

# Megiddo Message



April, 1995  
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*Masterpiece  
in the Making*



# "Follow Me" —Which Way?



The depth of our Christian faith is determined by the depth of our commitment to answer the call of the Master: "Follow me."

But following Jesus is not an effortless, blind, thoughtless action. Nor can it be a spasmodic effort. The Christian life must be a life of constant struggle. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh" (Gal. 5:17). It is good against bad, and bad against good; one impulse pulling, another pushing. It is the call of the higher against the weight and drag of the lower.

The apostle Paul was keenly aware of the downward tug on his highest and best efforts when he wrote: "I do not practice what I want to do, but I am always doing what I hate....Now really it is not I that am doing these things, but it is sin which has its home within me....I have the will but not the power to do what is right. Indeed, I do not do the good things that I want to do, but I do practice the evil things that I do not want to do....When I want to do right, the wrong is always in my way. For in accordance with my better inner nature I approve God's law, but I see another power operating in my lower nature in conflict with the power operated by my reason, which makes me a prisoner to the power of sin which is operating in my lower nature" (Rom. 7:18-22, Williams).

We who encounter today's version of this struggle need to hear again the call of our Master: "Follow me." And what an overtone of urgency we should hear in His words at this very late hour in the day. There is no time for vacillation, no time for indecision. If we would follow, we must *do it now*.

But what other alternatives do we have? Where else can we find

real hope, real peace, real joy? Where else can we find contentment and life?

To be sure, there are many other voices calling in a multitude of directions. But only the Master is calling us higher, calling us to virtue and goodness, calling us to life.

What does it mean to follow Christ? To follow Christ is to accept what He taught and to believe in the values He embodied and proclaimed: the surety of the coming Kingdom of God; and the character He requires of each one who will live in that Kingdom.

To follow Christ is to hold certain definite convictions about Him as the center around which we erect our own structure of living. These convictions will be life-transforming.

Following Christ means being done with our self-centeredness, our selfish self-interest, our narrow vision and small goals. When we follow Christ, life is changed forever by the dimension He has given it, the eternal dimension, the linking of our lives with the Divine purpose.

Then, too, following Christ means a life of devotion. In the Gospel record we can trace the life and ministry of our Lord. Here we can read His teachings and find through the alchemy of faith that those words were spoken not merely to those who listened on a Judean hillside 20 centuries ago but also to us in our situation today. In these words is the hope of life, the direction of love, and the power of obedience.

Then, too, following Christ means a new relationship with others. Jesus was very concerned about how His disciples related to one another and to Him. God seldom calls one to walk alone. We learn

from our interaction with others, whether they be committed followers of Christ or not. To each and all we must be examples of the believers, and of the life-changing power of our commitment to Christ. In our association with others we will find countless opportunities to practice patience, trust, courage, and fortitude.

Following Christ means adhering strictly to His pattern of belief. What we believe is *very* important. If our structure of belief is weak, our faith will be weak.

Our renewed commitment to Christ affects *every* part of our life.

One of our problems today in our commitment is the lack of the long-term dimension. Too easily we live from day to day without enough view of the future. We dabble with church, giving it lip service, using its services when we feel in need, but not really getting serious about our personal obligation to Christ. Here the imperative demand of Jesus echoes: "Follow me!" When was Jesus only half committed? When was He not mindful of His longtime career? When did He ever dabble with His faith, giving it mere lip service, using it only when he felt the need of it? The answer is *never!*

Do we wonder, then, that He calls us to a life of service to others? Do we wonder that He would have us thinking first of our duty to Him, and a right example to others, as we follow His steps?

The demands of following are high. Jesus never promised us a rose garden. He did not sugar-coat the requirements for discipleship. He went beyond the "normal" demands of nominal religion of His day. Men thought Him an extremist. But God blessed and honored Him. Are we not wisest to follow Him?

(Continued on page 27)



"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."
- in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be **King of the whole earth**.
- in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- in ourselves as capable 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.
- 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 God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

## SOON-COMING EVENTS ...

**The Herald and the KING**

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

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

The Bible pictures all events, all men and all nations moving together toward this one God-ordained climax, when "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), a kingdom in which all who live will enjoy the blessings of peace, equity and prosperity. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants, bringing to reality the promise of our Lord in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

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# Megiddo Message

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# Masterpiece

*In the*

*Making*

*Christian living  
is an art.*

Take an artist's palette, a brush, paint of various hues, a bit of water, and a canvas. Now add the artist, along with an almost infinite amount of time and patience. And watch, as the artist carefully dips the brush, first in one color, then in another, and touches lightly the piece of canvas. Then he pauses to study what he has done. What is happening? A concept is being translated into form and color. It is a masterpiece in the making.

Take a life, fresh from the hand of its Creator. Supply an abundant measure of the knowledge of God, along with the mental and physical resources God provides. Add a sufficient amount of time, patience and mercy. Watch over it with Divine providence, subject it to the disciplines of life, and watch it develop. What do you have? A masterpiece in the making.

God has called each of His children to be an artist, to fashion a superb and beautiful character from the resources He provides. Each has the potential to succeed. What we make of it is our deci-



sion. We can take the trials, the disciplines, the moment-by-moment opportunities of life, and fret and complain about them; or we can use each as an artist uses a bit of color on his palette to produce a masterpiece.

We can let the events of our days take their course, with little or no conscious thought. Or we can plan each move, as according to our Father's directions, and produce a masterpiece. The choice is ours.

Christian living is more than adherence to a code of clearly defined "do's" and "don'ts." It is the delicate combining of rare skills with precision and forethought, fitted to a predesigned pattern, refined by discipline and trial, to become part of a beautiful, skilfully wrought masterpiece.

Christian living is more than a monotonous routine of meeting the necessities of life. It is the creating of a work of art.

And just as the artist gives beauty to the elements of form, color, or sound, so the true Christian transforms the raw materials of life into a beautiful expression of the will of God.

Look at a great painting, and you see in it something that captured the artist's imagination. There is a subject, there is action, and there is result. If it expresses a concept and a beauty that is timeless, men call it a classic.

Look closer at the great painting, and you see even more—you see something of the artist himself. True Christian living is like that. But if you look closely, you see something greater than the artist, or the artist's concept—you see the face of Christ. That is just the way each follower of Christ would have it. Who wishes to project *himself*, when he can display the image of One who is supremely greater?

And just as the artist uses hue and texture to express a feeling, a passion, or a vision that has captured his imagination, so the Christian expresses eternal values in the matchless colors of virtue and holiness.

Every art has its basic elements. Painting is the combining of colors; and almost anyone with pigment, brush and canvas can paint. But to catch the vision of beauty, then combine the colors to produce a masterpiece: this calls for the skills of the artist.

Sculpture is the splitting and chipping of stone to create an image. And almost anyone can apply the hammer to the stone. But to see an object of beauty in the unhewn slab, then chisel and chip until there emerges from the massive rock a form of beauty that touches the heart: this calls for the skills of the artist.

Music is the combining of rhythm, harmony and melody, producing a quality of sound; and any amateur can create a noise. But to combine the elements of music to produce a sound that moves the heart and inspires the imagination: this is the task of the artist. Such artistry was what Handel described when, upon completing his writing of "The Messiah," he said, "I did think that I did see all heaven before me, and the great God."

Any school child can learn the letters of the alphabet and can use them to form words, then combine words to make sentences. But to take those words and sentences and use them to express a message which is the vision of the heart and the ideal of life: this needs the skill of the artist.

God has equipped all of us with the same basics of body and mind, in greater or lesser measure. All of us breathe, and eat, and sleep. All of us have the capacity to learn, to remember, to reason and reflect. But God has given us also the ability to become artists of life, to use the elements we have been given to produce a character of matchless beauty, a pattern of exquisite loveliness, a life in which faith and hope become real and visible in everyday situations; a life that transforms theory into practice and godly principle into daily conduct; a life that exemplifies the peace and holiness and uprightness of Jesus Christ; a life

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*Christian living is more than a monotonous routine of meeting the necessities of life. It is the task of creating a masterpiece.*

that achieves the very highest standard of God-likeness; a life that becomes a work of art which God will commend in His book of remembrance, and assign an eternal place in His hall of fame—such a life is truly a masterpiece in the Divine scheme, a work of eternal worth.

But such a masterpiece is not the product of a moment, a day, a week, or a year. Nor is it the result of undirected chance. No masterpiece makes itself. We cannot expect to go thoughtlessly through our days, and suddenly awake ten years hence and find ourselves changed and beautiful in character. We must set ourselves a goal, picture the masterpiece we want to create, then work steadily toward making that vision a reality. Every day, every hour must contribute something to its beauty.

How shall we do it? By giving our best to each opportunity as it arises; making each hour count for some eternal good. We can choose the very best thoughts to occupy our minds, the best words to reply to another's request; the noblest activity to fill our time.

We can reject anything inferior,

anything sensual, anything base, anything tainted by the values of this world. Nothing inferior can be part of our masterpiece. Every part must be as beautiful as we want the whole to be.

**H**ow well are we doing? You and I. How are we progressing in the making of *our* masterpiece?

If our moment-by-moment decisions are inferior, we cannot expect that one day we shall have formed a masterpiece. Good cannot come of evil, nor beauty from ugliness. Good work must build upon good work, beauty upon beauty, artistry upon artistry, if we are to impress our Creator. Our talents, our time, our materials—all belong to our Creator. All that we can claim as our own is what we make by using His materials.

May God grant us the strength and the diligence to use wisely every resource He has entrusted to our care, to bring the work we have begun to a glorious completion. So shall we have a rare and exquisite masterpiece to present to our King when He returns. May God help us to this end. □

## *Royal Resolutions*

- ❖ I will study the language of gentleness and refuse to use words that bite and tones that crush.
- ❖ I will practice patience at home, lest my testy temper break through unexpectedly and disgrace me.
- ❖ I will remember my neighbors have troubles enough to carry without loading mine on them.
- ❖ I will excuse others' faults and failures as often and as fully as I expect them to be lenient with mine.
- ❖ I will cure criticism with commendation and build healthy muscles by service.
- ❖ I will sweeten my nature by smiling, even when I do not feel like it.
- ❖ I will pray fervently, think good thoughts, and do a full day's work every day as to the Lord.



