



Megiddo Message

*"I have chosen you
to serve"*

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What About Those Hurt Feelings?

Your feelings were hurt.... What should you do about it as a Christian? Or perhaps you know someone else who has been hurt. What can you say?

Few subjects take us quicker to the heart of the New Testament. Here are a few suggestions:

- *Act quickly.* Good relations with other people are so important in the sight of God that even worship should be postponed until a serious effort has been made to make things right with one's brother (Matthew 5:23-24). We cannot even worship God properly while ill will wrangles in our heart (1 John 4:20-21). The longer we nurse hurt feelings the worse they become, and if not restrained may grow out of all proportion to the size of the issue.

- *Practice forgiveness.* Remember how much you have been forgiven and how much you yet need forgiveness. Jesus told the story of a man who had been forgiven an enormous debt, something like ten million dollars in our money. But this same man refused to forgive a fellow servant who owed him a trifling twenty dollars (Matt. 18:21-32). Who could miss Jesus' point? We do not have to commend all conduct, nor do we have to overlook another's faults. But for our own sake we cannot hold feelings against others. We mar our own character when we refuse to forgive.

- *Remember that you are not alone in your experience.* Think of the example of Christ, who "when he was reviled, did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he trusted to him who judges

justly" (1 Pet. 2:23, RSV). With this picture of Jesus suffering more at the hands of men than we will ever be asked to suffer in tiny hurts and slights, shouldn't we say firmly to ourselves, "Be strong, grow up, be a real Christian"?

- *Have a right spirit toward those who have wronged you.* The worst thing we can do for ourselves is to let ill feelings stir up more feelings. Unfriendliness can quickly grow into thoughts of revenge and feelings of the grossest sin. We need to realize that others stumble just as we do, and that we have no reason to injure ourselves. We are far better advised to overreact on the side of good and actually go out of our way to help another, to show a kind and encouraging spirit, to demonstrate that we are in the right frame of mind, that we have "the mind of Christ" and not the mind of evil. Remember, we are called to be sons and daughters of God, and what would *they* do?

- *Remember at all times your duty to God to show a Christian spirit of love, patience, kindness.* Said the apostle Paul, "Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, gives itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient" (1 Cor. 13:4-7, Moffatt). Notice the word *always*—how much room does this leave for hurt feelings?

None at all.



Forgiveness
lies at
the very heart
of the
Christian
gospel.

Megiddo means

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

We believe

- in God, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."
- in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.
- in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- in ourselves as capable of applying in our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.
- in the promise of God, that a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

Soon-coming events

The Herald and the KING

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

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

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

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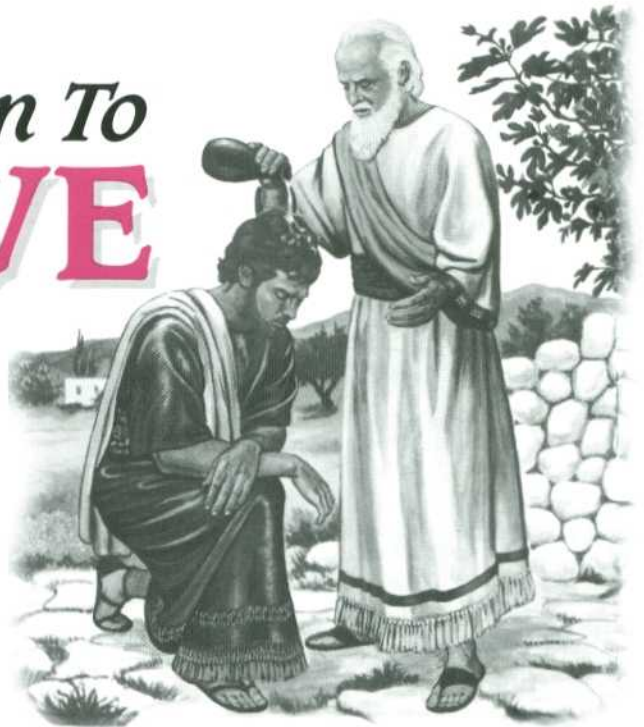
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Chosen To SERVE



*"If any
man serve
me, him will
my Father
honor."*

In the Genesis allegory we read that God placed Adam in the garden "to dress and to keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Adam was chosen to serve.

The Israelite people were a chosen people, whom the Lord had chosen to be a special people unto Himself above all people upon the face of the earth (Deut. 7:6). Though the majority proved unfaithful to their calling, they were a people chosen to serve.

Out of the Israelite nation God selected the tribe of Levi, and out of them He chose Aaron "to stand to minister in the name of the Lord, him and his sons for ever" (Deut. 18:5). As priests they were "chosen to minister unto the Lord, and to bless in the name of the Lord," also to judge and settle controversies. The priests were chosen to serve.

When God needed a king, or rather, when Israel wanted a king, God sent Samuel to be His instrument. When the eighth son of Jesse was called, the Lord indicated to Samuel that this was the man whom He had chosen to be His king. David was chosen to serve.

All through the ages, God has had His watchful eye on His servants. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth" (II Chron. 16:9), searching out those who are willing to serve. All such become His special charge, under His tutelage, His special concern. They are part of His providence. God speaks endearingly of "My servants the prophets" or "My servant the branch." And He arranged directly for what happened to them, through them, and for them. Even before the prophet Jeremiah was born, God had laid out his career. His primary duties: to go where he was sent, to speak what he was told. "Thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak" (Jer. 1:7). Jeremiah was chosen to serve. So were Isaiah, and Amos, and Obadiah, and Elijah, and Daniel, and Ezekiel, and Zechariah, and...

Paul spoke of himself as the Lord's servant, even the Lord's prisoner. He was not free, because he had been chosen to serve. Among the first words he heard from Jesus were these: "Thou art a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles."

Paul was not asked what he wished to do; he was told. He opened his letter to the Philippians with, "Paul and Timothy, the servants of Jesus Christ." They were not free to do as they pleased; because they belonged to Christ.

And just as Paul was Christ's servant, so were Christ's disciples servants. As Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "*Ye are bought with a price.*" The commitment is complete; the business is transacted. And as a result: "*Ye are not servants of men.*"

What is the difference between serving God and serving men? Simply this: that serving God means an entire commitment to Him for whatever He has to offer. Serving men is serving this world, its interest, even ourselves, for whatever mortals may have to offer.

In sharp contrast to the limitations of serving men is the abundant promise for serving God. Who does not love and long to be that good and faithful servant to whom God has promised the exceeding riches of His glory; to whom Jesus will speak those most blessed of all words: "*Well done!*"

At the Last Supper, Jesus told His disciples that they, too, had been chosen to serve. Discoursing upon topics nearest His heart, He talked about His relation to His Father, and His disciples' relationship to Him. Included were admonitions for the present, and brief glimpses into what lay ahead. But above all rang the call of duty. Life for them was to be a life of service, for everyone of them must go forth and bear fruit. They had been chosen to serve.

And what was to be the compensation? Jesus, only a few days before the Last Supper, had told them: "*If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honor*" (John 12:26). Here was service with a future: "*If any man serve me, him will my Father honor.*"

Thank God! He is still choosing servants. Are we among them? Are we willing to turn our lives over to His direction—totally?

Being a servant suggests two things. First, that we are actually owned by another. Someone else is making the decisions. And second, that we are not free to choose the type of service we shall render.

In the parable of the Unprofitable Servant, Jesus put another light on service. Everyone knew that God's reward was for the faithful servant. But Jesus was saying here that the *service* is more important than the *servant*—who ever heard of such a thing? The servant who gave his best, who did everything he was expected to do, was still counted "*unprofitable*"—because he had done only that which was his duty. He had done nothing to enhance his master's wealth or position. He had simply rendered the service he was supposed to render. So in this sense, he was really only working for himself.

Isn't this our position before God? When we have done all He has asked us to do, who gets the benefit? Isn't it we ourselves? For we have added nothing to His glory. It is all for us—because we have been chosen to serve.

There is yet another lesson in this parable, and that is the extent of the servant's responsibility. The servant is not responsible for the success or failure of his master's enterprise. His one duty is to serve well, to obey.

Is there not a parallel here with our situation? Does our service seem small and unrewarding? Are we doing our Lord's bidding without visible return? Do our efforts and sacrifices and prayers for the cause of Christ seem unavailing? Remember, we have been chosen to serve, and there our responsibility ends. Whether God chooses to prosper our efforts or not is *His* concern, not ours. When we have obeyed, our duty is done, and we will be judged accordingly. We will be rewarded or punished not on the basis of the success or failure of God's enterprise but only on the basis of our own faithfulness. For we have been chosen to serve. Let God prosper His work as He sees fit.

Is not even the smallest service a great honor in such a great cause? We are reminded of the story of the three brick layers who were asked what they were doing. The first said that he was laying bricks—couldn't anybody see that with-

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Chosen To SERVE

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out asking him? The second said he was earning money to feed and clothe his family. The third brick layer had the foresight to see that by his menial service he was part of a great enterprise—yes, he felt honored that he was able to help in the great task of building a cathedral. That is what we are doing. We are only ordinary servants, doing ordinary service. But think of the magnitude of the project to which we are contributing, a project as broad as the universe. What we are doing is part of filling another world with God's glory. By our little work we are helping to construct a spiritual temple on earth, which will be part of the new creation "*wherein dwells righteousness.*" How can any service in such a cause be unimportant?

