

# Megiddo Message

JULY/AUGUST, 2003

*Teach us how short  
our lives really are  
so that we may be wise.*

*-Psalm 90:12 NCV*

# IS IT WORTH IT?

The terrorists have showed us a willingness to die that shocks us. At the same time, it makes us look at ourselves and ask, What is life worth? The recent war and all the ongoing conflicts also point up the fact that people are willing to die for certain things, like country, friendship, principles, family. But the great question still haunts us, Is it worth it? What does it accomplish?

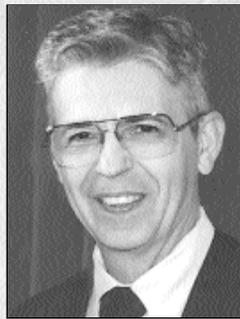
The whole issue focuses on the assumed benefit, whether it is perishing or permanent. Suppose that you really believe that what you are dying for will give you permanent benefit. Now this raises the stakes. Suppose that your dying may even entitle you to live eternally. Now let me ask again: is it worth it?

I once read an article by a man who grew up in a church where they had much to say about things worth dying for. They remembered the Christian martyrs burned at the stake or fed to wild beasts, and the ultimate test of devotion was the commitment that when our time came, we, too, should stand unafraid in the midst of the flames or not begrudge the lions their meal. But what impressed itself most on his mind was the fact that the commitment was unreal. His time would never come. He and his friends were still alive. They had not been burned at the stake or thrown to the lions, nor did it seem likely they ever would be. And slowly through the years the idea of things worth dying for lost much of its relevance. For him at least, there was nothing *probable* about it—like wanting toothpaste to brush his teeth the next morning. There was nothing *immediate* about it—like needing to put gasoline in his automobile so that he could get home that night. And there was nothing *significant* about it—nothing that would change the pattern of his life.

Jesus called His disciples to die for His sake, but He was not speaking of the sacrifice of physical life and breath

but rather the giving up of ambitions, goals, and relationships for His sake. It meant a reordering of one's priorities, affections, attachments and goals in this world. One must be ready for sacrifice, pain, suffering. There would be something to give up. There would be death in life, even to the point of physical death, if need be. But what of it? *"He who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it"* (Matt. 10:38–39).

Paul had another term for this death in life. He called it a living sacrifice, and one which he says is only our reasonable service, considering who and what it is given for. *"And so, dear Christian friends, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask?"* (Rom. 12:1 NLT). Such a commitment has relevance to our lives every day. Its effects are more than probable; they are immediate, and they are significant—they change everything, and the benefit is eternal.



*Is any part  
of your life  
outside your  
commitment  
to Christ?*

What is the meaning of the sacrifice? There are four principle words which contribute largely to that meaning: integrity, truth, love, and eternity.

How does one die for *integrity*? How does integrity relate?

Webster defines integrity as a "state or quality of being complete, undivided, or unbroken...wholeness." Integrity is being through the whole of you what you are at the start of you, what you are at the heart of you, what you are in the essence of you. If I can walk up to a lion and pet it as I would a kitten, that lion lacks integrity. It is not a lion at heart. If a person has his heart set on enjoying life and finding his satisfactions here, if he lacks the courage and the character-likeness of Christ, he lacks integrity—he is not a Christian at all. Someone once compared the professional actor and the Christian saying that the actor speaks fiction as though it were truth, and the Christian speaks truth as though it were fiction. Such a one lacks integrity. He lacks also a faith worth dying for.

What about *truth*? Jesus saw truth as the very core of life. When He was being questioned by Pilate, He stood by His commitment unflinchingly, and when Pilate questioned His kingship, He responded, *"Certainly I am a king, to this end was I born, for this cause came I into the world"* (John 18:36). He knew that the God who had given Him life would be with Him and restore that life.

Why is *love* at the heart of it? Because one who is committed to God will love God with all his heart, all his soul, all his mind, and all his strength. Is there any part of life outside this commitment? Is anything

# Maximum Living

by KENNETH E. FLOWERDAY

*If you forgive others, you will be forgiven. If you give, you will receive. Your gift will return to you in full measure, pressed down, shaken together to make room for more, and running over. Whatever measure you use in giving—large or small—it will be used to measure what is given back to you. —Luke 6:37–38 NLT*

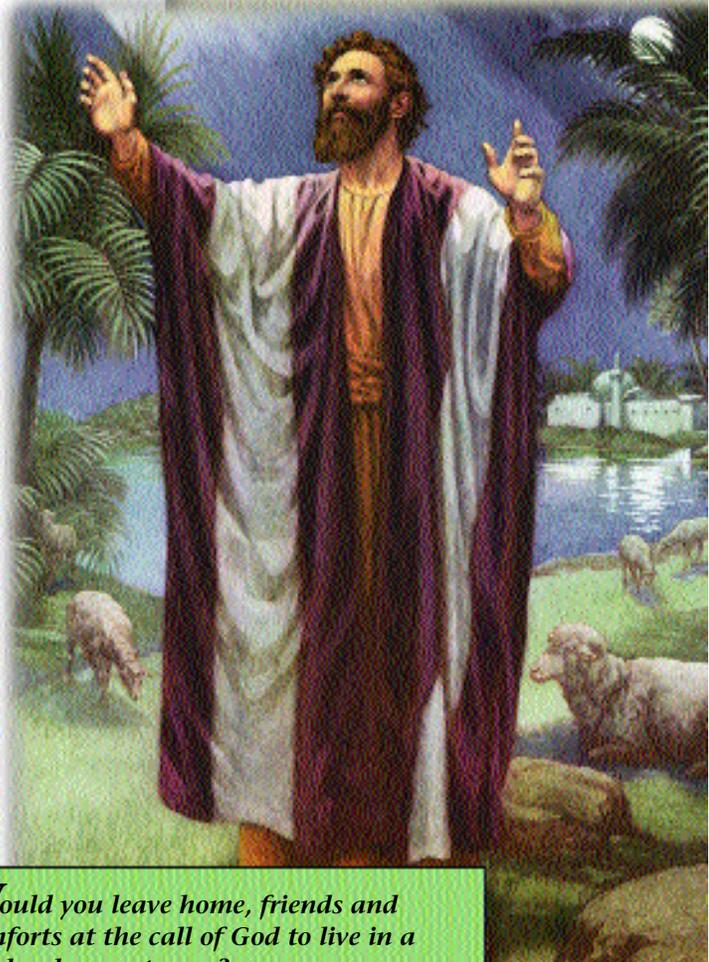
Jesus' words in Luke 6:37–38 point up the need for maximum living if we are to be a disciple of His. It is a spirit which we need if we are to live an abundant Christian life.

In an eastern city a few years ago there was a campaign to raise money to build a hospital. A high-powered financial wizard was called in to conduct the fund raising. He concluded his pep talk to the solicitors who were going out to raise the money with these words: "Never suggest to anyone a minimum contribution, for a minimum has a funny way of turning into the maximum." The person reporting this incident has this to say: "The man who came to see me about the matter had learned his lesson well. He did not suggest anything that seemed like a minimum, but mentioned several sums that looked like terrifying maxima."

There is real truth in the saying that a minimum has a funny way of turning into a maximum. When applied to our service for God it is not funny but subtle and tragic. God loves a cheerful giver, and a cheerful giver would never be satisfied with giving only the minimum. When the question becomes not "What can I do?" but "What *must* I do?" one is living the minimum and not the maximum life.

There is little in the realm of life where that statement is not true. We meet it in childhood, where the question often is "How little can I do and get by?" Most children are willing to wash their faces, but that means only the cheeks and not behind the ears. They are willing to shovel the snow off the front walk, but not around to the kitchen door. They are all for the minimum.

Teachers see the reluctance of many pupils to give more than the minimum. "How long does the term paper have to be?" "Do I have to answer all the questions?" Some students never get to the boiling point. There is no intellectual bubble of doing anything for the sake of accomplishment. Perhaps bubble is a poor word for scholarly achievement, but boiling water always seems to be water charged with animation, reminiscent of the reaction of the lame man whom Peter and John



**Would you leave home, friends and comforts at the call of God to live in a land unknown to you?**

**Abraham did!** (Heb. 11:8-10)

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FRONT COVER: PHOTO BY DAVID SUTTON.

## MEGIDDO MEANS...

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

## WE BELIEVE...

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

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

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

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

## THE HERALD AND THE KING

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

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

healed at the Gate Beautiful, leaping and praising God.

In the life of the mind the real delight comes after one passes the minimum. The words spoken of Christ, quoted from the Psalmist, were: *"I delight to do thy will, O my God"* (Ps. 40:8). His was maximum living. There was no place in His life for the minimum. That should be the password for each of us.

How poorly the minimum meets life's needs! Take the matter of food, for instance. Even where people are not starving, the minimum diet can be a dreary affair. One can exist on fruitless, starchy meals, but not in optimum health. To attain the maximum in liveliness, vitality, and vigor, one must have an adequate diet.

And take the matter of marriage and the home. There is a legal minimum that the partner in a marriage has to perform or the law steps in. But what a ghastly thing life on the minimum in the home can be—with a minimum of consideration, a minimum of honor, a minimum of sacrifice or love!

In Jesus we have the record of a maximum life. It is impossible to find any unsatisfied minimum of service in the life of Jesus. It was said of Him, *"Having loved his own, he loved them to the end"* (John 13:1). We never hear Him say: "Well, I guess I will call it a day. I have done enough for these fishermen today."

**T**he prophet Samuel was living the maximum life when as the last of the Judges of Israel he was rejected by his countrymen when they demanded a king. Samuel had spent his best years in the interest of the nation, and now they were rejecting him. What was his reaction? Was he hurt and resentful? Did he say, "Look at all I've done—I've given my whole life to this nation, and this is the thanks I get in return"? No, in spite of their inappreciation he still maintained a spirit of helpfulness. This was shown in his statement: *"God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you"* (1 Sam. 12:23).

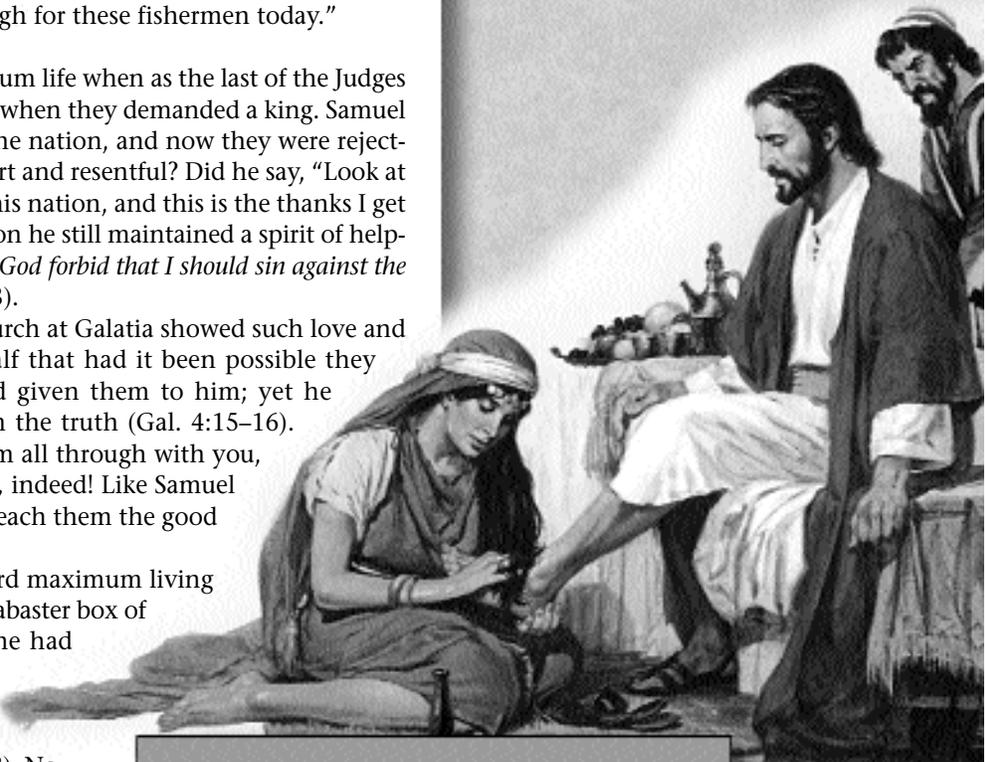
In Apostolic times the people of the Church at Galatia showed such love and appreciation for Paul's work in their behalf that had it been possible they would have torn out *"their very eyes"* and given them to him; yet he became their enemy because he told them the truth (Gal. 4:15-16). Under these circumstances did he say, "I am all through with you, don't look to me for any more favors"? No, indeed! Like Samuel he still prayed for them and continued to teach them the good and right way.

We have the clue to Jesus' attitude toward maximum living in the story of the woman who broke the alabaster box of precious ointment. When He saw what she had done He rejoiced, as if to say, "This is what I have been looking for, the spontaneous, unreckoning outpouring of the maximum gift" (Matt. 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:3). No wonder some shocked disciple said, "Go easy, sister, that stuff costs money!" But the impulsive outgoing in this woman, expressing her gratitude and devotion, won Jesus' commendation.

Now with us there is great danger of the minimum becoming the maximum in our spiritual lives. When that happens, our spiritual advancement stops. We miss the deep power of joy of willing-hearted service for God. There is a tremendous difference between something one has to carry and something that carries one. When we leave the minimum in our service to God, we get out of the realm of obligations into the realm of joy. That is where Jesus lived. It was His delight to do the will of His heavenly Father. Someone has said that He always had an open door to the incoming of the Divine resources of God. His minimum was always His maximum. His best was the least He would permit Himself to offer.

A man came back from Nova Scotia some time ago, telling about the high

*Lose your life in the service of the Lord that you may find it in the Kingdom of God.*



*Would you buy very costly oil and use it to anoint Jesus' feet?*

*Mary of Bethany did!* (John 12:3-8)

tide. He said: "You could hear it coming. You could see it coming. You could smell it coming. The tides swept up into the bays and lifted boats that had been careened on their sides and set them off on a new level." That is a striking picture of the powers of the Christ-filled life. His message comes into life like a tide. It lifts and sets life on a new level. If we have been living on a minimum of spiritual activity, satisfied with ourselves when doing the least that has to be done, let us try changing to the maximum!

We may look out almost hopelessly on a world like ours, and say, What can I do? What impression can one unit like myself make upon the mass confusion and strife about me today? The answer is that we can be different. We can begin to help others to be different.

- ◆ We can be different in our attitude toward others.
- ◆ We can remove the selfish spirit and do to others as we would be done by.
- ◆ We can be different in our attitude toward those who differ with us.
- ◆ We can be different in the way we spend our time, not in games of idleness or entertainment but making the very most of it, acting like sensible men, not like thoughtless.
- ◆ We can do more of the right things that we have done the most of.
- ◆ We can face and eradicate everything within us that makes the kind of world we have: fear, egotism, the will to selfish power, the inability to live in harmony and honesty with people nearest to us.
- ◆ We can eradicate the personal attitudes which make for war, everything that makes us willful, selfish, isolated units bent on a plan of our own, when we ought to be a united army, working to build God's Kingdom on earth.

