

Megiddo Message

Alleluia!

**NOW IS CHRIST
RISEN
FROM THE DEAD**

**AND BECOME THE FIRSTFRUITS
OF THEM THAT SLEPT**

Loving The Truth

In the eighth chapter of Zechariah, the Prophet gives many glorious glimpses into things to come. He foresees the time when "Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the Lord of hosts the holy mountain," when the work of the Lord shall be "marvelous in the eyes of the remnant of this people," when, as he says, speaking for God, "I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness" (Zech. 8:8). It is a dazzling picture.

Then, suddenly, the Prophet strikes a clear note of reality. If these blessings are to be experienced, they must first be merited. There is something for each and everyone to do. God's magnificent blessings do not come to all simply by right of birth.

Hence the Prophet's urgent message: "These are the things that ye shall do," and he details the high moral standard God requires of His people. Honesty is the first principle: "Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor." Next comes fairness and justice: "Execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates," or as translated in the New English Bible, "Speak the truth to each other, administer true and sound justice in the city gate." Even more than this, thoughts and imaginations must be controlled: "And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor; and love no false oath." Why such orders? "For all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord" (Zech. 8:16-17).

Then the Prophet catches another picture of glory. The time to come shall be incomparably rich in happiness and joy for all who are privileged to see it. Times of affliction shall be turned into joy and gladness and cheerful feasts.

In view of all this, what should each one do? *"Therefore love the truth and peace"* (v. 19).

The rich, glowing promise, is not for all. Those who would share the blessings must *qualify* for them.

God's law is always above man's. His thinking is on a higher plane. He wants obedience, strict adherence to His demands. But He wants more: He wants the heart, a total consecration to His purposes. He wants a total dedication of the inner life. It is not enough to *hear* the truth, or *believe* the truth, or even to openly and outwardly *obey*

the truth. There must be with it all an inner devotion, a compelling affection of heart and mind and soul that makes one's obedience complete: "Therefore love the truth and peace."

When we think of God's loving-kindness, His rich mercy, His overflowing goodness to the children of men, what thinking person is not constrained to "love the truth," that which is the power of God unto salvation, that which can redeem from this body of mortality and bring one to the level of the angels, even to be partakers of the Divine nature, escaping all the physical and moral corruption of the present? (II Pet. 1:3-4)

Who would not "love the truth," when, in the words of Jesus, the truth can make us free—free from the miserable bondage of hate and bitterness and resentment; free from the rottenness of envy and the cruel cutting edge of jealousy; free from the feelings of hurt when another is thoughtless or unkind; free from feelings of inferiority, or superiority; free from comparing, contention, strife and anxiety; free from any fear that this world may disappoint us.

Yes, love the truth of God because "the truth shall make you free," "free indeed"! Through truth we are free to know God, and be known of God. Through the truth we are free to pray to God, to live within His sight, within His circle of concern, and know that He loves and cares for us. Through the truth we are free to serve and give ourselves wholly, knowing that our giving will be recompensed abundantly. Through the truth we are free to trust our life, our energy, our mind, and all our being to His guidance and direction, assured that He will bring to us the richest and fullest realities of our faith. Through the truth we are free to become all that God has made us able to become, even to sharing the likeness of His own sons and daughters, eternal members of His celestial family.

With all this in prospect, who can fail to "love the truth and peace"?

Look ahead. Great things are in prospect. The Prophet of the Lord has spoken, and His word *shall* come to pass. Therefore, in view of all this, let us *love the truth and peace*.

MM

Megiddo means...

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

We believe

—in God, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."

We believe

—in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.

We believe

—in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a Virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

We believe

—in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.

We believe

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

We believe

—in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.

We believe

—in ourselves as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

We believe

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

Bible Quotations

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

NEB—New English Bible

NIV—New International Version

NASB—New American Standard Bible

RSV—Revised Standard Version

TLB—The Living Bible

JB—The Jerusalem Bible Reader's Edition

Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English

Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation

Williams—The Bible in the Language of the People

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



Daybreak

Over An Empty Tomb

Scripture Lesson: Matt. 28:1-8

The Resurrection story has daybreak as its setting. Matthew tells of that first Resurrection morning “as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week”; Mark says it was “very early in the morning the first day of the week,...at the rising of the sun”; Luke, “upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning”; and John, “the first day of the week...early, when it was yet dark.” It was daybreak, over the empty tomb.

Can we picture fully the joy, the radiant hope, the light of life that came with that daybreak—and that empty tomb?

Light is a beautiful, meaningful imagery. We speak of dawns and sunsets, starry nights and shafts of light in the darkness. And what could be lovelier or more radiant with hope and happiness than the light of the Resurrection!

Daybreak over the empty tomb is in keeping with the Bible’s extensive use of light.

Light, Light, Light!

The Bible opens and closes with light. The allegory of Genesis pictures God's first act in the long project of creation as the making of light. God looked out upon the vast darkness of human-kind and said, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). In other words, Let the light of My divine knowledge illumine men's minds. Let them have insight, understanding, knowledge, hope! Let there be light!

And light there was, though few were ready to receive it. But the opportunity was there. Those who *would* see *could*.

The Bible closes with a glimpse of the dazzling splendor of eternal glory. There is the city, the new Jerusalem, shining as the sun, not a shadow or trace of darkness in it. John writes, "And (the angel) carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal...and the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev. 21:10-11, 23-25). What transcendent glory and immortal light, light for all nations of earth, such light that "there shall be no night there."

Everything about that new world is radiant with light. What does this mean? We might understand its meaning in a double sense. When the earth is filled with shining immortals, there will be no darkness, for everywhere there will be light, physical light. But

more than this, there will be spiritual illumination, for all shall know the Lord "from the least even unto the greatest."

Light is often used in a metaphorical sense of knowledge, insight, understanding. It points beyond itself to something greater. Light represents the presence and glory of God, the nature of God, the truth of God, the knowledge of God.

Light is even used in Scripture to personify these divine properties. Everything in and about God is ablaze with light. His word is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path (Ps. 119:105). The entrance to His word gives light (Ps. 119:130). His face shines as the light. In the words of the Psalmist, "Lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, O Lord" (Ps. 4:6).

And who can forget that benediction which occurs where we would least expect it? A book concerned largely with a census of the people records also one of the finest of heavenly benedictions: "The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace" (Num. 6:24-26).

The New Testament makes three brave attempts to describe God, and two of them portray an image of light. "God is love," writes the apostle John. He says also, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all" (I John 1:5). The writer of Hebrews says even more in these powerful words: "Our God is a consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). Fire suggests light, also heat, destruction, purification. Fire that consumes the evil, fire that removes the dross, fire that purifies and cleanses—truly our God "is a consuming fire."

Are we mindful of this, we who shall someday be called to stand before this "consuming fire"? Are we now removing all the consumables from

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Our Lord calls us
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our lives, all the pettiness, pride, deceit, jealousy, selfishness and double-mindedness, so that when we stand before Him there will be nothing to consume?

Light is also associated with Jesus. From the day of His birth to His ascension into heaven, the story of the life of Jesus is the story of light. So consistently did He walk in the light, so powerfully did He reflect and radiate the light of His Father, that He Himself was called "the light." His birth is spoken of as a "dayspring from on high." That night so long ago "there were...shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them." What heavenly radiance, what splendor was displayed for simple shepherds! There was light, glorious, shining light! The wise men followed the brilliant star, another glorious, shining, divine being, "till it came to rest over the place where the child was."

John, in the prologue of his gospel, associated Jesus with spiritual light: "In him was life and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). John the Baptist came to "bear witness of the Light....That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh

into the world" (John 1:7, 9). Jesus said of Himself, "I am the light of the world," and He said the same of His disciples.

Do we comprehend the meaning in these words, that we are to be lights just as Jesus was light? To us has been entrusted the same divine knowledge, the same plan, the same hope. It is ours to radiate and display wherever we are, whatever our lot in life; for we, too, are to be lights.

It would be strange indeed if the gospels, when telling about the Resurrection of Jesus, did not employ the symbol of light. They did. All of the gospel writers set their account at dawn, when the sun was rising to flood the world with light. And the angel who announced to the women at the tomb that Jesus was risen is described as one whose "countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."

But once more it is light pointing beyond itself. It is more than luminous physical energy overflowing into the world. It is the dawn reaching beyond itself. It is a morning that announces a new day of victory, hope, life. It is daybreak revealing an empty tomb, a glorious victory, a living Christ.

"Hope Beyond"

What is the message of this daybreak, this Resurrection morning?

First it is this: that *Jesus is alive*.

Never has lived a hero of this world who was not mortal, subject to death. The greatest warriors, the greatest statesmen, the greatest artists, the greatest of earth's benefactors, all have died. Jesus was no exception. He, too, died. But His career did not end there. Only a few brief hours and Jesus was alive, and alive forevermore! It is God breaking into the pattern of the human race and proclaiming in unmistakable tones, "Hope beyond."