We are here to do our Lord's work. We are here to show the power of His Gospel to change old selfish creatures into fresh, new, living children of God. We are here to show the likeness of Christ's character and the radiance of His faith, and the purity and uprightness of the life He inspires. We are here to care for His property, and spread abroad His message. At times our efforts may seem fruitless, almost futile. But let us never forget the magnitude of the cause we serve. We do not need to understand every "why" behind what we are asked to do. If we obey, we have done our duty, and God will reward us. Our work will not be judged by any human standards of success but only by the exactness of our obedience. And God will tend to the success of the enterprise.

As chosen servants of God, we must also demonstrate the power of the Gospel to remake our dispositions; to translate earthly duties into heavenly credits.

We have been chosen to show our Master's way of speaking, acting and feeling.

We have been chosen to love as we have been loved; to call as we have been called; to bless as we have been blessed; to show the Christlike spirit in the workplace, the marketplace, the shop, the classroom, wherever we go. Being His

servants, we can serve anywhere, everywhere for His cause, His Kingdom, and His glory.

Noble Service

The Psalmist had caught a noble spirit of serving when he wrote, "*A day in thy courts is better than a thousand [outside]. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness*" (Ps 84:10). Did he really mean it? Was a man who was the king saying he would rather be a doorkeeper? Yes!—provided that the door he kept was the door to the house of his God! His was a spirit of delight in any service for God.

But perhaps he was saying even more than this—let us not miss his implications. For when we have passed the preliminary tests for serving and this highest of all service becomes our lot through the supreme blessing of God, a day for us will then be as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day—because time itself shall be no more.

And shall we think the task assigned us too lowly? The Bible does not tell us many details of what immortals do, but it is all service of one type or another. For an immortal there can be no such thing as a menial task. Gabriel was content to run errands, carrying messages to Daniel, Zacharias, and Mary. Even the simplest tasks performed by angels take on great distinction. To be a doorkeeper in the house of God will be vested with the highest possible dignities and honor. What a privilege to stand at the gates of Zion and watch and welcome all who come and go! What a privilege to be the first to welcome visitors from some remote outpost of God's vast empires in space! What a privilege to welcome them, and to be the last to bid them God speed when they depart. What a magnificent task to be a doorkeeper in the house of God in glory! Indeed, what does any service in the tents of wickedness have to compare with that? When we reach that level of service, we shall go from strength to strength, and from glory to glory. What a privilege to be chosen to serve!

Taken or Left?

In Luke 17, Jesus said more about the duties of His servants. He had just been talking about the end times, and how like the days of Lot they would be, and the days of Noah, the wide world all absorbed in its own business and pleasure when *"the Son of man shall be revealed."* Then He turned to talking about the effects of that great event on His servants: *"In that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left"* (vs. 34-36). Here is a picture of those chosen to serve. Here they are, brothers and sisters working side by side, each at his or her accustomed post of duty, each busy with a part of the serving. But suddenly the day of the Lord arrives, and everything changes. *"One shall be taken, the other left."*

As covenant makers, each of us is destined to be one or the other. We have been chosen to serve, and by the *quality* of our service we are deciding the *length* of our service. Either we will be removed, or we will be allowed to go on serving on and on through eternity. Which shall we be, taken or left? Here is the crucial question for us at this New Year junction. It is a question we are answering every day, as we confront the varied challenges of life. *How* we serve in our present capacity is determining *how long* we shall go on serving.

Does the term "service" seem too lowly, too small for high achievers? That all depends on whom we serve. If we are serving ourselves, nothing could be smaller. But if that service be *"unto Christ,"* it is immediately elevated to a plain higher than any other known to earthborns. Many of us

have felt the joy of serving those we love—what will it be like to serve our eternal King! What a delight! what an honor!

For the faithful, this realm of service will extend even beyond the pearly gates, for we read that inside the holy city *"there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him"* (Rev. 22:3). Can we imagine what duties this new service will include? Perhaps a service of teaching or ministering to those who shall be heirs of salvation on other worlds; or perhaps a service such as we are now receiving from the angels, those who have completed their term of service in other parts of God's universe. Oh, who can imagine the delights of such high service!

As we serve, God is watching. And He who reads the heart knows the type and quality of the service we are giving. It does not matter to Him what type of service we are doing, whether we are threshing, or grinding, or sowing; whether by human standards our work is counted high or low. Before God, the merits of our service depend upon the condition of our heart, and whether we are wholly devoted to Christ or are in part serving ourselves. As we pass or fail the little tests of each day, we are writing a record to witness for or against us in the great Day to come.

Let us never forget our responsibility as servants. Let the words of Jesus echo down to us: *"I have cho-*

***"I have
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please.***

sen you to serve"—and what does this mean in everyday terms? It means that we are not our own, we are not free to do as we please. We are not free to make our own decisions, because we belong to Christ.

And what shall be the end of such service? Paul described it as *"everlasting life"*: *"Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness, and...have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life"* (Rom. 6:19, 22). Think of it: Can any service be too small, or too strenuous, or too demanding, or too ignoble for such a reward?

Jesus Himself was a servant, and He will be when He comes again. When He talked about His second coming, He spoke of those who would be watching and ready for Him, saying: *"Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching."* What an honor to be at that banquet where Jesus Christ Himself will do the serving, for such will be His delight and pleasure: *"Verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them"* (Luke 12:37). Here is where our founder interposed a beautiful thought: That the first mouthful will be immortality. And what then—! Oh, who can tell the joys that will be served to those good and faithful servants at that banquet!

What a privilege to be chosen to serve. How can we give ourselves to anything lesser? How can we divide our interest with anything earthly, when such a high calling is ours? Why not serve wholeheartedly, so that He can say to us, *You served me faithfully in the little I entrusted to your care. Now I will give you greater responsibilities in larger fields of service. Now you can go on serving, world without end. For I have chosen you to serve—eternally!* □

Why

The Resurrection

MATTERS

...because without it we would have no hope

We want to
face the facts as
they are, so that
we can make the
most and the
best of the life
we have.

As members of the human race, we share a certain uneasiness about death. It is a haunting awareness springing up uninvited, triggered often by the most unlikely events. If not quite *in* consciousness, then it is just below the surface.

Life is so wonderful, it seems to us that it really ought to be immortal. Until we reach a certain age and experience, we live on the practical assumption that we *are* immortal—until suddenly we are shocked to learn that a friend or classmate has been seriously injured, stricken, or—is dead. How could it be? Is it really that final? Will we never see them again—*never*? And then the shocking reality strikes us, even in our tender years, that what happened to them *could* happen to *me*.

But no, we tell ourselves, I am really healthy and strong. And so we begin practicing the all-too-human art of not thinking about the future.

But reminders of death are ever present. Highway accidents are daily news. So are reports of the victims of violence and war and calamity. And who has not lost a father, mother, brother, sister, wife, husband, or close friend in death?

History is, quite literally, a study of the dead. All the great ones we read about—like George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy—all are gone. Presidents or commoners, millionaires or peasants, all were and are powerless against death.

Some may object. Why be so philosophical? Why dwell on the morbid, negative side of life? Why not emphasize the joys of simple pleasure, of work and play, of hearty conversation, good food, wholesome activity and love? But we are not trying to be morbid. We only want to face the facts as they are, so that we can make the most and the best of the life we have.

The Answer To Death

Our modern civilization—so-called—has come a long way from the cave man. At least we have a better chance to live longer. We have medical science, and surgery, and a knowledge of nutrition and good health which previous generations never imagined. We can put a man on the moon, or on the floor of the ocean. We can use computers to calculate to unfathomable degrees of precision. Still we have not learned to escape or avoid death.

The current vernacular says something about this fact. Phrases like “I died laugh-

ing," or "This one will kill you," or "We slaughtered them," or "I could have died" or "He will kill me if" are inappropriate commentaries on the serious issue that confronts all of us—as if making light of a reality could change it.

What is our reaction to the facts?

Some people live by the philosophy—even if subconsciously—that if we eat the right foods, obtain medical help when we are sick, and live as sensibly as we can imagine, we can stave off the Grim Reaper almost indefinitely. But time and observation have shown us that this method has only limited success at best. The time still arrives when we must face reality.

Almost all of us, by some undefined instinct, deny the reality of death by immersing ourselves in the present moment, as if not thinking about it would keep it away from us. We absorb ourselves in our work, our home, our children, a hobby, a book, or almost any activity. It might be something different every hour. Some people make friends, or party, or travel—anything to avoid the trauma of thinking, anything to avoid facing their inward poverty of soul, or looking too far into the future. Underneath it is the old philosophy of "eat, drink and be merry," with our eyes tightly closed to the reality around us.

There is a story of an Arab who awakened in the middle of the night and was very hungry. He lit a candle, and began to eat some dates that were beside his bed. He took one, held it up to the light, and saw that a worm was in it. So he threw it out of the tent. Then he took another date, held it up to the light, saw a worm in it, and threw it away. The same thing happened a third time. So he blew out the candle, grabbed the dates, and ate them voraciously.