When we begin living on a basis of exact truthfulness with others, clearing every wrong or tense situation, being kind and thoughtful even with those we do not naturally care for, sharing life with them, we shall become a channel of God's power and light, an example of a citizen of the Kingdom.

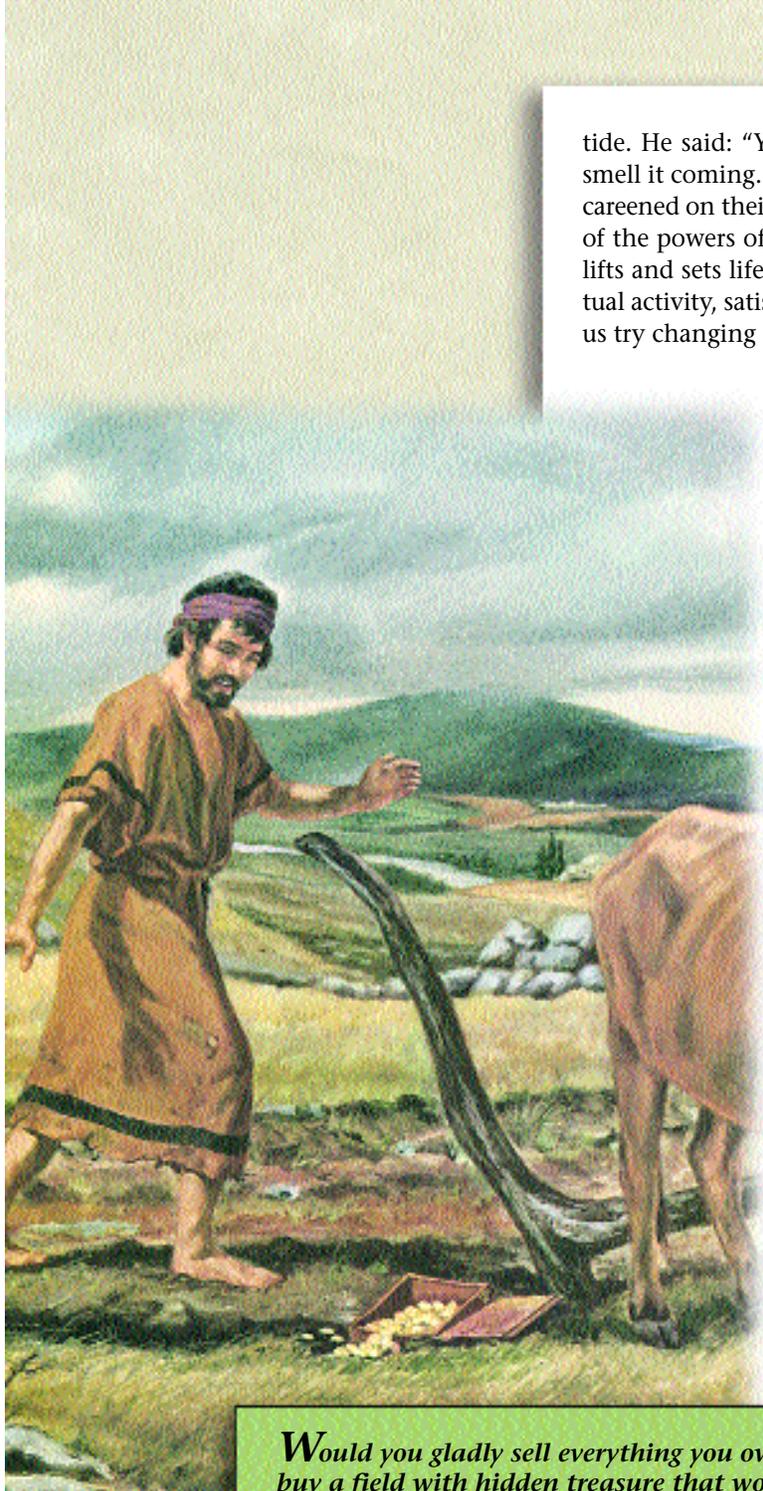
As fast as the days are passing, that is how rapidly we should be overcoming our besetting sins. This is easy enough to say, but too often our perverse human nature holds us in the same old rut. We go on still getting angry and irritable when something displeases us; and resentful when we should be radiant. But this cannot go on indefinitely if we would live maximum lives. Unless we get a firm hold on ourselves we will still be talking about it, and not doing,

when our day of opportunity ends.

Let us become part of that army already on the march, doing things which, thanks to God, are being done, and ought to be done. Let us become God-controlled personalities, persons who, like the boats lifted by the Nova Scotia tides, have been lifted and set straight by the power of the Gospel acting and reacting on their lives.

The Word of God provides many examples of maximum living and, sad to say, many examples of minimum living.

Speaking of maximum living the Psalmist said: "*Zeal for your house consumes*



***Would you gladly sell everything you own to buy a field with hidden treasure that would give you a right to live in the Kingdom?***

***The man in Jesus' parable did! (Matt. 13:44)***

me" (Ps. 69:9 NAB). His plan was to do all that he could for God, and he was so earnest about it that he described it as being consumed by his zeal. He said again: "With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commands" (Ps. 119:10 NAB) and again: "I hate men who are half and half" (Ps. 119:113 Moffatt).

Paul the apostle was living the maximum life. Here is how he described his intensity: "Brothers, I for my part do not consider myself to have taken possession. Just one thing: forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of God's upward calling, in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14 NAB). And he unhesitatingly recommended that plan to every life-seeker with the words: "Copy me as I copy Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1 Moffatt). To the Church at Thessalonica he tendered the advice: "Finally, dear brothers and sisters, we urge you in the name of the Lord Jesus to live in a way that pleases God, as we have taught you. You are doing this already, and we encourage you to do so more and more" (1 Thess. 4:1 NLT). This leaves no place for minimum living.

Christ had already recommended this plan. When answering the scribe as to what is the greatest commandment of the law He said: "...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30-31). This pictures maximum living at its best.

The Apostle John was recommending maximum living when he said: "Look to yourselves, that we do not lose those things we worked for, but that we may receive a full reward" (2 John 8). To receive the maximum reward we must give the maximum of ourselves. God wants us to give our best, our very best.

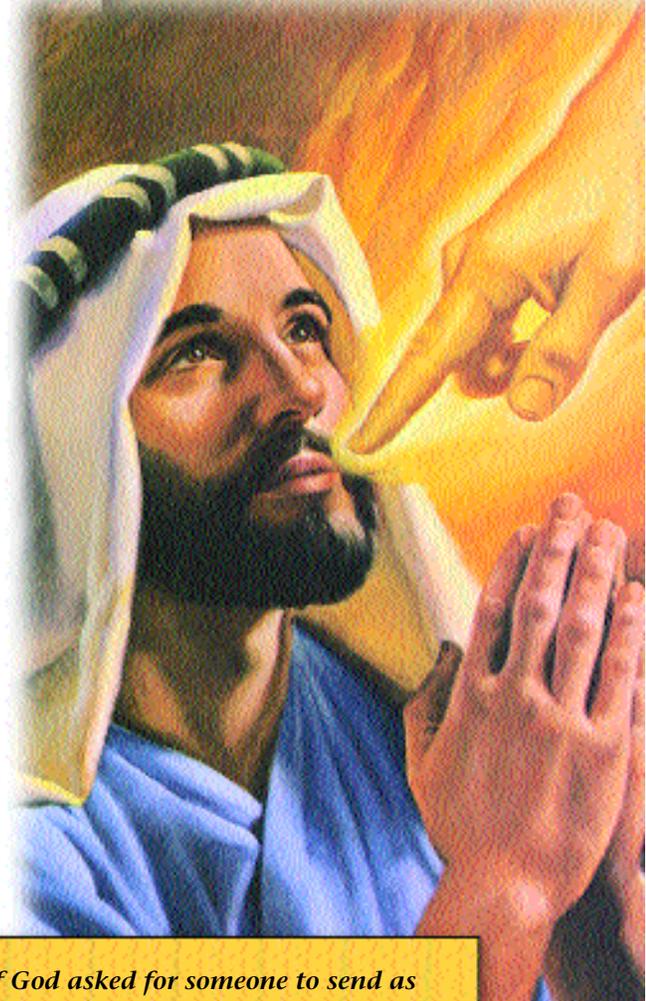
When in the days of Isaiah the Lord spoke saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" The Prophet unhesitatingly answered, "Here am I! Send me" (Isa. 6:8). His willingness was at the maximum—he was not satisfied with any minimum effort.

It is always a royal journey when we can go from the minimum to the maximum in sharing ourselves—that is, when we do it not as an obligation but of free will, as a willing offering of ourselves to God. "For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself" (Rom. 14:7) is a true maxim. Paul defines this journey in his Epistle to the Church at Ephesus with the words: "Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you" (Eph. 4:31-32 NLT).

And not only is it a royal journey to go from the minimum to the maximum of living for God and each other; it is also a most rewarding journey. Jesus said: "There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life" (Mark 10:29-30).

Give up all, and gain the hundredfold; sell out all your former hopes, ambitions, and ideals, that you may secure the pearl of great price; lose your life in the service of the Lord that you may find it in the Kingdom of God—so taught the Master. And as we offer in living sacrifice ourselves at our best, as we sacrifice the sunny, favorable, working days of our life; when we give the maximum of effort for God, when we give the best of our talents, all of our mind, might and strength, we shall receive an hundredfold in present remuneration and enlarge the capital for eternal dividends which they shall never know who give the minimum to God—only the tired, little end of life, that which is left after they have vainly tried to satisfy themselves.

Why not make your maximum the minimum you give to God! ♦



**If God asked for someone to send as a messenger to His people, would you reply, "Lord, I'll go! Send me"?**

**Isaiah did!** (Isaiah 6:8)

Edward Shayler tells another personal experience as a Canadian Prisoner of War in a Japanese prison camp during the Second World War.

# Burdensome Treasures

*Most of us never had it to lose. But this story is about a man who had it. He had all this world could give. Yet in a time of crisis he found he had nothing.*

Daveraux's material life centered on the banking profession in a British colony. His success gave him a beautiful home, servants, money, plenty of leisure time, and many enjoyments that were part of the office of a Bank Governor, along with boats, race horses, a private chauffeur, and, of course, a life of high social standing that belonged only to the elite. His self-esteem thrived on the constant attention, and a servant dealt with anyone who did not fit into that class. One might say that he enjoyed being seen on the "Society Page."

When I came into contact with him, he had already experienced the height of his success. I remember our first meeting. At that time he, like myself, had been made a Prisoner of War and had to accept a new living situation, which was for him a disaster, and his attitude made him a difficult man to deal with. Even his stature was against him, as he was tall (over six feet) and heavy (about 275 pounds). In addition, he had a very dominant personality. One could readily see that he was a man of affairs who had been accustomed to having everything he wanted.

He approached me looking for help with his daily living problems and felt that I, being Canadian like himself, would be eager to assist him and that my group would be a good source of servants. We would be reimbursed after the war ended. I tried hard to explain the gravity of our situation, and I also told him that he was free to approach anyone he wanted with his plan, and at that point I quickly made my exit. I did hear some of the superlatives that the men used to explain why they were refusing. This man even wanted the names of some of them so that he could bring justice to bear when the war ended. He just did not understand that his money had little value in these circumstances.

***What sorrows await you who are rich,  
for you have your only happiness now.***

—Luke 6:24 NLT

As time progressed he continued to make himself unpopular by being selfish in his associations. He never seemed to let up on his demands of increasing his inventory over others.



He even had a large group of local citizens outside the prison camp that catered to his demands and brought items for his use even at their own peril. These he displayed as a show of importance. One of his distinguishing points was his weight, which made him look odd and out of place. He was also known to be continually searching throughout the prison camp for anything of value so that he could acquire more. His passion was "gold," and if he knew of anybody with some he would pester them with offers that eventually they could not refuse.

It is not difficult to barter food to a hungry man for his possessions. At one point I intervened when I found out that he had convinced some of my comrades to part with the gold in their teeth. He in turn countered by signing my name to a letter to someone in the Colony that he knew and in it he included many statements that were forbidden by our captors. This action caused me a severe beating. From then on he kept his distance from me, and I seldom saw him, but I did hear some stories of his maneuvering. It was said that he was able to bribe some of the guards to help him in his dealings, and was living quite well.

***If anyone has material possessions  
and sees his brother in need but has  
no pity on him, how can the love of  
God be in him?*** —1 John 3:17 NIV

One day we were both notified that we were being taken to Japan. My thoughts were far from our banker, but suddenly he appeared. He offered a sincere apology for the trouble he caused me. As I had been spending any spare time trying to understand the reasons for our situation and had come to the conclusion that God is a forgiving God, I felt that I should offer him the same privilege. So I tried to be as convincing as I could be, all the while living in the hope that a great hole

would open and swallow him. He looked frightened and worried, and finally confessed. Why? Because he needed my help. He told me that he had been able to secure a quantity of valuables, including gold, and needed help to transport it to wherever our destination was to be.

I told him that I would not involve myself in helping with it, also that I would inform my comrades of the possible danger ahead if they were found concealing gold from our captors. I told him of the military principle involved, where it became the responsibility of each Guard Unit put in charge of our journey to completely search for these items and also weapons, and that we could encounter as many as seven different groups. He became more worried, and asked me what decision I would make. I told him I would change as much as I could for food. At least it would be unlikely that punishment would be applied for having food, and the worst that could happen was that it could be confiscated. He left with a look of a man who had just won a lottery.

***Just as the rich rule the poor,  
so the borrower is servant to the lender.  
Those who plant seeds of injustice  
will harvest disaster, and their reign  
of terror will end.*** –Proverbs 22:7–8 NLT

As time was a factor, he created quite a parade of interested purchasers of his booty. He had a network of Japanese guards working nights. I was interested from the point of view that not many Japanese had faith in the Japanese yen. He came back! His bartering had been successful. And now he had another dilemma: he had acquired so much tinned and dried food that he couldn't carry it all. He needed help, and he asked me if I and my men would be willing to help him. Because we Canadians had been made prisoners during combat, we had very few possessions. I told him it was up to the individual men to make that choice. So he began to canvass each of the sixty-five men who were part of our group of three hundred and sixty. He offered each man a share of whatever that man agreed to carry, and began to ration out his goods, making a careful inventory of what he entrusted to each person. I thought to myself, "What a stupid mistake!" Imagine a man who was being starved for two and a half years being handed a tin of corned beef to look after for a month, and then wait for his rightful share? Yet, on the other hand, what else could the banker do with it?

Our vessel of transport turned out to be a filthy old cargo ship and our quarters were the aft hold. During our twenty-eight-day trip, the area we occupied became littered with empty tins that had once contained food. It was easy to get suspicious of where they were coming from.

We finally reached our destination near Sendai, Japan, and we witnessed our work before us: Coal Mine. Almost immediately our banker friend came complaining to me that he could not recover the foodstuffs he had distributed among the men, and while I offered sympathy I could only tell him that he might get reimbursed when the war ended, so he should keep his accounts as a record. He then went into a tirade about values. I reminded him of his generous offer when we first met.