But oh, the darkness of that night and day that He was in the tomb! The

crucifixion looked like shameful defeat. For the moment it appeared as though He who had offered such hope to His people had failed them miserably. The light that shone so brightly flickered low. Jesus had been caught, it seemed, in the dark winds of fear, prejudice, injustice, and sin, and those winds seemed to have blown out the light that was in Him. The darkness in His enemies seemed so much stronger than the light in Him.

When He died, there was more darkness. Matthew tells us that "from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour" (Matt. 27:45). From noon until three o'clock the land lay under a blanket of heavy darkness.

But the Resurrection changed all that. God was in control, and He would not let the light be extinguished. He would not suffer His "holy One to see corruption" (Ps. 16:10). God's plan was that Jesus should live again!

It was the sabbath of rest, but certain women of the disciples could not rest. Very early in the morning on the first day of the week they came to the tomb, to anoint the body of Jesus. It was the last loving thing that they could do for him, they thought. But what a surprise when "behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." Can we even faintly feel the thrill of that moment? Suddenly the dark chill of the morning was radiant with light, for the angel's "countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow."

What a glorious sight, yet how frightening to human eyes. The angel felt their fear and greeted them calmly: "Do not be afraid," he said. "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt.

28:5-6). And by the faint light of the early dawn, they looked into Jesus' tomb, and saw that it was empty!

Daybreak over the empty tomb tells us that the power of death has been broken. The sun the previous day had risen over the tomb of Jesus—occupied. It looked so invincible. Pilate had done his pathetic best to secure it. Matthew tells us how Pilate had “said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.” So they went and made the sepulchre secure by sealing the stone and setting the guard (Matt. 27:65-66).

It looked so impregnable, as impregnable as death itself. But how feeble is the power of men against the strength of God. “Make it as sure as you can,” said Pilate, but how weak

was that surety! How weak their strongest battlements against God! How weak the clutch of death itself!

Life Beyond Death

With this daybreak comes also the assurance that there is life beyond the grave. He who came forth from the tomb that Resurrection morning gives us the assurance that we, too, may come forth. “Because I live, ye shall live also.” For us, too, there can be life beyond the grave! It is the promise of Scripture: “The dead in Christ shall rise!” Resurrection morning comes each year to remind us that that promise can be real for us. What God *has done*, God *can do again*! What He did for Christ He can do for us, also.

That tomb is still empty, and as we draw nearer and nearer the great Resurrection day, our hope mounts. It is real. It is certain. It is coming.

Death is the enemy of life. Young people die while standing on the threshold of success and achievement. Young adults are struck down in the midst of their best years, when they

Let Us Pray

Gracious Lord, Ruler of heaven and earth, Creator of the far-flung beauties of our universe and Author of the deep mysteries of life, as we contemplate the wonders of life we are filled with a sense of awe and reverence for Thee. Thou alone art the giver of life, Thou alone canst sustain life, and Thou alone canst recreate that life after it has been claimed by the ravages of death. None within Thy keeping will ever be lost.

Father, as we remember the anniversary of the Resurrection of Thy Son, we rejoice in the triumph of a perfect life. We rejoice that by Thy power He burst the bonds of death and rose triumphant over the grave, and that a like resurrection awaits each faithful servant of Thine. We rejoice, too, in the promise that there will be some living at the time of Christ's re-appearance who will escape death altogether, and—glorious prospect—that we may be among these.

We thank Thee for Thy Word, and the great and precious promises it contains. Help us believe them with

all our heart, and demonstrate that belief by living a fully consecrated life, gladly relinquishing every thought and feeling Thou canst not condone.

It was foretold that Christ our Lord would suffer, that He should be taken by wicked hands and crucified, that He would die, and be placed in the tomb. All these forecasts were literally fulfilled.

It was also foretold that He would rise again the third day, and this forecast was fulfilled to the letter. It was daybreak over an empty tomb. Death could not hold Him; and now He lives in the power of an endless life.

We pray for those everywhere who are seeking Thee in sincerity and in truth. And may the daybreak of the resurrection demonstrate to us the supreme victory of the obedient life and stir us to a deeper consecration of our own lives to Thee. As we ponder the disappointments of life, teach us to look up to Thee with a realizing sense of all that they have taught us. And as seems best to Thy infinite wisdom, help us to redefine our goals, rechannel our energies, and taking fresh courage, try again. We pray this in the triumphant Name of Him who triumphed over death and sin by the power of God. Amen.

Daybreak means life, light, hope—immortality! It means death CAN and WILL be conquered. There is hope beyond death!

are so much needed by friends and family. Old people die with hopes unfulfilled and a sense of life being unfinished. Victor Hugo, when an old man, wrote: "For half a century I have been outpouring my volumes of thought in prose and verse, in history, in philosophy, drama, romance, ode, and ballad, yet I appear to myself not to have said a thousandth part of what is within me, and when I am laid in the tomb I shall not reckon that my life is finished."

Unfinished business. However old or young, we die with the agenda unfinished. That is why we labor for more than this life can give. That is why we are not satisfied with the best that is here. It is too short, too abbreviated, too uncertain. We may plan, and work, and progress, but always there is a cutting off. There is a point beyond which we have no power to go.

Is there a time when life can be finished, climaxed, continued? The Resurrection says that there is, if we belong to Christ, if we have invested wisely our short time here, if we have used our powers to build into our lives the qualities God is seeking, if we have finished the remaking of ourselves for Him. There is more, much more, beyond!

At the time of the death of the adventuresome Theodore Roosevelt, an American cartoonist drew what he considered a picture of hope. He por-

trayed Mr. Roosevelt in his colonel's uniform, mounted on a horse, and riding off into the sunrise. This is the Christian's hope, traveling toward sunrise, where death is swallowed up in victory.

What a wonderful day that will be! Daybreak over an empty tomb! Daybreak that will mean freedom forever from sickness, sorrow, pain and all the woes of mortality; freedom from sin and woe; freedom from death itself.

That tomb is *still* empty, and as year succeeds to year, as we draw nearer and nearer the Resurrection at the last day, our hope mounts. It is real. It is certain. It is coming.

Daybreak means life, light, hope—immortality! It means death *can* and *will* be conquered. There is hope beyond death!

Our risen Lord is free from all that would bind Him, and now He beckons to us. He wants to set us free and give us life. And so, while we stand in the light of the Resurrection morning, a light that will never go out, He calls us to love, to trust, to follow, come what may. He calls us to higher, and yet higher levels of holiness and faith, where we must *be* what we profess and *do* what we proclaim.

What is *our* answer, yours and mine?

MM

The Virtue of IM-patience

Somewhere on your desk, or in your file, or on your workbench, or beside your bed is a project that you have long put off, maybe forgotten. It might be a letter you had planned to write, or a word of cheer you were going to send to a sick friend. Maybe an advertisement you intended to inquire about, maybe something you had planned to make, or fix, or improve.

Wrapped up as you are in your day to day dealings—business and personal—you set it aside. Until tomorrow, or next week or—?

How important are the projects we put off? Some do not matter, and perhaps are better for being put off—they do not need to be done at all. But others have a time limit. You and you only know what is important.

There is a place in our lives for the virtue of *im*-patience. Some tasks should not—*must not*—be kept waiting. When you decide what is important, when you decide what needs to be done for God and your own salvation, *do it!* Do not keep putting it off. If it will help and encourage another, *do it!* If it is a duty you owe to God or to your brother, *do it!*

Please—none of that "too busy" routine.

Dealing with Temptation

"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: . . . and if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell."—Matt. 5:29-30

Jesus traced temptation back to the first look, the first touch, the first thought, the first inception of desire.

What did Jesus mean by this seemingly strange advice? Is he advising us to pluck out a "right eye," however offensive; or cut off a "right hand"? Does Jesus require that we maim ourselves as an act of penance? We know He does not. Christ was not an advocate of ascetic practices. Yet His strong language has a deep and weighty truth to teach: that anything, even though innocent in itself, which in any sense ministers to sin, is evil, and must be dealt with severely.

However His language shocks us, a moment's reflection will show us that it is not a whit too strong. Any of us will, when necessary, choose the less terrible of two unwanted alternatives. If it came to a choice between plucking out an eye and death, or cutting off a hand and death, every sensible individual would choose the loss of the eye or of the hand. Every day, people undergo serious operations to save their lives or relieve intolerable sufferings.

In the spiritual realm, the lesson becomes even more forceful. When one of the alternatives is eternal death, what reasoning man or woman would not choose a lesser—temporary—loss

if by doing so they could escape eternal disaster!

If anyone should try to take Jesus' teaching literally, there is in it this fundamental problem: that the prescribed treatment will NOT eliminate the offense. As a matter of fact, self-mutilation is not the way to avoid temptation. Lust in the heart is *not* destroyed by plucking out the eye. If hatred reigns in the enraged man, he is still a murderer, even after he has cut off the hand. The only way to repent of sin is to cut off the sin itself. And/or its source.