It is easy to blow out all the candles and see nothing, but the facts do not change simply because we do not wish to see them. Everything about us and within us is temporary. *"One generation passeth away and another generation cometh"* (Eccl. 1:4).

We can bury our heads in the sand if

we choose, but denial is not a successful method for dealing with death.

Dealing With Death

The greatest test of any religion is how it deals with death. If it has no answer to this most central of all subjects, what is it worth?

A mature response to death is the very heart of the Christian faith. First of all, the Christian faith does not deny reality. It even sees death as having a purpose. Death is the means by which sin will be removed and the earth be purged of all iniquity. The rebellious, the wicked, the incorrigible element who will resist Christ's new authority when He returns—all will die. There is no cruelty in this, only a quick removing of all that opposes progress. Only in this way can the plan of God be realized and the earth be filled with the glory of the Lord.

Death is the recompense for all sin. *"The soul that sinneth, it shall die"* (Ezek. 18:20). If we live for the desires of the flesh, in our sinful state we shall die (Rom. 8:6, 13)—eternally. *"The wages of sin is death"* (Rom. 6:23).

But what about death that is the normal end of life? What about death that comes to all, sinner or saint, commoner or peasant?

Reading the New Testament reveals how quickly the early Church came to grips with this inevitable reality. The apostle Paul addressed the issue several times in his preaching and writing. The earliest—and most detailed—on record is his letter to the Corinthians. Perhaps the Corinthians recoiled from thinking about death and its implications, particularly in an age of active persecution. It was an ever threatening reality.

What was Paul's answer to death? Just one word: Resurrection! How can we know? Because *"now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept...But every man in his own order, Christ the first-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming"* (I Cor. 15:20, 23). And for him it was the personal hope nearest and dearest to his heart: *"If by any*

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Once the Judgment is past and immortality has been bestowed upon the faithful, "then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory."

means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:11). Paul did not want this life to be all for him; he wanted to live, and live, and live!

Paul saw death as an enemy. He did not try to make out that death was the gate to endless joy, nor did he adopt the Stoic belief that facing death bravely was the ultimate glory of life. He said plainly that death is an enemy. He said also that death will be destroyed. The last enemy to be destroyed is death (I Cor. 15:26).

Even Jesus viewed death as an enemy. Submitting to death was for Him the supreme test, even when He knew it was the will of His Father, even when He had complete confidence that the Father would resurrect Him, even when He had trained Himself intensely to obey, even when He knew that a crowning at His Father's right hand was literally a thousand hours away. Death was still difficult to face.

Paul was pondering the weighty matters of life and death and salvation when in his letter to the Romans he asked the question, *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* But he did not leave it unanswered. The very tone of his question implies the answer: No one! If God is for us, if He is working with us, He can redeem us from death and reward us with immortality. Only God can do this for us. And from where does Paul draw his illustration? From *"Christ"* who *"died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us"* (Rom. 8:34). With Christ at the right hand of God pulling for us, so to speak, working in our behalf, not even death will be able to separate us from Him.

This was Paul's strong persuasion, and *"death"* is first in his list of powers against which he was invincible in Christ: *"For I am persuaded, that neither death..."* nor anything else he could imagine could thwart him in his quest or annul his bright, glowing hope in Christ (Rom. 8:38-39).

Paul said it again in his letter to the Philippians, *"To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain..."* (Phil. 1:21). Even when

he was staring death in the face, he could speak calmly because of his confidence in the resurrection: *"We were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Why, we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead; he delivered us from so deadly a peril, and he will deliver us [eternal deliverance]; on him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again"* (II Cor. 1:8-10, RSV). The sting of death was gone because Jesus was alive, and Paul knew that if he followed in Jesus' footsteps, if he modeled his life after Jesus' character, death could have no eternal power over him. To this end Paul had committed his life, to abolishing sin from his own heart and character, so that he could face Christ unashamed and receive His eternal blessing.

Do we wonder how Paul could have such confidence in the face of death? And do we wonder how he could tell his brethren not to fear, not to worry about those who had died, who were in Christ?—because he knew a power that was stronger than the power of death (I Thess. 4:14).

Christian believers do not face death with confidence because they are blind to it, or because they have not stopped to think about its implications. Neither does their confidence rest on any supposed messages from the dead through a seance, or on any philosophical investigations into the survival of the human ego. Instead, Christians look to the resurrection of Jesus Christ and know that because He lives, they, too, may live.

Many people who disbelieve the resurrection are unbelieving simply because they have not investigated. They have not looked seriously for or at the evidence. They blandly conclude that Christ could not have risen from the grave because death is death, and dead people just don't rise up and walk. But no one is claiming that the dead rise in the normal course of events. We are claiming that *this man* rose—the Man who was the Son of God, Jesus Christ. God sent Jesus to reveal His

plan in its perfection, to show the perfect sequence from beginning to climax, from birth and childhood right through to maturity and the careful, meticulous living of a sinless life, and on to glorification and immortality. And the entrance to the final phase—of glorification and immortality—is the resurrection. Jesus' career, begun as a mortal being, climaxed in the glory of immortal life. And this same sequence of events will be repeated for each of His faithful followers.

What If He Didn't Rise?

In I Corinthians 15 Paul details the implications of death and resurrection for the believer. First of all, he points to Jesus as the prime example of one who had died and been resurrected. This meant that death *need not be final*. For the believer, it would be followed by resurrection, as the resurrection of Jesus Christ had made abundantly plain.

But what if Christ did not rise? The implications of this idea were shattering. Indeed, the resurrection is the very center of Christian faith. He makes this point especially clear in I Corinthians 15. If Christ did not rise, he wrote, the apostles' message is empty and the Corinthi-

ans' faith is vain. Believers are still sinners, unsure, without hope, without any prospect of future life if there be no resurrection of the dead. What is more, every Christian believer is doomed, so to speak, without the resurrection, because all will die and what will he have for all his sacrificing and pain? Christians are of all people to be pitied most because they have deluded themselves, because they have given up the present joys and satisfactions with no prospect for the future—if the dead do not rise.

But Paul was emphatic: The dead do rise *because Christ has risen*.

What are the consequences of the resurrection hope? According to Paul they are the following:

◆ The resurrection places Jesus in a category by Himself. He is the "*first-fruits from the dead*" (I Cor. 15:23). His rising from the dead makes Him unlike any other teacher who ever lived. Who else can say, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore*"? (Rev. 1:18).

◆ Because Jesus rose from the dead—and only God can resurrect—we know that God has placed His stamp of approval upon Jesus.

Paul knew
a power that
was stronger
than death.

Dear Father, we praise Thee that we can commemorate Resurrection Morning, when Thy dear Son arose triumphantly from death.

Now we may catch the gleam of the rising sun of hope. Our hearts have said, "There must be a way out." Resurrection Morning says, "There *is* a way out!" We see the footprints of the living Lord coming away from the tomb. The whole history of the world has been cut in two. Help us to grasp that transforming fact.

And remind us, Father, that if this resurrection of Jesus is to be real to us, we must share in His moral adventure, must do always the things that please Thee.

Said the apostle Paul, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above." Our affections must be centered on things which are above, our lives must be a constant pageant of hope and praise;

the bright prospect generated by the resurrection of Thy Son from the dead should amount to a vital fragrance that we always carry with us, and diffuse wherever we go.

If we would verify the truth of Christ's resurrection we must live for the values for which He died, and be willing to die for the values for which He lived.

Here the risen Christ is pointing us to new life and hope. Help us to recognize this ultimate truth. Here is the risen Christ directing us to trace His own steps, not toward the tomb, but away from it. We must follow His tracks. There are bloodstains as they lead in, but when they come out there is the firm tread of victory.

Grant, Father, that we may keep pressing on as long as our day of opportunity lasts, that a raising to life and immortality may be the happy sequel to our short journey through life. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A *bodily
resurrection to
mortal life is an
essential promise
of God.*

◆ The resurrection initiated the teaching of the Gospel (I Cor. 15:3-11). Who cannot see the difference between the Gospel which proclaimed "*Jesus Christ crucified*" and a gospel whose theme was "*Jesus Christ crucified and risen again*"? Without the resurrection there would have been no Gospel to proclaim, for all hope of future life depends on the resurrection, and Jesus' resurrection was the sealing of the resurrection promise. And the certainty of Christ's resurrection goes back to eye-witnesses, as Paul carefully documents (vs. 5-10).

◆ The resurrection means that Jesus is *alive today*. His life, His death, His resurrection all showed the plan of God *in action*, the operation of God *in process*. Believers died, but God will raise them from the sleep of death.

◆ By the resurrection, Jesus is the firstfruits of a great crop to come. He was the "*first*" in that He was the first out of *many* to rise from the dead, for when He returns, all who "*sleep in Jesus...will God bring with him*"—and almost all of these will have been resurrected (I Thess. 4:14-18).

◆ By the resurrection, Jesus has robbed the last enemy of its terrors. There *is* a way out. Death need not be final. Because Jesus lives, we too may live—if we follow His steps, if we live so as to merit the approval of God and a resurrection from the sleep of death.