The coal mine was a new venture for us all, and we soon

discovered our captors' methods. They divided us into parties of usually four workers each, according to our military origin. Each party was given specific duties, i.e., shoveling, pushing coal cars, working the coal face, and was assigned to a certain mine shaft and rotated. Each group was also given "car-tags" that had to be attached to each coal car that was filled. This identification was tabulated, and when the tags ran out your day's labor ended. When all of the tags were accounted for, then we were allowed back at camp under the supervision of guards.

***Pull for the shore sailor, Pull for the shore,  
Heed not the rolling waves. But bend to the oar,  
Safe in the Life-boat, sailor, Cling to self no more,  
Leave the poor old stranded wreck,  
And pull for the shore.***

The Banker was having trouble again, mostly because of his own actions. One party group after another refused to have him as a member of their party because they said he was lazy. As a result, our captors were treating him badly.

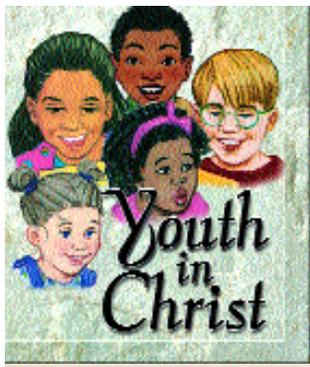
He fell ill and began to lose weight, and it became obvious that he was going downhill fast. Again he approached me, asking for help. I took this request to the men of our parties. There was some resistance, but I offered an argument for our banker. They had eaten his share of the food that he had given them to carry for him, and certainly they owed him something. The result was that our men agreed to include him in our parties, providing that he tried to honestly share in the work. The men realized that a Banker would have difficulty doing manual labor, and to make it fair for them all, he was to rotate from one party to another. It was understood that if a hardship was planned he would be automatically expelled from our work parties. He did give us an honest effort and was finally accepted by all the men for the remainder of our time as prisoners of war. His health held up and he was no longer abused by his captors any more than anyone else. He became friendlier and almost fitted into the routine of life we experienced, though his attitude of superiority still separated him from most conversations. He lived a lonely life indeed.

When the surrender came and we were preparing to leave the Prisoner of War Camp, and each group, according to origin, was being escorted out, I said a final goodbye to the Banker at Sendai, Japan. He did thank my comrades and me for the help we were to him. I explained that he should also be grateful to God, but he said that "God had not helped him much." Apparently he did not see any purpose in his life.

But all his efforts were not in vain. He had left a vivid impression on my mind of what *Not To Do* when those around you are seeking refuge from the injustices of the world.

***God has given us both his promise and his oath.  
These two things are unchangeable  
because it is impossible for God to lie.  
Therefore, we who have fled to him  
for refuge can take new courage,  
for we can hold on to his promise  
with confidence.***

–Hebrews 6:18–19 NLT ◆



## WHEN THE *Ump*phs *Go*me

Ten-year old Todd had been admiring his cousin's trumpet playing for many months. In Todd's eyes, 18-year-old Andrew was an accomplished trumpet player, and the idea of playing a trumpet kept popping into Todd's mind, even at the most unlikely times. He just couldn't seem to forget it. If Andrew could do it, why couldn't he? In his dreams Todd pictured himself marching in the band and making all those beautiful sounds. The more he thought about it, the more he wanted to do it.

Of course, Mom and Dad knew about Todd's dream, and Dad also knew a teacher who lived nearby.

So when Todd approached his parents with the idea, they were prepared. "Mom," he said, "I really would like to play the trumpet. Like Andrew does."

"Why do you want to play, Todd?"

"Oh, I think it would be a lot of fun. I could play in the marching band at school, like Andrew did, and travel with them. They went to some terrific places. Maybe I could also play in our church programs. I just want to make music."

Mom smiled: "I really enjoyed the clarinet when I was your age. But, Todd, it takes time and work. Are you ready for a lot of hard work and practice?"

Todd went off to play with the boys, but the next day he was talking it again, this time with his father.

"Dad," he began slowly. Dad thought he knew what was coming. "If I learn to play the trumpet, then some day I can play in the band like Andrew does, right?"

"Yes, Todd, but do you realize there is a lot of hard work and practice between the time you begin and the time you play in the band?"

Todd was ready this time. "I don't mind, Dad. I've thought about it. It won't seem like work because I really want to do it. I want to play a trumpet like Andrew."

"You understand, Todd, that if your

mother and I get you a trumpet and pay for your lessons, it will be up to you to practice regularly."

"And without complaining," added Mother, who suddenly appeared.

"That's right," agreed Dad.

Todd's reply was immediate. "I'll do it! Really, I will! I promise. May I start right away?"

"So you are willing to give up some of your precious summer time to practicing the trumpet?" queried Dad with a smile.

"Sure am!"

"Remember you'll still have your chores to do," reminded Mom.

"I know. When can I start?" Todd was ecstatic. "I'm ready to go!"

"Well," laughed Dad. "First we'll have to see about finding you a trumpet. We have a teacher in mind."

The arrangements were made, and within the next week Todd had his first lesson. It was great! After a few tries, he was actually making some pretty good notes, all on his own.

Todd was excited about the lessons, and even about the practice time. There was something new every week: new sounds, new notes, new things to learn, new pieces to play. And he really liked his teacher.

But after a couple of months the newness began to wear off. The daily practice became a drag. School started. Todd wanted to spend his free time riding his new bicycle or working on the computer.

"Todd, remember when you wanted to learn the trumpet, you agreed to practice," reminded Mom.

"I know, Mom," he whined, "but I don't have time now."

"Todd, if you plan wisely, I think you could find time for both your bicycle and your trumpet."

But Todd only wanted to ride his bike. Practicing was no longer any fun. "I don't want to play the trumpet anymore," he announced. "I want to quit it right now."

"Well, Todd," Mother said firmly but kindly, "that is not an option right now. You need to go to this lesson today, because your teacher is expecting you. We want to be dependable, don't we? Besides, your father has paid for all your lessons this month," she went on, "and your teacher has reserved that time for you. Go to your lesson today, Todd, and tonight when Dad comes home we'll talk about it."

Before evening came, Mom called Dad at work and explained what Todd



wanted to do. Together they decided that it would be unwise to let Todd quit the trumpet just because he was excited about his new bicycle and didn't want to practice anymore. They knew that if they let Todd quit right then, they were teaching him that it is all right to quit in the middle of any project or task when it becomes less than exciting; or that it is all right to make decisions based on how you feel at the the moment, without considering the longer-term results.

That evening when they sat down with Todd, they first gave Todd a chance to tell how he felt. "I understand," Dad began, "that you are thinking about quitting the trumpet."

"Yes, Dad."

"Todd, why do you think you would like to quit?"

"Dad, I don't have time for everything I want to do, and it isn't fun any more. I would rather ride my bicycle and do other things."

"So you feel that if you practice the trumpet you don't have time for other things?"

"Yes," Todd responded dryly.

"Well, this is something we need to consider carefully. You know, Todd, it isn't a good idea to make quick decisions."

"I know, Dad." Todd countered. "But I decided I wanted to play the trumpet, so now I can decide to quit it."

"We know it was your decision to play the trumpet," his father said very quietly and kindly, "but we have to think about *why* you decided to do it, and what will be the long-term results of quitting it. Do you really want to practice being a quitter? If so, you need to have a really good reason for it, because if you quit, that means that all the work you have put into it, and all the money we have spent for you on the trumpet and the lessons is just thrown away. Does riding your bike have more long-term benefit than learning an instrument? We want to help you consider your decision carefully."

"Many things in life take years of careful planning and work before we get the final rewards of our work. You remember the stories from my plumbing apprentice days. I had to do some pretty dirty jobs, but I stuck with it, and I've always been thankful I did, because that persistent attitude led to the wonderful job I have now."

"And Todd, think about your mother. It's not easy to keep up with four active children all day long. And aren't we glad she doesn't quit when she feels like it? You see, son, part of growing up is learning to stick at something even when you feel like quitting."

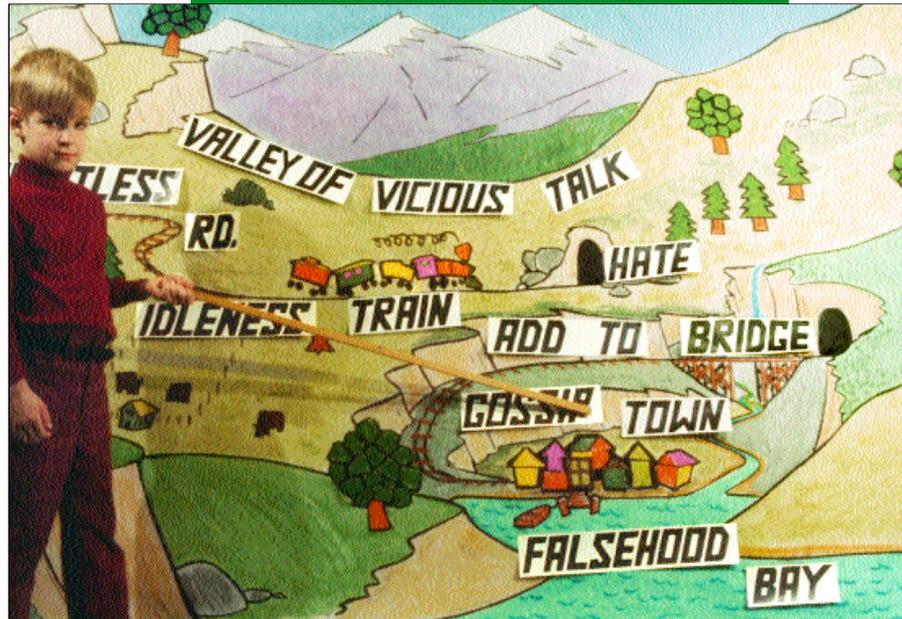
"I know, Dad," admitted Todd.

"We have a plan," Dad continued in a tone that Todd knew didn't leave him any options. "I want to make an agreement with you. It is this: You go to every lesson and practice every day for the rest of the school year without complaining, as you agreed to do when you started. At the end of that time, if you still want to quit, you may."

Todd was pleased with the arrangement. June seemed a long way off, but at least it had an end!

Meanwhile, Todd's mother helped him plan his afternoons. She showed him how he could have time both to ride his bicycle or use his computer and also practice his trumpet. Todd remem-

*continued on page 24*



## Gossip Town

*Have you ever heard of Gossip Town  
On the shores of Falsehood Bay,  
Where old Dame Rumor with rustling gown  
Is gadding the livelong day?*

*It isn't far to Gossip Town  
For those who want to go,  
The Idleness Train will take you there  
In just a minute or so.*

*The Thoughtless Road is a popular route,  
And many folks start that way.  
It's steep downgrade—if you don't watch out,  
You'll land in Falsehood Bay.*

*You glide through the Valley of Vicious Talk  
And into the Tunnel of Hate;  
Then crossing over the Add-To Bridge  
You'll walk into Liar's Gate.*

*The principal street is called "They Say"  
And "I've Heard" is the public well;  
It leads you direct to "Ssh Ssh" Way,  
Near the park they call "Don't Tell."*

*Just back of the park is Slanderer's Row—  
'Twas here that Good Name died  
Pierced by a dart from Jealousy's bow  
In the hands of Envious Pride.*

*From Gossip Town peace has long since fled,  
But Trouble, Grief and Woe,  
And Sorrow and Care you'll find instead,  
If ever you chance to go.*

# SHOULD WOMEN COVER THEIR HEADS?

by GERALD R. PAYNE

**The Bible talks about women covering their head in prayer in 1 Cor. 11:5, 15. Do we uphold this teaching in our Church?**

To understand this passage, several issues must be considered: the context of the passage, the problem Paul was addressing, and the customs of the time.

The passage in question is part of a letter in which the apostle Paul was addressing specific problems in the Church at Corinth. The problem here was regarding liberties that certain women in the Church were taking. Paul begins the eleventh chapter by commending those who remembered him, and were keeping the standards he had set. Then he says: *"I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God"* (1 Cor. 11:3). Or, as translated in the New Living Translation, *"There is one thing I want you to know: a man is responsible to Christ, a woman is responsible to her husband, and Christ is responsible to God."* (*"But I wish you to understand that, while every man has Christ for his Head, woman's head is man, as Christ's Head is God"* —New English Bible.)

Did Paul teach that women should be subordinate to men? No, he taught that all are equal in Christ. *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (Gal. 3:28).

What, then, could he have meant in 1 Cor. 11:7 *"For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man"*? The problem was the apparent permissiveness of the women of the Church as they would be viewed by those outside the Church. A principle of Bible teaching is to *"abstain from all appearance of evil"* (1 Thess. 5:22). However difficult this is to interpret,

Paul was concerned that the women of the Church not use their Christian liberty in a way that would appear immoral to those outside. At the time, a veil, or wimple (as it was called) was a "headdress worn by women over the head and around the neck, cheeks, and chin. From the late 12th until the beginning of the 14th century, it was worn extensively throughout medieval Europe, and it survived until recently as a head covering for women in religious orders" (1999 Encyclopedia Britannica CD). From ancient times it had been a custom of women to wear a veil (see Gen. 24:65). A woman who did not wear a veil was considered to be of very loose morals, as only prostitutes went without them (Dake Annotated Reference Bible, footnote, see also Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament).

To be seen in public without a veil was also to disgrace one's husband, therefore Paul's comment, *"Let her also be shorn."* A shorn head was a punishment for prostitution (Dake Annotated Reference Bible, Footnote).

Why did Paul say, *"... the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels"* (1 Cor. 11:10)? The covered head of the woman not only indicated commitment to her husband but also respected the Jewish customs. A Jew was obligated to divorce a woman who appeared in the street with her head uncovered. Observance of this custom was particularly important in a house church which met next door to the synagogue (Acts 18:7), where "messengers" ("angels" are defined as messengers, and can mean anyone, good or evil, who carry a message) might carry back a report of unsuitable behavior or attire (1 Cor. 11:10). In 1 Corinthians 11:16, however, Paul indicates that the church has no such universal custom, and a woman

has the right of choice (1 Cor. 11:10; cf. 1 Cor. 7:37; 8:9; 9:4, 5, 12); but it is mandatory for her to respect the sensitivities of others.

Would the wife be doing right to go without a head covering, which would not be violating a law of God, when she knew that to do so would bring the fury of the law on the husband and cause him trouble that he would not suffer otherwise? No, if she was a Christian wife, she would do all she could to help her husband keep the law and live peaceably.

## Roman Legal Structure

The responsibility of the "head" of the household for the misdemeanors of his family was part of the prevailing Roman legal structure in Paul's day. The oldest living male (father, grandfather or great-grandfather) controlled all the other members of the family, regardless of age or political importance. He held the power of life and death over other family members and assumed accountability for their behavior. In legal terminology, to have "head" was to be an integral part of one's legitimate family. If a person was adopted into another family, that individual received a new "head." In Christ, believers were offered a new head (Christ) along with their new family. Paul calls upon his churches to free themselves from familial bondage and to assume moral responsibility for their own behavior, and to establish new households with Christ as head (1 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:31-32).