Let us make two other observations in applying this text. First, observe that Jesus is advising a method that should be used by each of us in dealing with sin in—our neighbor? our brother? our friend? No, it is a strategy we should use in dealing with sin *in ourselves*. There is no place where sin should concern us more deeply, or more immediately, or where sterner or swifter action can be taken. For it is we ourselves who shall have to reap the consequences of what we allow. We ourselves will suffer the eternal loss—or reap the eternal benefit—of our discipline.

The second point Jesus is impres-

S*in is deadly and should be treated as we would treat anything else that is deadly.*

sing in this passage is the seriousness of sin. Sin is deadly and should be treated as we would treat anything else that is deadly. Sin separates us from life; sin separates us from God. Sin deprives us of hope and all prospect of future life. How can any measures be too drastic against such an enemy?

Let us also look at the meaning of a few other words Jesus used. One is the word for "offend," or its noun form "offense." The illustration comes from the "stumbling block," which referred to a bait stick in a trap. The picture is that of a pit covered over with a thin layer of branches for the unwary traveler to step on and fall into. It is a picture of temptation, all set and ready to spring upon us.

What is Jesus recommending? Is His advice a casual, soft, nonoffensive approach to sin? Does He say, "Now don't be too hard on yourself"?

No. On the contrary, Christ is saying that if your eye or your hand causes you to be tripped up with temptation, take drastic action.

The word "stumble" means literally "to lead into sin" or "cause someone to lose faith." Life was thought of as a journey, with definite directions for conduct as a "way to walk." The metaphor Jesus uses is that of a trap or a snare or anything which causes one to stumble and fall and thus be turned aside from the straight way of righteousness.

None of the modern, easy-going,

gentle "If-it-feels-right-it-is right" philosophy here.

Jesus traced temptation back to the first look, the first touch, the first thought, the first inception of desire. Nowhere is the inwardness of His teaching more evident. We, by contrast, dramatize our temptations and go out to meet them, instead of thrusting them from us. Do we wonder that we are weak?

The passage is not intended literally, but in taking the spiritual lesson let us not dilute or evade His stern truth. The sharpness of the language shows the stringency of the discipline required. Even if the hand should not be amputated, the ill-founded friendship, or the unlawful pleasure or the suggestive book *should*. Even if the friendship, or the pleasure, or the book seem altogether harmless, if it is a temptation to our lower nature and to sin it still must go, even though it be as dear as the right hand and the right eye (the "right" being generally considered as more useful and more precious than the left). A Christian will surrender even what is "lawful" for the sake of a dedicated, pure heart. Better, says Jesus, to enter life maimed than to miss the gate.

The purpose of the discipline is not bodily harm but abundant life. His prohibitions are always means to enrichment. His central concern is the great joy of sitting down with Him in His Kingdom. As the long hours

of tedious practice are for the ultimate joy of the near-perfect performance, and the pruning of the tree is for the sake of an abundance of good fruit, so the stern discipline is not an end in itself but for the greater joy of the Kingdom.

In this passage Jesus, as in all His teaching, takes into account the far-reaching benefits of obedience to the law of God.

Before all and every action of sin is the THOUGHT-SEED from which it grew, and behind all and every action of sin is THE MOTIVE that prompted it.

Any inlet, any feeder to the heart of sin, any occasion to sin, must be denied, closed, and destroyed, rather than left to be an "offense."

Anything that is a stumbling-block in the way of the spiritual life must be cast aside at any cost. The real issue is the value we place on the great goal ahead. To frustrate that goal in deference to any present pleasure, or to escape from any present trouble, is to commit a great mistake. The issue is not some slight inconvenience in the future but a complete shipwreck, and how it can be avoided.

Whatever hinders our Christian life must go—though it be a friendship as dear as the apple of the eye; though it be an occupation as profitable as the right hand. This is Jesus' advice on how to deal with temptation. It is the sure way to triumph! MM

I must not interfere with my child, I have been told; to bend his will to mine, or try to shape him through some mold of thought. Naturally as a flower he must unfold. Yet flowers have the discipline of wind and rain, and I have seen the gardener use his pruning shears to gain more strength and beauty for the blossoms. And he would do whatever he thought necessary to guide the development of the flower it does seem to me that only weeds unfold just naturally.



Don't be deceived by the glamor of "Easy Money"



It's everywhere. That letter that pronounces you the winner of some fabulous prize and bears the imprint of your own name, as though someone knows you personally (a process very easy with modern-day computers).

A scandalous delusion, nevertheless a greedy society falls for it. The outside of the envelope is cluttered with phrases designed to make sure that the recipient will look into the contents. "You've won it!"—"Sweepstakes! Sweepstakes!"—"Win! Win! Win!"—"Free Prize Must Be Claimed Within Expiration Period Above"—"Thousands Of Prizes Already Given Away."

In reality, it's a sly form of gambling, greed, the love of money. The Bible calls it idolatry. In the same category are betting, bingo, and games of chance. And now, giving a seemingly "legal" look to it all are the state-

sponsored lotteries. New York State took the lead, and now 32 other states are following, with many more thirstily eyeing this seemingly bottomless well of cash. Who can talk against gambling when even the Government is finding it lucrative? And so the purchase of one-dollar tickets has become the wager of choice for people in love with easy money. There is so little to lose, and the gains *can be* fantastic.

Altogether, it is a "big business." According to latest statistics, the total amount of money changing hands in legal and illegal gambling last year was a staggering \$252 billion, an increase of 67% from 1982 (Games & Wagering Business).

But is it right? Is "easy money" for the Christian?

The answer is a positive NO.

Reports are that people everywhere—even religious people who

profess better things—are tempted. Pollsters tell us that 77 percent of some faiths admit to at least occasional gambling. Smaller percentages of others say they do a little. They wouldn't go to a casino, but the lottery is thought to be harmless—after all, the Government is behind it.

But the Government is only "cashing in" on a weakness of human nature—at the same time encouraging what it used to—and ought to—condemn. The Government is only the expression of a majority opinion, and a majority opinion is seldom right.

As Christians, our trust, our aspirations, our expectations are anchored in God, not in "Lady Luck" or any goddess of chance. Any type of sweepstakes, betting, wagering, gambling is *wrong*.

In the sight of God, it is all idolatry. It is the worship of money. Idol-

MORE

The \$4,000 MORE[®] Card With No Annual Fee

This Credit Card is called the MORE Card for a reason.
It was designed to give more credit and more benefit.

...URGENT/IMMEDIATE ATTENTION REQUIRED...

One of the fabulous awards listed below has been secured in your name. You are **ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEED** at least one of these. **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY.** But, we must hear from you as soon as possible. **CALL IMMEDIATELY!!**

- NEW CHEVY BLAZER
- (2) FABULOUS VACATIONS FOR TWO
- \$5,000 CASHIER'S CHECK
- MEN'S AND LADIES' GEORGIO MONTE DIAMOND WATCHES
- \$1,000 SERIES EE U.S. SAVINGS BOND

Notes: This offer is not available to the general public. Only those notified by mail are eligible. This is not a contest or lottery. This is a valid premium incentive offer. A \$12.00 shipping & handling charge will apply. Any sampling with no purchase necessary will meet this offer. Void where prohibited by law.

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Our plan is to give you
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**Don't Be The Third
Winner To Give Up
TEN MILLION DOLLARS...**

\$750 Immediate Cash Advance Che

If you can use \$750 in
want to apply for the!
Then it is our jo!
through quickly. Aft
we do is mail you a
can use your credit
for your credit car
You may use

WIN BIG BONUS BUCKS
UP TO
\$50,000.00
FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS

Carefully look through this mailing pak and find as many
"O" stamps as you can. There are 3 missing "O's" in all. Stick
the 1st you find in the 1st "O" box below to go for \$500.00
instead of \$50.00... find a 2nd "O" and stick it in the 2nd box.

\$50,

Return game without "O" Stamps
affixed & maximum win is \$50.

and your potential win jumps to \$5,000.00... find the 3rd "O"
and stick it in the 3rd box, and BINGO — YOUR POTENTIAL
BONUS BUCKS WIN MUSHROOMS TO A GREAT

CONGRATULATIONS!!!

We are proud to announce that you are **ABSOLUTELY GUARANTEED** to
receive one of these five fabulous awards. **NO PURCHASE NECESSARY!!**

- NEW CHEVY BLAZER
- (2) FABULOUS VACATIONS FOR TWO
- \$5,000 CASHIER'S CHECK
- MEN'S AND LADIES' GEORGIO MONTE DIAMOND WATCHES
- \$1,000 SERIES EE U.S. SAVINGS BOND

BONUS: CALL IMMEDIATELY AND ASK HOW YOU CAN ACTUALLY RECEIVE
MORE THAN JUST ONE OF THE FIVE AWARDS LISTED ABOVE!