# Jesus Christ:

One and only

Every normal person wants to excel. There is probably no greater drive in the human breast than the desire to surpass one's equals, to be recognized and honored in one's field. It is the motivator of the Olympic contestant, to set a new record, to be recognized and acclaimed as "first." It is the force driving the enthusiastic ten-year old, who comes home from school exclaiming, "I got 95 on the history test today!" Another statement follows quickly, in a more subdued tone, and gives the real reason for the enthusiasm: "Everyone else in the class got in the low 80's, or 70's."

God does not condemn our desire to excel. He even encourages it. And to be sure that we are not too easily satisfied He has provided us the very highest pattern of excellence to copy: Jesus Christ.

As Christians, we can only observe the matchless record and attainments of Jesus with the greatest admiration and humility. No one among our human race ever achieved more than He, or in so short a time. No one among us ever received so many "first prize" awards.

How did Jesus excel? In what way was He first, one and only?



## Messiah

Throughout Old Testament times, the coming Messiah was the hope of Israel. Prophet after prophet revealed the details of His life and destiny. All through the Old Testament, from the first prophecy to the last, there is an air of expectancy—SOMEONE is coming!—the One to whom all the prophets gave witness. From earth's earliest ages the saints looked forward, not only to events in the future but also to the coming of One who would fulfill the Divine promises, who would be Saviour, Deliverer and King—the Messiah.

The New Testament opens with the appearance of that expected One, and all history from that time forward became a preparation for His second advent. Jesus throughout His ministry was continually affirming that He was the *Coming One* the One who had been prophesied. He was the one and only; there would be no other.

But for those who had misread the prophecies and who had anticipated a gallant display of power and authority, His quiet entrance was a disappointment. No splendor, no display, no show of power, He came as a lowly mortal, another son of Israel, learning and growing like other children. When He began to preach and teach, He told them the plan. He declared plainly that He was indeed the Messiah, that all that had been prophesied would be fulfilled. He had first to prove Himself by a life of flawless purity, then die, be resurrected, and ascend to His Father. And as surely as He was speaking to them, so surely He would return as Conqueror, Deliverer and King.

And so He taught them. His method of teaching was to open the Scriptures, with which He was totally familiar. "And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said



in all the Scriptures concerning himself" (Luke 24:27, NIV).

Wouldn't we like to have heard such a discourse!

Hear what He said to two of His disciples: "How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe" (v 26)—because they did not believe all that the Old Testament prophets had written of Him.

We would like to know how Jesus learned of His place in the Divine scheme, whether through instruction from His mother or directly from His heavenly Father. But by one means or another, He learned that He was the One who had been predicted, and could affirm from the Scriptures (John 5:39), "They are they which testify of me." If He was not the One to whom all the prophets gave witness, then He was a colossal fraud and liar to take such a witness and relate it to Himself as He did, declaring publicly that He was the Messiah for whose coming men had longed.

One day when in the temple He took a copy of the ancient book in which was written Isaiah's prophecy, and "He found the place"—He had no need to fumble—and turning quickly to the Prophet's description of the mission of the coming Messiah, He read it and then related it to Himself, saying: "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears" (Luke 4:16-21; see also Isa. 61:1). He was the One and Only—no one else could fulfill what had been written.

At Bethlehem, the Christ of prophecy became the Christ of history, and through His brief mortal career He was always taking Old Testament prophecies and relating them to Himself. Openly He declared that His life and work were the fulfillment of all that had been written in the first part of the Volume. Although the greatest part of His work was yet future, with His arrival the prophecies began to be fulfilled. At the early age of thirty-three He was cut off, but death could not keep its prey—here was another fulfillment of prophecy, and another step toward the complete fulfillment of His Messianic mission—to be the deliverer of His people and the King of the whole earth.



### **Begotten Son of God**

Jesus began life with a singular distinction—He was the only begotten Son of God. Born of a virgin, conceived by the Holy Spirit, by a higher law than is known to us, He was from the start ahead of us in one sense: He had only one human parent. He was the Son of God. But this did not mean that He was partly God, or Divine in nature. The Bible describes Him as having been "made in all points like his brethren" (Heb. 2:17). He was the "man Jesus Christ," a "partaker of flesh and blood" like other human children (Heb. 2:14). Still He carried the honorary distinction of being the only begotten Son of God (John 3:16; I John 4:9); the "only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14); the "only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father" (John 1:18).

Being the Son of God, He is the Elder Brother of all who become sons of God by adoption, by becoming morally like Christ. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom 8:14).

This opportunity is open to each of us: to become sons of God—and brothers and sisters of Jesus Christ. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (1 John 3:1-2).



### **Firstborn From the Dead**

Jesus had the privilege among earth-borns of being the first to be raised from the state of death, never again to die. A few others had been resurrected before Him, but not to life eternal. Said the apostle Paul of Jesus, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept"—the firstfruits to life and immortality (I Cor. 15:20). Then he continues, "But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming" (v. 23).

God planned that Jesus should be a perfect example of the entire process by which a mortal can attain the immortal state. To demonstrate this process, Jesus had to die and be raised to life, for this step is vital in the career of every one of God's chosen ones, with but very few exceptions.

The apostle Paul was motivated by the hope of the resurrection: "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:11). And why did Paul believe in the resurrection? Because He had seen the risen Christ. Indeed, he wrote, "If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not...But"—what glorious certainty—"Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:13-20).



### **Head of the Church**

Jesus has the distinction of being the one and only head of the Church, also called the body of Christ, His loyal believers, those who are following His example and conforming their lives to His pattern in hope of receiving eternal honor and blessing in the world to come. The apostle Paul wrote to the Colossian brethren of the eminence of Christ: "And he is before all things [not in time but in authority, supreme], and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:17-18). Only one could occupy such a position in relation to the Church, and that One was Jesus Christ.



### **King of Kings**

Among the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Jesus was the prophecy that He would be King. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one



Lord, and his name one" (Zech. 14:9). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jer. 23:5). The prophets leave no question as to the identity of this King. The angel, speaking to Mary, said she would "bring forth a son," who would be called "Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33).

Jesus will be the one and only King of the whole earth. But what of His title, "King of kings"? The new Kingdom will be His Kingdom, under His jurisdiction, and "all dominions shall serve and obey Him" (Dan. 7:27). But He will not rule alone—He will have associate kings seated with Him on His throne of power (Rev. 3:21). That is why the Revelator saw Him in vision as having on His vesture a name written "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev. 19:16).

 **Mediator between God and Men**

One of Jesus' distinctive roles is that of mediator or advocate in behalf of His human brethren. God being Almighty and All-powerful, and we mortals being in our natural state so much dust of the earth, God has devised a special plan whereby we may have our requests heard on high. The means: Our mediator, the man Christ Jesus (I Tim. 2:5). When Jesus was talking to His disciples the night He was betrayed, He instructed them to beseech the Father in His name. "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you" (John 16:23; 15:16; 14:13). The apostle John recognized this same arrangement, counting it a favor: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (I John 2:1).

When we realize that God's thoughts and ways are as far above ours as the heavens are above the earth, we can thank Him for providing a mediator, one to help us, to be our Elder Brother, to show us the way, and to bring our requests into the Divine presence. When we consider His greatness and our utter insignificance, how humble and contrite we should be in His presence. And how we should thank God for providing us a mediator, the One and Only, Jesus Christ.

 **Alpha and Omega**

Only Jesus can say, "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last" (Rev. 1:11). Actually, this is a distinction He shares with His Father, or rather, receives from His Father. But Jesus is the one and only beginning and end of a special new creation, the earth made over new and filled with God's glory. Of that special creation He will be indeed the beginning—the instigator, the one to set up the new government; and He will also be its end—its climax—as the finished Kingdom is handed over to the Father, to continue in its perfect state through the eternal ages (I Cor. 15:24).

 **Saviour of Life**

God has given Jesus a singular distinction of being able to impart life to whomsoever He chooses. God alone holds the key to life. He is its designer, and He alone can create life. But life as we know it is not the only life there is. He also designs life on a higher level—the immortal level. And God has given to Jesus the power to bestow this higher level of life on whomsoever He will. We read: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will";...and "as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man" (John 5:21, 26-27). To be able to create life would be honor sufficient; but to Jesus has

been given the singular honor of bestowing life immortal. He will be the Judge of all who have covenanted to serve God during 6,000 years. All must appear before Him, to receive according to what they have done, whether good or bad (II Cor. 5:10; Luke 14:14; Eccl. 12:13-14). Jesus pictured Himself in this vital role as a shepherd dividing the sheep from the goats, setting the sheep on His right hand and the goats on the left, and dispensing to the sheep the ultimate blessing: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you" (Matt. 25:31-34). At the same time He will deliver the curse to the unfaithful, saying "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire [destruction]" (v. 41).

 **To Open the Seals**

In the book of Revelation the apostle John was given a preview of the events which will follow the second coming of Christ to earth, and one of those events was the opening of the seven seals. The Revelator saw "in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals, And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" (Rev. 5:1-2). The seals represent earth-shaking events soon to take place in the history of the world. Apparently the Revelator recognized the good which those seals held, and we read that he "wept much, because no man was found worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon" (v. 4).

Then we read that one was found to open the seals, and that One was "the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" (v. 5)—Jesus Christ. Here again He is the One and Only in this distinction, and receives the highest honor for His work. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb,...And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood [Word] out of every kindred, and tongue, and people,



and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:8-10).

Nor is this all. According to the Revelator, the honor of the angels will combine with the honor of earthborns to give this one and only achiever the highest of high honors, "Saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing....Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*" (Rev. 5:12-13).

To "open the seals" signifies to bring to pass the action which the seals represent. Until one could be found having sufficient power to break the seals, that action was restrained, locked, as it were. But with the Second Advent of Christ, those seals will be broken, and a new age inaugurated on earth. Why? Because the one and only Son of God shall have arrived!



### **Possessor of Immortality**

At the present time, of all our earth-

born race, only Jesus Christ has received the immortal crown. Only He has immortality (I Tim. 6:15-16), and He has had the singular honor of receiving that reward in His Father's presence (John 17:5).