In an era when a woman was legally required to have a "head," Paul called upon the woman to join herself in an attitude of both accountability and commitment to a husband, freed of repressive family hierarchy and responsive to Christ as head.

After stressing the importance of mutual submission of the husband to the wife and the wife to the husband

(Eph 5:21), Paul, in Ephesians 5:23, calls the husband head of the wife *“as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.”* The extended passage stresses the concern of Christ, the bridegroom, for the full development of His bride, the church; and husbands are called to a similar concern. As Christ the head brought growth and empowerment to the body of believers (Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:10), so the husband should promote the wife’s personal growth. (See Hawthorne, G. F., Martin, R. P., & Reid, D. G. (1993). Dictionary of Paul and his letters, pgs 376-377).

The same principle applied to the observing of Jewish laws. Paul did not tell the Jews not to observe their law. He only told them that obedience to their law could not bring them salvation, that to be saved they had to obey Christ’s law. He even advised believing Jews to cooperate with Jewish customs (this was his underlying reason for circumcising Timothy, because he was part Jew, and Paul wanted to remove an occasion for criticism). Never were the Christians in the category of social “rebels.” Paul had the same attitude toward the observance of the Sabbath. Under Christ’s new law, the keeping of the seventh day was not required. However, believers, who lived in Jewish communities—and Paul when he was traveling—attended the synagogue on the Sabbath day. It was a place to worship God, and God can be worshiped honorably on any day. There is also evidence that believers who were not associated with Jewish customs or communities observed the first day of the week as a remembrance of Jesus’ resurrection.

Was Paul right in viewing Christian conduct in relation to the customs of the times? We can be certain his first obligation was to obey the law of Christ. But if there was no conflict between the law of Christ and the current custom, it seems that Paul advised that the custom be followed. One example was the institution of slavery. The law of God, with its insistence that all men are equal, would not support the institution of slavery. But neither would believers be in a position to overthrow slavery. So it was prudent for Paul to advise believing slaves to be subject to their masters, and

believing masters to treat their slaves as brothers in the Lord, recognizing that they too have a Master in heaven (Eph. 6:5–9; Col. 3:22). Even though the basic institution was wrong, believers could honor God while working within the system of slavery and by conducting themselves according to His law.

Our Church does not require any woman to wear a head covering at any time. However, if conditions were such that it would bring hardship on the husband, or appear immoral, then it would be necessary for the women to wear a head-covering. In the eyes of God it is neither right nor wrong to wear a head covering, it is a choice the woman can make, as long as it does not appear immoral or bring hardship on the husband; if so, it would dishonor both her husband and Christ, who is the head of both husband and wife.

To understand certain requirements imposed on women, or others that seem strange to us may be a result of custom during the time of the Early Church, or as a result of the Mosaic Law which the Jews insisted on observing even after it had been abolished. The questions we have to answer in whether or not we observe certain practices are, Does it violate any law of Christ? Does it appear evil to others? Will it cause someone else grief? Will it cause a weaker Christian to stumble? Can we do or not do something with a clear conscience? You see, if we do or refuse to do something and feel guilty, we are convicting ourselves of sin, and we will be guilty.

#### ◆ Is assisted suicide wrong?

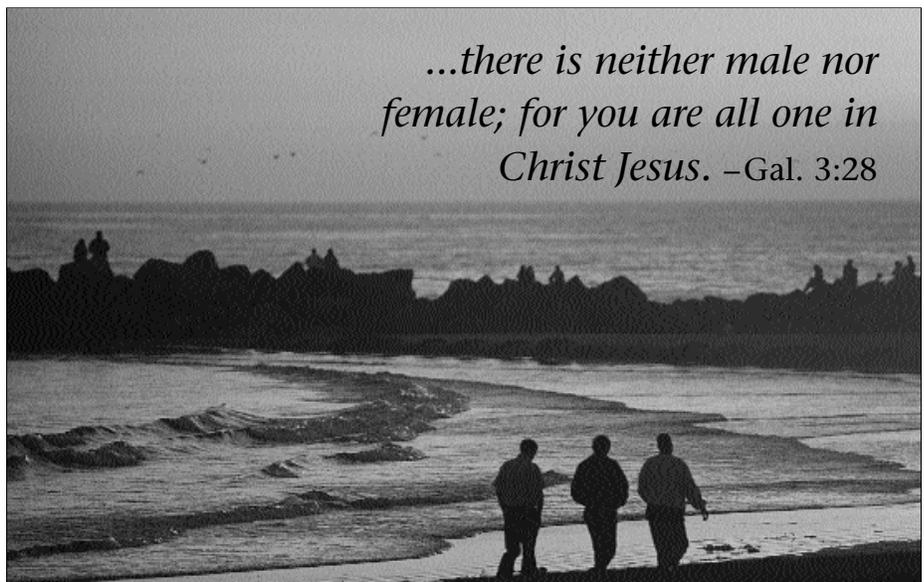
#### *What are the wrongs of assisted suicide?*

When one mentions “assisted” suicide, I am taking this to mean that the person being assisted is cognizant; that is, he or she is fully aware of the fact that they are committing suicide and know the consequences will only result in cessation of life. It is also understood that this person is seeking relief from pain or some other experience they are having that seems impossible to bear.

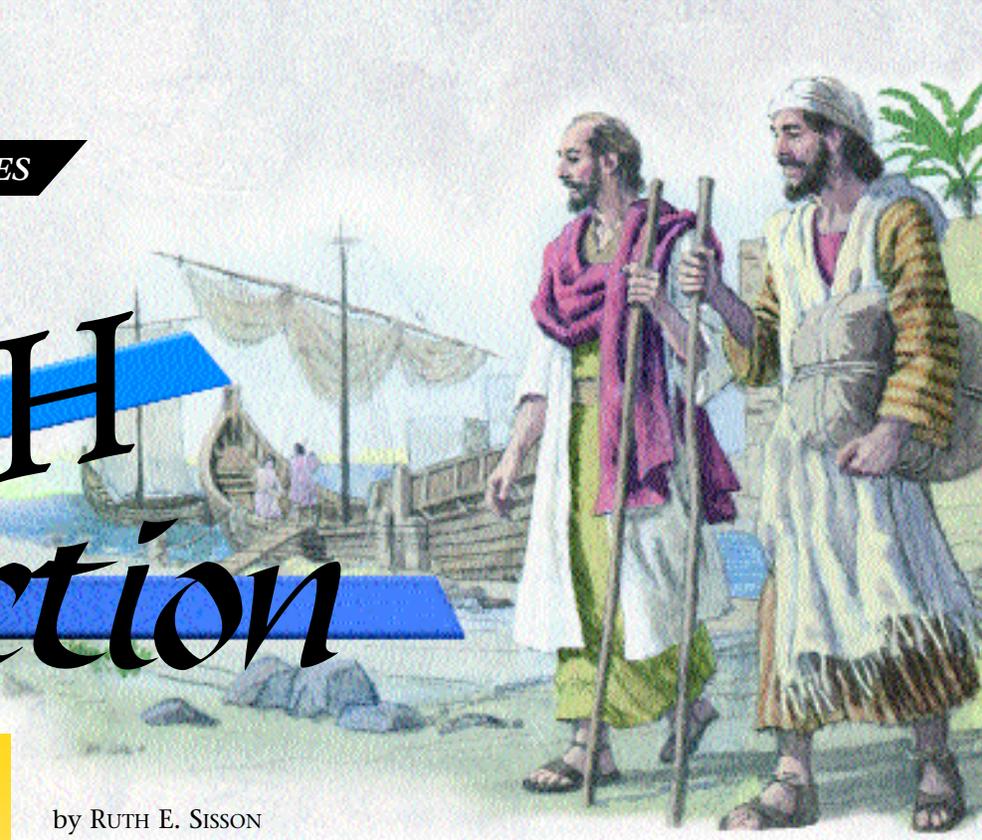
The Bible contains a clear and direct command against killing: *“Thou shalt not kill.”* Call it by whatever name you wish, taking life is murder, and I know of no deviations being allowed for taking another person’s life except perhaps in self-defense or when God commanded His people to go to war. Life is a gift from God that we should never take lightly. If one feels that assisting another to take his own life is the proper thing to do, perhaps that one is not trusting God to know when a person should die. David said, *“My times are in Your hand”* (Ps. 31:15).

If one is terminally ill, in great pain, and can realize no further benefit from life, the better plan is to help that person by requesting medications to keep that person as comfortable as possible and allow a natural death without heroics. At the same time, no special interference to natural death would be used to prolong life. ◆

*...there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. –Gal. 3:28*



# FAITH in Action



**A Gospel "for Gentiles Also..."**

Jesus had not preached to the Jews exclusively. He emphasized the point that even though there were "many widows in Israel," God sent Elijah to a lone widow in Zarephath, a city of Sidon, during a time of famine. And even though there were many lepers in Israel, Naaman the Syrian was the one chosen for healing (Luke 4:25-27). Jesus took opportunity to preach in Samaria (John 4:1-42), and in the region of the Gadarenes, which was predominantly Greek (Mark 5:1-20).

In His revelation to John, the associates to reign with Jesus are described as being chosen from "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). All are judged by one standard: character (1 Sam. 2:3).

by RUTH E. SISSON

## WHEN THE CRITIC IS WRONG

NO one naturally likes criticism. But to be able to take it and benefit from it is a valuable part of life, especially of Christian life. One who cannot benefit from criticism is missing an essential ingredient of spiritual growth.

But this is not to say that the criticism is never wrong. Sometimes it is all wrong. Still, one needs to be prepared for it and to take it in the right spirit, even as Jesus who, "when He was reviled, reviled not again," (1 Pet. 2:23).

Another approach to criticism is to discover the motive behind it. Why did that person criticize? Perhaps he is misinformed, or perhaps he has misunderstood. Or he simply may not share the same views or opinions.

What is the right response when the critic is wrong?

In the eleventh chapter of Acts, we have an account of how an apostle of Jesus, Peter by name, handled severe criticism when the critics were all wrong.

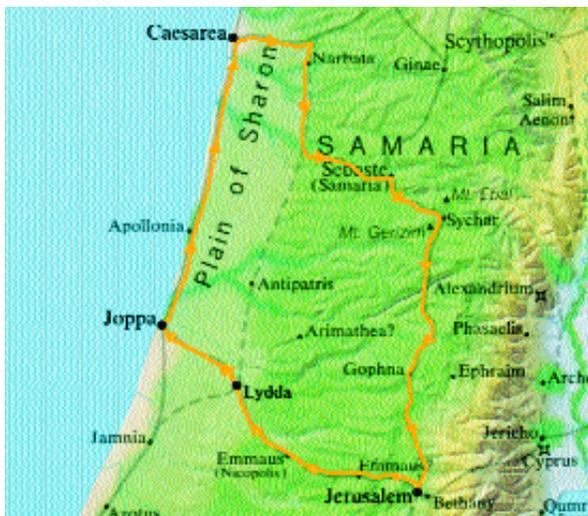
And, to make matters worse, the critics were not enemies or even strangers but persons right within his own Church fellowship. They were people he had known and worked with for many years. Here was a serious test of Peter's character.

What was the problem? The Apostle had gone to Caesarea and visited at the home of Cornelius. He had done this accompanied by six fellow Christians from Jerusalem. He had done this at the direct command of the Lord, and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Before going he had even been favored with a Divine vision, which gave him exact details about where to go and what to do. All the way, Peter was following Divine instructions.

Yes, Peter had done what he had been told to do. And he was criticized. Severely. He might have anticipated it, but how does one prepare for such a test?

When he returned to his home Church in Jerusalem, he walked right into it. To put it mildly, his Jewish brothers were upset. Palestine was a small place. The distance between Caesarea and Jerusalem was less than 50 miles. And Caesarea, being the seat of the Roman government and Jerusalem the principal city, there was likely a thriving grapevine carrying information between the places.

Did Peter spend longer than he had intended to spend in Caesarea? Or did



he stop at some other places to visit brethren while he was travelling? Perhaps the men who accompanied him from Joppa returned home before Peter, and went on to Jerusalem to deliver the news. If they did, we can be sure that they talked enthusiastically about all that they had seen and heard up in Caesarea, and how God had opened the way for Gentiles to come into the Church. The Jews could easily get the message.

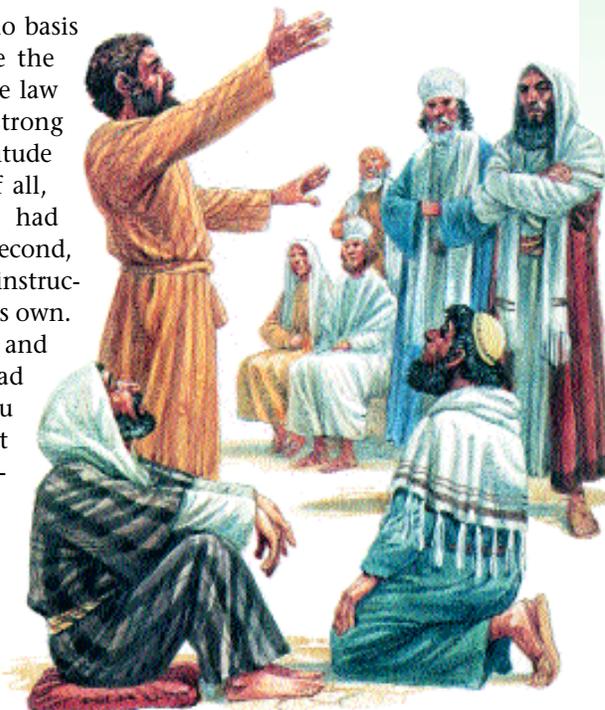
Even though the Jews had long accepted Gentiles into their ranks as proselytes, they still looked down on non-Jews. What was the meaning of this event? Did it mean the Gentiles could come into the faith of Christ on an equal basis with Jews? Did it mean that Gentiles who believed in Christ did not have to first become Jews? Did it mean that Jews had no right to suspicion of Gentile believers or look down on them because they were not Jews? Yes, all of the above were true. The Jews had always suspected the Greeks, and felt superior and God-blessed in every way above them. Would the Jewish Christians have to look upon Gentile believers as equal to themselves?

The obvious answer was Yes!

 READ ACTS 11:1-10

1. What had the Jerusalem Church heard about certain Gentiles? (Acts 11:1) \_\_\_\_\_
2. What were the complaints of the Jews against Peter? (11:2-3) \_\_\_\_\_
3. According to their laws, who would be defiled by such a transgression? (11:2-3) \_\_\_\_\_
4. When the Jews took so extreme a position against Peter, how might the other Apostles have been affected? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What was Peter's response to the criticism? (11:4-8) \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many times was the vision repeated and the sheet drawn up into heaven? (11:10) \_\_\_\_\_

Actually, the critics had no basis for their complaints outside the customs of the times and the law of Moses. Peter had very strong support for his change of attitude toward the Gentiles. First of all, he was an Apostle, and had received Holy Spirit power. Second, God had given him specific instructions. He had not acted on his own. God had given Peter a vision, and Peter had done what God had commanded. And did you notice that in his vision that the sheet loaded with four-footed animals of all kinds was lowered and drawn up into heaven three times? In the eyes of any Jew, a three-fold testimony established a fact. God was making His pronouncement solid to a



Bible Text: Acts 11:1-18 NIV

- 1 The apostles and the brothers throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.
- 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him
- 3 and said, "You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them."
- 4 Peter began and explained everything to them precisely as it had happened:
- 5 "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.
- 6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles, and birds of the air.
- 7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'
- 8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'
- 9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'
- 10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.
- 11 "Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying.
- 12 The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man's house.
- 13 He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, 'Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter.
- 14 He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.'
- 15 "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as it had come on us at the beginning.
- 16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."
- 17 So if God gave them the same gift as He gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?"
- 18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, God has granted even the Gentiles repentance unto life."