FIRST CLASS MAIL
ZIP + 4 PERMIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
DALLAS, TX
PERMIT NO. 88

RETAIL VALUE
\$25,000.00
600.00
5,000.00
500.00
1,000.00
(AT MATURITY)

IMPORTANT! TO ENTER:

You must return your Address Label with your ? Sweepstakes
Numbers on this Entry-Order Card in order to qualify for the prize.
You may have already won in these fabulous no purchase necessary
MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR SWEEPSTAKES!
(The winning number has already been selected and sealed away —
it may be in your hands right now!)

PASTE YOUR ADDRESS LABEL HERE
— AND MAIL CARD TODAY!

**ORDER NOW--
DON'T BE DROPPED!**

atry in ancient Israel was defined as bowing to a carved or painted image. But it is more than this. Idolatry is any misplaced allegiance. It is a lust or longing for *anything* that takes the place of God in our affections, anything that comes between us and God. It may be something innocent of itself, like our home, or family, or even our work; it may be a too absorbing hobby, a too dominant interest, or a love of greed or gain. The prophet Ezekiel

said, "Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart" (Ezek. 14:3)—and so may we.

As Christians, we cannot allow ourselves to be overpowered by a love of money. Money is necessary and lawful in its place, when used for lawful ends. But its acquisition must not become an end in itself, or absorb too large a portion of our thought and interest. "The love of money is the root of all evil," and Christians are not ex-

empt. There is great danger in acquiring an overanxious desire or longing for money.

We cannot expect that our decision not to participate in any type of legal or illegal gambling will alter it's immediate destiny. However, the decision will prove a step forward for us, toward our goal of spiritual maturity and the crown of life.

And what earthly prize could even begin to compare with that! MM

"IMPORTANT"—"URGENT!"— "VERY PERSONAL"

OFFICIAL
REPLY
FORM
0120733460 03074

0120733460 03074

— Please enroll me as a member of
the Commanders Club with my Gift marked below:
() \$ Other () \$12

COMMANDERS
CLUB

per recognition, please return
my form with your check.

RETURN THIS STUB
TO BE AWARDED ON MARCH 31, 1990

On the Other Side

When They Beg, and Appeal, and Intimidate...

BECAUSE YOU'VE STOOD WITH US IN THE PAST
I KNOW YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN.

BUT OTHERS HAVE!

For just a moment, put yourself in the shoes of a woman who
suffered through several years of...
I wish I could tell you this doesn't happen too often...
we know differently. Reports tell us that over 13,000 be-
darkened VA hospital wards across the nation, because me-
staff them. And believe it or not the budget cutters in Was-
wounded veterans to pay for part of the cost of their

Vicious guerillas made
this innocent girl an orphan.
Now her only hope for the future
is caring people like you.

Every night, Rosa Marie pulls a tattered blanket
over herself and curls up on the hard wood floor. She
cries quietly in the darkness as she tries to fall asleep.

GRAND PRIZE: OLDSMOBILE CALAIS
OR \$10,000 IN CASH
TO BE AWARDED ON MARCH 31, 1990

MISSIONS SWEEPSTAKES

KEEP THIS
PRIZE

Make all checks payable to
Please return this form with your gift.
You will be sent a tax deductible receipt.

But lately, the violence in Canaguaro has worsened and Sister Leonore has
had to take in more and more girls. Some are dropped off by parents, fearful that
their girls might be killed or captured by the guerrillas... while others, like Rosa
Marie, are orphaned and have no place to go.

The situation was so critical that there were over 40 young girls sleeping on
the floor in the classrooms because there was simply no more room.

...wrote me an urgent letter requesting \$20,000 in emergency

...to send her this sum and a
fancy soon. But problems
furniture for this

[] \$1000 [] \$500 [] \$100 [] \$50 [] \$25 []

[] Send the gift of the month.
It is written on the other side.

Account Number
013516

On the other side of the dangers threatening the Christian are the countless advertisements and solicitations that come in the mail. A recent article in *Consumer Report* magazine warned against these, and how many elderly people are being taken by them. Some ask only for one's name and address, and the answers to a few general questions; but it is not safe to reply to such requests. They make a reply sound very urgent, and themselves very authoritative, appealing to your sense of moral duty. They make you feel obligated to do something for them in return for what they are doing for you, but many of them are frauds. It is a billion-dollar racket.

It is a racket that all Christians should—must—avoid. It is simply not possible to know from reading the advertisements which are reputable and which are not.

The only safe course is to not respond to any.

Our government has investigated some of these organizations, and has found where people have appealed for

money in the name of an organization that did not even exist—often by changing only a word or a few letters from the name of one commonly known. To make themselves appear even more convincing and veritable, these deceptive campaigns enclose pictures of their buildings, or people, or children for whom they are raising money. There have been cases where good-hearted Americans gave millions of dollars thinking they were helping a good cause, when in reality they were only enriching some scheming individual.

What should we as Christians do with such mail? *Throw it away.* We are responsible, as good stewards of God, for the proper use of our money. We cannot judge the worthiness of a cause by a circular we receive in the mail. Advertisements may sound good and trustworthy on the surface, may be well written and seem to support a good cause, but we cannot know the facts by what they say. Furthermore, these organizations sell name lists to others of their kind, and soon the innocent goodhearted responder

is deluged with bushels of this type of mail.

Christians stand more in danger of being hurt by dishonest solicitation than most people because they are generous, kindhearted, and sympathetic. But as stewards of God, we must be wary. We do not have enough information to judge between one and another, and most know how to write to get sympathy and support.

The only safe course is to not even answer mail-order appeals for money. Even if they say their message is IMPORTANT or URGENT or VERY PERSONAL and they insist that they need a reply IMMEDIATELY, discard it. We are not subject to their mandates or directions. And they have devised all kinds of schemes to get response from the innocent.

We cannot expect the situation to improve. The Bible foretells that there will be many deceivers in the last days, and that such will get worse and worse. But as Christians we do not want any part in it. Our money belongs to God, and we are accountable to Him for the use we make of it. MM



Thy Kingdom come

Thy will be done on Earth

These Things Shall Be!

- The Coming of Elijah
- The Second Advent of Christ
- The first Judgment
- Armageddon
- The Millennial Reign of Christ
- The Second Judgment
- Eternity

Part 3 Step By Step to Eternity

THE KINGDOM is the sure and certain promise of God.
But how do we get from here to there?
God has not left us in the dark. He has revealed a
succession of events which will bring that Kingdom to reality.

The Messenger Arrives: ELIJAH THE PROPHET

The second advent of Jesus is a fact confirmed again and
again by the sacred writers. Also foretold is the arrival of a



as it is in Heaven.

herald, Elijah the prophet. Concerning Elijah we read from the prophet Malachi: "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5-6).

As John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus' first coming, so Elijah will herald Jesus' second advent. John the Baptist preached the message of repentance. He was a voice "crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." Those who listened to John were more ready to receive Jesus' message when He began His ministry.

So when Elijah begins his mission of restoring all things (Matt. 17:11) and bringing in the great moral reformation, the people who listen to his warnings will be in a frame of mind to accept the authority of Jesus when He comes. Elijah will arrive "before the great and dreadful [terrible, RSV] day of the Lord," to turn men and women to the Lord, "lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

A tremendous work awaits this divine messenger upon his arrival from the unknown sphere where he has been in training since his translation nearly 3,000 years ago. A hostile and unbelieving world must be warned of the impending change. One of his first tasks will be the restoring of the power of the Holy Spirit, withdrawn in the first century A.D. The restoring of this power will arouse attention, and

prepare the way for the Great King.

The length of time between the coming of Elijah and the actual appearing of Christ is not revealed; but the Scriptures suggest that it will not be long. Once God commences His great work upon earth, events will move rapidly (Rom. 9:28). Retribution for man's defiance of God's law has been a long time coming, but when it comes it will be swift.

Before the King Arrives: THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD IN CHRIST

Before the Kingdom can be established, even before the rulers for that Kingdom can be selected, the sleeping servants of Christ, those who have died, must be resurrected, restored to the level of the living, so that they can be judged and rewarded for their life work.

A physical, bodily resurrection was the hope and confidence of all of God's people through the ages. Those faithful servants of old who looked forward to the time when God's Kingdom should be established on earth saw also the Day when they would awake from death to inherit those promises.

The apostle Paul said definitely, "There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust" (Acts 24:15).

Especially striking are the words of the prophet Job. Knowing that death would claim him, he confided in the promise of God, hence could exult,

"I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me" (Job 19:25-27).

The Psalmist also expressed his confidence in his own personal resurrection: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave" (Ps. 49:15).

The prophets Isaiah and Daniel expressed their belief in the raising of the people of God from the dead. Isaiah wrote, "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust:....the earth shall cast out the dead" (Isa. 26:19). And Daniel, looking ahead to the time when the plan of God would be consummated, said, "At that time shall Michael [the Chief One, Christ] stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people...and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:1-2).

