiritual mind" is identified with the "law of the Spirit." These two "laws" are two principles, or codes, the one making man to be at "enmity against God," leading to

death; the other making him the friend of God, thus leading to life.

3. **The flesh vs. the spirit.** Here again we have the conflict of the two opposing natures, the flesh, or lower nature, against the spirit, or higher nature. That these two natures are at odds is clear: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:16, 17). The New English translation renders "the lust of the flesh" as "the desires of your lower nature."

a. **The natural man lacks spiritual discernment.** The natural man, the man governed by the flesh or the desires of the lower nature, does not have spiritual discernment. He does not have his "senses exercised to discern both good and evil" (Heb. 5:14), but is governed by the wisdom that is not from God; he is "earthly, sensual [margin, natural], devilish" (Jas. 3:15).

b. **The natural man wants what he cannot have.** The book of James gives a fitting description of the natural man: "What causes conflicts and quarrels among you? Do they not spring from the aggressiveness of your bodily desires? You want something which you cannot have . . ." (4:1, 2). Of such the author says: "Have you never learned that love of the world is enmity to God? Whoever chooses to be the world's friend makes himself God's enemy" (4:4, NEB).

D. God's Demand For Change

We have learned from the Scriptures that man in his natural state is sinful, subject to temptation and transgression. **But no matter how sinful a life has been in the past, it can be changed. God demands that all who desire eternal life must change.** The old man must become a new man; the natural or the carnal man must become a spiritual man; fruits of the flesh must be exchanged for fruits of the spirit; the servant of sin must become the servant of righteousness. Man must be regenerated, reformed completely.

1. **Regeneration defined.** The meaning of regeneration is significant. To be regenerated means to be spiritually reborn, to be transformed completely. **Regeneration** is a new understanding ending in a new life, a new man. This new man is not a transubstantiation—not supernaturally converted—but he is the old man with a new governing disposition, a new heart, new hopes, new aspirations. **The regenerated man, or new man, is the same man after he has been penetrated by the Word of God.**

2. **The demand for change.** God's demand for change is unequivocal. It has been sounded through His prophets, apostles and Jesus. Through the prophet Isaiah He says: "Cease to do evil; learn to do well" (Isa. 1:16, 17). Through the apostle Paul the command is: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17), and the command of Jesus was: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

3. **The process of becoming a new man.** The Scriptures are definite that the **old man** must be banished to make way for the new.

a. **The old man must be crucified.** "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. 6:6).

b. **The old man must be "put off."** "That ye put off . . . the old man, . . . and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4: 22—24, also Col. 3: 8—10).

c. **The carnal mind must be replaced.** "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). The carnal mind must give way to the mind of Christ. Peter also pictures this transformation: "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; that he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (I Pet. 4:1, 2). The man obeying this command has become a new creature.

E. Change Demands Action

The process of change from the old nature to the new is not the work of a moment, not the work of a day or of a week, nor is it the work of a year, but it is the work of a lifetime of replacing old habits with new, of adding the Christian graces until the old creature is displaced by the new. This process is contained, not in the Ten Commandments, but in literally hundreds of commands throughout the Scriptures. Action is a prerequisite of change. We will cover some of the "action" verbs contained in various verses of the Bible.

1. **Becoming a new creature.** The Scriptures give no indication of an instant change from an old to a new creature, but on the contrary, they show the need of effort. The believer must—

a. **Study.** "Study to shew thyself approved unto God" (II Tim. 2:15).

b. **Meditate.** "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them" (I Tim. 4:15).

c. **Follow.** ". . . follow his steps" (I Pet. 2:21) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).

d. **Purify himself.** "Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure" (I John 3:3).

e. **Work.** "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12).

f. **Exhort one another.** "Exhort one another daily, while it is called Today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13).

g. **Rejoice.** "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice" (Phil. 4:4).

h. **Let his light shine.** "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

i. **Walk.** "Even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4).

j. **Walk NOT.** "Henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind" (Eph. 4:17).

2. **More on becoming a new creature.** There are also many things the believer must be—

a. **Be transformed.** "Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind" (Rom. 12:2).

b. **Be diligent.** The believer must be diligent to add to his faith virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity (II Pet. 1:5—7).

c. **Be content.** "Godliness with contentment is great gain"; "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content" (I Tim. 6:6; Phil. 4:11).

d. **"Be in behaviour as becometh holiness"** (Titus 2:3).

e. **Be perfect.** "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48).

To be a messenger you must know the message.

TEST YOURSELF

1. List twelve Scripture texts to show that the Christian life demands change.

2. Describe man's moral conflict.

*Reprints of these studies are available
upon request.*

THE SABBATH

WHEN WAS IT GIVEN?
TO WHOM WAS IT GIVEN?
WHY WAS IT GIVEN?
WAS IT TO LAST FOREVER?
IF NOT, WHEN WAS IT TO CEASE?
WHAT LAW ARE WE NOW UNDER?

Saturday or Sunday?

When Israel left Egypt, the Lord instructed Moses to command Israel (Ex. 12:2): "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." Exodus 13:4 reveals the name of this month: "This day came ye out in the month Abib." Here is established the beginning of God's year with the month Abib, and it is common knowledge that the month Abib, or Nisan, came with the first new moon after the spring equinox.