Did you know...

### To Antioch in Syria

The city of Antioch, 300 miles north of Jerusalem, was the third largest city in the empire, and a center for the cult of Artemus, as well as several other thriving pagan cults of the time. It was also a thriving commercial center, known as the gateway to the east.

Except for the Jerusalem Church, the Church at Antioch played a more important role in the growth of the Early Church than any other. Paul used Antioch as home base for his missionary journeys—he departed from and returned to Antioch.

Jew of good standing. If in Peter's vision these unclean animals could be received up into heaven, how could mere men object?

Peter had even something else to reinforce His actions. The Lord had not only instructed Peter what to do; he had also sent an angel to Cornelius, the Gentile Peter had visited.



READ ACTS 11:11-18

7. What message did the angel of the Lord give to Cornelius? (11:13) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Who was Cornelius told to get instructions from? What was the purpose of those instructions? (Acts 11:13-14) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. How did Peter compare what happened to these Gentiles with what had happened to himself and his fellow Jewish believers in Christ? (11:15) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. What promise of Jesus did Peter relate to this event? (11:16; See Acts 1:4-5) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. Peter said that if his fellow believers rejected these Gentile converts, they were actually standing against whom? (11:17) \_\_\_\_\_
12. What was the reaction of those who had been criticizing Peter? (11:18) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Peter had double evidence from the Lord that his actions were right.

Up to this time, most preaching had been primarily to Jews, though some others had believed. But now the Lord had arranged for a major effort to be made to bring Gentiles directly into the faith, not through the route of Judaism. Some might have feared that the change would make a rift in the Church.

It was a major revelation to the Jerusalem congregation, but their response was encouraging. *"Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life,"* they said (Acts 11:18).

Because the majority of believers up to this time had been drawn from among the Jewish people, some of the Jews had mistakenly assumed that they were so "special" that any Gentiles coming into the faith had first to become Jews. The experience of Peter, along with God sending him to Cornelius, proved that idea totally wrong. As the Lord had told Peter, *"God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him"* (Acts 10:34-35). A Jewish believer had no advantage above a Gentile.

### The Critics Recant

It is one thing to accept criticism gratefully when one's position is wrong. It is another to accept it well when one's position is absolutely right.

Peter knew he was right. There was no question whatever. But Peter knew where his Jewish brothers were coming from because he himself had been there. He had grown up in the same traditions and had the same strong scruples against eating with Gentiles, or even entering their homes. Peter could understand his critics fully.

How did Peter respond to the criticism? Did he tell them off, so to speak, saying that he had authority from the Lord and they should be quiet? No, he carefully told them the details, from beginning to end, even relating a promise from Jesus (Acts 11:16), and then appealed to them to accept it, asking that since God was giving these Gentile brothers the same favors He gave to them,



Insight

### Barnabas The Encourager

Every time we read about Barnabas, he is encouraging. Can we imagine why the brethren in Jerusalem sent Barnabas to Antioch, where the Church was new and needed strengthening in the Lord? We can be sure he was happy to go, and he *"encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts"* (11:23 NIV).

This man named Joseph actually acquired a new name because of this outstanding quality. Those who knew him in the Jerusalem Church preferred to call him Barnabas, which means "Son of Encouragement." He was encouraging them to be committed, wholehearted believers, to make a decision and make it stick.

Barnabas himself was a man full of faith and a good man—both high commendations for his character. A great believer, he took God at His word and practiced what he preached. This made his preaching effective.

We need more Barnabases!

were not the Gentiles equal brothers in Christ? It was a case of “a wise rebuker” and “an obedient ear” (Prov. 25:12).

We can learn a good lesson from Peter’s example. We can also learn from the mistake of the Jewish critics, who should have asked what was underlying the strange conduct of Peter before they criticized.

It had been a case of accusation without information. The burdensome laws that had been tremendously effective in keeping a Jew a Jew were no longer binding. Peter as much as said, I could not see it either. But now I plainly see.

The Lord had given just as much attention to preparing the Roman centurion as He had given to preparing Peter for this great change. Who could deny that it was of God?

### The Gospel Spreads

 READ ACTS 11:19–26

When persecuted believers had to flee Jerusalem, they scattered into Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, taking the Gospel with them. Most of them addressed it to the Jews, but Gentiles also heard. The results were spectacular. “The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21).

This news caused a stir in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch to help the new believers.

14. What did Barnabas do for the Church at Antioch? (11:23) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. What are we told about Barnabas’ character in this context? (11:24) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
16. What was Barnabas’ longer-term solution to the problem? (11:25) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. How long did Barnabas and Saul stay in Antioch and assemble with the people in the Church? \_\_\_\_\_
18. What title was given to the disciples for the first time in Antioch? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

When Barnabas needed a helper in Antioch, he knew where to go to find one. He went to Tarsus, where he found young Saul, who was a Jew by birth, a Greek by culture, a Roman by citizenship, and full of zeal!

Barnabas must have had some idea of Saul’s whereabouts, because he shortly returned with him.

It is likely that young Saul had been spending his time absorbing the new faith, and practicing it. It is also likely that he was disowned by his family because of his new convictions. The son of a family who had worked so hard to educate him in the ways of the Jews had turned against the family heritage—what a traitor!

But Saul had new loyalties, and when Barnabas came, Saul was ready. Saul went to Antioch, and for a whole year he and Barnabas labored side by side with the people, teaching them and showing them how to live so as to please God.

Here was Paul’s first hands-on teaching after his Day in the Arabian desert. He himself was totally convinced, and that conviction would help others. ♦

#### Bible Text: Acts 11:19–26 NIV

19 Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.

20 Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

21 The Lord’s hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

22 News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

23 When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul,

26 And when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.



#### Insight

**“And the Disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”**

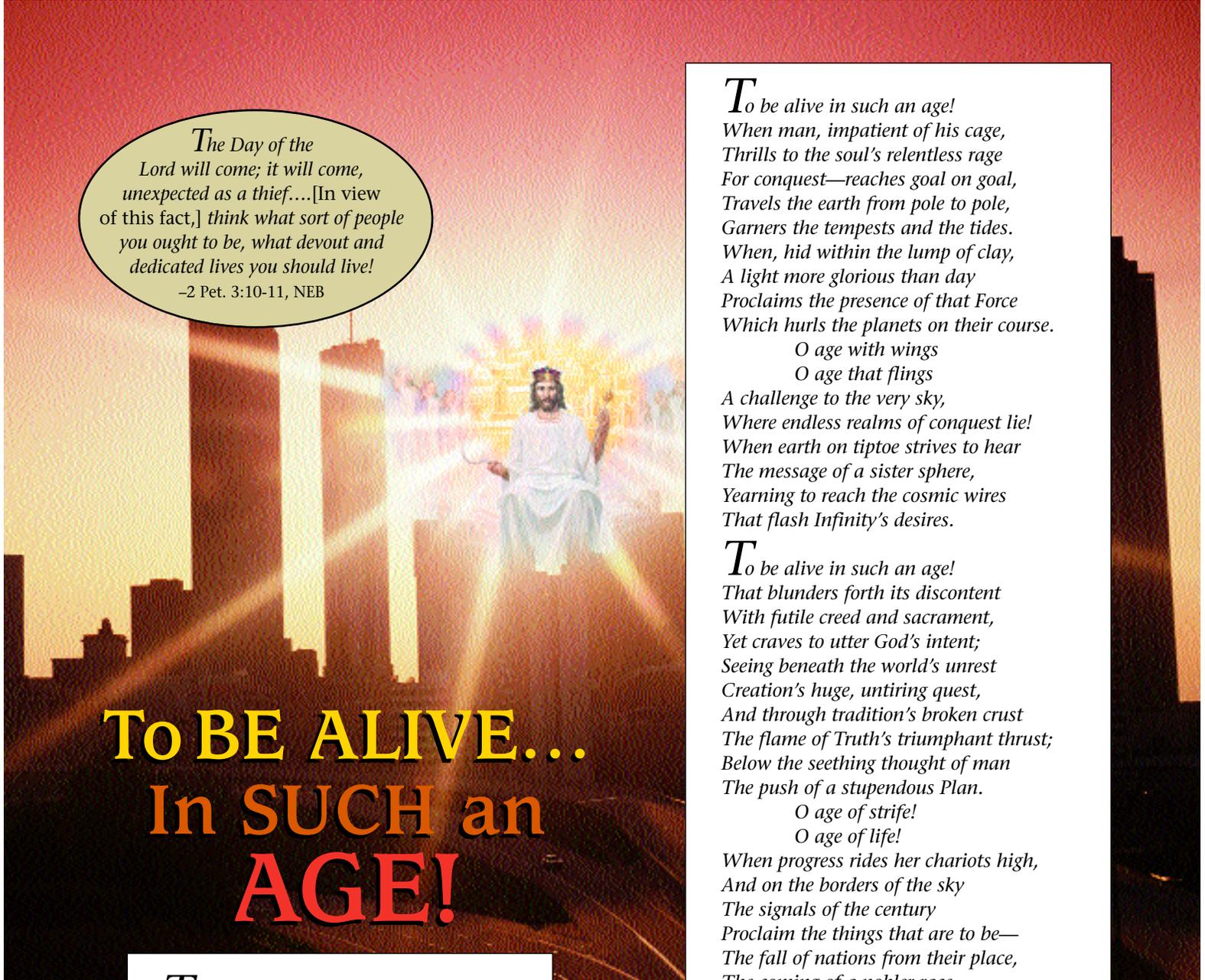
Was it a nickname? Perhaps one to bring dishonor, but a singularly appropriate name. Christian—literally, “like Christ”—it was a wonderful name. The real origin of the name was Divine, because Christ was “the anointed One,” the Messiah of prophecy.

“Christians” seemed to be a just-right name for the new believers. They were literally “Christ-ones,” followers of Christ. Christ was their rallying point, Christ was their example, Christ was their reason for living. Christ had died and had been resurrected, had ascended to heaven, and had sent the Holy Spirit power which was their prized possession, the Divine seal on their ministry.

“Christians” became a badge of honor. Today it suggests those who are following the example of Jesus, doing the will of the Father in heaven, bearing His name until Jesus returns and His will is done on earth as now it is done in heaven above.

*The Day of the Lord will come; it will come, unexpected as a thief....[In view of this fact,] think what sort of people you ought to be, what devout and dedicated lives you should live!*

—2 Pet. 3:10-11, NEB



# To BE ALIVE... In SUCH an AGE!

*To be alive in such an age!  
With every year a lightning page  
Turned in the world's great wonder book  
Whereon the leaning nations look.  
When men speak strong for brotherhood,  
For peace and universal good,  
Yet build their implements of war  
To devastate the other more;  
When miracles are everywhere,  
And every inch of common air  
Throbs a tremendous prophecy  
Of greater marvels yet to be.*

*O thrilling age,  
O willing age!*

*When steel and stone and rail and rod  
Shall yet become the path of God—  
A trump to shout His thunder through  
To crown the work that He shall do.*

*To be alive in such an age!  
When man, impatient of his cage,  
Thrills to the soul's relentless rage  
For conquest—reaches goal on goal,  
Travels the earth from pole to pole,  
Garners the tempests and the tides.  
When, hid within the lump of clay,  
A light more glorious than day  
Proclaims the presence of that Force  
Which hurls the planets on their course.*

*O age with wings  
O age that flings*

*A challenge to the very sky,  
Where endless realms of conquest lie!  
When earth on tiptoe strives to hear  
The message of a sister sphere,  
Yearning to reach the cosmic wires  
That flash Infinity's desires.*

*To be alive in such an age!  
That blunders forth its discontent  
With futile creed and sacrament,  
Yet craves to utter God's intent;  
Seeing beneath the world's unrest  
Creation's huge, untiring quest,  
And through tradition's broken crust  
The flame of Truth's triumphant thrust;  
Below the seething thought of man  
The push of a stupendous Plan.*

*O age of strife!  
O age of life!*

*When progress rides her chariots high,  
And on the borders of the sky  
The signals of the century  
Proclaim the things that are to be—  
The fall of nations from their place,  
The coming of a nobler race.*

*To be alive in such an age—  
To live in it,  
To give to it!  
Rise, soul, from thy despairing knees,  
See what thy Lord in heaven sees.  
Fling forth thy sorrows to the wind  
And link thy hope with God's own mind!  
The passion of a larger claim  
Will put thy puny grief to shame.  
Breathe heaven's thought, do heaven's deed,  
Thy King is almost here—take heed!  
And what thy woe, and what thy weal?  
Look to the work the times reveal!  
Give thanks with all thy flaming heart—  
Crave but to have in it a part.  
Give thanks and clasp thy heritage—  
To be alive in such an age!*

—Selected

# The Heavenly Kingdom on Earth

## ARMAGEDDON

### RIGHT WILL WIN

When one nation goes to war against another, the aggressor hopes to justify a "good" cause and win supremacy over the other nation.

When Jesus returns, He will ask all nations to submit to His authority. Those who refuse will take up arms to fight against Him, and the result will be Armageddon. This is a war that need not be; if they would submit, there would be no war. But they will not submit. In the words of Jesus Himself, *"these shall make war with the Lamb"* (Rev. 17:14). Much as they may have talked for peace and progress, when the way is opened, they will resist Him who has come to take control.

Can you imagine what this means on a worldwide scale? Can you imagine the president of any nation saying, "Come right in, you can have our government. I know you can run it better than we can"? Or do you expect a prime minister to say to Jesus, "We have made a mess of this government, but we know You have the answers; You know what to do. Come right in and take over"? No, they will resist. They will want to preserve their autonomy, their culture, their authority. None will want to give up to one whom they view as an intruder.

In the 14th chapter of Revelation is a picture of Jesus standing on Mount Zion with His faithful, chosen ones. These are His co-rulers, His associates, and each is fully qualified. Each has *"the Father's name"* written in his forehead, the symbol of the law of God in their minds. They are equipped, trained, prepared. *"These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These are redeemed from among men, being first fruits to God and to the Lamb"* (Rev. 14:4). Through the previous 6000 years, God has been selecting and qualifying these very special individuals for the task of sharing Christ's authority. What was the standard required of them? We are told in verse 5 *"In their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God"* (Rev. 14:5). There will not be one corrupt, self-seeking politician among them.

Then, with the new authority in control, this ultimatum is issued: *"Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come"* (Rev. 14:7).