The Bible does not disclose just when this resurrection of the dead will occur or who will perform it, but it seems altogether possible that it may be one of the missions of the herald, Elijah, as the apostle Paul pictures the sleeping saints among those who with the living rise to meet Christ in the

A *physical, bodily
resurrection
was the hope and
confidence of all God's
people through the ages.*

air at His return (I Thess. 4:17). This would be possible if the dead in Christ had been resurrected by Elijah.

In fact, I Thessalonians 4 pictures the approach of Christ, the resurrection, and the arrival of the herald so close as to be one event: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel ["Chief Messenger," Concordant Version], and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise" (v. 16).

The Event of the Ages: THE KING IS HERE!

Suddenly, with the masses still unbelieving, the King will come, not in spirit, but bodily, as He went away (Acts 1:11); and not in secrecy or obscurity, but openly, visibly. His coming will be visible, as visible as the lightning that flashes out of the east and shines even unto the west (Matt. 24:27).

Some day, some ordinary day, the heavens will open, and down the parted skies will come the King in the greatness of His strength, His face shining as the sun in its splendor, His eyes like a flame of fire, His voice like the sound of many waters, and

attended by a splendid retinue of shining seraphim. With brilliant bands of celestial hosts filling the skies, He, the immortal Conqueror, the eternal King, the Prince of Peace, shall come to take His throne, and "every eye shall see him" (Rev. 1:7).

How magnificent beyond all mortal comprehension! How glorious, how sublime the moment when He "shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels" (II Thess. 1:7).

Besides accompanying the King, these angels have yet another purpose in coming: to assist in the work of gathering the saints. "He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:31). Wherever His servants have fallen asleep, from there shall they be gathered.

The arrival of the King will be the greatest event of the ages. To those who have been watching, waiting, preparing, His arrival will mark the culmination of their every hope and the realization of their highest desire and anticipation.

The arriving King will be welcomed by His own—and in a singular manner. As soon as Christ appears to view, the living believers, together with the resurrected ones, shall rise to meet Him in the air. The apostle Paul describes this meeting in the air: "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them [the resurrected ones] in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air" (I Thess. 4:17).

The First Judgment: JUDGMENT OF GOD'S SERVANTS

Next in the sequence of events is the judging of God's servants. Those

to whom God has entrusted His priceless wisdom with its promises of eternal rewards cannot escape being called to give account of their stewardship, to receive reward or punishment according to the record of their lifework. Jesus taught this truth in Revelation 22:12, "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." Again in Matt. 16:27, "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."

Many prophecies of Scripture focus upon this Judgment and what it will accomplish. Jesus mentioned it in the parable of the Talents as "the lord of those servants" coming and reckoning with them (Matt. 25:19). He described it further as a separation of "sheep" and "goats." We read: "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 25:31-33).

The prophet Daniel pictures the auspicious event in these words (7:9-10): "I beheld till the thrones were cast down ['seats were placed,' RSV], and the Ancient of days did sit,...his throne was like the fiery flame,...A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened."

The purpose of this Judgment is to identify all who have faithfully served God during the first six thousand years of His plan and to reward them for their labor. Those represented as "sheep" in the parable, placed on the

right hand, are these faithful servants of God. And what is their reward? First, it is life, immortal life! (Rev. 22:12; I John 2:25). Then all the promises of God are theirs. "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations....To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 2:26; 3:21). They shall be the co-rulers with Christ. Theirs is the high honor of being kings and priests unto God (Rev. 5:9-10), reigning over the nations who will submit to the reign of Christ.

What of those represented as "goats" who are placed on the left? They are those who because of unbelief, indifference or indolence prove unfaithful. To them shall be paid the wages of sin, eternal death. "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28). The sorrow which the unfaithful shall experience will be caused by the realization of the great prize they have missed. To see one's companions gain the prize and to become fully aware that the reason for one's rejection is simple carelessness, will be the cause of the sorrow.

How many at this first Judgment will prove faithful? That number is revealed in Revelation 14:1, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." These are not the whole number that shall be saved. These are the elect, those chosen for positions of authority and leadership in God's new government. These are the bride of Christ, the firstfruits unto God, the select individuals who have worked out their salvation during their day of probation, between the time Adam was called and the Lord's return.

The Judgment: Where?

Where will this Judgment take place? The location is not specified. But the prophet Zechariah gives us one detail that may be a clue. He pictures the King "and all the saints with thee" (Zech. 14:5). The fact that the "saints" stand with Christ on Mt. Zion at the time of His arrival suggests that the Judgment may take place in the air between the time that the servants of God rise to meet their coming King and the time He first stands on Mount Zion; the "saints" must be identified at the Judgment before they stand with Christ on Mt. Zion.

God is just and His mercy boundless, but in His Kingdom He will not permit sin. All who through life spurn His pleadings and disregard His warnings after agreeing to serve Him will receive His severity. Those who have been obedient and faithful to their covenant will merit His supreme and eternal blessings. This is why Paul cautioned in these words: "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22).

Brief Interlude: FAMINE IN THE LAND

While the servants of God are being judged, what will the nations be doing about the startling events they have witnessed? We cannot expect men and women worldwide who have heard Elijah's strange message, who have been jolted by seeing dead men live again, and who have witnessed an event so spectacular as the arrival of the King, to dismiss it all as a dream. The thinking world will have been stirred. Doubtless many will be

T*o those who have been watching, waiting, preparing, the arrival of Jesus will mark the culmination of their every hope and the realization of their highest desire and anticipation.*

terror-stricken, fearing—falsely—a complete destruction of earth's inhabitants.

To this time the prediction of the prophet Amos applies. We read (8:11-12), "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it."

What a strange and unprecedented condition for the history of this planet: multitudes seeking the word of the Lord and not being able to find it! What a sharp reversal of the condition that has prevailed through the centuries!

Why the change? Has not God always had more knowledge available than men wished to avail themselves of? Why should such a condition of famine for "the word of the Lord" exist when for centuries the "word of the Lord" has been so available—and so unwanted?

The reversed situation will be a natural result of events at that time. While

the servants of God are all away at Judgment, no one will be present from whom to obtain the information demanded—knowledge of what will happen next. No representatives of the new government will be around to dispense “the word of the Lord.” For the first time in the history of our planet, the demand for knowledge of God—particularly of coming events—will exceed the supply. It is then that “they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it.”

But the hunger will not continue long. For “when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water” (Isa. 41:17-18). Only a short time, and the new supply of knowledge will be available for all who seek. No one who really hungers and thirsts after righteousness shall be left to perish.

The period of famine will be brief. Suddenly, the world will be startled by the new government—organized seemingly from nowhere—assuming authority, demanding allegiance, and commanding reform. MM

(Next Issue: *The Coronation*.)

When wealth is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; when character is lost, all is lost.

“By his faith he is speaking to us still”—Heb. 11 : 4, Moffatt.

Words for the Living

Excerpts from the sermons, talks and writings
of Rev. L. T. Nichols (1844-1912).

It is not the yoke that makes the neck sore but our hauling and pulling. If the yoke is hard we may know it is our own fault.



We should be enthused about our future; have it our meat and our drink at all times, morning, noon and night. Just think of living forever!



I would that all of you some day might be home with God to stay.



We should be exceeding thankful God has promised us such a good life on such easy conditions.



“Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure” (I John 3:3)—doesn’t this say that we cannot have that hope without purifying ourselves?



Sometimes it is good for us to be disappointed.



If we will only observe God’s ways and give thanks in everything it will aid and help us to do God’s will.

We talk about the things we think about, and we think about the things we love. If we love the evergreen shore, we will be thinking about it, and talking about it morning, noon and night. We will long for it and will be doing everything in our power to obtain it. Nothing will stand in our way.



Don’t begin to complain just because the sea is boisterous. Stick to the old ship, come what may. Soon the voyage will be over.



No matter how much wealth we may amass now, death awaits us and we must leave father, mother, brothers and sisters, lands and houses. When the grim monster knocks at our door, we must yield to the summons. Yet we are not willing to leave these things for the glorious Kingdom!



We have to be the very best persons on the earth if we want the Lord to accept us.



We cannot rejoice unless we have none on earth beside God. The Lord is the only one we can rejoice in.



Chapter 3

Problem: Hopelessness

Synopsis

Paul, the great missionary apostle, is a prisoner "in his own hired house" in Rome, awaiting trial before Nero. Upon coming to the capital, he found a congregation of Christians awaiting his leadership, and though in chains and under guard, he is still the counselor and governor, not only of this church but also of a far-flung chain of ecclesias. Daily, members of his flock come to him with their problems.

In the previous scene, the problem was *Ambition and Personal Sacrifice*. Lucius, a young Roman patrician, was torn between the things which are seen and those which are not seen. With his background and ability, there were a great many things which could be his, but which he faced giving up in order to gain the things of real value. The Apostle, with the tenderness and understanding of a father, reasoned with him on the uncertainty of this life and all it can give, and the wisdom of seeking for enduring rewards—as he himself had chosen to do.