Thus the first day of Abib was the first day of the New Year. It was also the first day of the week. Leviticus 23:3, 5 shows the relation of the Sabbath, the seventh day of the Hebrew week, to the year's beginning: "Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, a holy convocation; ye shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover." The Passover always fell on the Sabbath (see Luke 23:54; John 18:28). The first Sabbath of the year fell on the seventh day of the first month, the Passover on the fourteenth, which was also a sabbath, and so on throughout the year. The year's beginning being determined by the moon, each year would begin on a different day of the week from the preceding year; therefore, the Sabbath would also fall on a different day. Hence, if we try to parallel this system with our present calendar, we find that neither Saturday nor Sunday could coincide with the Jewish Sabbath through succeeding years.

However, to prove that this system of reckoning time was followed all through the centuries of Jewish history, evidence is lacking. By the time of Christ the plan had apparently undergone considerable modification.

The individual days of the Jewish week have no special designation but are simply numbered consecutively: first day, second day, third day, etc., until the sixth day which was sometimes called the "day of preparation" or "day before the sabbath," which was followed by the seventh day or the Sabbath. The calendar of the Jews revolved around the Sabbath.

At the beginning of our era, another seven-day week was in use—the planetary week. The origin of this week and the exact time of its adoption is uncertain. However, from historical evidence it would appear that "Saturn's day" (Saturday) was being observed regularly in various pagan circles during the first century B. C., and that the Sabbath of the Jewish week coincided with this day. Thus, as the veneration of a planet came to be concentrated on a particular day, and this day was the Sabbath day of the Jews, we can understand how Saturn's day (Saturday) became the first day of the planetary week and the seventh day of the Jewish week. Saturday being established, the remaining six days were named after the other six planets known at that time (sun—moon—Mars—Mercury—Jupiter—Venus).^{*} Our present-day week is a mixture of the Jewish week and the planetary week.

Two Laws, Two Covenants

The Law of Moses, as we have shown, originated at Sinai. But this was not the beginning of law. God had a law by which to govern His people long

^{*} Historical evidence from Willy Rordorf, *Sunday*, Westminster Press, 1968, pp. 24—35. The fact that in 325 A. D. the church was still debating the date of Easter shows that even then there was still some recognition of the earlier method of counting time by the moon.

before Sinai. He gave them a plan of holy living, a law immutable and eternal, by which they could prepare themselves for eternal salvation. To Abraham the Lord said—and this was more than four centuries before the law from Sinai was given—“Walk before me, and be thou perfect” (Gen. 17:1).

In Hebrews 11 we read of several holy men of old whose lives pleased God long before the Ten Commandments were delivered to Moses. We read, “By faith [not by obedience to the Decalog] Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous.”

Also of Enoch: “By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.” He *pleased* God, he *walked with* God three hundred years—and all before the Ten Commandments were given.

Also we read of Noah: “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house [which of the Ten Commandments was he obeying by building the ark?] by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.”

Also of Abraham: “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” Which command of the Decalog would he have disobeyed had he refused to go at God’s command? “By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son.” Abraham was obeying God, but this obedience had no relation to the law of Moses.

Four hundred thirty years before the law was given to Moses, Abraham was promised a future inheritance, for “he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God” (Heb. 11:8—11). Paul tells us, “But the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, ‘And to the offspring,’ in the plural, but in the singular, ‘And to your offspring,’ which is Christ. This is the point: the Law, that came 430 years later, cannot invalidate a covenant that has been ratified by God, so as to annul the promise. If the inheritance is due to Law, then it is no longer due to promise; but God showed His grace to Abraham through a promise” (Gal. 3:16—18, Berkeley).

“For the promise, that he should be the heir of

the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith” (Rom. 4:13). Abraham received his promise of inheritance not through obedience to *the law* but *through the righteousness of faith*. Why? Because this was 430 years before *the law* was even given!

The Law of Sinai

God delivered His original law, His covenant of future, eternal blessing for loyal, faithful obedience, to Noah, Abraham, and the patriarchs. Then came the time when God chose a nation for His own. And to them He gave another law—in addition to that law of faith and obedience by which Abel and Noah and Abraham became righteous. This new addition, the special covenant, is known as “the law,” “the law of Moses,” “the law of Sinai.” Its primary purpose was to civilize.

The apostle Paul boldly declares that all those who desire to be teachers of the law understand “neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm” (I Tim. 1:7). So let us be sure *we* understand.

What is the law?

The term “the law” when used with the definite article and without qualifying words refers “in nine cases out of ten, to the Mosaic law, or to the Pentateuch”—*Smith’s Bible Dictionary*. “The law” included the whole system of law given to the Israelites at Sinai. Read Luke 2:27: “The parents brought in the child Jesus to do with him after the custom of the law,” that is, to offer sacrifice (v. 24). Gamaliel was a “doctor of the law,” and Paul was, “as touching the law, a Pharisee” (Acts 5:34; Phil. 3:5).