◆ The resurrection of Jesus is the guarantee of His return. The fact that He died and rose from the dead is a pledge that He will come again, just as He promised. "*In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump*" (I Cor. 15:52). And then "*shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*" (vs. 54-55).

◆ The resurrection of Jesus is a constant spur for Christian action, so that when He returns we may be like Him, and receive the change from corruptible to incorruptible which He has experienced, so that we may be changed into

the likeness of His own glorious body (Phil. 3:20-21; I Cor. 15:53).

Why The Resurrection Matters

Why does the resurrection matter? Because without it there would be no hope. In our mortal state we would die, and without any power to revive us, our career would be ended. But thanks be to God! a bodily resurrection is part of the plan. And the evidence for that plan stands solidly on hard facts.

What are these facts? Let us go again to Paul's exposition in I Corinthians 15, where he gives a number of statements.

First, look at the way Paul begins his dissertation: "*For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures*" (I Cor. 15:1-3). Paul did not stop with Christ's death—the resurrection was the most important part of the story! And both were fulfillments of prophecy. Both were "*according to the scriptures*."

Look, too, at the man who was writing this dissertation. He was Saul of Tarsus, the chief enemy of the Christian "heresy." What turned Paul around in midcourse? It was nothing less than the resurrected Christ. On the Damascus road he was, as Paul puts it in Philippians, "*apprehended by Jesus Christ*." "*Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?*" he asks (I Cor. 9:1). No single event apart from the resurrection of Jesus had so dynamic a role in determining the course of Christian history as the conversion of the apostle Paul. In the words of an Eighteenth Century writer, "The conversion and apostleship of Saint Paul alone, duly considered, is of itself a demonstration sufficient to prove Christianity to be a divine revelation."

Second, consider the prominence Paul gave this message. He delivered it to the Corinthians as of first importance, this message of the resurrection that he himself had received with such power and joy. It was at the very heart of Christianity. The resurrection was so prominent in

his teaching at Athens, in fact, that his hearers proclaimed him a new deity, calling him "Anastasis" (that is, "*resurrection*")—Acts 17:18). The resurrection is no tailpiece to Christian doctrine; it is the centerpiece.

Third, observe the time when Paul was writing this message. Jesus was crucified about the year A.D. 30 or 31. I Corinthians was written in approximately A.D. 54, some twenty years later. It would be a very good argument if the evidence went back only that far, but it goes back even further. Paul says, "*I delivered unto you...what I also received*" (I Cor. 15:3). That is to say, he passed on the message he himself had received. This immediately takes us back to within three or four years of the resurrection, when Paul was converted. The approximate date can be determined from Gal. 1:18 and 2:1. If the "fourteen years" of Galatians 2 means fourteen years after his conversion, which seems likely, then it would have been about A.D. 35 that Paul came face to face with the risen Christ. If the three years of Gal. 1:18 are added to those fourteen, then we can assume that he came to the faith in approximately A.D. 33, for the visit to Jerusalem can be fixed at A.D. 49. In either case, the time gap between the event and Paul's discovery of it was tiny. Jesus had only very recently risen from the dead and ascended to heaven when he came back to put Paul into the ministry.

Even more significant than this small time gap is Paul's choice of words for "receive" and "deliver." They are technical words, both in Greek and in Hebrew, for receiving and handing on *authorized* knowledge. The resurrection fact and story were already *authorized* in Christian circles before the conversion of Paul.

Fourth, consider the source of this belief. Paul stresses in I Cor. 15:11 that he proclaimed precisely the same message of the resurrection as did the Jerusalem Church. His message comes from the very center of the events themselves, and if it is within only two or three years of those events, could anyone imagine better evidence of any his-

torical event than this? Incidentally, in this passage Paul mentions two names of great significance—Peter and James. Both were eyewitnesses of Jesus' resurrection. Both met with Jesus after His resurrection (I Pet. 5:1; I Cor. 15:7). Paul went up to Jerusalem after his conversion to talk with them and question them (Gal. 1:18). Was not his knowledge indeed firsthand?

Fifth, there is a confident note of conviction in this passage that would have been hard to fabricate. The short, staccato sentences throb with discovery and assurance. They also display a remarkable change of tense. In Greek, the past tense is commonly used for events in the past, the perfect tense is used for past events that have present overtones and effects. Paul puts together a string of verbs: "*Christ died...He was buried...He was seen.*" Then when he comes to the resurrection, he changes his tense. He bursts out into the perfect tense, saying, "*Christ arose, and he is alive!*"

Sixth, glance at the historical evidence he cites. He is very careful to delineate that Christ died according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day also as Scripture predicted (see Ps. 16:10, Isa. 53:10-11) and that He appeared also to Cephas and the others.

Paul also adduces the evidence of several resurrection appearances: Peter, the twelve, James, the 500, all the Apostles, and finally himself. He hints, perhaps, at what is explicit elsewhere: that their lives were changed as a result of the resurrection. Peter changed from coward to a convinced teacher, a pillar of the Church. The apostles changed from rebels into stalwarts for the cause. James changed from skeptic to Christian leader. Paul changed from persecutor to persecuted, a dynamic apostle of Christ Jesus Himself. The Corinthians changed from people of the world to people of God. It was remarkable evidence not only of Christ's resurrection but that He lives. Such is the power of the Gospel to change lives.

(Continued on page 23)

*The Apostles
went everywhere
preaching Jesus
Christ crucified
and resurrected.*

He's Gone...

(Ascension Day anniversary this year is June 5)

*He is gone!—a cloud of light
Has received Him from our sight;
High in heaven, where eye of men
Follows not, nor angels' ken;
Through the vales of time and space,
Passed into the holiest place;
All His toil and sorrow done,
He the battle fought and won.*

*He is gone!—and we remain
In this world of sin and pain;
In the void which He has left
On this earth, of Him bereft.
But we've still His work to do,
We can still His path pursue;
Seek Him both in joy or woe,
In ourselves His image show.*

Jesus was with His brethren forty days after His resurrection, "speaking to them of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." Then suddenly the moment arrived when He was taken from them, "and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1:9-10). He was going away, as He had said, all the way to the Father's throne, there to be judged and rewarded at the Father's right hand.

Probably many did not realize what it was all about, that the long-looked-for Messiah had actually come and gone, until it was all over. It was all too different from their way of thinking.

But this was not the end of His career. The angels who watched Him ascend promised also that He would come again. "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11, NIV). Shortly after Jesus ascended, the Gospel would be preached to all parts of the then known world. Then a great power of

In The

darkness would arise, totally silencing true religion. Then slowly the darkness would begin to break, until finally the true light would again be allowed to shine. This, then, would finally fulfill *all* that the Prophets had spoken, of the first advent of the Messiah, of His second advent, and of the great Day of the Lord.

We find ourselves living today during this most significant interval of time. We are living literally in the meantime, between two great events—Jesus' ascension into heaven, and His return.

Most of those who heard or read the prophecies concerning the Messiah were not aware of it, but the ancient Prophets forecast two comings of Christ, a first and the second. Sometimes they combined both prophecies in a single statement; at other times, they applied the prophecy to one, then to the other situation. We read in Isaiah 9:6, where both prophecies are made in a single prophecy: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder" (Isa. 9:6). Here is a prophecy of Christ's first coming, when He would be born of the virgin Mary: "Unto us a child is born." Then follows immediately a statement of the work He will accomplish. "And the government shall be upon his shoulder"—here the Prophet is looking further into the future, when Christ should return as conqueror and King of the whole earth.

Christ came just as foretold, a babe born in obscurity, in a little town called Bethlehem. He ministered among men, as was prophesied, He died, and was resurrected and taken to heaven, all as prophesied.

But those fulfillments were *only* part of the prophecies, for He will come again. Just as He went

He's Coming!

Meantime

away, He shall return. It was the promise of the angels: "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

When will He return? We do not know, but never before has there been so much evidence pointing to the end of the age. Never before has there been more to support our confidence that we are nearing the climax of all climaxes, the second advent of Jesus Christ. As one believer has said, "Christians never had more reason to believe that the coming of Christ would occur any day than they have at the present time."

What is our responsibility in the meantime? Our whole duty may be summarized in two words: *Get ready*. Lest the Day of the Lord find us unprepared, we must busy ourselves doing the work of our King, living as His representatives, concentrating on His goals, and not on the fleeting baubles around us. "Get ready" means being like Him in every particular, believing His Word, living by His laws, and enjoying the sweet communion which He enjoyed with His heavenly Father.

Jesus will accept only those who are like Him, who are willing to live by His laws, live by His standards, and acknowledge His authority. *In the meantime* is our opportunity to practice this type of living, to develop and perfect the character which He is seeking. In the meantime is our opportunity to spread the good news about the great events which lie just ahead. For with Christ will come a whole

*"I will come," they heard Him say,
"I will come again some day."
But He must to glory go
That we may that glory know.
So we leave behind the past,
Forward all our gaze we cast;
And these words around us ring:
Jesus shall return as King.*

*He is coming!—yes, we once more
Shall behold Him as before;
He our truest, dearest Friend,
With His angels will descend.
Stands the promise sure as day,
Promise none can take away;
Jesus Christ the Lord the same,
He shall come to earth again!*

new government. First there will be the sweeping away of all that opposes the New Order, the eternal destruction of all that gravitates to that which is low and sinful. Then will follow the glorious Millennium, a thousand years of worldwide peace, progress and prosperity, such as this world has never before known.