In this scene, the problem is *Hopelessness*. We are brought face to face with one of the ugliest and most vicious features of Roman society, human slavery. Christianity had a special appeal for the oppressed classes, offering them manhood, dignity, equality, and hope, even in such a world as this.

It was not to be expected, however, that these things might be easily acquired. The trials of the present are so close to us, be the future ever so bright, and every mortal has his low moments.

In this scene, Paul is seated with Telemachus, a short

middle-aged Greek in the coarse garb of a slave, whose face is stamped with the bitterness of despair.

Telemachus: You talk of hope! Is there anything more hopeless than the life of a slave? A slave—yes! And no hope of ever being anything else. Is this the way God treats His children—some of them? It seems to me that a faith like Christianity is for *free* men, for those who can choose their own course in life. What chance has a slave?

Paul: No, my son, Christianity has a message of hope to all men. None of us can escape trouble and chastening. We all have our problems, and this is yours, a part of your discipline.

Telemachus: [*desperately*] It is more than a problem, it is a burden that I simply can't endure!

Paul: You are near-sighted, Brother Telemachus. Look ahead to the end of the matter...

Telemachus: Look ahead to what? To a life of brutal labor and cruel treatment, and the death of a beast. I try to look ahead, Sir, but it is small relief. To think of food to come next week or next month is only a torment to a hungry man. I want something now!

Paul: You can have something now. You already have it, if you could but recognize it. The hundredfold is waiting for you, as soon as you lay hold upon it.

Telemachus: What does this hundredfold look like? Is it

No one can enslave your
mind without your consent.
If your mind is above ex-
ternal things, then nothing from
without can take command of you.

beatings and starvation? Is it heat and cold and thirst and endless toil? Is it the constant threat of being sold into the arena, to make a Roman holiday? I try to dream of a glorious time to come, when all men will be brothers and Christ the King over all, but always I am awakened by the coarse voice of my master and roughly brought back to reality—to slavery. Why should this be?

Paul: I do not know. I cannot account for many things in this life. But I have learned one lesson which has been priceless to me. Have you ever been shipwrecked, Telemachus?

Telemachus: No, I have never even seen the sea.

Paul: I have been, several times. The first time—that was off Paphos—I was panic stricken. I struggled and thrashed and was at the point of sinking, when something said to me, “Relax. The water is ready to bear you up. Let it help you.” That is what I did. I turned on my back and floated quietly until strength returned and my mind cleared, and I was saved. So I say to you, and to all who have problems, or burdens as you call them: do not struggle against circumstances which can’t be changed; use them. Accept them and build around them and with them.

Telemachus: [resentfully] You have never known the life of a slave—to have no rights, not a moment you can call your own, to be completely—

Paul: Look, my son, look; what is this?

Telemachus: A chain.

Paul: Are you in chains?

Telemachus: No, not at this moment....I’m sorry, Father.

Paul: I am not free to come and go, not as free as you are. Yet I do not complain; I try to let the water of adversity hold me up. What do I gain? I have lei-

sure to write letters to the churches. I have time to get the physical rest I never had when I was free. And I have great opportunity to develop those jewels of patience and contentment. Yes, I even have some good talks with my guards. I think I may have converted a couple of them—at least they took them away.

Telemachus: But you are a free citizen, and at least you have hope of a trial and release.

Paul: Perhaps; perhaps not. Would you like to change places with me? Would you like to be at the mercy of the Emperor Nero on one of his bad days?

Telemachus: [looking uneasily at soldier] Be careful, sir.

Paul: Oh, that’s all right. This fellow doesn’t understand Greek. He’s a Dacian; very kind, but we have to use sign language....But to come back to your condition. Let’s be realistic. You are a slave. What can you do about it, if you do not accept it?

Telemachus: [sullenly] Run away.

Paul: You be careful. You know the penalty, don’t you? It isn’t worth it. Even if you escaped, you would still be a miserable fugitive, living in fear, unable to meet with the church of Christ—the only place where you can find equality and fellowship now. Just as important is the fact that the truth of Christ must not suffer. Christians must be trustworthy.

Telemachus: [rising] Even so, it is the only way I can see that I can find myself. Here I have no self. I am not a human being, not a person, neither man nor woman, but a *thing*. Service is the name the Romans give us; not servants, but only service.

Paul: [thoughtfully] Have you ever thought, my son, how like the Christian life that is? Slavery is the complete extinction of all personal rights, the loss of individuality. So in Christ we must surrender our individuality, we must lose our freedom to do as we please. No matter what we are by accident of birth, in Christ Jesus there is neither Paul nor Telemachus, neither slave nor free, rich nor poor, Jew nor Greek, male nor female: all is lost in one grand ideal—service. Service to God and to our fellow man. It is a noble service which opens the door to a new life, a wider freedom than we could ever have imagined when we were trying to have a self. I am Christ’s slave, and we are both Christ’s freemen by virtue of our wholehearted service. And this service includes your relations with your master.

Telemachus: You mean I owe *him* something?

Paul: Yes, you do. Part of Christ's service is to render honest service to your master according to the flesh, if you are called being a slave. You must glorify your service with the spirit of a Christian, not stealing, nor working only when the overseer is around. We must show that Christians are different. You have a great opportunity to witness for Christ right where you are, by the quality and honesty of your service.

Telemachus: [with disgust] That may be all right for a decent master, but mine is a beast.

Paul: All the more test of your manhood in Christ. We cannot meet or cure evil with evil. And the higher freedom you enjoy enables you to choose. If you are commanded to do something which would make you deny the faith, you can choose to witness by your suffering, or, if it comes to that, your martyrdom. Just as I am prepared to witness at this moment.

Telemachus: [slowly] This is not easy advice to take.

Paul: When did the good things ever come easy? But, after all, as I said, let's be realistic. It's the sensible thing to do, as well as the right thing. Who gets sold into the arena? Is it the diligent, honest worker, or the one who is rebellious and intractable and dangerous? It is possible that your condition is not as hopeless as you think. Slaves gain their freedom; they are being manumitted every day. Freedom is far preferable, if you can get it lawfully. Why not work to this end?

Telemachus: Not a chance.

Paul: How do you know? Try it.

Telemachus: The truth is, I hate to oblige the old beast.

Paul: Telemachus, you are lowering yourself to the level of personal hatred, which is far below the level of the Christian. You can never win by hating. Most men have something good in them, if we look for it. Try to find something in your master that you can approve, and serve that portion of him. Who knows? You might convert him by your example. Stranger things have happened.

Telemachus: I doubt it.

Paul: Now here's a test. Would you, a Christian, change places with your heathen master? Be truthful now.

Telemachus: [thoughtfully] No, I can't say that I would.

Paul: He is not free—not as free as you are. He is a slave to his riches, a slave to his social caste and custom, a slave to his evil habits, his lusts and desires, a slave

to a thousand gross superstitions, a slave to mortality. From all these things you are free—or can be. He is the one whose lot is really hopeless. What is more hopeless than the life of a slave?—It is the life and death of a slave to sin. Can't you begin to see your hundredfold?

Telemachus: Yes, I can. Things look different.

Paul: Freedom begins and ends in the mind. No one can enslave *that* without your consent. If your mind is above external things, then nothing from without can take command of you. Other men may own your body, but your soul is yours to give to whomsoever you choose. You belong to a body where all men are brothers and Christ is supreme, even now. Your master cannot trust his own household, and his life and happiness are at the mercy of the Emperor. What would he give to enjoy such fellowship as we have!

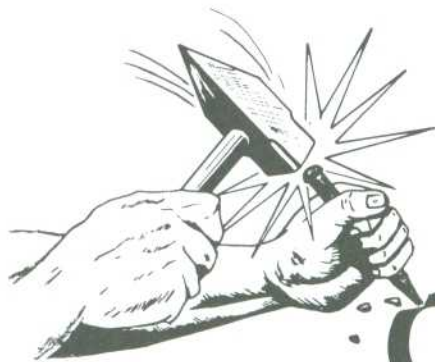
Telemachus: [standing erect, his head up] I see. I am a slave only if I choose to be. I'm glad I came tonight. I can face it once more—and win.

Paul: Remember, my son, that all present conditions are transient. This is but a phase, a minor phase, of your training. Never forget that you are a king in training, and your discipline is valuable, for no man is fit to rule until he learns to obey. Remember that when Rome, with all her glitter and show, her corruption and cruelty, is a forgotten ruin, you can be associating on equal terms with immortals and building a new world. Remember that time is very short and eternity is very long. What matter our present condition if it does not control us, if we are not overcome by evil but overcome evil with good?...Good night, my son.

[They clasp hands as the curtain falls.]

Next Problem: OLD AGE AND DEATH.