“The law” was the “first covenant” (Heb. 8:7), the “old covenant” (Heb. 8:13), the covenant from Sinai. This law included the Ten Commandments, which included the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. We read: “And Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto Mount Sinai, as the Lord had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone. . . . And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments” (Ex. 34:4, 28).

In Deuteronomy 5 Moses speaks: “Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day” (vs. 1—3). The Lord did not make His special covenant with Abel or Noah or Abraham, but with the people of Israel themselves.

"The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. . . . The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, . . . saying, . . . Thou shalt have none other gods before me," and a restating of the Ten Commandments follows. Clearly the "covenant" was the Ten Commandments.

"And he declared unto you his covenant, which he commanded you to perform, even Ten Commandments; and he wrote them upon two tables of stones" (Deut. 4:13).

The Law Was Added

The Law of Moses, the covenant of Sinai including the Ten Commandments, the sacrifices, the tabernacle, feast-days, etc., was added to and founded upon an already existing higher law. Paul makes this fact plain: "Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19). It was *added* as a civil law to the nation of Israel, to restrain open violence and create a united nation. "The law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless." These lawless ones might have "robbed and murdered the righteous ones had there been no national, temporal law to protect them; for these wicked men would have cared little about God's higher law, which pertains to the future judgment. But as the Jewish government was a theocracy, one in which God Himself was ruler, the law required and regulated service to Him as well as duties among themselves.

"Hence to this nation God gave the law of Sinai (Ex. 20:2). Would it have been given had they obeyed God without it? Paul has settled that point. 'The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless' (I Tim. 1:9). This, then, is not God's original law by which He prefers to govern men. It was a law of prohibitions, threats, pains, and penalties. Its object was to restrain open crimes, protect men in their natural rights, and preserve the knowledge of God in the earth till Christ should come (Gal. 3:19—25). In order to keep that nation separate from all others, many burdensome rites were incorporated into the law, which made it a 'yoke of bondage' (Acts 15:10; Gal. 5:1—3)."

The Law Was Instituted By Moses

God gave the law to Israel through Moses. This fact is stated repeatedly. "The law was given by Moses" (John 1:17). Nehemiah speaks of "the law which the Lord commanded by Moses" (Neh. 8:

14), also of "God's law, which was given by Moses" (Neh. 10:29). Again, "Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?" (John 7:19). The law forbidding killing, part of the Decalog, here is called the law of Moses.

Furthermore, these texts prove that the law was not given until the time of Moses and Sinai. "Did not Moses give you the law?" (John 7:19). "For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed where there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses" (Rom. 5:13, 14). Here the entrance of the law is located at Moses. Every attempt to place it back of that time contradicts the plain testimony of these texts.

The Bible locates the giving of the law with the Levitical priesthood. "If therefore perfection were by the Levitical priesthood, (for under it the people received the law)" (Heb. 7:11). "*Under it the people received the law.*" The Levitical priesthood taught the law to the children of Israel, and all Bible students agree that the Levitical priesthood did not begin before the time of Moses.

The law was instituted 430 years after the covenant with Abraham: "A testament, or covenant, had already been validated by God; it cannot be invalidated, and its promises rendered ineffective, by a law made four hundred and thirty years later" (Gal. 3:17, NEB). This brings us to the time of Moses, when the law was given, 2500 years after Adam. (To be continued next issue)

Words to WALK By

You can't straighten out a snake—or an evil intent—without killing it.

God calls men who are busy, not idle.

A lie has no legs of its own; it must have other lies to support it.

To take the wind out of an angry man's sails, stay calm.

A man is also known by the company he keeps out of.

When did you have the last spiritual house-cleaning?

The egotist is an "I" specialist.

Don't ever get tied to the post of postponement.

You don't need references in order to borrow trouble.

Have you included God in your plans? Has He included you?

** H. M. Riggle, *The Sabbath and the Lord's Day*, pp. 69, 70.

LETTERS

Our Only Hope

I'm receiving the *Megiddo Message* regularly and always find most articles both interesting and helpful in gaining a greater understanding of God's written Word which is mankind's only hope to everlasting salvation in these troubled times we live in. My sisters are also beginning to take an interest in seeking the truth which is so often neglected by religions of today.

Boyanup, West Australia

R. G.

Living as Christians

It is a great and hard task to live Christian with the world around. Sometimes I find myself wondering if I have any friends, but the thought passes away like a shadow. James 1:4 is very fitting to keep in mind for a daily reminder; this command brings more strength to my mind.

The trials of this life are not a burden to me. I can rejoice in them. I am looking forward to that day when Elijah will step upon the scene. I am wondering about no one but myself. I search myself the last thing every day.

Words cannot express the joy and the sincere thanks I get from reading your literature. It provides so much strength for the spiritual man, and I am always ready for the instruction it contains. It is so upbuilding and instructive.

The day is fast approaching when the world will have to bow to the King of glory. We can see lots of signs telling us that time is near at hand.

Charleston, Mississippi

Effie White

DECEASED: We have just received word of the sudden death of Mrs. Effie White. We extend sympathy to the family.

Seeking Satisfied

I received the books I ordered from the Megiddo Mission, and am both pleased and satisfied with their contents—so pleased, in fact, that I am currently in the process of ordering additional publications.