Among earthborns, only He has received the final, full salvation. But soon He will give that same salvation to all who have served God faithfully during the first phase of God's plan for this earth, and before the plan is completed all who live on Earth shall enjoy it—forever. For "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Hab. 2:14).



### **High Priest Entering the Holiest of Holies**

Jesus is our High Priest, "who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. 8:1). Only He of our mortal race has received this high honor, following the pattern of the high priest in Israel, who went once each year into the most holy place alone, there to obtain a blessing for the people.

Jesus has now gone to heaven, from which He will return. He is our Priest forever, "after the order of Melchisedec" (Heb. 7:17).



### **"Without Sin"**

Jesus is the only one of our race to leave behind a perfect record—He never sinned once He knew the Law. Of all our stumbling race, only to Him can go the honor of rendering a life of perfect obedience. Only He was "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Only of Jesus could it be written that He was "such a high priest,...who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens" (Heb. 7:26).

How we should thank God for this One and Only; and thank Him, too, that we are also called to be children of God. As the apostle Paul wrote, "Think what this means. If we are his children we share his treasures, and all that Christ claims as his will belong to all of us one day. If we share in his sufferings, we shall certainly share in his glory" (Rom. 8:16-17, Phillips). □



## **Abib Calendar**

### **The Bible New Year:**

*Abib 1—from sundown March 31 through sundown April 1.* Abib was the first month of the Hebrew year as God told Moses to measure time (Ex. 12:2). On the first of Abib the tabernacle was set up. Abib is the "spring" and "sprouting month" in Israel. How fitting a time for the Lord, our Savior, our Redeemer and coming King to have been born!

### **The New Passover:**

*Abib 13—sundown April 12.* The Jewish Passover was on the fourteenth of Abib. Jesus instituted the New Passover on the thirteenth, of which He said, "This do, in remembrance of me."

### **Christ's Resurrection:**

*Abib 15—morning of April 15.*

In Christ's resurrection lies our assurance that we too may someday triumph over death and gain real life.

### **The Ascension of Christ:**

*Forty days after the Resurrection—May 24.*

This was the last time Jesus was seen among men, until the great day when He shall come again. On that day some nineteen hundred years ago, He was "taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:10-11).

### **Pentecost:**

*Fifty days after the Resurrection—June 3.*

This was a day the Apostles never forgot—Israel had been observing it for centuries. But to the New Testament Church it meant great power to do a great work for God.





## Why Hurt Yourself?

I don't believe you know what it's like to try to work with anyone so cantankerous. Ethel just makes my blood boil! She just seems to go out of her way to be disagreeable. It's a fact. For my sake the whole family has tried to get along with her—without success.

I try to forget about her, or pretend she isn't there. But she is.

I close my ears to her words, but they still find their way in and they grind me to the bone.

I even find myself thinking about her when she isn't anywhere around. I try pushing such thoughts into the background and forgetting them. But they just won't stay there.

This is the way it used to be, until one day I happened upon this verse in Psalms. *"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?"* (118:6). I found myself repeating those last words over and over again. *"What can man do unto me?"* Yet, Ethel was surely doing something to me.

Or was she? The more I thought about it, the more I realized Ethel wasn't doing anything to hurt me—I was hurting myself by the way I was reacting to her. Isn't that really what you are saying when you describe how someone else affects you? When you think somebody is a "pain in the neck," whose neck hurts? Or when someone gets "under your skin," whose skin is affected? Maybe someone makes you turn green with envy, or red with anger—who suffers the color change? Somebody makes your blood boil—whose misery is it? In all cases, the person who causes the trouble is not affected; it is only the one who allows himself to be affected by it who suffers. We don't injure the person who disturbs us; we *harm ourselves*.

Did this mean, then, that I was to blame for the trou-

ble with Ethel? I'm afraid that's right. I was to blame because I was allowing her to determine my feelings. I was allowing her to impose her ugly or mean feelings and frustrations on me.

I know Ethel was wrong. I know she had a disposition she could not (or *did not*) control. But my disturbed feelings are just as wrong in God's sight as her meanness.

There is a Bible verse which says all this: *"Great peace have they which love thy law; and nothing shall offend them"* (Ps 119:165).

That's right—nothing. Other people don't do anything to you. It is *you* who allow other people to cause *you* to do something to *yourself*. You hold the controls. If Ethel wants to be cantankerous, that doesn't have to disturb *your* peace of mind. Not in the least. It's a fact. If your mind is stayed on God, nothing and no one can disturb your inner peace.

I'm talking to myself, but maybe I've said something that will help you sometime—if you should ever encounter a cantankerous Ethel.

After all, what sense does it make to go through life hurting yourself? □

*Outside pressures do not make us as we are; they only reveal WHAT we are.*

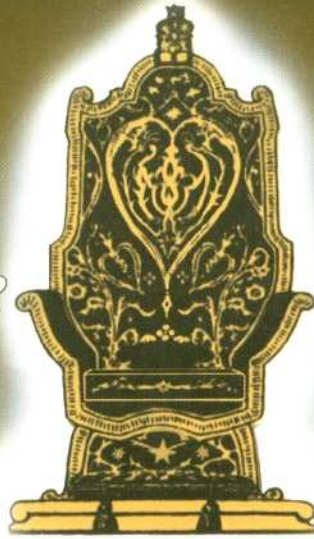
### EVALUATE...

*"There's nothing wrong with it" is simply not enough reason for the Christian, but what is the POSITIVE VALUE in what you're doing? In other words, is it WORTH doing?*



# WHO

*Will Sit on the*



# THRONE

*of the World?*

Reprinted from  
*Megiddo Message,*  
December 22, 1918

*To whom shall the throne of the world belong?  
The poet sits down with his wisdom profound  
And gives man the glory, the fame and the power,  
And with boasting supreme claims the right of the dower.*

*To the "Great Hearts," He says, to the "Stalwarts, the Strong,"  
To the "Men of Goodwill" shall our fair world belong;  
Yes, they shall possess it and bring peace about,  
Redress every wrong, and put evil to rout.*

*Vain man like a shadow, a flower of the grass,  
Whose life like a swift flying shuttle doth pass,  
Presumes, in his folly, that he can undo  
The sins and the sorrows humanity through.*

*Though the rhythm be perfect, the measure most true,  
If it clothes a dark falsehood, what good can it do?  
For the fables and fancies of men can ne'er bring  
Sweet paeans of truth in your hearts e'er to sing.*

*An Almighty Creator this earth formed and made,  
Unto Him it belongs, by His power 'tis upstayed.  
And to whom will He give it? Pray tell if you can;  
Will it be to the natural, sin-ridden man?*

*Ah, no! He will tell us; though some have concealed,  
In God's wonderful Word it is plainly revealed:  
'Tis the meek who the lasting inheritance gain,  
Those who make themselves worthy, and cleanse from each stain.*



*O*h! the earth is the Lord's in its fulness complete;  
On the fair hill of Zion the King's forces will meet,  
The decree has gone forth, and the Lord has declared,  
"This day He's begotten, My Son is prepared.

*A*sk of Me and to thee I will great treasure give;  
All the heathen be thine on the earth that now live;  
For the uttermost part shall belong unto thee,  
Thy dominion extending from sea unto sea."

*T*hough in league they do strengthen themselves in that day  
He shall break them to shivers like vessels of clay;  
And the kingdoms of earth shall forever decline,  
And their suns in their brilliance will nevermore shine.

*T*hus the meek shall possess it, the saints of the Lord,  
They have earned this great right by obeying His Word;  
They have washed their robes white, have o'ercome every sin,  
They shall sing the "New Song" and the victory win.

*"K*ings and priests" to their God, they forever shall reign;  
Underneath the whole heaven shall be their domain.  
In their day shall the righteous each flourish and grow,  
For the richest of blessings their King shall bestow.

*W*ith righteous exactors, and enforcers of peace,  
Each day blessings brighten and comforts increase.  
None make them afraid, war is all in the past,  
Sweet peace upon earth has o'erspread it at last.

*C*hrist is coming, soon coming His power to take,  
From their deep sleep of lethargy nations awake;  
Will He find you prepared to receive Him with joy?  
Or will you reject Him with those He'll destroy?

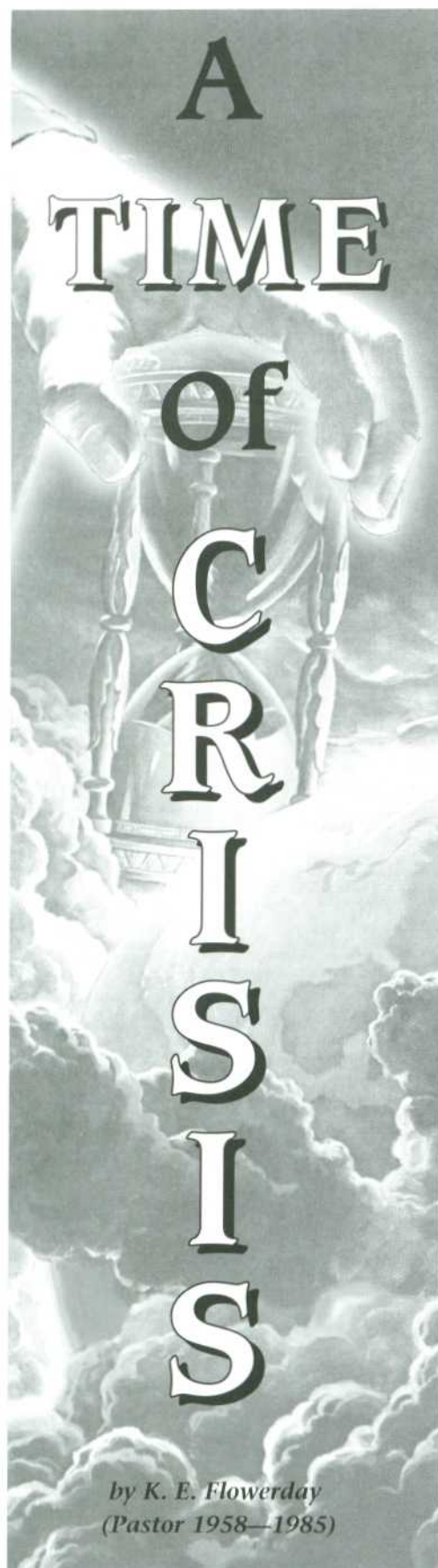
*W*hy not turn to Him now with your whole heart and soul,  
Let His Word reign within and your spirit control?  
You will gain His protection through long, weary years,  
While He purges the earth from its sorrow and tears.