When Rome, with all her glitter and show, her corruption and cruelty, is a forgotten ruin, you can be associating on equal terms with immortals and building a new world.



CHISELWORK

We find ourselves in the workshop of the Almighty, unsightly objects," said a workman who needed not to be ashamed. We come to this holy Workshop in our rough, natural state, as wood that can be carved and polished into something useful; as rock to be transformed into a granite monument. Every bit of the material taken into this Workshop is crude and unsightly in its natural state. It takes untold hammering and chiseling to fashion the substance into a perfect, beautiful work of art.

*'Tis the Master who holds the mallet,
And day by day
He is chipping whatever environs
The form away;
Which, under His skillful cutting,
He means shall be
Wrought silently out to beauty
Of such degree
Of faultless and full perfection
That angel eyes
Shall look on the finished labor
With new surprise
That even His boundless patience
Could grave His own
Features upon such fractured
And stubborn stone.*

All with a longing desire to become something of value in the hands of the Master, something enduring, will cry more and more for the chastening rod. Anyone having spent some time in this Workshop knows he can never attain the beauty of the image of Christ without passing through this process. All must submit to the fire, the sword,

the hammer; not only submit to the chiseling process but actually long for it and rejoice in the circumstances and opportunities that arise for its use upon us, that we may be developed into something useful.

Should God allow us poor frail mortals to plan our own circumstances in life, He knows very well we would not choose discipline or contrary circumstances. We would like the easy, the comfortable, the pleasant. We would surround ourselves with things we like, without trial—hence, without development, and consequently without a character worthy of perpetuation. Therefore God in His love and mercy arranges circumstances for us that seem contrary to us, that cut and hurt, so that we may be made into something worthwhile.

He allows the fire to burn out the dross, and the hard blows of the hammer to chip the hard and worthless substance away. Without these there is no possible method of having our character refined.

*'Tis the Master who holds the chisel;
He knows just where
Its edge should be driven sharpest,
To fashion there
The semblance that He is carving,
Nor will He let
One delicate stroke too many
Or few be set
On forehead or cheek, where only
He sees how all
Is tending—and where hardest the
Blow shall fall
Which crumbles away whatever
Superfluous line
Would hinder His hand from making
The work Divine.*

The time for this making-over process is limited, and we must learn to submit quickly to the hammer and not be such hard material as will cause the hammer to glance off, allowing the rough spots on our character to remain.

There are many processes we must pass through before we can become a smooth and perfect stone for the temple of the Lord. Our reaction to each circumstance in our everyday life, be it great or small, form this process.

Should the Master's wisdom now decree work on one side of this stone, let us remember He will not be arranging these circumstances for long. It is for us to make the very most of them while He gives us the opportunity, yield and submit at once; for there is much work on our stone and only a limited time to make perfect the whole. Soon our opportunities for one specific part of the development might be terminated for work elsewhere, according as we respond to His will.

"He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." That is our motto while in this Workshop of the Almighty; whatever the process, if we let the Master have His way we shall come forth as gold. That is the end for which we are in this Workshop, and it must be constantly before our minds.

There is no staying this work of the Almighty. Our opportunities in life are never the same for long; they change frequently. It is for us to grasp them as they come and allow them to remake us; using them day by day and hour by hour, for they are ever changing. The opportunities of today may never come again. Therefore the change must be rapid and thorough.

Using the simile of clay, the Prophet wrote, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" Unfortunately, all the "clay" in this Workshop will not allow the Potter to mold it. Some may be partly softened but remain hard in other areas. To become perfect in the finale we must allow the touch of the Almighty's hand to recast our disposition until it becomes like that of Christ's. The Potter cannot mold hardened clay. If we harden or resist the molding process we make ourselves dishonorable. Only as we allow the fire of the law of God to soften us in every ordeal and become sensitive to the warmth of the Potter's hand working with us, shall we ever be made over into new creatures.

At different periods during the day of salvation, others have had their time in this Workshop. Now we are having ours. Many who had the opportunity to become a perfect vessel proved dishonorable. They resisted the sharp edge of the chisel upon them, preferring to retain their ugly imperfections. Only a few realized the pricelessness of their opportunity and submitted to the Almighty's will

instead of becoming hardened in sin.

As rough slabs of stone in this workshop, let our cry be:

*With tools of Thy choosing, Master
We pray Thee, then,
Strike just as Thou wilt, as often,
And where and when
The vehement stroke is needed;
I will not mind,
If only Thy chipping chisel
Shall leave behind
Such marks of Thy wondrous working
And loving skill,
Clear carven on aspect, stature
And face, as well,
When discipline's hands are over,
Have all sufficed
To shape me into the likeness
And form of Christ.*

Each Day

*A day of opportunity
Has been presented to me,
Not for the good that I have done,
But that the race I yet may run.
And though unworthy I have been
To walk the earth with braver men,
His hand to me is outstretched still,
Imploring me to do His will.*

*And though the day brings trials new,
And of temptations not a few,
Oh, may I use them as it were,
As tools to hew a character
Of which I shall be proud to say,
"This is the work I did today!"
For if I thus meet every test
I know I shall by God be blest!*

*Oh, may I use each circumstance
This day my progress to advance;
And may each passing hour be found
A stepping stone to higher ground;
Then when the shades of night are hung
Although my praise may not be sung
By men, I know my God will see
I grasped each opportunity.*

Exceeding Abundant!

The apostle Paul wrote that God is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20). Such description is difficult to grasp, but when we translate it into realistic thoughts and imaginations, what do we have?

Any attempt is, of course, inadequate. But our founder, Rev. L. T. Nichols, tried. Never did he address his people without thrilling anew at the reward God is offering to lowly earthborns. He thought of it, spoke of it, dreamed of it; and doing all this, he was constantly impelled to live for it.

Occasionally he prepared a bit of verse to capture the vision.

As you read this rhyme, join him in his flight of fantasy—and realize that, since this still is within the realm of what we can imagine, what will the reality be!

O what great joy and peace divine
Can all be yours, can all be mine
If we'll but walk in narrow way
With Christ our Lord each day by day!

O what a happy blissful lay
Can grace our lips in that glad day
If we will now forsake the world
And hold aloft God's truth unfurled!

O what a power our God will give
To all who now will godly live
And do His bidding, great or small,
As did our dear, beloved Paul!

O what a mansion bright and fair
We each one then will have and share,
If we'll but to all sin now die
And keep our mind on things on high.

O my! what grand beatitudes!
We'll sure enjoy the interludes
If we will crucify the flesh
And ne'er be caught in sin's dark mesh.

O what a joyful, happy band
We'll join within God's summerland;
We'll bask with them for evermore
In joys each day increasing more!

O what great joy we then will take
In passing through the pearly gate
With all the joyous happy band
Who'll enter that glad summerland!

O what a joy to then behold
This happy band all pure as gold
All shining with God's love divine
Because they did their all resign.

O wondrous summerland of joy
Without a thing that can annoy!
Among the ones that reach this land
O may we be, this little band!

O how we long to meet you there,
And in these glories gladly share,
Where all the tugs and toils of life
Will all be gone, with every strife.

O what a joy we all will take
In hearing Daniel, Paul relate
The trials they in life passed through
While they were being made o'er new.

Great Gabriel will be there in white
Who long ago passed weary night;
He has been learning, living more,
He'll have great things for us in store!

O what a pleasure, lasting, grand,
To have him 'mongst our little band!
We'll listen to his stories great
Which he to us will then relate.

'Twill make our hearts with joy expand
As Gabriel tells of his dear band,
Of all the wondrous things they've done
Throughout ten thousand ages long.

O what a privilege greater still—
'Twill give our hearts the grandest thrill
When he invites our little band
To go and see his blessed land.

May you be there to shout "Amen!
So let it be, Amen! Amen!
We'll gladly visit your own band
Within your own dear summerland!"

O what a visit that will be
To go and Gabriel's brethren see;
We'll pass ten thousand worlds so bright
With all their inmates filled with light.

And we'll hear music, oh! so grand,
That sounds afar from Gabriel's band;
They've spied dear Gabriel! oh, the joy,
That nothing ever can destroy.

And then the welcomes! oh, how sweet
As they come forth to Gabriel greet!
Yes, what grand joy, as loves entwine,
Surpassing loves of humankind.

So upright, good and grand and bright
Are all his brethren dressed in white;
All clean and spotless, pure within,
Long cleansed from every form of sin.

This trip alone will pay us great
To bear our cross and evil hate;
To do with all our mind and might
The things our God has said are right.

Long time we'll stay at Gabriel's home
And with his happy, loved ones roam.
Our minds will grow, each day expand
As stay we do with Gabriel's band.

The time will pass so quickly, fast,
Ten thousand years will soon be past,
And then we'll hear a trumpet sound
In accents sweet, "Be homeward bound."

We'll bid Adieu to Gabriel's band,
And swiftly fly to our own land,
Where our own brethren, loving, dear,
Are anxious to our story hear.