Originally I had had some very pressing questions about the Sabbath, and the Holy Spirit, especially since I had heard and read so many contradictory teachings on both. Hence, I was thoroughly confused as to the real and true meaning of each of them. Then, too, I was never fully satisfied with any of these teachings because of the lack of substantial and logical evidence to support them. However, the treatises that I received from the Mission, coupled with the study of the Bible itself, have been more enlightening on these subjects than anything else I have ever read or heard. It is just as the eunuch said, how can I fully understand what I read unless someone guides the way, and your various publications have done just that.

I am currently receiving the *Megiddo Message*, and have found its articles to be sources of encouragement and also

of a greater understanding of the Bible—both of which are helpful and necessary during these "troubled times."

Again I say thank you. And I do thank God for having made it possible for me to have discovered your publications, for they have aided me in removing a number of misconceptions about Biblical history, about the way to salvation, and about the future.

Wichita Falls, Texas

S. C.

God's Help

God is good to all that seek Him, and try to live right. If we are His children and the sheep of His pasture, He helps us that we go not astray. He guards us through the long nights, that the dangers that surround us come not nigh. And through all the cares and trials that come with the day He is ever there for us to draw on for comfort and strength.

We are so thankful for His help and care.

North Rose, N. Y.

M. S.

Entirely Different

I confess that the *Megiddo Message* is one magazine entirely different in presentation from all other publications I have come across, giving strength, faith, answers, courage, help, peace and stability. It gives so true, concise and clear a picture of the Holy Word. It has given me further inspiration and courage just at the time my faith has been at a low ebb.

Rangoon, Burma

P. S.

"I Don't Have Time"

WHEN A task comes our way, especially one which we do not prefer, we are always ready with the excuse, "I don't have the time." But it has been said that if you need help with something, ask the busiest man you can find—he will always have time to lend a hand.

Have you noticed that when God has needed someone for a special work, He always has chosen a person who was already busy? Moses was busy tending his flocks at Horeb (Ex. 3:1—10).

Gideon was busy threshing wheat (Judges 6: 11—14).

Saul was busy searching for his father's lost asses (I Sam. 9:1—16).

David was caring for his father's sheep (I Sam. 16:1—13).

Elisha was busy plowing with twelve yoke of oxen (I Kings 19:15—21).

Nehemiah was engaged as cupbearer for the king (Neh. 1:1—3).

Amos was busy following the flocks (Amos 7: 14, 15).

Peter and Andrew were tending to their business of fishing (Matt. 4:18—20).

James and John were mending their nets (Matt. 4:21, 22).

These men—and many more—were fully employed when called to do a special service for the Master. Idleness is not a trait that fits into God's plans. ●●



Even A Child



IT IS A bright, beautiful spring morning, and the last I shall spend in this office. Where have the years gone? Today a young, vigorous person shall take my place. I'll show him around the school, introduce him to the faculty, acquaint him with my duties here, and then step out, relieved of the position of guidance counselor.

Forty-three years of service! How the time has flown. Where are the children I have counseled? I wonder. Did they take to heart the lessons I tried so hard to impress upon their young minds? Those nobler things that this new generation takes so lightly—politeness, absolute honesty, courage to defend the right at all times, respect to elders and general good manners—

As I look back I have few regrets; I tried to do my duty, both by example and by leadership. I could relate many an instance with the children, but among the most unforgettable was a young girl named Corlis. I knew her well and was always impressed by her exemplary behavior.

One very busy afternoon—Corlis was about eight years old—I was surprised to return to my office and find her seated by my desk, crying softly into her handkerchief. This child had never been into any kind of trouble. In fact, her behavior was outstanding.

"Corlis," I spoke to her gently, "what brings you here?" Tears came flowing faster than ever as she tried in vain to choke them back. I spoke again. "Things can't be as bad as all that."

"Mr. Whitney," Corlis began, stammering. "I—have been—uh—sent to your office by—Miss Cook for—I did a terrible thing."

"What did you do, my child?"

Corlis looked up from her handkerchief and straight into my face. "I told an untruth. Oh, Mr. Whitney, I told a lie!"

"Please tell me about it," I kept my voice firm.

"Well," she went on, "you know Fred. He makes

trouble in class. He teases and bothers everybody. I didn't want to sit next to him, so I told the teacher that he was copying off my paper—but he wasn't." When the truth finally came out, she felt better, but still kept her face hidden as much as possible—she was obviously ashamed of herself.

I was ashamed of her, too, and I let her know it. I explained that she could have made even more trouble for Fred, and we all knew he didn't need that.

"Corlis, you know that we must discipline you, for this is a very serious thing. You must take back that lie and apologize to Fred and to Miss Cook." Corlis nodded, twisting her handkerchief as she squirmed in her chair. She had understood every word I had said.

"Tell me, Corlis, have you ever told a lie before in your life?"

"Oh, no!" she sprang out of her chair, "I just never, never have."

"Well," I went on, "after we tell the first lie it is so much easier to tell another. I knew a little boy once, a few years younger than you, who told his first deliberate lie to get out of discipline. He got away with it. When he was ten years old, he was still lying, and the lies were getting bigger. At fourteen, he was making up fantastic stories. After he became a man, he learned his lesson. But it was a long and painful struggle to get out of the habit."