It is zero hour, and the choices are simple: do or die, submit or perish. *"Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour of His judgment has come."* No more time to contemplate, no more time to enjoy the pleasures of sin, or exploit the poor, or promote anything sensual or base. The true God will be recognized universally as the Creator, and Jesus Christ His Son as the supreme authority on earth. No rebellion will be tolerated. *"Fear God and give glory to Him...and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the seas and the springs of water"* (Rev. 14:7).

The message will be: Listen! Believe, and bow—or die.

### RESISTANCE

When the nations of earth go out to fight against Christ, He will have His forces ready to fight back. We read in Rev. 19:19, *"And I saw the beast, the kings of earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat*

PART FIVE  
 by RUTH E. SISSON

### Steps Into the Kingdom

1. Elijah the Messenger arrives
2. Holy Spirit power is restored
3. The dead in Christ are resurrected
4. Jesus Christ returns
5. Jesus Christ chooses His co-rulers (Judgment of covenant makers)
6. Jesus Christ is crowned King
7. The Millennium begins
- 8. Battle of Armageddon; one third of the earth's population submit to Christ**
9. Satan is bound (no open manifestation of evil)
10. Earth is repopulated and re-trained under new rulership (Christ and Saints)
11. Satan is loosed (strict authority is relaxed)
12. Second resurrection
13. Open rebellion against Christ's government
14. Rebellious element is destroyed
15. Final judgment of mortals who lived during the Millennium
16. Glorified earth is annexed to God's family in heaven and the Eternal Age begins

## Two Judgments

When Jesus returns, His first task will be the judging of His servants, those who have agreed to live by His covenant. This judgment will be followed by a judgment upon the nations of earth, to force them to submit to His laws. Both judgments are very important, because the first judgment prepares the way for the second.

The Bible indicates that those at the first Judgment will be judged faithful or unfaithful, according to their works. (Rev. 22:12; Matt. 25:31-46). Those who have repented and turned from their sins will have had their sins fully pardoned and erased, and when God pardons, those sins are never mentioned again (Ezek. 33:14-16). These will receive the crown of immortality, the crown which Paul was looking forward to when he said, *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only, but also to all who have loved His appearing"* (2 Tim. 4:7-8).

But all will not repent and turn from their sins, hence all will not receive immortality. Those who turned back, who rebelled against God, who agreed to serve Him and forsook Him, will be required to serve for their unfaithfulness. These will comprise the sword of the Lord, which He will use in conquering the nations of earth (Rev. 19:15, 21).

The Lord requires accountability. If someone were to give a million dollars to an individual for the purpose of building a hospital, with an agreement that it should be done in a certain length of time, at the end of that time there would be an accounting. Suppose that individual decided that there was more than enough money to build a hospital, he would first take a trip around the world, and even build himself a new home. When the investor returned and found no hospital, and the money all spent, would he dismiss this man from his responsibility with a simple wave of the hand? No, there would be a reckoning. Even so, God will require His unfaithful servants to account for misusing the wealth He had entrusted to them. Those who did not live up to their agreement will be held accountable. ♦

*on the horse* [representing Christ] *and against His army.*" They are saying, we don't want this man to rule over us, as Jesus had stated in His parable (Luke 19:27). They do not want to be told what to do. When Christ takes the authority and closes the casinos, the night clubs, and the distilleries; when the makers of tobacco can no longer produce and sell their lethal products, and those who design and publish pornography, along with all their illicit filth, are swallowed up; when Jesus tells the people worldwide that they cannot have their TV shows, or their movies, or their lustful living because the government of Christ has taken control and all wickedness must end immediately, will people everywhere be happy? Will they be rejoicing? Will they be welcoming the new authority with open arms? No, they will resist, they will be angry. Many would rather die than live under such a regime. That is why the Revelator says, prophetically speaking, *"I saw the beast, the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together."* They will resist to the death, if need be.

The momentous process of cleaning up the earth will be quickly undertaken and quickly completed. Jesus will have all of the forces He needs to take and hold control, and to remove those who oppose progress.

That is the reason for Armageddon, to subdue and remove all impediments to progress, so that the earth can be cleaned up, made ready for the new and better. Those who refuse to comply with the new rules will die. But there will be no torture, no cruelty, and no innocent persons suffering. The wrong will be subdued, and no resistance will be allowed.

In Revelation 18 we have a picture of the fall of Babylon. Babylon is a symbolic term not for a city but for the whole economy of evil. In verses 2-3, the angel comes with his great authority, and cries *"mightily, with a loud voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication...."* In Revelation 17, the woman on the scarlet colored beast is seen thriving and prospering. But the powers of earth are going to fall; whether they be political, ecclesiastical, or economic, all will fall together. And all will have one choice: to submit to the Lord and live, or hold to their own way and die.

Revelation 18 describes the scope of the fall of the old system as it affects the political, economic, and ecclesiastical interests of the world. Verse 3 reads, *"The merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury."* Think of the filth being broadcast and promoted in the fields of entertainment and media production, to say nothing of the thriving industries of gambling and pornography, all destructive and immoral. See the vast amounts of money being spent for interests that are against the cause of God. All will be removed in one vast sweep of destruction. Verse 16 describes the wailing that will result: *"Alas, alas, that great city that was clothed in fine linen, purple, and scarlet,...For in one hour such great riches came to nothing...in one hour she is made desolate"* (verses 16-17, 19).

In Revelation 17:14, we are told the outcome of the battle of Armageddon. As with any battle Divinely directed, the winner will be predetermined. There will be no question at any point as to the outcome. Christ is coming with unlimited authority, and those who oppose Him will only destroy themselves.

Who will be accompanying Jesus in His ride to triumph? It will be those who are *"called, and chosen, and faithful"* (Rev. 17:14).

Revelation 1:7 likewise describes the distress of those who oppose Him.

*"Behold He comes with clouds, and every eye will see Him...and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him."* Why the mourning? Why the distress? Perhaps they panic because they realize He will not support their customs, their cultures, their accustomed way of life. Or perhaps this statement reflects the reality they face when they go out to fight the intruder—and find that Christ's armies are literally undefeatable. *"All the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him"*—because He will bring down their booming and highly profitable structures of evil.

Resistance to Christ will be totally futile. The deadliest explosives and most powerful armaments of His enemies will be powerless against this New Authority. When they see their military power broken, and the forces of Christ literally indestructible, they will quickly realize that they have undertaken a task which will destroy only themselves.

Only the judgments of God can bring about the drastic change, from the world we have today to the new world where Christ is supreme. Only the judgments of God can turn the trend, and bring men and women worldwide to seek the Lord. *"When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness"* (Isa. 26:9–10).

## THE SURVIVORS

Who will survive the mighty holocaust? The words of the prophets indicate a devastating loss: *"The slain of the Lord shall be...from one end of the earth to the other"* (Jer. 25:33). The incorrigible element will be persistent, and the destruction vast. The Prophet Zechariah is specific: *"And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein"* (Zech. 13:8). Two parts are overtly rebellious to the point that they refuse to change, even to their own death. The proportion seems staggering, but when one considers the resistance God's cause has met through the years, how people persecuted His Prophets, crucified His Son, and stoned and imprisoned the Apostles, and how the world at large totally ignore His Word today; how even in a country founded on Christian principles the Bible is largely out of vogue and not seen as an authority for life, perhaps we should marvel that a third will submit to the new order.

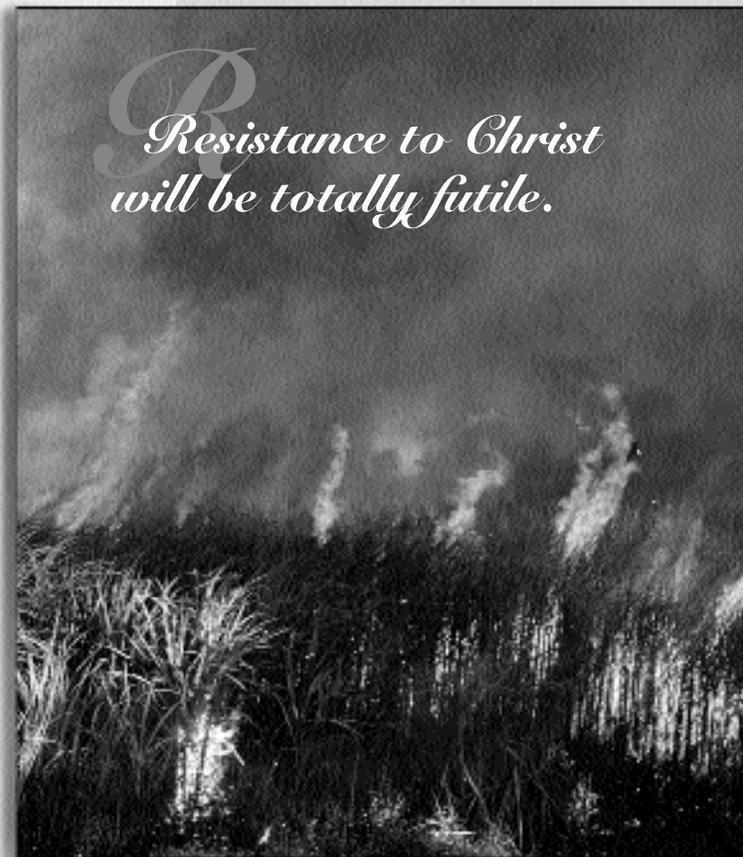
Can we imagine what would happen if the rebellious were not eliminated? The history of the last century would be repeated, making peace impossible so long as the willful mischief makers were permitted to live.

But the God who can read the heart and know the future of every individual can remove only those who are impenitent. All who will submit will survive. There will be no innocent loss of life.

And the survivors will form the nucleus of the new world, from which will be developed the subjects of the Kingdom. Death, long an enemy, will be an indispensable agent for the removal of the evil element, so that the good can grow and prosper.

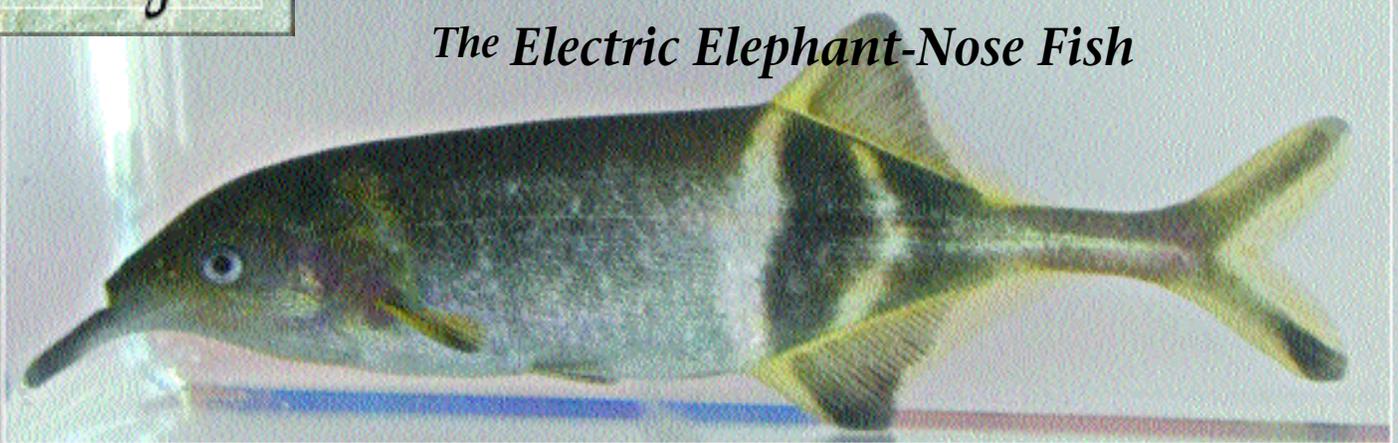
For those that survive, the future will be bright with opportunity, but they must be tried and disciplined, refined and developed, like those of former ages, before they can be granted the immortal crown. *"I will bring the one-third through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The Lord is my God'"* (Zech 13:9).

Those who survive will form the nucleus of a new and better nation. They will multiply, and their children and their children's children will be the progenitors of a whole new race who will fear God and live according to His laws, and ultimately fill the earth with His glory (Num. 14:21). These will be the *"great multitude"* which the Revelator saw in vision, a number *"which no man could number [a number not revealed]"* (Rev. 7:9–17), who during the millennial reign of Christ will be prepared for life in that great eternal world. ♦



## A BLIND SWIMMING WONDER:

### *The Electric Elephant-Nose Fish*



If you've seen my picture, I can guess what you're thinking. But when I tell you about myself, I think you'll forgive my ugly appearance. Above all, I hope you'll say about my wonderful Designer, "He's Marvelous!"

First let me ask you a question: What would you do if you had to live all the time in a fog so dense that you could not see anything around you, so dense that you could not see enough even to locate any food to eat; or find a friend to talk to? What would you do?

That is the problem some of us tropical fresh water fish have. But our vision is not hindered by fog but by mud. We live in such murky water that eyes such as most fish have are useless.

A problem? Not for my masterful Designer! He has actually worked out a way for me to "see" through the mud using my own home-made electricity.

Scientists have called me a "weak electric fish" because I make only a very small amount of electricity (about one volt), but that doesn't mean the process is simple. In fact, my Designer thought up a plan so complicated that He had to give me a super-size brain to be able to do all the calculating required. It's said that in relation to the size of my body, my brain is bigger than yours! And it is ten times bigger than that of most fish!

So I must have a super-size head? No, my Creator actually made my brain in a very special way so that I can have a lot of brain in a very small head. He designed my brain with folds in it,

much as you would put folds in a blanket or a piece of cloth. If that isn't design! You see, He knew I would need the extra brain capacity for my highly specialized electric "eyes." Part of the process of "seeing" for me is performing a huge amount of mathematical calculations very quickly—before my dinner swims away (if it is good to eat!), or before it attacks me (if it is something dangerous).

Now there is another side to this extra amount of brain: Brain tissue consumes energy at a rate ten times faster than average body tissue. You might think of me as you would think of a special kind of automobile that requires between 20 and 30 times as much gasoline as the average car! Most animals use between two and eight percent of their energy to power their brains. Humans use about 20%. My brain gets about 60% of the energy generated from the food I eat. So what is my biggest problem? You guessed it—I'm always hungry!

One thing I can tell you for sure, my kind didn't just happen. In fact, I've heard that some scientists have spent years studying us in the laboratories, trying to understand just how we make and use electricity to identify what is in our environment.