*W*hen at last from the bands of the wicked it rolls,  
And Christ with His kings every subject controls,  
Man no more will in arrogance think he is great,  
Or his fine deeds of valor to others relate.

*H*e will know who the Conq'ror is, faithful and strong,  
For this earth unto mortals could never belong;  
But to those who, redeemed from the power of the grave,  
Have the right to control, and are mighty to save.

—by Mary A. Lee





**W**hy all this stress on behavior? Because, as I think you have realized, the present time is of the highest importance—it is time to wake up to reality. Every day brings God's salvation nearer. The night is nearly over; the day has almost dawned. Let us therefore fling away the things that men do in the dark; let us arm ourselves for the fight of the day!...Let us be Christ's men from head to foot, and give no chances to the flesh to have its fling.

—Romans 13:11–13, Phillips

THE TIME is short! The hour is urgent. It is the midnight hour, the hour of crisis. It is near, it is almost upon us. Something is going to happen—something has to happen. Is it the beginning of a new day with new opportunity and benediction, or simply the end of all things? Thinking men and women see the crisis building, but the nature of the crisis they do not know. But whatever it may be, they approach it with apprehension.

But thank God! the end of this day is not the end of all things—it is only the beginning, the beginning of a new and better Day, a Day of righteousness and peace, a Day when Christ shall come to establish His superior, eternal Kingdom. Our insight into God's plan for the earth and its inhabitants precludes our fearing the things most men fear, that man may destroy himself and civilization through the misuse of nuclear power; or that this age of enlightenment may end in barbarism and another Dark Age.

Yet we have need for one very grave concern: Our eternal life hangs in the balance. We should be imbued with a feeling of urgency. Our time for preparation is running out. This very moment may be even later than two minutes to twelve; and these remaining moments may decide our destiny eternally. *"It is far on into the night; the day is almost here"* (Rom 13:12).

What we do during the next twelve months may decide our destiny for eternity. The power of habit is tremendous. At some point along life's way our iniquities shall have become so ingrained that, as the Ethiopian who cannot change his skin, or the leopard that cannot change his spots, we will be unable to change; it will be too late. That point could well be reached during the year we are now entering.

We do not know, but the next twelve months may bring the end of God's long silence with the appearance of Elijah the prophet as the forerunner of Christ's personal return to earth, ushering in the era when greater works shall be done than Jesus did at His first advent. Time will not always tarry; before this year has expired we may find ourselves face to face with immortal beings from other worlds, powerful angels, to whom the carefully guarded masks we have sometimes fabricated to hide our true character will be as transparent as the finest optical glass. How shall we feel then if sin still lingers in our hearts?

And besides, we have no real assurance of even twelve months more of life. The lifespan has been lengthened, and premature deaths greatly reduced through advanced medical knowledge; yet death is very much in evidence. And highway deaths and deaths by accident are on the increase.

#### **A New Year**

The beginning of the month Abib, the beginning of the New Year as given by God to Moses to give to the children of Israel upon



their departure from Egypt, is a day that rightfully claims ascendancy among the procession of days.

At the beginning of the secular year alert business men take inventory to ascertain the financial standing of their business and to determine the degree of profit—or loss—for the year just closed. Likewise at the beginning of the sacred year it is prudent for Christians to take stock to see whether the year's Balance Sheet is favorable or unfavorable. If our record shows that we have done many things we should not have done, and left undone many things we should have done, we are badly in the red, and unless a radical change is made in the oncoming months, we are headed for spiritual bankruptcy.

Our lives are so arranged that on special occasions, when we gather for prayer, praise and devotion, we are transported, as it were, to the mountaintop where we leave far below the foul air of petty human annoyances, the daily grind of problems in home, office, or place of employment. At times like these our faith is strengthened, our conviction of the reality of our sublime hope deepened, and our courage to live the fully consecrated life heightened.

Perhaps, like the two disciples with Jesus on the Mount of the Transfiguration, we feel like prolonging the mountaintop experience by building some shelters and remaining in the seclusion of our place of meditation. But that is not God's will for us; the duties of the lowlands call us. It is there that we prove our mettle; it is there that we work out our own salvation and create for ourselves a reserve fund of favorable credits against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life.

### **Time to Resolve**

The New Year is commonly considered an opportune time for good resolutions, but too often the insincerity of those making the New Year resolutions is such as to justify the cynic's claim that good resolutions are made with one purpose: to be broken. This sacred New Year is a fitting time for us to make good resolutions, not to be broken but to be

lived up to with unabating thoroughness.

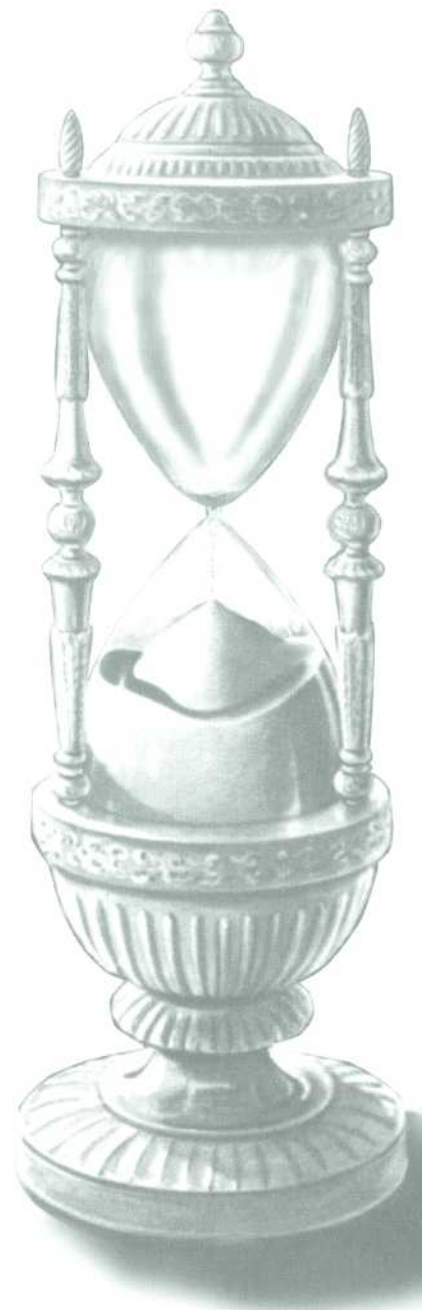
People take their religious responsibilities with varying degrees of seriousness. If you class yourself as a nominal church member and have looked upon your duty to God casually, with an attitude of a little of God and much of self, this could be a good time to resolve that during the coming year you will take your Bible down from the shelf, and if the dust has accumulated on its covers, brush it off and each day take time to read some of the Blessed Letters the Father has sent us. Would it not be prudent to spend more time in God's service and less in idle gossip, in reading light and trashy literature, in playing games of chance, watching worthless entertainment on the screen, or listening to thought-paralyzing radio programs? Now would be a good time to resolve to make a start at obeying the Divine injunction (Eph 5:16, Moffatt): *"Make the very most of your time, for these are evil days."*

To those who are making a supreme effort to prepare to live eternally, there could be no better time than the present to resolve that during the coming year we will reinforce our effort for truth and righteousness. We can do more of the very things we have done the most of. We can make a better surrender to the will of God; we can be more humble, more ready to help our struggling brother, more anxious to see ourselves as God sees us, more thankful to have our character defects pointed out so we can correct them before the fateful moment when the Judge shall solemnly declare (Rev. 22:11): *"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still."*

If we have been saying Lord, Lord, without doing the things He commands, let us here resolve that during the coming year such shameful dissimulation must end, and that henceforth our words and actions will agree. If in the past we have let our tempers fly when things did not go our way, let us tighten the reins, remembering that (Prov. 16:32) *"he that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."*

*(Continued on page 23)*

*Let us resolve to reinforce our effort for truth and righteousness. We can do more of the very things we have done the most of.*







*A New Year Message*

Sing we the King who is coming to reign:  
Jesus our King, Jesus our King;  
Life and salvation His empire shall bring;  
Joy to the nations when Jesus is King!

Come and sing praises to Jesus our King;  
Jesus our King, Jesus our King;  
This is our song who to Jesus belong:  
Jesus is King, Jesus is King.

Glory to Him in His marvelous might;  
Races long severed His love shall unite;  
Justice and truth from His sceptre shall spring;  
Joy to the nations when Jesus is King!

Kingdom of Christ, for Thy coming we pray;  
Hasten O Father the dawn of that Day  
When this new song Thy creation shall sing:  
Evil is vanquished and Jesus is King.

Can we who drink from the fountain on high,  
Can we the gospel of Jesus deny?  
Glory and honor, the notes loud proclaim  
Till ev'ry nation has heard of His fame!

**D**uring the sixteenth century a small group of Huguenot followers were holding out in the French town of Le Havre, when the commander of the opposing forces outside the walls shot a message into the square on an arrow. The message advised the Huguenots to surrender to their “rightful king”—the enemy outside the walls. Admiral Coligny, head of the Huguenots, had the arrow immediately shot back bearing this message: *Regum habemus* (“we have a king”). One king, and one alone—they were not willing to divide their allegiance.

So today, we have a king, Jesus Christ, One to whom we owe all our allegiance and honor; to claim for ourselves that which belongs rightfully to Him is to insult His majesty. Abib comes every year to remind us anew of the allegiance we owe to our King. For when we think of Jesus we think not of the babe in the manger but of the King on the

throne. Where Christ sits He is King. He will

not take second place.

So let us answer all the lesser loyalties that tempt, which would say that His laws are secondary, that we should be able to make our own judgments about what is right or wrong; which say that moral issues are not a matter of black and white but of varying shades of gray; which say that one is “good enough” who is basically honest and self-respecting, who pays his bills and keeps himself from grosser sins,



however divided his affections. To all such let us answer firmly: *Jesus is King*, and to Him is due our *entire* allegiance. We are a people under authority, and we have no right to alter the terms of our commission. Whatever the inducements or blandishments that others may offer, our first duty is to obey our King. Nothing else matters. *Nothing*.