"What about God, Mr. Whitney? Didn't he know that God sees and knows all? His eyes are everywhere. Oh, I want most of all for God to love me, and He won't if I tell lies."

This ended the mystery I had always felt with this child. Now I knew! She had religion at home. Religion had made her different from other children. This child had been taught respect and love for God and her elders.

"One more thing you must promise me, Corlis," I said in a tone as matter-of-fact as possible.

"Yes, Mr. Whitney—" the child hesitated.

"You must tell your parents all about what has happened today. I'm sure they will want to know. And you must promise to tell them *everything*."

Corlis sprang immediately to her feet. "I promise, Mr. Whitney, I will tell them *everything*."

With that I dismissed the child. I put her on her honor. I felt that she could be trusted to do just what she had promised, and any further discipline would be at the discretion of the parents. They were doing a fine job.

At the door of my office Corlis paused and looked back at me. "Thank you, Sir," she said, smiling faintly, and closed the door softly.

I have never forgotten Corlis. Somehow I marveled at her faith in God. I had no desire to tell her the whole story about the young boy who had lied. I remember it only too well, too painfully, myself. But I did feel a strong desire to correct this little one while she was still so young. I felt a strong urge to instill upon her mind the hazards of lying.

Years of time, opportunity and ambition have, no doubt, carried that young lady to far places and distant areas. I can't help but wonder.

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A strong knock at the door startled me from my reveries. It was the superintendent, and with him a slight, fair-complexioned young lady, very wholesome in appearance.

"Mr. Whitney, this young lady is to be our new guidance adviser, Miss Clarke. We hope she likes it in our school."

"How are you, Sir?" she spoke pleasantly as she gave me a firm handshake. As I went about showing her my office, I could see right away that she would be efficient.

We had a busy time getting things arranged for my departure. I could see Miss Clarke glancing at me now and then with a strange expression on her face, a face that seemed strangely familiar. That dark hair—and those deep, penetrating eyes—had I seen them somewhere before?

Then I took a good look at the application lying on my desk—and there was that name—"Corlis." Corlis Beverly Clarke.

"Corlis," I spoke up almost instinctively. "You are Corlis! Why, you went to school here, didn't you?"

"Why, yes, Mr. Whitney." She gave a hearty laugh. "I wondered when you would recognize me. I have looked ahead for many years to this day. Your splendid example always inspired me. When I was still quite young, I prayed that I might come near to your high standard of character. And may

I personally commend you for your many loyal years of service here. I have a very great challenge to meet." ●●

Little Members

There's a very little member
That's a part of ev'ry man;
It's a part of ev'ry little girl and boy;
And we all must needs remember
It will do the best it can
Other members of the body to destroy.

How this very little member
To be noticed does its best;
There is nothing quite its equal, you would
think;
It's a weapon for the temper,
And delights in foolishness;
But from worthy deeds it naturally will shrink.

Now this very little member
Is as sly as any wink;
When one least expects, it's there to do its
work:
If we once fail to remember—
Yes, if we forget to think,
It will seize the opportunity, nor shirk.

There is but one thing with power
Great enough this mite to tame;
It is called the Word of God, which we
must wield;
If we would this rascal cower
Ere it puts us all to shame.
It will never do to justify or shield.

While this very little member,
When untamed is like an ember,
Which would take us to destruction very
soon;
If the Spirit sword is wielded
Soon obedience is yielded,
And this very little member is a boon.

Oh, this very little member—
Who can guess what it may be
That can lead astray, or guide unto the light?
Do I hear somebody whisper,
"It's the tongue that bothers me"?
Why, you little dear, you've surely guessed
it right.

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The Right Kind of Tongue

"Keep thy tongue from evil"—Psalm 34:13

DO YOU realize what an important thing the tongue is? I should like you to learn that fact now and never forget it, because if you do, you will be able to save yourself and other people from a great deal of trouble.

Never think that what you say is a small thing and unimportant. Sometimes it counts more than what you do. There are a lot of people going about the world who seem to think that it doesn't matter what they say, so long as what they do is all right. Some of these people are quite kind and well-meaning, and they would be surprised if you told them that they were doing more harm by their words than good by their deeds.

Part of our duty to other people is to "hurt nobody by word," and yet you hear people saying that words don't hurt. Words *do* hurt. They can do much harm. They can break friendships, and spoil lives, and sometimes they can even kill. The Bible doesn't let us think that words don't count. It tells us much about the right and the wrong use of the tongue.

Now if I were going to tell you all there is to tell about the right kind of tongue, I should be talking for hours, and if you hadn't fallen asleep before I finished you would inform me that I didn't know how to use my own tongue. So I'm going to mention just a few things about it, and you can think out the rest for yourselves.

1. First of all, the right kind of tongue is a well-controlled tongue. It knows when to be quiet and when to speak. It doesn't blurt out just whatever comes uppermost to mind. It doesn't go on chattering when it ought to be quiet. It doesn't give away secrets that don't belong to it. It doesn't run off at a gallop like a badly-trained horse.