All this is the promise of the Word of God, and above all else, "These words are true and faithful" (Rev. 21:5). It is no idle dream. It is all in the plan of God—and it *shall be!*

What a glorious Day it will be for those who have used this little while, this "in the meantime," in the right way. For Jesus Christ *is* coming. It is the blessed hope, bringing peace and blessing worldwide.

Will we be ready when Christ comes? Will we be ready to welcome Him? Are we so gripped by this hope that it is our sustaining power, our strength and stimulus every hour?

May this be our prayer, our joy, our hope, and our sincerest effort — in the meantime. □

The Inerrant Word of God: Why We Believe It (3)

Scripture Speaks For Itself

The Bible writings speak for themselves about their own authority.

The self-witness of Scripture has for centuries been the cornerstone of Christian belief in Biblical authority. John M. Frame says in an address called "Scripture Speaks For Itself,"

"There would never be any such argument [that Scripture speaks for itself] unless there were reason to believe that Scripture *claimed* authority. If Scripture renounced all claim to authority, or even remained neutral on the subject, there would not be much reason for Christians to claim authority *for* the Scripture. But if Scripture *does* claim authority over us, then we are faced with a momentous challenge indeed! Acceptance or rejection of that claim will influence every aspect of Christian doctrine and life."

How true is this last statement! For we cannot accept the authority of Scripture over us without making a drastic and total change in "every aspect" of our lives.

Belief in the authority of Scripture is a doctrine just like any other doctrine of faith. To find evidence for any other doctrine we consult Scripture. Should we not, then, let Scripture decide the authority of Scripture if we would be consistent?

Someone may object that that claim

is not competent to establish itself; that just because the Bible *claims* to be God's Word does not prove that it *is* God's Word. That is true in a sense. Many documents claim to be the word of some deity when they are not. Countless books make claims that cannot be justified (as the Koran, or the Book of Mormon). In no case does a claim in itself establish the authority of the book. The claim must be compared with the evidence. And for the Christian, that evidence lies in the Bible.

The argument is circular,—but strong because Scripture is an ultimate criterion. (Where can we go to get "above" that which claims to be—and which all available evidence shows to be—Divine in its origin?)

We must go to the Bible to learn of its own self-witness. When we speak of the Bible's "self-witness," we mean not merely the text in which the Bible explicitly claims authority but the whole character of the Bible as it confronts us.

What gives us confidence in the Bible?

Chiefly the following: the unity and harmony in its teachings, its contrast with the philosophies of men, and the confirmation of its statements upon the pages of history and in the findings of

archaeology. Also consider that the Bible was written by more than 40 authors over a period of some fifteen hundred years, yet it presents one God, one picture of man, one Christ, and one doctrine throughout, all harmonious, all presenting one plan of salvation. These facts may not be obvious to the casual reader, but are very obvious to anyone who has studied it in depth, with an honest mind and a heart open to conviction.

(For further discussion of the evidence for the Bible, see "The Known Bible," Section 2, Part 2, in the April, 1994 issue of the *Megiddo Message*.)

The Testimony of the Apostles

How did Jesus' Apostles refer to the Old Testament? They called it "scripture," "holy scripture," "law," "prophets," "royal law of liberty," "the oracles of God." And listen to the introductions they gave in citing Scripture: "it is written"; "it says"; "the Holy Spirit says"; "scripture says." All of these denote something far more significant than a document with mere human authority. They denote a reference to words bearing the very authority of God. "Scripture says" had the same authority as "God says."

The apostle Paul gave full authority to the Old Testament in these words: "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). More than being written for the people of the Old Testament time, Paul says that these words were written to teach us, to give us patience, comfort and hope. And note also that he did not single out a portion of the Old Testament. He spoke in a wholesale manner of all the Old Testament. None of it is dated, none of it is invalid. It is all "written for our learning."

The apostle Peter in his Second Epistle wished to assure his readers of the dependability of Scripture. He knew that false teachers would be attacking the Church, and deceiving

the flock. And he insisted that the Gospel he had been preaching was not myth or legend but the account of events which he himself had witnessed. And, he emphasized, even when eye witnesses would be gone, the believers would still have a source of sure truth. They would have the "word of prophecy"—the Old Testament Scriptures—a word which is "more sure." And they were to "take heed" to that Word "as unto a light," for all else would be darkness (II Peter 1:19-21).

Peter says also that this Word did not originate through human initiative; it was not a set of human opinions about God, nor did it come by human volition. Rather, the Holy Spirit moved these writers to speak for God. The Holy Spirit determined what and how they would write. Therefore, the Bible was penned by human authors, but its authority is Divine.

What About the New Testament Scriptures?

Can we say that the New Testament Scriptures also are the word of God?

Both Testaments insist over and again that their words are the words of God. As we have seen, the New Testament writers accepted the Old Testament. And Jesus told His disciples that obedience to *His words* was an absolute necessity for entering the Kingdom, and a criterion for true discipleship. "*If ye keep my saying...*" (John 8:51); or "*Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them...*" (Matt. 7:24-25); or "*My words are spirit and they are life*" (John 6:63).

Where, then, do we find Jesus' words? Jesus promised His disciples that after He was gone He would send the Holy Spirit which would lead His disciples into all truth (John 16:13). Christ gave His apostles a special mental gift through the power of the Holy Spirit which we today would probably term total recall. (See John 14:26-27; 16:12-15; also Acts 1:21,16.) This is the

*The writers
in both
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basis for the Scriptural authority of the New Testament writings, which were produced in apostolic circles. Having this gift of special power, their writings bore the authority of Christ Himself. In this way God provided for the preserving of the true teaching in readable form. The authors were not left to write from their own fallible memories, or to speak in their own strength. Therefore, the written words of the Apostles under these conditions have authority and absolutism. They, too, are the words of Scripture. Peter recognized this fact when he classified the writings of Paul as among the "*other scriptures*" (II Peter 3:16).

Mr. Warfield used an apt illustration to show the surety of the Bible's witness to its authority. He says, "The effort to explain away the Bible's witness to its inspiration reminds one of a

man standing safely in his laboratory and elaborately expounding—possibly by the aid of diagrams and mathematical formulae—how every stone in an avalanche has a defined pathway and may be easily dodged by one [in its path]. We may fancy such an elaborate trifler's triumph as he would analyze the avalanche into its constituent stones, and demonstrate of stone after stone that its path is definite, limited, and may easily be avoided." But avalanches, unfortunately, do not come upon us stone by stone, one at a time, courteously leaving us opportunity to withdraw from the pathway of each in turn: but all at once in a roaring mass of destruction. Just so we may explain away a text or two which teach inspiration, to our own satisfaction, dealing with each without reference to the others: but these texts of ours, again, unfortunately do not come upon us in

Inerrancy Matters

What difference does it make whether we can depend on the *whole* Bible or not? Isn't it enough that it be reliable in matters that relate to our salvation and our faith?

It used to be that those who challenged the Bible's trustworthiness when it spoke about miracles or the supernatural, were those who doubted and challenged every aspect of Christian faith (unbelievers).

But times have changed. Now those who question the authority of the Bible are committed and ordained ministers, people who have dedicated their lives to uphold and teach the Christian faith as they understand it. To many of these, Bible inerrancy is unnecessary, even harmful. To them it is akin to modern day Pharisaism, seeking to impose on people of God more than God Himself chose to do.

While inerrancy is not the only issue that matters, we must be concerned about the foundation of our faith. We must know whereon we stand, and to what we have committed our lives. And if the Bible does

not have total authority, if it is not God's means of revealing Himself to us today, what do we have? The answer is nothing. We depend on the Word of God, and we must be fully satisfied that it is true and right in all that it proclaims.

Biblical inerrancy is not a peripheral matter. It is the foundation stone upon which our whole structure of faith and hope stands. It is the foundation upon which the larger question of Biblical authority, hence authority generally, stands. No one can avoid it without removing himself totally from the reach of Divine authority.

Disputes over authority have been center stage ever since the time of Jesus. Paul had to defend his authority as an apostle. The early Church fought Gnosticism and other strong challenges to the teaching of the Scriptures. East and West split over the nature of Papal authority. The Reformation raised the issue again, as widespread and influential challenges arose to the notion that any supernatural guidance to man exists, whether it be the Holy Spirit, an organization, a man, or a book.

We today believe that God chose to oversee His Word so that it teaches what He wants us to know. Those who believe that its teaching includes errors have at least two problems. First, they must recon-

this artificial isolation; neither are they few in number. There are scores, hundreds of them: and they come bursting upon us in one solid mass. Explain them away? We should have to explain away the whole New Testament. What a pity that we cannot see and feel the avalanche of texts beneath which we may lie hopelessly buried, as clearly as we may see and feel an avalanche of stones!

No critic can explain away *all* the verses which call God's people to obey "the commandments, statutes, testimonies, ordinances" of the Lord. No critic can explain away all the "it is written" formulae, or all the commands delivered by apostles and prophets in authoritative tone. Anyone can close his ears to them, but the authority remains, and so does the threat of Divine judgment for such a rejection.