Our King is no ordinary monarch. Highest in the ranks of earthborns, noblest of all the sons of men; first in honor, first in glory, first in achievement, first in influence, first in all that combines to form real greatness is Jesus Christ. So spectacular was His achievement that we almost forget it was not His by birthright; that He, too, had to learn; that He, too, had to grow.

Of the seed of David, of the tribe of Judah, He was, in the words of the Prophet, "*raised up from among his brethren*." He was made in "*all things...like unto his brethren*" (Heb. 2:17). "*Made of a woman, made under the law*" (Gal. 4:4), He was born and grew to maturity like other men. Very few who saw Him at work in the carpenter shop of Nazareth surmised that He was any different from any other young carpenter in the village. Doing ordinary tasks—though certainly in an extraordinary manner—He still seemed very much like one of His generation.

But when He went out to preach, when He began telling men why He was alive and what was His destiny, when He began to demonstrate the power of His heavenly Father, and to manifest His Divine authority; when He began calling men and women to a life of holiness and delivering God's inflexible standard of conduct, they quickly realized that here was no ordinary man. "*Never man spake as this man*," they said one to another. Or, "*He teaches...like one who has authority*."

And when He began laying down the entrance requirements and the laws of the Kingdom of heaven, those who comprehended raised their eyebrows and looked questioningly at one another. Some even turned away in disgust. What right did *He* have to make the rules? They had never heard anything like it. "*Who then*," they demanded to know, "*can be saved?*" Others listened, defensively. "*We be Abraham's seed*," they declared, as though that exempted them from any and all other requirements.

Others were plainly bewildered. "*Is not this the carpenter's son*," they queried, "*whose father and mother we know?*"

What they failed to recognize was the very presence of the King among them, the Messiah, the real Christ, a man of power and dynamite, one whose word was law, impartial and just, yet exacting, challenging, even dictatorial, demanding a *total* allegiance. The call He set ringing was a call to individual initiative and personal holiness, and the unrelenting, Divine authority behind it meant that no one could safely disregard it.

Such is the authority under which we live today. Though unseen, unknown, and unfelt, yet the authority of our King upon us today is just as real as ever it was upon any people. If we would know the benefits of being His subjects, His rightful heirs, we must feel the weight of His authority over us. We are not free to do as we please. We are not free to think as we please. We are not free to go where we please. Jesus is King, and this fact changes *everything* in and about our lives.

Our modern generation cherishes a spirit of independence from authority. To be under restrictions, to be told what to do or not to do harms one's spirit of individualism. But what can we do for ourselves apart from God? Is it not the greatest *privilege* to be subject to Him? Are we not dependent upon Him for every breath? Should we not be grateful and glad to be under His direction—so that we can experience the security and safety and eternal blessedness of belonging to Him?

#### ◆ The Difference

What makes our King different from the common authority to which we would bow? First of all, our King is unequaled in excellence and moral character—in fact, He is on a level of distinction with *His Father*. Who but Jesus Christ could say: "*I and my Father are one*"? How could Christ be one with the Creator of the universe? How could He know and share any one-



*When we think  
of Jesus we think  
not of the babe in the  
manger but of the King on  
the throne.*



ness with Him in whom all of us live and move and have our being? They were one in holiness, one in purpose, one in direction, one in fulfilling the high and holy purposes of God.

Again, Jesus is outstanding because He could testify (John 8:29), "*The Father hath not left me alone, for I do always those things that please Him.*" Who else could say it? What other lips could truthfully

frame those words? One might say, I do *many* things that please Him, or I do *some* things that please Him. But who—apart from Christ—could make the statement so all inclusive as "*I do always those things that please him?*"

Then, too, Jesus was the Christ, the Anointed, the Messiah, the Chosen One. On

the basis of His character He had been selected for high service. His own apostle Peter was the first to publicly affirm His authority: "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" He spoke by Divine inspiration. Never before had any man walked on earth of whom this could be said. Here was truly the "*Son of the living God.*" When He spoke, was it not the voice of God? Who could disregard His message with impunity?

Still greater is His destiny as the Prince of the kings of the earth, that kingly honor which is yet future. For He has not yet been crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. He is yet in heaven, seated at the right hand of God, "*henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool*" (Heb. 10:13). All nations are not yet subject to His authority, though they soon will be, for it has been prophesied, "*And the government shall be upon his shoulder: And...of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end*" (Isa. 9:6-7). This King shall some day take "*dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth....Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him*" (Ps. 72:8, 11, 17). Oh, let no one underestimate His authority. Here is a King!

Then, too, Jesus was distinguished by His title of "Lord." What does this mean? It means that He is one worthy to be lis-

tened to, worthy to be obeyed. It means He has been delegated certain authority which demands our respect, that it is His to command and ours to obey. He is a King. If we take to ourselves any honor that belongs to Him, we deny Him.

There is an ancient fable about a man who put an image on the back of his donkey to take it to one of the temples in the town. As they went, people along the road came out to look at the image, and uncovered and bowed their heads in respect. The donkey, seeing the people, thought they were doing homage to himself, and so began to feel conceited and to imagine that he could do just as he liked. At length he came to feel too proud to be carrying a load on his back and by way of protest he came to an abrupt halt, and flatly refused to proceed any further. His driver, finding him suddenly obstinate, hit him hard with a stick, saying, "You dunder-headed idiot, has it come to this, that men must be subject to the will of a donkey?"

So it is with us, if we take to ourselves the credit that is due our King.

Most religion today lacks authority. Church members are not required to subscribe to any definite code of belief, much less any precise code of conduct. However, the allegiance to Christ allows no such freedom. The Scriptures stress the importance of exact belief: "*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God.*" "*To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*" "*If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ,...He is proud, knowing nothing,...from such withdraw thyself*" (1 Pet. 4:11; Isa. 8:20; 1 Tim. 6:3-5).

And the demands for right living are equally clear cut: "*Be ye holy; for I am holy.*" "*Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [Christ] is pure*" (1 Pet 1:16; 1 John 3:3). True religion has authority. The preaching of the gospel is the shrill, commanding, rousing tone of a trumpet call. The commands of God are to be obeyed, not discussed and parleyed over. "*Act on the word, instead of merely listening to it and deluding yourselves,*" is Moffatt's rendering of James 1:22.

Christ left us the pattern of life that we must follow. He who is so far superior to us, it is He whom we must imitate. Do



The commands  
of God are to  
be obeyed, not discussed  
and parleyed over.



we call Him "Lord"? Then let us show that He is Lord of our lives and Lord of our affections; and if of our affections, then also of our loves, ambitions, motives, and every other aspect and attitude of our being. If He is our King, He must dominate us in everything. We must learn to love the things He loves, and abhor what He abhors. Our aspirations must align with His. Our friends must be His friends, and His Father our Father.

If He is our King, then He becomes, too, the motivator and inspirer of our lives. Our devotions, our disciplines, our activities all center in Him. For we are His disciples, and discipleship means obedience; and obedience implies that there are absolute commands to be obeyed. We are under oath to let Him govern us. If we fail; if our actions and our words do not agree, if we fall short in submitting to His authority, can we expect His favor? Can we rightly call Him our King?

This was what Jesus implied when He said, "*Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say?*" (Luke 6:46). Such conduct is inconsistent. More, it is disrespectful. It is claiming for ourselves the authority which we have turned over to Him.

Where, then, are our rights as individuals? Have we no free moral agency to choose for ourselves? Have we no liberty to do as we please?

It all comes down to one question: Is Jesus *our* King? Is His law the supreme authority in our decision-making, in our lives?

"Jesus is King" admits that we recognize authority. Our judgment is not the last word in what is right. We are not "our own boss," so to speak. This type of voluntary subordination is fully spelled out in the Word: "*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. 5:17).

Again, "*You must lay aside the old nature which belonged to your former course of life, that nature which crumbles to ruin under the passions of moral deceit, ... Putting on the new nature, that divine pattern which has been created in the upright and pious character of the truth*" (Eph. 4:22-23, Moffatt). Again, "*Whether therefore ye eat, or*

*drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God*" (I Cor. 10:31).

Other authorities will demand our allegiance. They will tell us that the demands of our King are too exacting, that we need not be so loyal. Our ready answer must always be: Jesus is King; we recognize no other.

If fully under the dominion of our King, even our movements will be definitely curtailed. We cannot go to places

**E**ternal Father, the light of all our seeing, the source of all our living, and the depth of all our love, we lift our hearts in reverence to Thee this day for Thy bountifulness to us. We come because we need tranquillity and strength. O Thou from whom come all courage and certainty, today let the anxieties of time be seen against the large horizons of eternity. So grant that our worship may beget in us such purity of heart, calmness of spirit, wisdom of insight, depth of intuition, and certainty about Thee that shall make us strong through the days to come and ready to do our duty for Thee whatever that duty may be.

For all the light and hope that shines upon our lives we bless Thee, especially for the gift which Thou hast given in the life of Thy Son and our perfect Example. With humble footsteps and reverent hearts we seek to follow Him. Lead us away from our pride and conceit to copy His humility. Deliver us from all shortsighted fears and petty concerns that we may share His sublime faith. And may the Kingdom of Christ be the motivating power in our lives, and the triumph of right our whole concern.

Father, we pray for Thy guiding hand upon our nation and all nations, according to Thy will. We know that there cannot be peace on earth and goodwill among men until Thy King of righteousness shall reign. But help us to make Him the supreme ruler in our lives now. Remind us constantly that we have a King, and that we must honor this King now if we would receive His favor in that soon-coming Day.

Our Father, we pray Thee to free us from the slavery of any impure thoughts and suspicions of one another. Unite Thy church in the unity that is in Christ, and inspire us to serve Thee as one family in the fellowship of faith. Renew our interest in each other as brothers and sisters in Christ and the love and loyalty of each of us to Thee and Thy true Church. Break down our crooked reasoning and all our foolish trusting in ourselves. May we not carry into this New Year any feelings of prejudice against another, any feelings of bitterness or ill will, any feelings of hostility or superiority or revenge. But may all our interests and all our aims be dominated by Thy holy principles of love and brotherliness, that the life of Christ may truly be seen *in* us and *among* us in all our dealing and working one with another.