There is an Eastern proverb which says, "Of thine unspoken word thou art master: thy spoken word is master of thee." And that just means that so long as we have a thought in our minds it is our own, but once we speak it, it is ours no longer. We can never get it back again, and the power it has is loose, for good or for evil.

Boys flying kites haul in their white-winged birds, / But you can't do that when you're flying

words. Thoughts unexpressed may sometimes drop back dead, / But God Himself can't kill them once they're said.

2. There are two things I want to say about the true tongue. The first thing is that it is cowardly to tell a lie. It is better far to suffer for telling the truth than to escape punishment and lose your honor. If you have done wrong, own up like a man; don't deny it like a sneak.

The second thing is that there are more ways of telling an untruth than one. What makes a lie is the intention to deceive. You may lie by saying what is true in word but not in sense. And you may lie by consenting to a lie, by being silent when you ought to speak.

3. In the third place, the right kind of tongue is the pure tongue, the tongue that does not stoop to repeat any bad stories or jokes, and above all that tongue that does not stoop to take God's name in vain.

Boys and girls, this is one of the shabbiest and lowest-down tricks you can play. If you heard another boy or girl speak lightly or disrespectfully about your father, you would feel like standing up to defend your father's

name. And yet you don't hesitate to take your Heavenly Father's name lightly and foolishly upon your lips. Why? To show how brave and daring you are? Surely that is a poor sort of courage which deliberately defies a God who has given you everything you have. To show how big you are? You deceive nobody but yourself. It is only childish men who stoop to such language. It is generally when things are going against them that they use it. They use bad language instead of the tears of a baby who can't get what it wants.

A certain American planter had in his service a Negro slave boy, part of whose duty was to wait on his master at table. Now this planter had a very bad habit of swearing, and he began to notice a curious thing. Whenever, during a meal, he took God's Name in vain, the slave boy bowed his head.

At last he questioned him about it, and the Negro answered, "Massah, the Great Name always fills my soul with awe and reverence and so I bow my head."

The reply so struck the planter that he made a determined effort to get the better of his fault, and in the end he succeeded.

And, boys and girls, that is the only way we should ever presume to speak of God's great Name—in a spirit of awe and reverence.

4. Again, the right kind of tongue is a kind tongue, the tongue that prefers to say good about another rather than evil. Never twist and deform your tongue by picking out people's faults and speaking about them. If you hear a nasty thing about anyone, don't go and spread it. If there were no one to repeat nasty stories, they would soon stop. If you must talk about others, try to find the best things to say about them. Use your tongue to cheer and comfort, and the world will be a happier and better place for your having lived in it.

5. And lastly, the right kind of tongue is the gentle tongue, the tongue that cannot be roused to anger. There is no place in our lives for anger. Does this sound impossible? No, the Bible tells us to "cease from anger." If we are going to use our tongue in fighting petty squabbles, we shall never have that great and noble peace which nothing can offend. It takes two to make a quarrel, and if one of the two gives the "soft answer" that "turneth away wrath," no quarrel can last long.

Can you remember these five things about the right kind of tongue? It must be a well-controlled tongue—not given to chattering heedlessly. It must be a true tongue—too brave to tell a lie. It must be a pure tongue—too proud of God to stoop to anything mean, or low, or profane. It must be a kind tongue that prefers to say good rather than evil,

and it must be a gentle tongue that turns away wrath.

There is just one thing more I want you to remember, and it is the most important of all. You will never have the right kind of tongue unless you have the right kind of heart, for "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Our tongue just tells what our mind thinks, and if we want to have the right kind of tongue, the tongue that is kept from evil, we must ask God to give us the right kind of heart. We must keep our minds on good things, and forget the bad. ●●

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

"I believe that when you settle down to any religion, you've literally stopped growing. We are not Christians, like Christ, until we come to have the mind of God as Jesus did. Even Paul was not sure, until the very last, that he had obtained the fullness of correct belief. How can we, who do not have prophets, apostles and teachers today, be sure we have attained that which the Bible promises, when we have only the Bible to teach us? For this reason I have never been able to accept any teaching."

You reveal a very critical attitude toward all religious teachings. You reveal that in your opinion no one should attempt to make any definite statements regarding their religious beliefs. Your position reminds me of the attitude of higher education: there are no absolutes.

But does this approach agree with John the beloved apostle when he said, "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19); or with Paul in I Thess. 5: 21, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"; or with King Solomon: "Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" (Prov. 22:20, 21)?

You mention that Paul was not certain of his beliefs until just before his demise. But no, that is not what he said. He reveals in Philippians 3 that at that time he was not certain that he had "apprehended," "captured," "laid hold of," or "attained to" the moral perfection that would assure him of

acceptance at the hand of the great Judge; of a resurrection from the dead if sleeping, and the better resurrection, the lifting up from mortality to immortality. But I cannot believe that he had any doubt about the genuineness of what he was believing.

In Romans 8 Paul spoke with definiteness about his belief. "If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:31, 35, 38, 39).

No, Paul was certain of his hope and his beliefs. What he was not sure of until the close of his mortal life was his own acceptance at Judgment Day. This is what he was speaking about in II Tim. 4:7, 8.