Our claim for the inerrancy of the

Bible is never itself inerrant, but the evidence is mountainous that Christ held exactly this view of Scripture. Shall we be so presumptuous as to think we know better than He?

Says B. B. Warfield, "We adopt [the doctrine of inerrancy] specifically because it is taught us as truth by Christ and His Apostles, in the Scriptural record of their teaching, and the evidence for its truth is, therefore, as we have already pointed out, precisely that evidence, in weight and amount which vindicates for us the trustworthiness of Christ and His Apostles as teachers of doctrine." □

*The Word of God
does not stand or fall by
popular vote. Our position
makes no difference—
except to us.*

cile their view of Scripture with the teaching and practice of Christ. Jesus found plenty of fault with established religion in His day, but He did not question the Scripture text itself. Second, those who believe that God's Word contains errors must show how they distinguish truth from error by a process that does not make *them* the final authority on what to accept or reject.

As for the problems that accompany the serious study of Scripture, we must carefully define our terms, also separate between literal and spiritual interpretations. Apparent discrepancies and difficulties must be addressed.

However, once they are studied honestly in the light of Scripture, it can usually be shown that there is no discrepancy. If a difficulty persists, we must allow that it is in our understanding, or in the translation, and not in the original text itself.

We must also remember that a position on inerrancy is not like a political campaign. We are not taking a position to win the approval or support of anyone. God's Word does not stand or fall by popular vote. If the Bible contains errors, no amount of debating or maneuvering can take them away. And if the Bible is without error, our poor skills in defending it or our lack of application and study will hurt

only ourselves. God does not depend on us for the validating of His Word. By our study and application of it we benefit only ourselves.

In short, inerrancy is not a matter *we* are able to decide. It has been decided long before we came along. It is for us to recognize it as fact and benefit from it.

In affirming inerrancy and holding to the Bible, we need to see the purpose of God. In providing an inerrant Word, God has given us the means whereby our love "may grow ever richer and richer in knowledge and insight of every kind, and may thus bring [us] the gift of true discrimination. Then on the day of Christ [we] will be flawless and without blame, reaping the full harvest of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:9-11, NEB).

Later portions of this series will be addressing point by point the various issues raised against the Bible. And always when we seek, we will find there is an answer. God has not left us in the dark regarding His Word. For this reason we can affirm that the Bible is without error, discrepancy or absurdity in the languages in which He gave it. The problems that arise are in our *understanding* of the Word, not in the written Word itself. □

More on the Resurrection

Q *Does the fact that Jesus rose bodily from the grave—rather than merely surviving in a spiritual form—matter?*

A Yes! In the first place, surviving in a spiritual form is not resurrection. And a physical resurrection for the Messiah was prophesied. Said David, speaking prophetically of Christ, *"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell [bades, the grave]; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption"* (Ps. 16:10). David said also, again speaking of Christ, *"But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me"* (Ps. 49:15). What does it mean to be *"redeemed from the power of the grave"* if not to live again, to be resurrected?

Jesus did not survive death; He died *and was resurrected*, restored to life. And after the resurrection He walked, and talked, and ate with His disciples. He was a real, bodily person.

Some have tried to say that the resurrection was a crude resuscitation. But no such idea is taught in Scripture. The early eyewitnesses knew that the resurrection meant the reviving of the body. The physical nature of the resurrection mattered, and mattered greatly. Jesus walked, talked, and met with His disciples after He was resurrected. A spirit could do none of these. Furthermore, the disciples *"knew that it was he"*—they recognized His form. Mary Magdalene, meeting Him in the garden on that first resurrection morning, knew from the sound of His voice that it was Jesus, when He said to her, *"Mary."*

A bodily resurrection to return one to the level of mortal life is an essential promise of God. It is not a matter of acci-

dent that Jesus, who was made like unto His brethren (Heb. 2:17), who was a prophet raised up from among His brethren (Deut. 18:15), suffered physical death, followed by physical bodily resurrection, and glorification at the right hand of God. This was the Divine plan. Only so could Christ be the living example of one who had gone the whole way, from start to finish, and had been made immortal.

Q *Is there any intermediate state between death and the resurrection?*

A The Bible does not say anything about such a state. It does not even hint of it. It speaks of two states, living and dead. The dead are said to be at *"rest from their labors"* (Rev. 14:13), or simply *"asleep"* (John 11:11-14). God is said to be a God not of the dead but of the living: *"For all live unto him"* (speaking of all who are His children—Luke 20:34-38)—but nothing is said of any other state of being.

What did Job say about the state of death? *"If I wait, the grave is mine house"* (Job 17:13). The dead *"sleep"* until the return of Christ, when they will be raised to the level of the living, and be judged and rewarded for what they have done (I Thess. 4:14-16; I Cor. 15:51-53; II Cor. 5:10).

Q *What will the resurrection be like?*

A We have little information, but we do know that those resurrected will be mortal until given immortality. Paul explains this carefully in I Corinthians 15: *"For this corruptible must put*

on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." How could they "put on immortality" if they had been resurrected to an immortal state? Not until the Judgment is the separation revealed between those who have won and those who have lost. Only after the Judgment can the faithful be awarded immortality, else all who come forth from the graves, whether good or bad would have to survive in some state. This error has led to the teaching of hell in its varied forms, often understood as a state of separation from God, a perpetual existence in a condition of punishment. No such idea is taught in the Bible. (For further information on this subject, see our booklet, *"The Hell and Devil of the Bible."*)

Once the Judgment is past and immortality has been bestowed upon the faithful, then *"this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality,"* and *"then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory"* (1 Cor. 15:53-54).

If believers came forth from the grave with bodies other than mortal, Paul's statement would not be correct. But Christ set the pattern. He was raised to the state of a mortal being, then forty days later was changed to the glorified state. Such is the pattern, which we can logically expect to be repeated for every believer.

Q *"Will our bodies be of flesh in the resurrection?"*

A Yes, indeed, the resurrected dead will be as real after their resurrection as they were before they died. There can be no life without an organized being, and no thought without the brain, the organ of thought.

The proposition is sometimes presented that a resurrection of the body would be out of the question on the grounds that the material from which that body was formed no longer exists. But such is not the case. Matter can not be destroyed. The arrangement

of the atoms forming that matter may be altered, but the matter itself still remains, and by knowledge of laws not now known to human beings it could be rebuilt into a human structure again.

A hypothetical case could be built of a fine watch being dropped into a bath of acid so potent as to completely dissolve the various metals entering into the make-up of the watch. A competent metallurgist then could reclaim all the metals from the acid, an expert watch maker could reconvert those metals into parts for a watch, and reassemble them into a timepiece. Hence at the close of the cycle of destruction and reconstruction the watch could exist in its original form. Applying this same logic to the reconstruction of a human body no incongruity exists.

It is a known scientific fact that the matter forming our bodies is replaced about every seven years, yet we are the same individual.

Objection to the theory of the resurrection of the dead is sometimes raised on the grounds that the only way a body could exist is through the process of birth, growth and maturity. True, that is the only way we ever have seen a human body produced, but that is no proof that other procedures are not known to God Almighty. We obtain our food, whether from the vegetable or animal kingdom, through the slow process of inception and growth. A life germ implanted in a congenial medium starts the cycle of growth terminating in ripened grain or fully developed animal organism. Jesus, however, was able to employ a greater law whereby this process could be side-stepped and bread and fish to feed five thousand hungry people be produced instantly.

Even to re-create a brain with the impressions of the original brain upon it would be no stretch of the Almighty's power. We are told in Mal. 3:16 that the records are all safely kept: *"And a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name."*

And the dead are to be raised in the mortal state, the same as they fell asleep. □

*I shall start where I stand and never mind the past,...
The past won't help me in beginning anew,...If I have left it all
behind at last,...Why that's enough, I'm done with it,
through;...This is another chapter in the book,...This is another
race the Lord has planned,...I will not give the vanished
days a backward look.*

Can You Say "NO"?

Many of the problems in our world today are due to someone's inability to say *no*. While nearly every aspect of the Christian faith is positive, just as there are negative and positive poles to a magnet, so there are negative and positive aspects to Christian living. We have definite obligations, to ourselves, to God and to one another—to which we must say *yes*. And we must say an absolute *no* to anything God forbids.

We are living in a permissive age, in a permissive society, and in a time when much evil goes unchallenged. It is *not* easy to stand against the current and say *no* when everyone else is saying *yes*. But that is exactly what we must do.

The Bible offers many examples of those who were able to say *no* at a crucial time in their lives. Abraham said *no* to the natural desire to stay with his family in his own home when God called him to go. His obedience came first. Years later, when God asked him to sacrifice his son, his natural impulse would have been *no*. But we read that Abraham obeyed, "*accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure*" (Heb. 11:19).

Moses said *no* to the impulse to spend his life in the affluence and security of Pharaoh's household, "*choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season*" (Heb. 11:25).

Joseph said a firm *no* when the wife of Potiphar tried to tempt him. His immediate response was, "*How...can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?*" (Gen. 39:9).