For all our brethren, for all who are striving to be Thy saints on earth, and for the work of Thy Church everywhere, we ask Thy blessing. And may Thy Kingdom come, and Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, world without end. Amen.

of amusement, as we might naturally desire, for we have no money with which to buy a ticket. We cannot spend for that which is neither food nor raiment and which tends only to satisfy the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of



life, for we have no money of our own. We cannot pay to support any system which our King forbids; for His Word is law and all our property is His.

The same is true of our time. It is not our own, hence cannot be wasted. Every moment must be spent in a way our King can honor. This means we cannot indulge in time-killing games, or in reading light or entertaining literature. Our King commands, *"Be strictly careful then about the life you lead; act like sensible men, not like thoughtless; make the very most of your time"* (Eph. 5:15-16, Moffatt).

Where Christ sits, He is King; He will not take second place. He has given absolute commands that are to be obeyed. We are under oath to let Him direct. If we fail, if our actions belie our allegiance, then we cannot expect Him to praise and bless us.

#### ◆ The Meaning of Christ

What do we mean by "Christ" in the fullest sense of the word?

We think first of the physical Christ, and all that He means to us, as our perfect example, our Elder Brother, the Son of God, the epitome of perfection. When we think of Christ, we picture in our minds the full surrender, the race entirely and successfully run, clear through from start to finish—even to immortality. Christ is our life, our hope, our joy, our light, our assurance that we, too, may live and live eternally.

Christ, then, is our hope, our glory and our joy. The apostle Paul spoke of *"Christ in you, the hope of glory"* (Col. 1:27), speaking of His heavenly message, His holy ideals all embodied in this spiritual "Christ in you." It is the whole Divine scheme from beginning to end, including every exhortation, inspiration, and obligation. God has not left us alone. He has not left us to grope in the dark. Before us has walked the Light, and we are privileged to follow that Light.

Christ also signifies to us our accountability. And one day we shall have to face

Him with the record of what we have done. He is our Judge, and the bestower of our recompense. Truly, He is our King, a King to whom we shall have to give account. And though He is not yet on the throne of earth, before His work is complete the whole earth will be under His jurisdiction and everyone who lives will give allegiance to Him. With such an eventuality before us, how much wiser, how much more sensible to let Him be our King now, to let Him dictate to us now, to accept—even welcome—His authority so that in that day we may be proud to own Him as our King—forever!

Our King demands—deserves—our best. We want to give to the limit of our possibilities, to demonstrate the love that we feel for what He has set before us. Where else can we get *life*—endless life? Such a prospect gives us a deep, genuine, compelling love for Him, which moves us to comply with His mandates. Duty makes us do things; *love* makes us do them beautifully. We must refuse to be satisfied with anything less than the best, the *very* best of which we are capable.

Popularity even at the price of mediocrity is a good philosophy among a large segment of people today. The best father is one who is "one of the boys." The popular minister is one who feels on a par with his congregation, who is not *below* them but neither is he noticeably above them. Leaders should be on a common level with the majority, even if it means sacrificing a few ideals and principles.

Such may be the philosophy of this passing world, but it is not of Christ. The call of Christ is not to mediocrity but to the highest type of excellence. If we are to see Christ's spiritual stature, we must look up. If we are to reach it, we must climb. Where Jesus sits, He is King. Where Jesus lives, He is Lord.

Jesus explained this in several of His parables. Let us think about the Parable of the Talents. Three different men were given goods or "talents" with three different values. The talents in the parable represent the natural endowments and spiritual possibilities of each of us. There are wide differences in energy, zeal, and spiritual power. There are also differences in health, intellectual powers, and earthly resources. None of us could expect to serve in the capacity that the apostle Paul served Christ. Nor could we wish to rival the energy and spiritual power of our founder, Rev. L. T. Nichols. But God does



Is Jesus our King?  
Then let us show  
that He is Lord of our  
lives and Lord of our  
affections, loves, ambitions,  
motives—our whole being.



not ask us to be equal to one another. He asks only that we use *what we have* in the proper way.

This was the commission to those entrusted with the talents in Jesus' parable. When the final reckoning came, the Lord judged the diligence and the work which each had expended, not the amount each had been given. The first servant had used his five talents to make five more, and his effort was approved. "Well done," said the Master. The second, too, had done his best. His possibilities were not those of the first, but he was as good and holy and noble-hearted a man as his more highly gifted brother. His work was welcomed with the same high praise; his faithfulness, not the measure of his gifts, was being judged.

The third servant lingered to the last. He was uneasy, but he could not escape his master's eye; he too must render his account. At length he comes, but not in humility. He has thoroughly convinced himself that he has done the right thing. So he comes with false excuses, justifying his action—or non-action—trying to shift the blame from himself to his lord. He knew, he said, that his master was a hard man, harsh and exacting, requiring from his servants more than they could render. So, this third servant explains, to be on the "safe" side he did nothing at all. Here was his talent, just as it was given to him.

This third servant is like those who say God is not just, that they are not capable of the work to which God calls them, that His demands are more than ought to be expected of them. They shrink from trying, lest by failure they incur the wrath of God. But they do not see that their excuses are false, that negative obedience counts for nothing. The real issue cannot be evaded: that they are God's servants, and accountable. And belonging to Him, their time, health, strength, money, intellect all belong to God, and are only lent to them for a while; and in the great day of Reckoning they must account for the use they have made of them.

Spiritual possibilities cannot lie dormant within us. If they are not valued and used, they will be taken away from us and we be cast out.

There is yet another reason we must respect Christ's authority: because He is infinitely more powerful than we are, and whatever we may say or do, He will have the last word. To Him the Father has entrusted the future authority of the whole

earth. The Kingdom is to be the Kingdom of Christ. Whatever we may think or reason or figure out, the final verdict will be rendered by Him.

Is not this also the message of the Parable of the Sheep and the Goats? Who is doing the separating? Who is delivering the sentences of life and death? Is it not Christ? And is not the sentence to each just according to what they have proven themselves to be? Jesus is saying, I will separate. I will divide. I can distinguish faithful from unfaithful as easily and as accurately as the shepherd can divide sheep from goats. I cannot be deceived. I know. Get ready for My judgment.

What is the reward of the righteous? They are overwhelmed with their wondrous welcome. It is a joy almost too great for them to bear—a sweetness so penetrating that the heart fairly bursts with the joyous intensity of its rapture. Nothing they had done could deserve the unutterable blessedness now opening before them. Immortality—can they comprehend even the smallest part of its meaning?

But all are not accepted. And those who are not are cast aside. They loved darkness rather than light. They thought their obedience above reproach; they had grandiose ideas of their worthfulness. But the all-seeing eye of the Judge discerns the heart. And the heart was not right.

What is the message? That we are under authority. Christ is our King. And He is the inflexible Judge, and His verdict will be final.

Christ is coming. On which side will we stand, the right or the left? There is no joy so intense, so rapturous, as shall belong to those on the right, and no misery so awful as that of those on the left. The decision of the Judge will be right, and it will be just according to what we have done.

Having Christ as our King affects every aspect and avenue of life. It means



*If we would know the benefits of being His subjects, His rightful heirs, we must feel the weight of His authority over us.*



a totally new perspective on life. Are we ready to judge all circumstances, events, people and ideas by His unaltering standard and from His perspective? Are we ready to call good what He calls good, and abhor what He abhors? to love those whom He loves and absent ourselves from the company of those whom He does not love? Oh, let us be watchful.

Submitting to Christ also involves surrendering what we naturally feel is the ultimate in good judgment. It means relinquishing our hold upon that which is often most near and dear to us: our own private opinion—which, of course,

is the *only* right opinion, as we see it. If we cannot part with our own opinion, He is not our King.

Having Christ our King means openly supporting His laws, His cause, and His authority at every opportunity, whether in our own lives or the lives of others. What did

Jesus say? *"Whosoever*

*...shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels"* (Mark 8:38).

Are we ashamed of Him in any way, ashamed to let others know that we are one of His, ashamed to identify ourselves with Him by living above the world about us? Striking even closer, are we ever ashamed to let others know that we are growing, that we are not the rough, untamed creature we used to be? that we are more forbearing, more kind, more considerate—and less faultfinding, less sensitive, less opinionated? Are we ever ashamed to own that we carry His banner, that we are numbered with His disciples, that we are under discipline, that He is our King?

Submitting to Christ means certain risks. There will be gains. There will also be losses. We may lose the favor of this world. Jesus Himself said, *"Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you"* (Luke

6:26). If we wish to be everybody's friend in this world, we cannot belong to Christ.

*"Whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it"* (Matt. 16:25). But what of it? What could be less of a loss? Can we not learn to see the size of our loss in proportion to the greatness of our gain? Why consider the loss at all if by it we become inheritors of Christ's eternal riches in glory and share the inheritance of the saints in light?

If only we could be the shining examples of purity and Christlikeness that we set out to be! If only we could be such replicas of Christ that others, seeing us pass by might say, *"It seems as if Jesus of Nazareth were here."* If only when we get home someone could see that we are indeed becoming different, that we have been drawing nearer to God. If only they could see each day, each week, that we were a little more thoughtful, or courteous, or kindly or patient and understanding. "Oh!" they might be heard to say, "there must be something to a faith that can make such a difference as this! I know it's not human nature to be that way."

Yes, where Christ sits He is King. And Kingship means authority. Christ is not passive and mild. He comes bringing law, and law must be obeyed.

Someday we will have to meet Him, and give account to Him for the use we have made of the stewardship He gave us. Someday we will stand before Him. He is the Judge. He will have the last judgment, the last word, the last gesture, the last verdict on our lives.

Let us take His demands to heart, and make His standards ours. And before we act or speak, let us say to ourselves, "What would Jesus do?" By so doing we shall assure ourselves of His lasting friendship and He shall be our King through all the cycles of eternity. □



**Is Jesus our King?  
Is His law the  
supreme authority in  
our decision-making, in  
our lives?**

**No one is saved by  
buying a Bible he does  
not read; and no one is  
saved by reading a  
Bible he does not obey.**



## *A Time of Crisis*

*(Continued from page 15)*

And how about our home life? Do we have kind words for the stranger, and smiles for the sometime guest, but for our own the bitter tone, though we claim to love our own the best?