How does it work? First of all, my Creator has equipped me with some very special hardware. I have cells in my tail that act like tiny batteries connected in series. When my brain sends a mes-

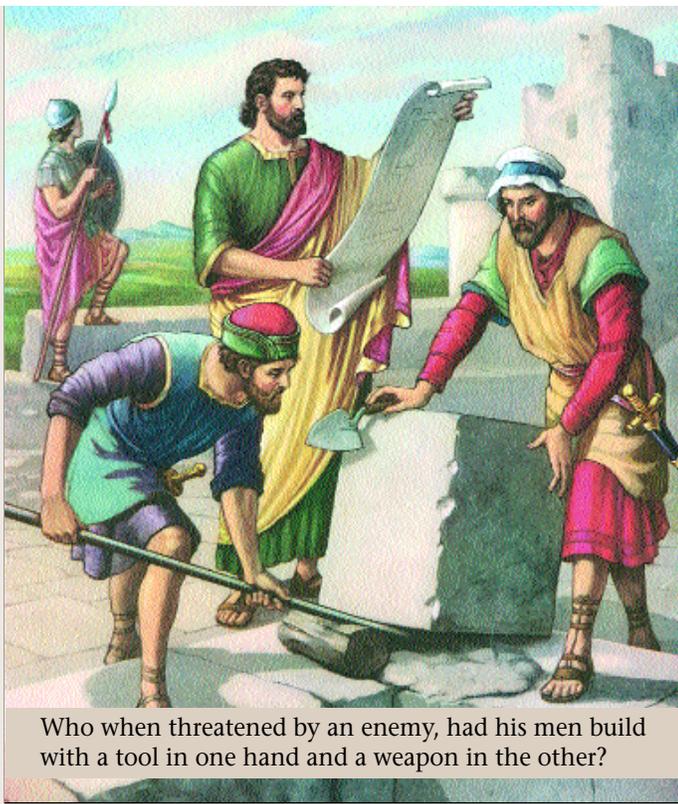
sage to these cells in my tail, telling them to "Fire!" they fire. This creates an electrical field in the area around my body.

But that is only half of it. My Creator has also equipped me with electro-receptors. These devices, imbedded just under the surface of my skin, are so sensitive that they can detect the slightest change in that electrical field around my body. When a moving object enters the electric field, these electro-receptors pick up the information (its location, size, color, thickness, even its consistency) and send all this information to my brain. In just a fraction of a second, my brain has analyzed the information and I know exactly what the object is—whether it is something good for dinner, or just a piece of shell or stone. Or an enemy.

When a delectable animal swims into my electric field, do you know what I do? I swim backwards to grab it. Why? If I were to continue in forward motion, I'd likely miss it, because by the time I detected the prey with the current from my tail and turned around, the prey would be safely out of range! By quickly shifting into my "reverse" gear, it's an easy catch! Then I use those funny trunk-like projections on my nose to suck it in (they are just right for worms, bugs and zooplankton. Uummm!).

Using this same electric field my Designer has made me able to "talk" to

*continued on page 24*



Who when threatened by an enemy, had his men build with a tool in one hand and a weapon in the other?

#### BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1. What happened to Job's sons and daughters while they were feasting in their oldest brother's house?
2. According to Proverbs, to what virtue should it be said, "thou art my sister"?
3. Who were the sisters of Lazarus, the man who was raised from the dead?
4. Which two men killed Hamor and his son Shechem because Shechem took advantage of their sister Dinah?
5. Which two half brothers each received promises from God? One's descendents would become a great nation and the other one's would be multiplied as the stars of heaven.
6. Who was the sister of Aaron and Moses?
7. This man was so afraid of the anger of his twin brother that he offered him 220 goats, 220 sheep, 30 milk camels and their colts, 40 cows, 10 bulls, 20 female donkeys and 10 foals to appease him.
8. Who was the sister of Laban and the wife of Isaac?
9. According to Jesus, how many times should a man forgive his brother if he is sinned against? Is this to be taken as a literal number?
10. Which two men introduced their wives as their sister because they feared they would be murdered to get their wives?
11. Which of Solomon's brothers rivaled him as heir to the throne?
12. Which son of David killed his half brother and then fled to his grandfather for protection?
13. Who married his brother Philip's wife and was told that it was not lawful?
14. Who was Ruth's sister-in-law?
15. A brother offended is harder to be won than what?
16. Which brothers were known as "Boanerges" or "The sons of thunder"?

#### BIBLE GEOGRAPHY

1. The meek will inherit \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Jesus gave his 'sermon' starting in Matthew 5 from which geographical feature?
3. Matthew speaks of famines, pestilences, and \_\_\_\_\_ in various places.
4. Although raised in Nazareth, Jesus was born in this city near Jerusalem.
5. To escape the Egyptians, the Hebrews crossed this body of water.
6. David was king in this city before he reigned in Jerusalem.
7. From which Philistine city was Goliath?
8. The queen of which land came to meet Solomon?
9. According to Jesus' parable of the sower, a person who receives the word happily, but falls away due to persecution is described as this type of ground.
10. The Psalmist describes the Messiah's kingdom stretching from \_\_\_\_\_.
11. The Apocalypse was written from which island?
12. The location of the palace of king Ahasuerus (Xerxes): \_\_\_\_\_.
13. According to Zechariah, in that day his feet shall stand on \_\_\_\_\_.
14. Job was a native of this land.
15. The Lord will gather all nations and plead with them in the valley of \_\_\_\_\_.
16. Joses (surnamed Barnabas) sold land in this country.

#### CONSTRUCTION

1. Who led the construction of the Lord's temple during which there was no sound of hammer or ax?
2. Which king built cities in mountains, and castles and towers in forests?
3. Who put a curse on anyone who would rebuild Jericho, warning that when the foundation was laid the builder's oldest son would die, and when the gates were set up his youngest son would die?
4. Which brickmakers faced a problem when their straw material was taken from them and they were ordered to continue to turn out the same number of bricks?
5. Which clever worker was brought from Tyre for the sole purpose of constructing beautiful brass items for the temple?
6. Who, after collecting material to build a temple, was forbidden by God to go ahead with the construction?
7. Who received building plans from God and orders to construct a sizable boat?
8. Which clever craftsman was specifically appointed by God to serve as general superintendent of construction of the tabernacle?

answers on page 25

## The Electric Elephant-Nose Fish

continued from page 22

other electric fish. I can't tell you much about the language we use, but we have no difficulty understanding each other.

Now I have a question for you. When I go traveling I often encounter other electric fish just like myself, who also surround themselves with an electric field to be able to "see" and "talk." Now just picture five of us, each with our own electric field, each sensing the others' fields. Can you imagine the confusion when we try to "talk" among ourselves? Wouldn't you think we would "jam" each other's receptors, so that none of us would know anything, because each of us reads information at the same fixed frequency?

Well, my Creator thought of this problem before I came along, and prepared an easy, effective solution. When I meet another electric elephant-nose fish, my frequency automatically changes just slightly, so that it is different from that of the others. In fact, all of us in a group will change to different frequencies! Say I'm broadcasting at 400 Hertz, I may go up suddenly to 405 Hertz. Maybe my neighbor will drop to 399 Hertz, another may go up to 402, and so on, so that each of us can do our own "broadcasting" without interfering with the other. The result: Total order, and total jamming avoidance. We can have a clear, friendly conversation. And when we swim away from each other, each of us returns to our own normal frequency.

I've heard that our technique of jamming avoidance has provided your scientists with some very useful information. But they can't take the credit for the design—my Creator gets that!

Don't you agree I have a marvelous Designer? Don't you want to get acquainted with Him? ♦

## WHEN THE Umph Is Gone

continued from page 11

bered the agreement, that he must practice and he must attend his lessons without complaint to be able to make his own decision at the agreed time.

By the end of the third month, Todd was seeing the results of daily practice and feeling better about the trumpet lessons. The teacher had the students playing in a contest, and Todd was doing really well—because he was practicing diligently. Also he was now a part of a small band which he and a friend had organized.

When the time to decide came, Mom and Dad could guess what Todd's answer would be. The last day of school, Dad called Todd into his office and asked him if this was the time to quit the trumpet.

With a grin Todd answered. "If everyone can put up with all the noise and you and Mom are willing to pay for my lessons, I don't want to stop for anything. The contest is only a few weeks away, and I just might win it!"

Todd did win in the contest—not first place, but he felt sure he could next time if he tried harder. Now the trumpet was fun! It was a challenge. He also discovered that by planning his time he still had time for other things.

Todd did not realize it then, but he was learning a valuable lesson: don't quit just because you feel like it.

The more you put into something the more you get out of it. Quitters are losers; those who persevere are the winners. ♦



## THE THINGS I SEEK

*There are a few things I would pray for, Lord,  
a few small things Your Word alone can give:*

*The power to leave unsaid the bitter words,  
the strength to say the kind words,  
and to live each day in fear of God  
and not for praise of man;  
the will to love the good, and evil hate;  
the courage to go on and try again when  
I have failed;  
the patience, Lord, to wait;  
the wisdom to see clearly and to cling to simple  
truth though every prospect dim;  
the faith to make a dream a living thing;  
the loyalty of heart to follow You;  
a gentleness of soul;  
a spirit meek;  
a noble life.*

*These are the things I seek. Amen.*

## H. R. Payne

On May 16, 2003, Herschel R. Payne, a long-time friend and the father of our Associate Pastor, Gerald R. Payne, succumbed at the advanced age of 96. Funeral services were conducted at the local funeral parlor in Conyers, Georgia, Brother Gerald Payne officiating.

Mr. Payne was acquainted with the Megiddo Church during most of his life, was always hospitable to visitors from the Church, and was a regular attendant at Church services in his home, participating to the last week of his life. He was blessed by a daughter, Sister Carol Payne, who provided loving and diligent care in her home for her father throughout his declining years and made every effort to make life pleasant for him.

I would like to quote a few excerpts from Brother Gerald's funeral sermon:

"He was married Feb. 13, 1927 to Grace P. Nelson [a correspondence member for many years] with whom he lived happily until her death July 12, 1981. I must say that I know of no other man so devoted, and who loved his wife more than my dad. He will be missed by acquaintances and friends. He was truthful and honest in his dealings with others.

"Dad is survived by his daughters Elizabeth Arnold, Carol Payne, three sons Bobby Payne, Johnny Payne, and myself, one sister, Irene Byous, numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren.

"Dad believed in the Bible hope of the personal return of Christ to earth to inaugurate a heavenly, worldwide Kingdom, fulfilling the Lord's Prayer, 'Your Kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

"Dad outlived man's allotted three score and ten years by 26 years. When one passes at such an advanced age death seems to wear a less terrible face than when one passes in early or middle life, yet in the absence of any assurance that our individual life-span will be equally long, we should do well to echo the admonition of the psalmist: 'So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.'" ♦

## Arthur Balewski

On May 25, 2003, a long-time friend and brother, Arthur Balewski, of Brampton, Ontario, succumbed to the debilitating effects of Parkinson's disease at the age of 87. Funeral services were held at the Ward Funeral Home in Brampton, Ontario, Sister Ruth Sisson and Brother Ronald Hicks officiating.

Brother Balewski was born in Strassburg, Germany, on May 30, 1916, to Lydia and Henry Emil Balewski. He had two sisters, Hilda Hilderley, of Roseville, Ontario, and Hattie Schechtl, of Edmonton, Alberta, both of whom survive him. The family emigrated to Alberta, Canada, when he was nine years old. In May, 1940, he was married to Mary Hac, and was her faithful and devoted companion until her passing in 1998.

Never afraid of hard work, the Balewskis took on the ambitious task of farming a 160 acre plot of virgin land in Alberta, which meant they first had to build their own shelter, clear the land, and remove the stumps—with nothing more than literal horse-power (teams of horses). Part by necessity, and part by talent, Brother Balewski became a very skilled carpenter. About 1950, the family relocated to Ontario.

Brother Balewski was blessed with four children, all of whom survive him: Ethel Reynolds, Frieda Wrench, Wilfred Balewski, and Lillian Kassoulides. He is also survived by six grandchildren: Peter, Joanne, Daniel, Katherine, Jason and Stephanie, all of the Bolton and Brampton area.

While the family were still in Alberta, in the late 1940's, Brother Balewski saw an advertisement in a magazine for the Elijah book. He sent for it, was interested in its message and began corresponding with the church. The move to Ontario made it possible for the Balewski family to make their first trip to Rochester, and during the next 20 years they made many such trips.

Brother Balewski's life was not without

challenge, but he was always grateful for his loving, supportive family. After he retired in 1981, he took on the care of his wife, who was seriously afflicted with a steadily worsening condition until, in 1989, he was forced to find professional care for her. Even then, he continued to spend time with her every day, in an effort to make life more tolerable for her. He was her faithful and devoted companion until her passing in 1998.

Bro. Balewski was a firm believer in the Biblical doctrine of the Resurrection. The Bible is very clear that there is no consciousness in death. In the words of Scripture, "The dead know not anything." But it is equally definite that this life is not all there is. But it is the sure promise of God that when Christ returns, the dead in Christ shall be resurrected and judged, and receive for the things they have done. In the words of the prophet Isaiah, "Those who belong to God shall live again. Their bodies shall rise again! Those who dwell in the dust shall awake and sing for joy!" (Isaiah 26:19 TLB). It was the sure confidence of Job: "I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth...and after this my skin is destroyed, once more my skin shall clothe me, and in my flesh I shall have sight of God. I myself, with my own eyes...deep in my heart is this hope reposed" (Job 19:26, Knox).

We look forward eagerly to that Day! ♦



Mary and Arthur Balewski

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 23

Picture: Nehemiah (Neh. 4:6-17)

### BROTHERS AND SISTERS

1. A great wind blew the house down upon them (Job 1:18-19)
2. Wisdom (Prov. 7:4)
3. Mary and Martha (John 11:17-19; 41-44)
4. Simeon and Levi (Gen. 34:2, 25-26)
5. Ishmael (Gen. 17:20; 21:18) and Isaac (Gen. 22:9-17)
6. Miriam (Num. 26:59)
7. Jacob (Gen. 32:6, 7, 13-15)
8. Rebekah (Gen. 25:20)
9. 490. No, it means we should be willing to forgive at any time someone sins against us (Matt. 18:21-22)
10. Abram (Abraham) and Isaac (Gen. 12:10-13; 26:6-7)

11. Adonijah (1 Kings 1:17-18)
12. Absalom (2 Sam. 3:3; 13:28-37)
13. Herod (Matt. 14:3-4)
14. Orpah (Ruth 1:3-4)
15. A strong city (Prov. 18:19)
16. James and John (Mark 3:17)