"I would like to call your attention to something that I do not agree with in your booklet *The Kingdom of God*. You say, 'Barriers of nationalism, of race, of creed have made men enemies instead of brothers.' You say also, 'Christ's ultimate goal at His return is one nation.' I cannot agree. The Bible tells us of different races, and nations of different races.

"Now in Isaiah 13 the prophet speaks of the coming of that great and terrible day of the Lord when he shall lay the land desolate and destroy the sinners out of it. Then the next verse (14) says, 'they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land.' How do you explain this, if there is to be only one nation and one land?

"Also in Acts 17:26: 'And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.' Note the word *bounds*; why would there be boundaries if all were one nation?"

In God's kingdom there will be no barriers of nationalism, race or creed. I am certain that this is a statement of fact. During the Apostolic Age, there was no line drawn between peoples of different nationalities. Read Rom. 10:12; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11. This last text reads: ". . . there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free: but Christ is all and in all."

The Almighty being a God of progression, He will never go back to a former plan of segregation.

Abraham was called the father of all believers, and this leaves no place for distinction between races or nationalities. Galatians 3:28, 29 is definite: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." Certainly there will be only one nation when God's work on earth is complete.

I surmise that you believe there will be a special place in God's kingdom for the people of natural Israel. Many people hold to this view, but I cannot believe it is the teaching of the Bible. God is no respecter of persons, "but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts 10:34, 35). All true believers are classed as Israel. Read Rom. 2:28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; . . . but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." These are the "all Israel" that shall be gathered when Christ returns to earth.

Isaiah 13:13, 14 is a prophecy with a dual application, short-range and long-range. Verse 13 pictures a day of divine judgment and retribution. From verse 14 forward, the chapter is picturing a short-range prophecy of events which should occur in the near future, events which would involve the Medes, Babylon, and the Chaldees. Taking the longer-range view, it projects the greater destruction when God's judgments are in the earth. But verse 15 could not picture God's finished Kingdom on earth: "Every one that is found shall be thrust through: and every one that is joined unto them shall fall by the sword." For in God's finished kingdom there will be nothing to hurt or destroy, no sorrow, pain or death (Isa. 11:9; Rev. 21:3, 4). Therefore, the time when every man shall flee "into his own land" must picture the time of judgment, before the beginning of the eternal age.

You quote Acts 17:26, "And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, . . . and the bounds of their habitation," The first part of the verse militates against your position: "God made of one blood all nations of men"; being "of one blood" all could rightly and easily be forged into one nation. Then you stress the word "bounds," the "bounds of their habitation," indicating that their habitations will always be definitely bounded. I cannot believe the verse says that. In the present set-up, national boundaries are part of God's plan, but not for His finished earth, when His world-wide Kingdom is fully established. ●●

Swallowed Up In Victory!

(Continued on page 6)

our flesh (verse 12). We are to "yield" ourselves unto God, and the members of our bodies "as instruments of righteousness unto God" (verse 13).

The whole secret of success is bound up in the literal meaning of this word "yield," which in actuality is not in any way connected with the usual sense of giving up, or giving way to something *reluctantly*. The same Greek word translated "yield" in Rom. 6:13 is translated "present" in Romans 12:1: "that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice." But even this suggestion of voluntary presentation is not the complete thought Paul intended in Romans 6:13. In Romans 14:10, the same Greek word is translated "stand" as the Apostle asserts that "we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." Here is the rendering of the word which gives us the fullest meaning intended in Romans 6:13. We are to take a stand before God on the basis of His declaration of our death and resurrection with Christ. For in the same degree that we *yield* ourselves to God now we shall be able to stand before Christ at His Judgment seat. How vital, then, is our obligation to make good in

our personal, daily living the truth to which we thus in faith commit ourselves.

Obviously, this is not at all the one-time, over-all experience which some have suggested is implied in Romans 12:1. It is rather a daily, hourly momentary act of presenting ourselves to God in the confidence that we *can* walk in the newness of life which He has promised. It is for us to be "workers together with Him." It is God thus working in us, "both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). The measure of His work in us and the measure of our victory in this wondrous newness of life and spirit which our Father waits to give us will be the exact measure of our faith and surrender and commitment to Him.

For in this, as in every aspect of Christian endeavor, "according to your faith be it unto you." Again, "even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone."

Let us therefore, like Abraham, stagger not at the promise of God through unbelief, but wax strong in faith, giving glory to God. Let us be fully persuaded that what He has promised He is able also to perform, accounting that God is able to raise us up—even from the dead. ●●

Meditations On the Word

(Continued from page 27)

If we are strained by tension, frustrated, dishonest by making excuses and putting the blame on someone else, we are simply a facsimile of plain unrefined human nature.

Most of us know in our sane and thoughtful moments that we are not what we should be, or even what we could be. But facing that last phrase is uncomfortable. It implies that we have been negligent. Therefore, we immediately and unconsciously set to work to smother it with excuses. It is much easier to deceive ourselves than to reform ourselves, and too often we take the easier way.