What sort of example do we show in our community? Are we at all times strictly honest? Is our word as good as our note? If Jesus in disguise should meet us on the street, would our deportment be such that He would know at once that we were one of His? When the people of Jesus' day communed with His disciples, they perceived that they had been with Jesus. Association with the Master had made a marked change in their lives. It must do so in ours.

### **Stronger, Stronger...**

As we go into this New Year, we should be stronger to put our religion into daily practice. Whether on the farm, at the office, in the factory, in the home, or wherever we work, no work can bear its best fruit, unless it is done with the feeling that God stands with us at our work and that angels are keeping a record. When God works with us, there is honor and dignity and spiritual value in every task, no matter how humble or routine.

Careless talk and filthy conversation is one of the major sins of our age. But it is an omen of an unhealthy spiritual condition inside, "for," said the Great Teacher, "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." If this is one of our weaknesses, let our daily petition be (Ps. 141:3): "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth: keep the door of my lips!"

We read that when the Christ Child was born, wise men from the East came to seek Him that was born King of the Jews. Can we claim the distinction of "wise men from

the West" seeking a life pattern from the Christ who one day shall be King of the whole earth? If allowing our hearts to become overcharged with surfeiting, drunkenness, and the cares of this life, to the exclusion of the eternal interests, we are not wise. A verse from Paul's letter to the Ephesians graphically pictures the one whom God counts wise: "Be strictly careful then about the life you lead; act like sensible men, not like thoughtless; make the very most of your time, for these are evil days" (Eph. 5:15-16, Moffatt).

Can we qualify as wise men from the West if we become so absorbed in making money that we have no time to make a righteous life, no time to lay up in store that good foundation which will assure us of eternal life?

Let the coming year be a year of action. Seeing we have so much at stake, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily besets us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. And that race is right here and now.

We have work to do—let us be doing it. □

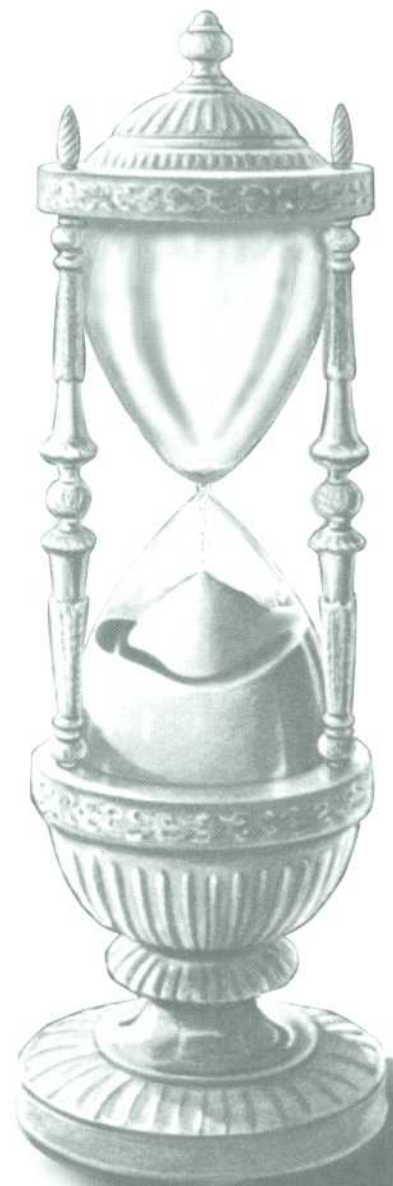
*The time is short, the days are flying  
Like tempest clouds along the sky;  
A fleeting breath, a passing vapor—  
Tomorrow we may in silence lie.*

*The time is short! away with malice,  
With sharp rejoinder, keen retort!  
Away with lust, and bitter feelings,  
With deeds unkind—the time is short!*

*We have no time for aimless drifting,  
For idle dream, for selfish end,  
No time for languid, weak endeavor,  
Our strength on worthless tasks to spend.*

*Then at our best let each be living.  
Wake up! Make haste! Sharp rings the bell;  
Be this our aim, to find our duty,  
Be this our prayer, to do it well.*

*Time will not always  
tarry; any day we may  
find ourselves face to  
face with immortal  
beings from other  
worlds, powerful angels  
to whom our true  
character will be wholly  
transparent.*







# Thank God, I Can See!

## Did You Know...?

- ✓ ... that every second, the retina in our eye performs billions of computer-like calculations, as it measures distances, intensities, focal lengths, colors and hues, and tones of dark and light on all the objects we see.
- ✓ ... that we are aware of our surroundings because our eyes pick up light rays, and the cones and rods in our eye convert the information (about size, distance, patterns, color, etc.) to electrical impulses and send it to the brain.
- ✓ ... that our eyes, when accustomed to darkness, can sense as few as 10 quanta of light (the glow of a candle flame 10 miles distant).
- ✓ ... that our eyes are constantly in motion, flicking from one image to another several times a second.
- ✓ ... that the fluid nourishing the interior of the eye is colorless and clear. If it were the color of blood, light would be stopped before it reached the retina, and we would not be able to see.
- ✓ ... that we see color because we have some 7,000,000 cones in our eyes which are of three types, each having one pigment (red, green or blue) and able to absorb that part of the color spectrum.
- ✓ ... that our eyes are equipped with their own anti-bacterial cleansing agent, so that unwanted bacteria entering the eye are immediately dissolved.
- ✓ ... that the retina of our eye contains from 75 million to 150 million rods (tiny photoreceptors) which are continually picking up light that is reflected to our eye.
- ✓ ... that our eyes, when accustomed to darkness, are 10,000 times more sensitive to light than when they are light adjusted.

For the scientific data in this article we are indebted to *Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia*, Copyright 1993, 1994 by Compton's NewMedia, Inc.; T. P. Mattingly & M. L. Rubin in *The 1995 Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*; *Eyes, Their Problems and Treatments*, M. Glasspool, MD, published by Arco Publishing, Inc. New York; *The Incredible Machine*, published by National Geographic Society, Washington, DC.; and *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 15th Edition, 27:721ff.

Suppose you could make a camera that would operate for fifty years without needing a new battery, or even a new roll of film. Suppose further that this camera was self-focusing, self-repairing, self-adjusting to intensities of brightness or darkness, that it could retain a picture in its library for fifty years or more—would you not have quite a remarkable product, one that everyone would want? Our eyes are all of this, and much, much, much more.

Our eyes are unbelievably complex. Even to suggest that this small organ, only an inch from side to side, came about by the mere working of chance, without design or constructive plan, is a shameful insult to our great Creator. Would the men and women in the Eastman Kodak Company who designed the new Kodak Digital Camera 40, just now being marketed, be pleased with the idea that this device came about without intelligent guidance, that it was simply another automatic generation in a constantly improving series of cameras? Kodak employs thousands of highly trained research personnel, who spend all their working hours originating and developing new ideas in camera technology. Yet what is the most sophisticated camera beside the human eye?

## The Eyelid

Let's begin by thinking about the eyelid. Now the eyelid should be a simple structure, just a piece of muscle we can pull down and up to cover or uncover our eye as needed...? Wrong. The eyelid is a highly complex mechanism, and vitally important to protect the eye. But imagine how useless our eyelids would be for the defense of the eye if they were left for us to operate—imagine if we had to *think* every time we blinked, or if we had to *think* to draw our eyelids over our eyes when a foreign object threatened our eye. But no, our Creator has freed us from this cumbersome task by installing an intricate system of nerves and reflexes, too much to talk about here but marvelous in its operation.

Actually, it has been found that the eyelids do even more than protect the eye. Each time we blink, our eyelids, acting much like the windshield wipers on our car, sweep a thin film of fluid across the eyeball, lubricating them and keeping them clean. Any excess drains into our nose through tiny ducts in the lower inner corner of our eye.

What is this fluid? Several glands in our eyelids contribute to this fluid. Most familiar are the tear glands, which supply a form of salt water to the eyes through tiny ducts—we have from 3 to 12 of these ducts—at the outer upper corner of each eye.

But our eyes need more than water—because water would soon evaporate and leave our eyes dry and scratchy. So our Creator has supplied us with another set of glands



that secrete a fine, oily substance which does not evaporate. And this is not all. There is yet another gland in our eyelid that secretes an antibacterial agent into our eyes, so that foreign bacteria entering the eye are immediately dissolved.

Can anyone think honestly that all this came about by mere happenstance?

There is no way of separating the eyelid from the eye—they are literally attached—but not too firmly. Can we imagine what it would be like if our eyelid were attached so tightly to our eye that we could not move our eye? But no, the eyelid is composed of 4 layers, and the innermost layer, which attaches to the surface of the eyeball, is loose enough to allow complete movement of the eyeball in all directions, and ample enough to supply a complete protective covering. (*Was this delicate balance achieved by chance?*)

Also within the eyelid are several specialized muscles, some voluntary and some involuntary. We blink every 2 to 10 seconds. The rate of blinking varies from one person to another, and is controlled, it is believed, by a "blink control center" in our brain. Our eyes blink by a set of involuntary muscles, without any direction from us. Yet we are not left without control—we can easily overrule that blinking and close or blink our eyes at will—by using another set of muscles.

### Structure of the Eye

Now let's look at the eye itself.

The eye is made up of three coats (layers), which enclose a spherical center area that is filled with a clear liquid to keep the eye firm.

The outermost coat consists of a transparent area (the cornea) through which light enters the eye, and an opaque, white area on either side of the clear area. The second coat (layer) determines if our eyes are black or blue. The third layer is where the light that enters our eyes is interpreted.

If this seems relatively simple, let's look a bit closer at each coat.

**Coat 1:** The outer layer, the transparent window glass of the eye, is itself made up of five distinguishable

layers, each composed of transparent tissue and each critical to the functioning of the eye. One of these sub-layers is a set of about 200 plates, which are stacked much like the leaves of a book; each plate consists of transparent microscopic fibers. And, remember, this is just one of five layers of the outer coat of the eye. (*What law of evolution designed transparent tissue, then made it grow in just the right place in our body, where light must enter?*)

**Coat 2:** The next (middle) coat contains a ring of tissue at the front (the iris), which gives the eye its color. At the center of this ring is the pupil, which enlarges or contracts to control the amount of light entering the eye.