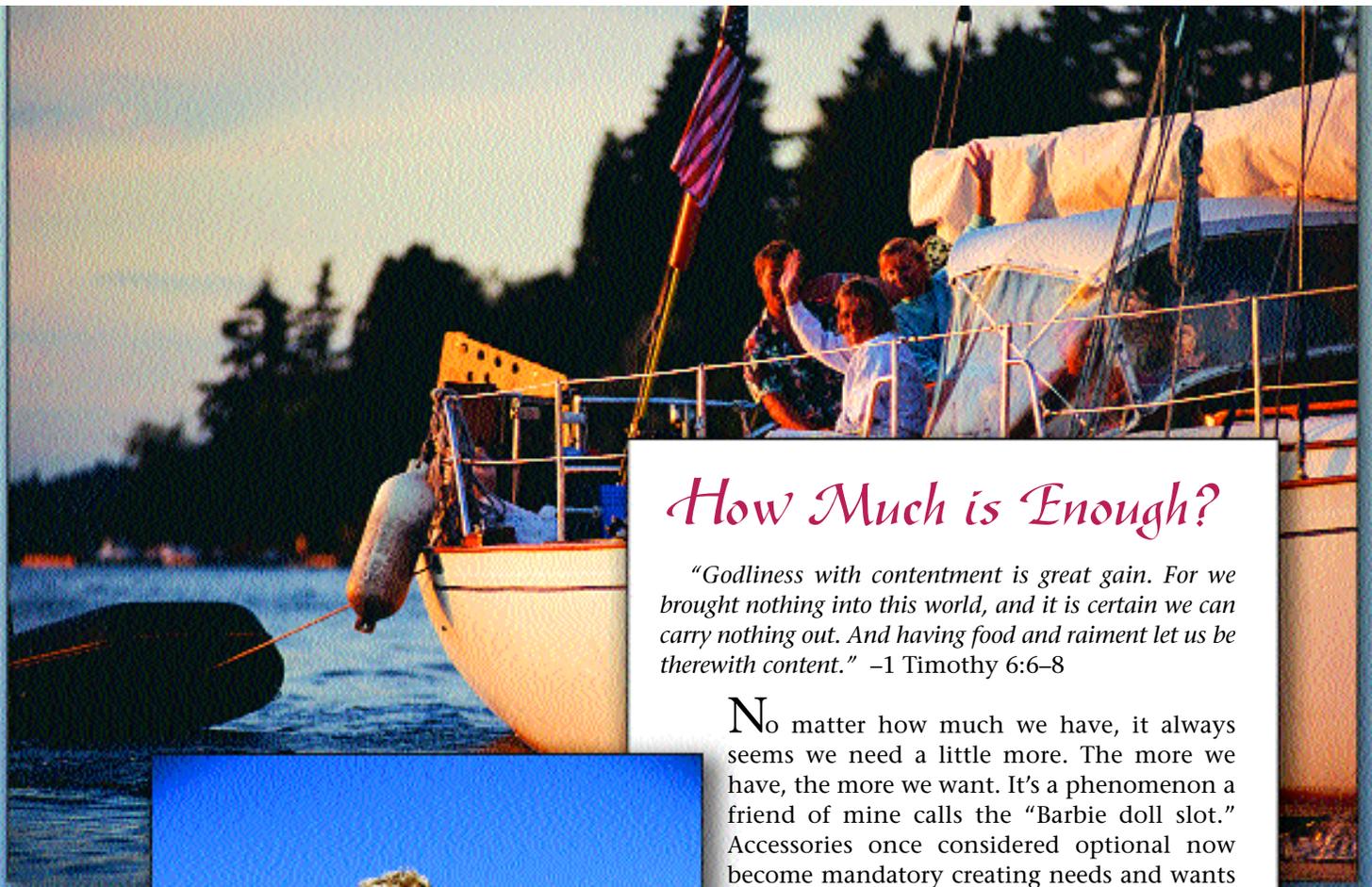
### BIBLE GEOGRAPHY

1. The earth (Matt. 5:5)
2. On a mountain (Matt. 5:1)
3. Earthquakes (Matt. 24:7)
4. Bethlehem (Matt. 2:3-6)
5. The Red Sea (Ex. 13:18; 14:21-24)
6. Hebron (1 Kings 2:10-11)
7. Gath (1 Sam. 17:4)
8. Sheba (1 Kings 10:1-2)
9. Rocky (Matt. 13:20-21)

10. Sea to sea (Ps. 72:8)
11. Patmos (Rev. 1:9-11)
12. Shushan or Susa (Esther 1:1-2)
13. Mt. of Olives (Zech. 14:4)
14. Uz (Job 1:1)
15. Jehoshaphat (Joel 3:1-2)
16. Cyprus (Acts 4:36-37)

### CONSTRUCTION

1. Solomon (1 Kings 6:1, 7)
2. Jotham (2 Chron. 27:1-4)
3. Joshua (Josh. 6:26)
4. Israelites (Ex. 5:6-14)
5. Hiram (1 Kings 7:13-45)
6. David (1 Chron. 22:2-8)
7. Noah (Gen. 6:13-16)
8. Bezaleel (Ex. 35:30-36:1)



## *How Much is Enough?*

*"Godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content." -1 Timothy 6:6-8*

No matter how much we have, it always seems we need a little more. The more we have, the more we want. It's a phenomenon a friend of mine calls the "Barbie doll slot." Accessories once considered optional now become mandatory creating needs and wants we never thought of before. More often than not we come to the end of every acquisition vaguely discontented.

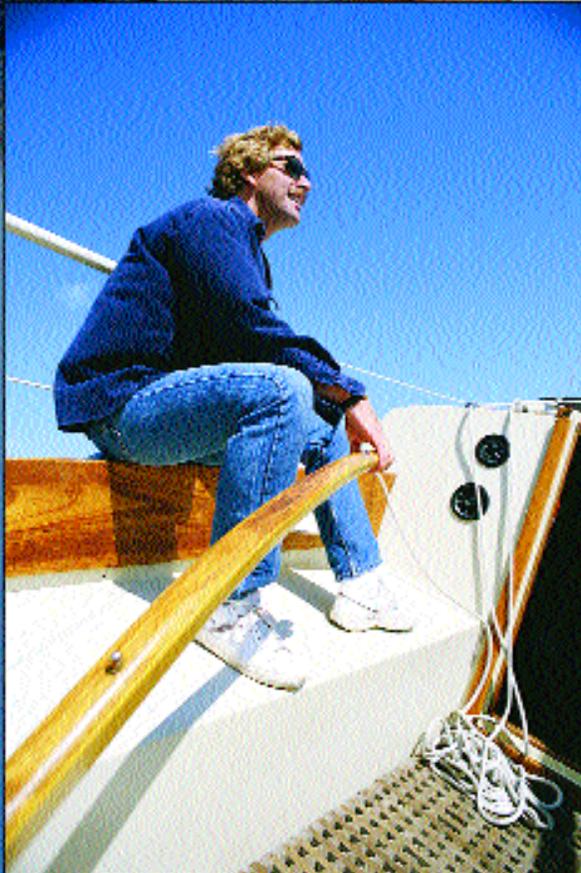
Henry Kissinger, former U.S. Secretary of State writes: "To Americans tragedy is wanting something very badly and not getting it. But many people have had to learn that perhaps the worst form of tragedy is wanting something badly, getting it, and finding it empty."

The Apostle Paul, by contrast, said he had learned how to be content. *"I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."* He also said: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."* What did he mean by "all things?" Does that mean that I can run faster than a speeding bullet? Or leap over a tall building? No, that would not be contentment. But Paul said he had learned he could be content whether full or hungry, whether he had or whether he had not, whether living in plenty or in want, it didn't matter.

True contentment lies in learning to be satisfied with what God gives.



*The contented person is never poor, the discontented one is never rich.*



*God does not take away trials or carry us over them, but strengthens us through them.*

*It is not the talented people who serve the Lord best, but the consecrated ones.*

*The Lord's tomorrow of blessing is only waiting for our today of consecration.*

*He who cannot pray when the sun shines does not know how to pray when the clouds come.*

*Most failures are expert at making excuses.*

*If we take care of the minutes, the hours will take care of themselves.*

*Time flies. It's up to you to be the navigator.*

*Your unused talents give you no advantage over one who has no talent at all.*

*Greatness is not found in possessions, power, position, or prestige. It is discovered in goodness, service, and character.*

## Is It Worth It?

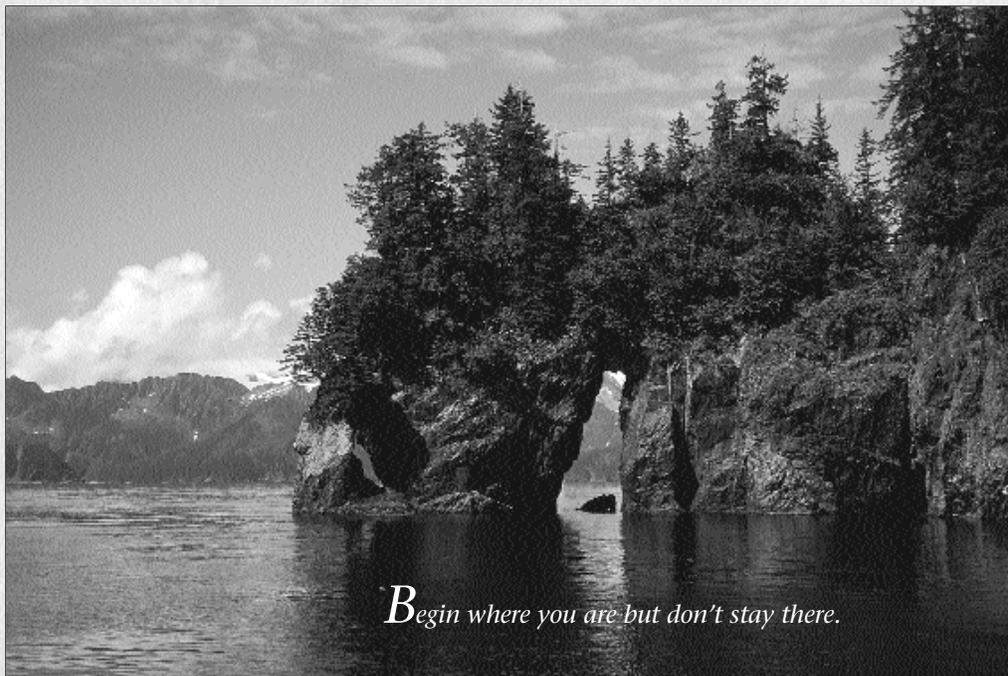
*continued from page 2*

reserved for oneself? Is there any holding back, any "I-will-give-this-but-not-that"? No, because such a love for God is worth dying for.

Then there is the call of eternity, the eternal blessings God has promised. Is the prospect of something eternal—yes absolutely unending—worth living for? worth dying for? What could be worth more than unending life, unending friendship, unending happiness, unending delight! Is it worth it? Here I feel compelled to rephrase that question and ask, How much can I give up for it?—because anything less than my all would seem unworthy of the lovingkindness of my Benefactor. What can I give to merit such blessing, such honor, such joy—eternally!

The "loss" part in Jesus' words is suddenly gone, and all that remains is gain! For "He who loses his life for my sake will find it"—yes, find it full of joy and happiness everlasting! The loss will be forgotten long, long before we have scarcely begun to discover the joy.

I have to say, It's worth it! Don't you agree? ♦



*Begin where you are but don't stay there.*

*Unless there is within us that which is above us, we shall soon yield to that which is about us.*

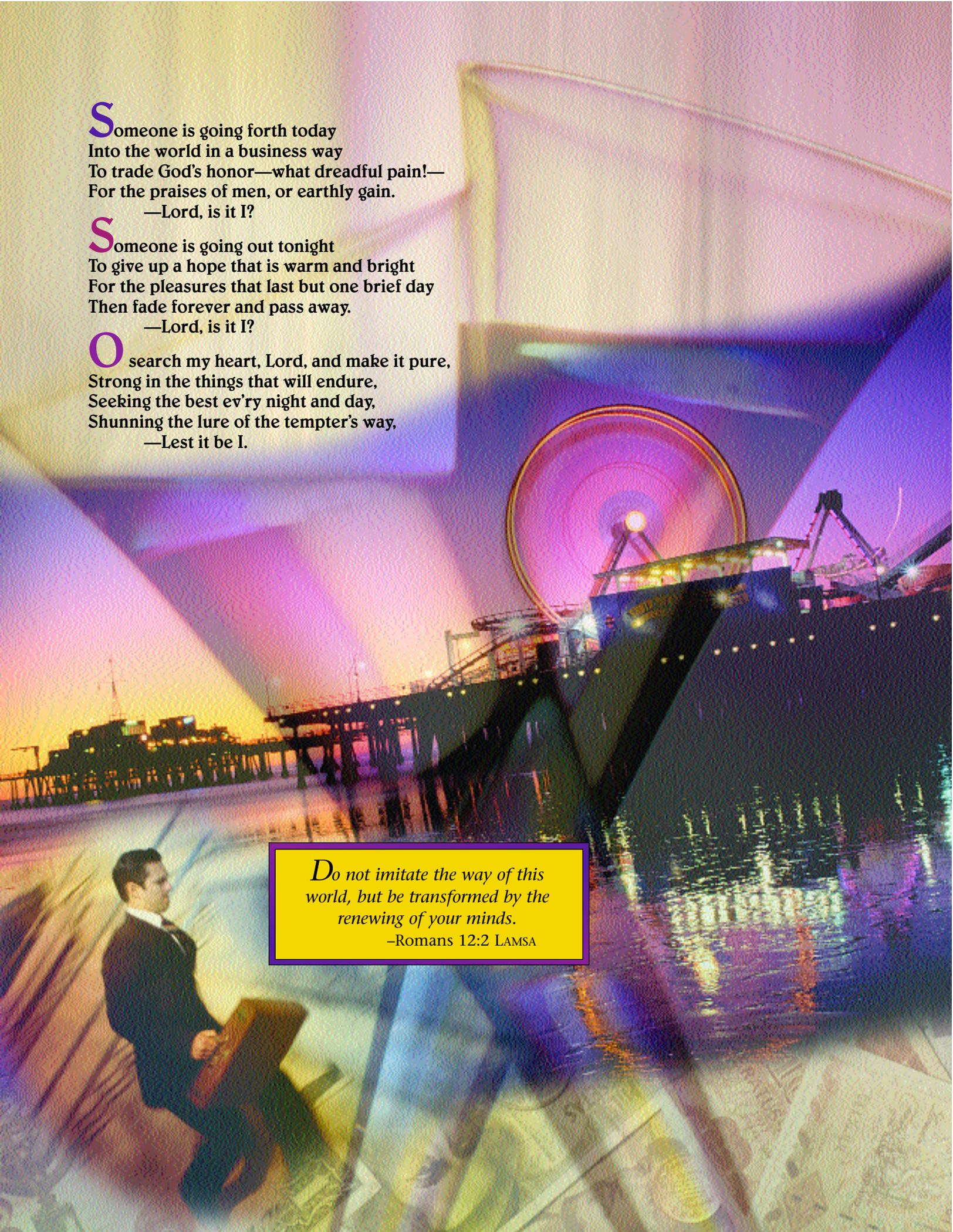
*Christianity promises to make men free; it never promises to make them independent.*

*A man's life is what his thoughts make it.*

*A wise man reflects before he speaks; a fool speaks and then reflects on what he has uttered.*

*God can only stand with us as we stand firm.*

*If there is righteousness in the heart,  
there will be beauty in the character.  
If there is beauty in the character,  
there will be harmony in the home.  
If there is harmony in the home,  
there will be order in the nation.  
When there is order in the nation,  
there will be peace in the world.*



**S**omeone is going forth today  
Into the world in a business way  
To trade God's honor—what dreadful pain!—  
For the praises of men, or earthly gain.

—Lord, is it I?

**S**omeone is going out tonight  
To give up a hope that is warm and bright  
For the pleasures that last but one brief day  
Then fade forever and pass away.

—Lord, is it I?

**O** search my heart, Lord, and make it pure,  
Strong in the things that will endure,  
Seeking the best ev'ry night and day,  
Shunning the lure of the tempter's way,

—Lest it be I.

*Do not imitate the way of this  
world, but be transformed by the  
renewing of your minds.*

—Romans 12:2 LAMSA