The first step toward freeing ourselves from this all-too-human trait is to face ourselves bluntly and stop making excuses. Alibis are a luxury we cannot afford to indulge in, because they thwart our determination to transform ourselves. Honest self-examination is the beginning of true maturity. Growth becomes possible only when we take an honest look at the "old man" in ourselves, that menace that is "me," acknowledge it is there, and set to work to deal the death blow.

If we keep our mind focused in the faith that even annoyances can be instruments of the great

enterprise, those very annoyances will teach us to be patient. Every life experience, no matter how distasteful, can be a source of personal growth and power. If the great enterprise of living is to make the most of our own possibilities of mind, spirit and character, then we can take whatever touches our life and use it creatively. Those who annoy us can minister to our character.

Perhaps we can take a lesson from the disciples, for surely their growth began with the question of honest self-examination: "Master, is it I?" They had human nature to deal with the same as we have. When they sat at the last supper they were not saints by any stretch of the imagination. They had quarreled over the chief seats in the Kingdom. They had wanted to destroy an unfriendly Samaritan village. Shortly they were to desert their Master. One would betray Him, another deny Him, and in the stress of the Garden of Gethsemane, "they all forsook him and fled."

When Jesus calmly announced, "one of you will betray me," not one of the twelve looked at another of the company to ask "Is it he?" Not one of them even ventured an excuse for such a possibility. On the contrary, there was an earnest searching of souls and a single question from the heart of each of those who sat with Jesus: "Master, is it I?" ●●



Meditations

On the Word

THERE is not a habit more universal or more pernicious or more stubborn than that of self-justification. Because we are not better than we are, because we are not further up the hill of perfection than we are, we are prone to excuse ourselves. We like to think someone else is to blame for our shortcomings. If only the people around us would change, our whole situation would improve. Or we get to thinking that the world is lost, and there isn't much hope of going on. Try as we may to have things right, they seem to go wrong in spite of us. We seem to attract trouble like a magnet.

The crux of the matter is the fact that we are not able to manage ourselves. Since "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," we must take our minds and wills and emotions and manage them with the wisdom of God. If we do not, we are bound to run off the road into a morass of misery and conflict; and when life slips out of control, we try to excuse ourselves and wistfully and sadly say, "I wasn't myself when I did that." True enough, we weren't ourselves. Or with aching heart we say, "I didn't mean to," as if our behavior ran off and left our good intentions behind. Exasperated, we ask ourselves, "Now why did I do that?" as if some imp of perversity pushed us into folly when we were looking in the other direction.

The question of a small boy after he had been vigorously spanked is suggestive. "Mom," he asked tearfully, "how do you make yourself do what you ought to do?" That is the ultimate question we all must answer. On the one hand we see the ideal which we must meet, and on the other is the realization that we are often—too often—poor managers of ourselves.

"And they all with one consent began to make excuse" (Luke 14: 18).

The trouble with many people is the trouble of this little boy—they are victims of an egocentric, self-regarding, or self-pleasing disposition. That is to say, they haven't the willpower to rise above themselves. They want to do what they want to do and have what pleases them.

Unhappily, however, this self-pleasing disposition in all of us is deeply rooted. In fact, it is at the root of most of our ills. We block our own recovery from our wrongdoing by finding scapegoats outside ourselves. It pleases us to save our face. It displeases us to confess our own personal failure to meet life creatively, and so we defend ourselves and make excuses to preserve our ego intact.

We are pleased to claim credit for our virtues, and our achievements; but often we are equally displeased to accept responsibility for our failures and mistakes. It pleases us to have our pie and eat it too! So our sins are not our fault; another is to blame. Our problems are not of our making; they are the result of forces beyond our control. And so we please ourselves and preserve our self-regard by getting out from under responsibility for being the way we are. When we get ourselves into fixes of one sort or another trying to please ourselves, we just look around for somebody to blame for our troubles.

My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Abraham Lincoln put this fault of human nature aptly when he explained the character of a village scoundrel, saying, "He's got the 'can't-help-its.'" Other people made him the way he was; he could not change it, so he thought. The world is full of people who have the "can't-help-its." "I cannot change me," is their attitude.

(Continued on page 26)

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Lord, I would follow, but--

*First, I would see what means that wondrous call
That peals so sweetly through Life's rainbow hall,
That thrills my heart with quivering golden chords,
And fills my soul with joys seraphical.*

Lord, I would follow, but--

*First I would leave things straight before I go--
Collect my dues, and pay the debts I owe;
Lest when I'm gone, and none is here to tend,
Time's ruthless hand my garnering o'erthrow.*

Lord, I would follow, but--

*First I would see the end of this high road
That stretches straight before me fair and broad;
So clear the way I cannot go astray,
It surely leads me equally to God.*

Lord, I would follow, --yea

*Follow I will,--but first so much there is
That claims me in life's vast emergencies--
Wrongs to be righted, great things to be done;
Shall I neglect these vital urgencies?*

*Who answers Christ's insistent call
Must give himself, his life, his all,
Without one backward look.*

*Who sets his hand unto the plow,
And glances back with anxious brow,
His calling hath mistook.*

*Christ claims him wholly for His own;
He must be Christ's and Christ's alone.*