**Coat 3:** Perhaps the most intricate part of the eye is the third or innermost coat, which contains the retina. In the retina, light is received, images are focused, photoreceptors are exposed, and light images are converted to electrical impulses which are then sent down the optic nerve to the brain, where they are interpreted, so that we know what we are seeing.

Ten different layers are visible in the retina. The first layer contains the eye's light-sensitive cells, which are of two kinds, called rods and cones (the terms are descriptive of the shape of the cells). In the retina are about 7,000,000 cones, and from 75,000,000 to 150,000,000 rods. The rods pick up shades of grey, while

the cones are usually thought to be sensitive to the various wavelengths of color. These cones and rods are attached to about 1,000,000 optic nerve fibers (in another layer of the retina), which carry electrical impulses to the brain. Because there are only about 1,000,000 optic nerve fibers to 150,000,000 receptors, a number of receptors must share a single optic pathway.

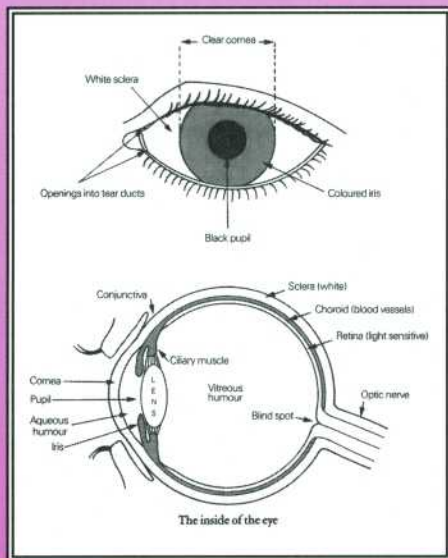
The rods and cones of the retina are distributed across its surface, but not evenly, as might be expected. Near the center of the retina is a pin-hole-sized cup called the fovea. The fovea—1/100th of a millimeter across—has some 4,000 cones concentrated in it. This area gives us our keenest, most sharply focused vision. When we really want to focus closely on something of interest, we use the fovea. Why are images so sharp from this area? Because *each one* of the cones in the fovea is attached to a nerve fiber, giving it a direct pathway to the brain.

Can we think for a moment that any undirected chance designed such a light-sensitive, light-interpreting structure as our eyes, with 150,000,000 photoreceptors continually picking up information from light waves that enter the eye? Could the elements of chance produce even *one hundred* photoreceptors that would function daily—and keep functioning—for 70 or 80 plus years?

### How do we see?

Vision involves a continuous interaction between the eye, the nervous system and the brain. If we had eyes without a connection to the brain, we would see nothing. Or if we had a nervous system and a brain without a device for receiving light rays, we would see nothing. But our great Creator has designed all three to work together—light to reflect into the eye, photoreceptors in the eye to pick up the light and convert it into electric impulses, and a brain to receive and interpret the impulse. So equipped, we are able to look at an object and—most often—identify it without giving the process a conscious thought.

We need to look no further than our eye to agree heartily with King





David's statement, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14).

As soon as we open our eyes at birth, we begin to learn through the gate of the eye. And the process goes on as long as we live.

### What is the Process?

Our eyes pick up light reflected from an image, and the image is projected on a postage-stamp-size screen on the retina in our eye. The image as it arrives is upside down, but as quickly as the image hits the screen of our eye, millions of light sensitive receptors on the retina record the intensity, the color, the angle of the light striking each tiny rod or cone, and transmit an electrical impulse to the brain by way of nerve fibers. At the brain, these impulses are assembled and interpreted by being compared with the "similar records" (memory) of previous impulses that have been received and archived, and we are able to identify what we see. The details of the process are beyond the scope of this article, but who can help but marvel at the process that goes on every waking hour every day, and give thanks to Him who made us able to see!

Some have speculated that information gathered by our eyes goes to an information relay center in the brain, where it is coordinated with impulses sent by other sensory organs (touch, smell, feeling, hearing, etc.). There is still much to be learned about how the eye sees.

### The Eyes' Pump

Studies have shown that the cornea steadily takes in fluid, which it needs. But if it takes in too much fluid, it swells; and if the fluid stays in the eye, the eye loses its transparency and vision becomes blurred or cloudy. So the fluid intake is counteracted by a tiny pump that expels the fluid as fast as it enters. This pumping action creates a balance so that the cornea does not swell, and so that fresh fluid is continually supplied, keeping the liquid transparent. Since the innermost layer of the eyelid is directly responsible for maintaining pressure in the

pump, if the eyelid's lining becomes torn, vision is affected—because the pump cannot operate effectively.

Who can say that such a mechanism simply evolved, without any intelligent direction?

### Eye Movements and Adjustments

Another wonder of our eyes is their ability to keep imaging on a level plane, however we may tilt our head. Look at something level—a tabletop, a shelf, the roof of a house. Now continue looking at that object while you tip your head just a little to the left. The level object still appears level. Keep tipping your head to the left until you have bent your body slightly. The level object still appears level. If we stand on our heads, so that our eyes are upside down, everything we see does not look inverted. How is this possible? Because our eyes adjust for the movement of our head—however much or little—so that level images continue to appear level.

Imagine what it would be like if everything we looked at appeared to tip just because we tipped our head!

God has designed our eyes to adjust for the continuous movements of our head, so that the image on the retina stays level. Our eyes are also moving continually to pick up additional bits of information so that our brain can keep updating its information—it is estimated that the eyes are never stationary for more than a fraction of a second.

Actually, our eyes make three types of movements. Most common are the small, irregular, involuntary movements, of which the eye is said to make between 30 and 70 per second. The eye also makes flicks—in larger movements, also involuntary—about one per second. Third, our eye makes slow, irregular drifts which extend over longer intervals. The rapid movements of the eye are thought to be necessary to allow the contours of an image to fall on new sets of rods and cones at repeated intervals, so that the retina keeps sending messages to the central nervous system.

Can we say that any or all of this

power of motion came about by chance?

These eye movements are done primarily by six muscles, which are attached to the outside of the eye. One muscle pulls in a circular motion, another acts like a pulley, another operates on an oblique angle and passes under the eyeball like a sling, and so on, allowing the eye to turn quickly in any direction.

It is thought that the two distinct types of movements of the eye, the high frequency movements (30—70 per second) and the slower movements are controlled by two totally different sets of muscles. The velocity of the high frequency movements is relatively slow (about 25 degrees per second), whereas the velocity of the slow movements is very high (about 500 degrees per second). Again let us ask: Did such a system of motion just happen?

### Marvels, Marvels...

Our eyes are wonderfully adaptable to changing amounts of light or darkness. Go into a totally dark room, and you can hardly see anything. But stay there about 30 minutes, and your eyes have adjusted so drastically that they now are about 10,000 times more sensitive to light than when you entered. (If our eyes were to retain this high-sensitivity in bright light we would soon be blind.)

When the eye is dark-adapted, it is thought that the rods are utilized rather than cones, because the amount of light they require to "see" is much lower than that required by the cones. This idea is confirmed by the fact that we cannot distinguish color when light is very limited.

### Summary

We have only touched on a few highlights of a vast subject, where many questions remain unanswered even by those who know the most about it. But haven't we observed enough to thank God for our eyes, those very small organs we use every day in so many ways, with scarcely a thought?

Who cannot say, with all humility and reverence, that the hand that made us is Divine! □



We best glorify God when we grow most like Him, when we act most for His glory, when we are so captivated and overcome by the sense of Divine goodness that we conform our entire will to His.

*Have nothing to do with that which will not bear the test of time.*

If you think you are too small to do big things, try doing small things in a big way.

*One advantage in being 100% truthful is that you don't have to rack your brain trying to remember what you said.*

You cannot form a pure character without pure thoughts.

## *"Follow Me" — Which Way?*

*(Continued from page 2)*

To be a Christian is to be an extremist, in the judgment of a nonbeliever. For Christian faith is no half-way measure. It talks about going two miles instead of one, of sacrificing, and suffering, and dying. To believe is to risk death, to love enemies, to pray without ceasing. To follow Christ is to do right regardless of consequences. True faith involves intensity and commitment. We are called to love God with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, our whole strength. Nothing less will suffice."

The call to commitment is a call to discipline. Almost everyone recognizes the value of discipline in daily life. But how much more needful is it in the inner life. These words are borrowed from a well-known athlete: "Discipline is very important to winning. You can't have a real winning team without it. In fact, I don't think you can have a successful life without it. When you're disciplined, it means you're able to pay the price. You are able to sacrifice things that may be easier to do in order to do the things that will bring success."

Just so are we called to practice the principles of our faith, to impose upon ourselves the disciplines that will make us real winners (true followers of Christ). It will not always be easy. But the hopeful factor is that at the end awaits the crown of life. The discipline of following Christ is not pointless or fruitless. It is a process toward a goal. It is faith working to produce the life of Christ, which He will reward with the eternal crown.

To follow Christ is to pursue the crown of life. Here is a direction and a goal.

As we hear again the call of Jesus, "Follow me!"—let us arise and follow, realizing where this following will take us—all the way into His glorious and eternal Kingdom. □



## Light Shining Out Of Darkness

*God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.*

*Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.*

*Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.*

*Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.*

*His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.*

*Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan His work in vain;  
God is His own interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.*



# Whose Fault?

*I* heard the Old Year talking, and he seemed to say to me,  
"I'm just what you have made me, not what I hoped to be.  
I did not bring the failures; my days were bright and new.  
I was the time allotted, the work was yours to do.

*I* am only what you made me. I had no will nor choice;  
Through all the day of trial, I was not given voice.  
If victory came, you earned it; yours was the faith and power.  
If losses came, 'twas your loss; I furnished but the hours.

*I* came in empty-handed, a year that was to be,  
And what I am in passing is what you made of me.  
I am your petty failure, your glory, your success;  
I am your soul's advancement, your shame, or happiness.

*I* was not born of evil, or governed by the stars;  
Sometimes I bring high honors, sometimes but ugly scars.  
But oh! my days are numbered; I was the time for toil.  
And you have reaped the harvest, just at you tilled the soil.

*I* am what you made me, not what I hoped to be,  
And so will be the New Year, which soon shall follow me."

—Author unknown.