Daniel said *no* to the king's request that he eat the dainties of the king's table. With strong conviction he "*resolved that he would not defile himself with the king's rich food or with the wine which he drank*" (Dan. 1:8).

Daniel's three companions said *no* to the command to bow before the great image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up. Even though they realized their lives were at stake, they answered with firmness, "*If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he*

will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Dan. 3:17-18). They said *no*, and there was no "yes" in it whatever.

Years later Daniel said *no* again, confronted this time with the temptation to buy safety at the cost of compromise. The king had signed a decree against public worship, but we read that "*when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went*

Say *no* to selfishness;
Say *no* to lust;
Say *no* to self-love;
Say *no* to pride;
Say *no* to dishonesty;
Say *no* to greed;
Say *no* to worldliness;
Say *no* to hate;
Say *no* to everything you do
not wish to have published
on your permanent record
in heaven.

to his house; where he had windows in his upper chamber opened toward Jerusalem; and he got down upon his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before God, as he had done previously" (Dan. 6:10, RSV).

Our Lord told us that everyone of His followers must have the ability to say *no*. "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself [say no to himself], and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). This is a command which all of us have countless opportunities to practice. When temptation comes, it is so much easier to compromise a little to avoid criticism. But, if we would follow Jesus, we must not.

The apostle Paul knew the pressures that we would be under. That is why he admonished, "Don't allow the world around you to squeeze you into its own mold" (Rom. 12:2, Phillips).

The law of God says both "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not."

It is a test that faces us at every age and stage of life. Young people must say *no* to temptation. "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not" (Prov. 1:10). Middle-aged people must

say *no*. And elderly people must continue to say *no* to any temptation to do wrong, think wrong, or feel wrong.

Living in the shadow of God's moral balances, we must learn not only the danger of compromise but also the blessing that comes from being strong enough to say *no*. At any point, a single decision may change the whole course of our life. At the very least, one decision will help the next. In the words of the hymn, "Each victory will help you some other to win."

God has given us His law, by which we must be guided. And though it does not address every particular we might wish, it is nevertheless a "thorough furnisher unto all good works" (II Tim. 3:16-17) in that it offers the guidelines and principles by which we can live acceptably before God. He has not left His children to grope in darkness.

But the ability to say *no* is one that must be cultivated, not with a hard, unyielding stubbornness but with the desire to please God above all else, to form ourselves to the character likeness of His Son Jesus Christ, so that when He comes we may be accepted for a place of honor in His Kingdom. □

*If we would be
loyal to Jesus,
we must not
compromise our
convictions.*



(Continued from page 13)

A final piece of evidence is the movement itself that was begun. Christianity was started, and the very existence of the Christian church today—in whatever form, however apostate, however corrupt—is living evidence of the resurrection of Jesus. Something triggered the movement, which has, in one form or another, continued uninterrupted from that time. It is a fact of history which cannot be controverted. What differentiated the Christian church from Judaism at the beginning? Only the triumphant, exultant conviction that the long awaited Messiah had come, had died, and had risen and was alive again. This was the Gospel that the Apostles went everywhere preaching.

Such were the facts on which Paul based his own confidence on the resurrection, and commended it to the Corinthians—and to us.

Our resurrection hope is no idle dream. It is a matter of life and death. It is the difference between eternal oblivion and eternal happiness; between total extinction and ever expanding life with Christ. To every believer the resurrection matters—it matters as much as our next breath, or our next heartbeat.

It matters, because without it we as Christian believers are "of all men most miserable"—because we have let go of the present, with nothing for the future. But God be thanked! Jesus is alive, and because He lives, we too may live. Because He lives we are of all men the most radiant and hopeful, because we are destined for eternal joy—if we just follow Jesus' example of holiness to the end. □



Twilight Blinkers...and More

Did You Know...?

- ✓ ... that there are more than 1900 species of fireflies?
- ✓ ... that most fireflies turn on their light only about once a second; but some fireflies produce two flashes a scant 1/30th of a second apart, which the human eye detects as only one flash. Other species flash only once in several seconds?
- ✓ ... that many fireflies live only a few weeks?
- ✓ ... that fireflies are really light-making beetles?
- ✓ ... that firefly light is among the most efficient energy known. An electric light uses only 10 percent of its energy as light, and 90 percent is lost as heat. By contrast, the firefly's light is 95 percent light.
- ✓ ... that in some areas, millions of fireflies in a single tree blink their lights in almost perfect synchronization?
- ✓ ... that the blink of the firefly seems to be largely without purpose—which undermines the theories of evolution yet more, if it is consistently true that the fittest survive.
- ✓ ... that scientists today have identified several dozen species of luminous fungi.

Note: Scientific data for this article was taken from the *National Geographic* magazine, Vol. 140, No. 1; "Nature's Nightlights," by Paul A. Zahl, Ph.D., pp. 45ff.; also "Nature's Night Lights," by R. Burton, Plamford Books, England.

Did you ever step out into the backyard on a warm summer evening just at twilight and watch for the first flicker of a firefly? This tiny creature, less than an inch long, is one of the marvels of God's creation.

The firefly, along with various light-producing fish, squids, and mushrooms, have intrigued scientists for centuries. More than 2,000 years ago Aristotle wrote, "Some things, though they are not in their nature fire nor any species of fire, yet seem to produce light." They were baffled by the glow sometimes seen in the ocean, which they called "sea fire," which is actually produced by minute living organisms.

The firefly has an almost incredible family. The North American firefly, known to most of us as a lightning bug, is one of some 1900 species of fireflies. And it is one of more than a quarter million species of beetles that have been identified.

In the daylight the firefly seeks shelter from the sun by hiding on the underside of leaves. Small, striped and green, it can easily be mistaken for a cucumber beetle.

What is the tiny beetle's secret for making light? The light is produced by a substance called luciferin which is stored in a tiny organ on the underside of the beetle's tail. The organ is shaped like the headlight of an automobile, with a transparent window backed by a substance that acts as a reflector. The firefly lights up when air exhaled from its respiratory system strikes the luciferin, changing it into another chemical which oxidizes for an instant, creating the cold light. Immediately the chemical changes back to the original compound, and the process is ready to be repeated. If fireflies are deprived of oxygen, they cannot make light.

Firefly light is distinctive, however, because it is light without heat—a level of efficiency which our scientists have not been able to achieve. An electric light uses only 10 percent of its energy as light, and 90 percent is lost as heat. By contrast, the firefly's light is 95 percent light—only 5 percent is lost as heat. Here is efficiency unmatched by any product of human design.

Who can think that the trial and error of chance could develop such a marvelous process? Why not give glory to an All-wise, All-knowing Creator, who understands the luminescent compounds—which our scientists must study for years to comprehend?

North American fireflies do not blink their little tail-lights year-round, but only for a few weeks in early summer; and not all night, but only in the early evening, for perhaps one or two hours. The temperature and atmospheric conditions must be just right for them to come out of hiding. But before they disappear for the season, they have laid their eggs in some hidden location, guaranteeing next year's night lights.

The life cycle of the firefly is unknown, but is believed to be very short. The larvae turn into pupa, then hatch into adults that join others, which flash their lights briefly, and within a few weeks die.

In other parts of the world fireflies are much more spectacular than in North America. In Southeast Asian countries, such as Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and the Islands of New Guinea, swarms of fireflies may put on a light show every night. And residents say that it is not limited to a short season in summer but is a year-round occurrence.

Writing for the National Geographic magazine, Doctor Zahl, who made an extensive study of bioluminescence, told of traveling to Malaysia to observe the fireflies. What he found was a phenomena more spectacular than he could have imagined. He writes of prowling through mangrove swamps of northwestern Singapore, arriving finally in an area where fireflies were said to cluster. As night descended, he says, "a single beacon flashed high in the tree. In a short time branches and leaves were full of lights blinking away, but without any particular pattern or rhythm." Then he tells of a change, when "fireflies clustered on a single branch began flashing on and off in unison, as though they were wired together and someone were snapping a switch at regular intervals." In a short time other areas "picked up the synchronization, until most of the fireflies in the tree flashed in perfect time."

How do they do it? What gives these insects the remarkable ability to flash together? And the flashing is much more precise than it would be if each firefly had to see another's flash before producing his own. Somehow, each insect is able to match his flash with that of his neighboring fireflies.

West Indies' fireflies "shine like a first magnitude star seen with the naked eye," so brightly that the natives tie them to their toes to light their way through the jungle. There are so many fireflies in Japan, we are

told, that the Japanese hold a firefly festival each year.

And More...

Fireflies are not nature's only night lights.

Scientists today have identified several dozen luminous species of fungi. For centuries men ascribed magical powers to tree trunks that glowed at night without being consumed, unaware that the "fire" came from bacteria or fungi growing within the rotting wood.

Certain noninjurious bacteria light up some species of squids and fish. Others produce their own light. Luminescent marine creatures include shrimp, jellyfish, sea pens, comb jellies, worms, mollusk, hydroids, and other small sea creatures.

In some parts of the world, coral rock appears to be luminescent. But it is not the coral at all, but tiny hydroids that inhabit it.