Ten billion visits we'll repeat;
Each time 'twill be a greater treat;
Time ne'er will wane nor shorter grow
As to ten billion worlds we go.

Our minds they will expand and grow
As with the noble ones we go.
How happy will the dwellers be,
Enjoying all they hear and see!

O praise the Lord! can it be true,
These wonders are for me and you?
Yes, yes! they are for each one here
Who will perform what they do hear.

O brethren, will you each one go
Where there will come no kind of woe?
All will be joy supremely great
Within the Golden City gate.

Yes, we can join that faithful band
Who'll enter God's fair summerland,
Those who will clothe in garments white
By doing what they know is right.

Old Testament Queries

1. Who suggested selling Joseph to the Ishmeelites?
2. What was the name of Joseph's wife in Egypt?
3. From whom did Moses receive his name?
4. Who built a monument in the middle of a river, and why?
5. What criminal in his confession said, "I saw, I coveted, I took"?
6. Who said, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord"?
7. Who said, "Ye are witnesses against yourselves"?
8. What is the most noted instance of devoted friendship in the Bible?
9. From what king did David take both crown and capital?
10. Who preferred in the time of trouble to fall into God's hands, rather than into the hands of man? What was the occasion?
11. What queen sent a message with a forged signature?
12. Who destroyed the brazen serpent Moses made? Why?
13. What laboring men were so honest that no accounts were kept?
14. By whom was Solomon's temple destroyed?
15. To which son of Jacob was the birthright given when taken from Reuben?
16. What tribe furnished the counselors of Israel?
17. What tribe of Israel was specially characterized by sincerity?
18. Who were the doorkeepers of the ark of the covenant?
19. To whom was applied the military title of general?
20. Who shut the door of Noah's the ark?
21. What queen in Bible times is described as that "wicked woman"?
22. Who, of the kings of Israel, was carried captive to Babylon, and brought back to Jerusalem?
23. What king of Judah had not seen a copy of the law until he was twenty-six years old?
24. What women helped to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem?
25. Who said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away"?
26. Who said, "All that a man hath will he give for his life"?
27. Who said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him"?

ANSWERS:

1. Judah.—Gen. 37:26-27.
2. Asenath.—Gen. 41:45.
3. Pharaoh's daughter.—Ex. 2:10.
4. Joshua, in Jordan, as a memorial of God's deliverance.—Josh. 4:9.
5. Achan.—Josh. 7:21.
6. Joshua.—Josh. 24:15.
7. Joshua.—Josh. 24:22.
8. That of Jonathan and David.—I Sam. 18:1.
9. From the king of the Ammonites.—II Sam. 12:29-30.
10. David.—II Sam. 24:14.
11. Jezebel used Ahab's name.—I Kings 21:8.
12. Hezekiah.—II Kings 18:4.
13. Workmen on the temple.—II Kings 12:7-15.
14. Nebuchadnezzar.—II Kings 25:1-11.
15. To Joseph.—I Chron. 5:1.
16. Issachar.—I Chron. 12:32.
17. Zebulun.—I Chron. 12:33.
18. Obed-edom and Jehiah.—I Chron. 15:24.
19. Joab, of David's army.—I Chron. 27:34.
20. The angel of the Lord.—Gen. 7:16.
21. Athaliah.—II Chron. 24:7.
22. Manasseh.—II Chron. 33:11, 13.
23. Josiah.—II Chron. 34:1, 18.
24. The daughters of Shallum.—Neh. 3:12.
25. Job.—Job 1:21.
26. Satan.—Job 2:4.
27. Job.—Job 13:15.

Obituary

Emanuel F. Boyer

On February 27, funeral services were conducted for a friend and brother, Emanuel F. Boyer.

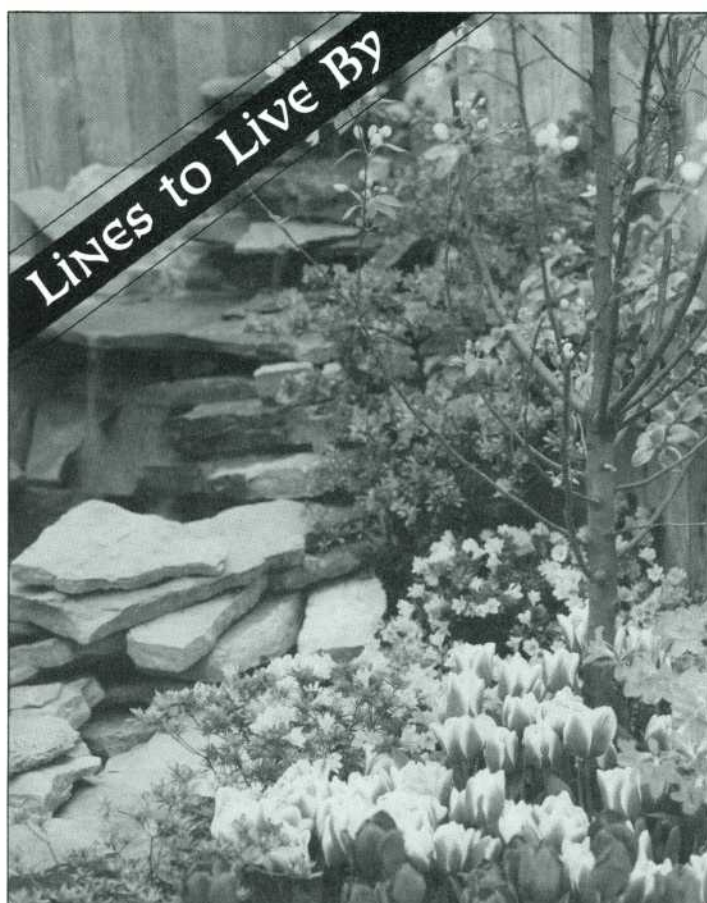
Brother Boyer had a lifelong acquaintance with the Church, his mother having obtained the Church's literature from missionaries who were canvassing in the area of North Tonawanda, New York, about 1919. The Church missionaries at that time traveled the waterways of New York State by means of the Megiddo III, a large yacht constructed for the purpose, with living accommodations for six men, who from the yacht would travel to nearby areas on bicycle and on foot.

Brother Boyer's mother was impressed by the literature, and instructed her children in the principles and beliefs of the Church.

Through the years he kept in contact with the Church, attending services regularly as long as—and even longer than—his health permitted. He also took a keen interest in Church activities and participated in Church programs. During years when his business required him to travel to various distant points of the United States, he planned his trips so that he could visit interested brethren along his route, encouraging both them and himself.

Brother Boyer is survived by his wife Betty; three sons, Emanuel F., Jr., George, and Thomas; and four daughters, Betty Alice, Virginia, Diane, and Lynette; also six grandchildren. He is also survived by three brothers, Clarence, Malvan, and Milton; and one aunt, Sister Hedwig Cummings of our Rochester Congregation.

Rough paths often
lead to desirable
destinations.



*The tissue of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own,
And in the field of destiny
We reap as we have sown.*

No Time?

No time, no time to study,
To meditate and pray,
And yet much time for doing
In a fleshly, worldly way.

No time for things eternal,
But much for things of earth;
The things important set aside
For things of little worth.

Some things, 'tis true, are needful,
But first things must come first;
And what displaces God's own Word—
It surely shall be cursed.

*If you neglect today's tasks, you in-
crease tomorrow's burdens.*

"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God" (Rev. 3:12).
Wherever one is being tried and ripened, in whatever common or ordinary way, there God is hewing out a pillar for His temple.
Oh, if the stone could only have some vision of the temple of which it is to be a part forever, what patience would fill it as it feels the blows of the hammer and knows that success for it is simply to let itself be wrought into whatever shape the Master wills.

Let us learn from those who went before to live in hope. Those who are now at rest were once like ourselves. They were once weak, faulty, sinful; they had their burdens and hindrances, their weariness, their failures and their falls. But now they have overcome. Their life was once homely and commonplace. Their day ran out as ours. Morning and noon and night came and went to them as to us. Little fretful circumstances and little disturbing changes wore into their hours, just as into ours. There is nothing in our life that was not in theirs; there was nothing in theirs that may not also be in ours. They have overcome, each one, and one by one; each in his turn, as God used and tried him. And so may it be with us.

He Is Watching!

*Whatever you think, both in joy and in woe,
Think nothing you would not like Jesus to know.
Whatever you say, in a whisper or clear,
Say nothing you would not like Jesus to hear.
Whatever you read, though the page may allure,
Read nothing unless you are perfectly sure
Not the least consternation would show in your look
If God should say solemnly,
"Show Me that book!"*

*Whatever you write, if with haste or with heed,
Write nothing you would not like Jesus to read;
Whatever you sing, in the midst of your glees,
Sing nothing that God's list'ning ear could displease;
Wherever you go, never go where you'd fear
God's question put to you:
"What doest thou here?"*