The question stumping the experts is: What is the value of this so-called "self-created light" to the organism? If evolutionary theory is true, these species should have survived while others did not because of some advantage which their luminescence gives them. In many species, the luminescence seems purely fortuitous. For example, what benefit does a marine microbe derive by being luminous, when it simply mills around myriads of its nearly identical brothers? Or what advantage has a glowing mushroom which grows beside one which does not glow? We see far more advantage in crediting these wonders of nature's handiwork to the Supreme Creator, whose designs and purposes far transcend our feeble minds. What need for one creature to have advantage over another, except to show the handiwork of the Designer?

Again, we can observe, but we do not know the why or the how. We can only say, "The hand that made them is Divine."

The Glowworm

There is yet another light-producing insect, the glowworm, which in reali-

ty is neither worm nor beetle but a close relative of the common housefly. These creatures lure tourists to the Waitomo Caves in New Zealand, where they congregate among the stalactites in large numbers. In the darkness of the cave, these glowworms appear like "stars."

The glowing of these creatures has a unique purpose. These glowworms spin almost invisible threads, similar to the strands of a spider's web. One worm may dangle as many as 70 such strands or fishlines. Each fishline is strung with pearls of deadly glue. Attracted by the light of the glowworm, the caves' flying insects fly towards the glow and are trapped in the dangling sticky strands. The glowworms then reel their victims in and devour them.

Although best known in these famous caves, glowworms abound throughout New Zealand. Now let us ask: did the glowworm design the formula for making its own glue? And who taught it how to spin fishlines, and to reel in its captives?

The comment of one scientist is significant: "Mystery surrounds these and all the other organisms that light nature's nights with their cold fire, and as in so many other endeavors, the more we learn, the more there is to learn."

Says another scientist, "We must admit that nature is still far ahead of us."

We can only bow our heads to our great and wonderful Creator, whose smallest works are beyond our comprehending. Scientists have identified the chemicals that produce the light, but they are not able to duplicate the enzyme that enables the firefly to make light, hence have not been able to reproduce the light. Yet the process goes on in the tiny firefly, day after day, year after year, millennium after millennium.

God is not depending upon us to understand His creation, much less to operate it. Our part is to reverence and serve Him, and to let everything around us keep us reminded that the hand that made it all is Divine. □

Letters

What about Play-back?

Psalm 19:14 is a very thought provoking verse, "May my spoken words and unspoken thoughts be pleasing even to you, O Lord my rock and my redeemer" (TLB).

If we should have a tape recorder tied around our neck all day, what would we sound like on playing it back at the end of the day? Would our speech be pleasing to God? Would we have a good positive attitude, upholding the Scriptures in every way? Or do we have some worldly speech to be gotten rid of?

We have to believe in and live by His every word. Not only does God have a spiritual tape recorder for our every word but our every thought is recorded. Much prayer and meditation is needed to overcome all evil with good. It takes a lot of hard work on our part, but if we do all we possibly can do, God will help us with the rest.

Georgia

C. P.

God's Promises Like a Dream

God's promises sound like a dream, a dream too wonderful to ever possibly come true. However, God, and not man, is the maker of them—these wonderful dreams—so we know they are not just idle dreams, and that His purpose for this earth will most certainly become a reality.

How wonderfully encouraging God's promises are! Who would not wish to live forever in circumstances so wonderful, beyond compare, beyond our comprehension, in a new heaven and earth, when the old order has passed away and when God will have His dwelling among men, and they shall be His people and God Himself will be with them? There will be no night in that beautiful City, and the gates will never be shut by day. Nothing unclean shall enter, nor anyone false or foul, but only the righteous ones. All these promises can be ours if we, with gladness and joyfulness, serve God, and develop a character pleasing to Him. Is not this the reason why we are here?

God's ways are past finding out, nevertheless, in His great goodness, and by His wonderful grace, He teaches us the way to salvation. It is by His grace also, that we are disciplined to renounce godless ways and worldly desires, and to live a life of temperance, honesty, and goodness in this present age, that we may look forward to His great and precious promises and to "the happy fulfillment of our hopes when the splendor of our great God and Saviour Christ Jesus will appear."

South Wales

R. B.

Examples to Follow

I remember reading once in the *Message* that we cannot be successful unless our interest in God's work amounts to enthusiasm. And Paul wrote in Col. 3:23, "Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto men." Whatever we do, we are doing it for the Lord. And that which is done for the Lord will be richly rewarded.

We must continue to make practical application of the Word in our daily lives. Having a head full of knowledge is not enough. We have to put that knowledge into action. As Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus, we must be born of the water before we can be born of the Spirit. In saying we must be born of the water, Jesus was combining the first two steps in the way of salvation into one. This is understandable because throughout the Bible knowing and doing are inseparable. As James said, Faith without works is dead, as dead as a body without breath (James 2:20, 26).

The editorial, "God-owned Men" in a past issue of the *Message* is really good. We should ask ourselves everyday, Am I living a life that would cause people to refer to me as a man of God? Some of us tend to stumble more than others, but we should never let our stumblings discourage us. Rather we should learn from them and work harder to avoid repeating them.

The apostle Peter is often looked upon as one of the worst stumblers in the Bible, and with some of the

mistakes he made he could have been easily discouraged and given up. But Peter was one who kept on going toward the finish line, even when it seemed he was taking a step backward for every two steps forward. And in the soon-coming Kingdom of God, he will no doubt stand as one of the greatest.

Tennessee

S. K.

How Long?

Greetings from New Zealand. I am writing to thank you all for your kindness to me these many years in sending me the Megiddo Message. I enjoy its articles and find them very edifying.

How long have we to wait until Christ returns? How desperately our world needs His wisdom and love and infallible rule—for "he shall speak peace to the nations" (Zechariah 10).

I enjoyed the article about the honey bee. What a marvelous creature—and in spite of all the evidence, we have many people who believe in that wicked, God-denying theory of evolution.

Our world is slipping into a perilous state, family life disappearing, morals likewise, violence rife. New York City has 24,000 police. Unemployment worldwide now stands at 380 million. I think Christ may be here before 2000 A.D. but time will tell.

New Zealand

B. B.

We are growing
stronger when we
learn to pass yester-
day's breaking point
and not break.

New Every Morning

Every day is a fresh beginning.

*Every day is the world made new;
You who are weary of sorrow and sinning,
Here is a beautiful hope for you—
A hope for you and a hope for me.*

*All past things are passed and over;
The tasks are done and the tears are shed;
Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover;
Yesterday's wounds which smarted
and bled
Are healed with the healing which night
has shed.*

*Every day is a fresh beginning;
Listen, my soul, to the glad refrain
And in spite of old sorrow and older sinning
And puzzles forecasted and possible pain,
Take heart with the day and begin again.*

If our religious beliefs do not affect our way of life, we can be certain that we are not true Christians. To be followers of Christ, we have to set ourselves apart from the corrupt and evil practices of the world. This is the only way to life. The promise is: "For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:8).

The man who sits down to wait for a golden opportunity to come along never has a comfortable seat.

Recipe for a Happy Life

Take a large quantity of CHEERFULNESS and let it bubble without stopping. Put with it a brimming basinful of KINDNESS, then add a full measure of THOUGHT FOR OTHER PEOPLE. Mix into these a heaping tablespoonful of SYMPATHY. Flavor with essence of CHARITY. Stir well together and then carefully strain off any grains of SELFISHNESS. Let the whole be served with LOVE sauce and FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.

—Selected.



"When home is ruled according to God's Word, angels might be asked to stay a night with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element." —Selected

God is too wise to err, too good to be unkind.

There are lives that glow with friendly helpfulness. Their presence is a blessing and their acts are benedictions, like a touch of a cool, soft hand upon a fevered brow or a gourd of water to parched lips.

Let peace, O Lord! Thy peace, O God!
Upon our souls descend;
From midnight fears and perils Thou
Our trembling hearts defend;
Give us a respite from our toil,
Calm and subdue our woes;
Through the long day we suffer, Lord,
Oh, give our souls repose!

What does the Lord think of us...

- if we sing: *"I Love to Tell the Story,"* yet seldom mention it?
- if we sing: *"Cast thy Burdens on the Lord,"* and worry ourselves sick?
- if we sing: *"Throw Out the Lifeline,"* and then let go of it ourselves?
- if we sing: *"I'll Go Where You Want Me to Go,"* and go only where we want to go?
- if we sing: *"Abide with Me,"* then when trouble comes wish God would leave us alone?
- if we sing: *"Give Me the Bible,"* and fail to study it?
- if we sing: *"Have Thine Own Way Lord,"* and then insist on our own way?
- if we sing: *"Working, O Christ with Thee,"* and don't show up when there is work?
- if we sing: *"Jesus, Saviour, Pilot Me,"* then take the helm in our own hands?
- if we sing: *"Stand Up for Jesus,"* but withdraw at the first opportunity?
- if we sing: *"Onward Christian Soldiers,"* and keep looking behind us?
- if we sing: *"I Will Follow Thee, My Savior,"* and then turn and go our own way?
- if we sing: *"Put Your Shoulder to the Wheel,"* and then let someone else push the work?
- if we sing: *"Everything, Lord, for Thee,"* and keep as much as possible for ourselves?
- if we sing: *"Sweeter as the Years Go By,"* and go around with a long face?