



Megiddo Message

*Righteousness shall yield peace,
its fruit be quietness and
confidence for ever.*

— Isaiah 32:17, NEB

In Memoriam to the
Late Rev. Kenneth E. Flowerday
Pastor of the Megiddo Church, 1958-1985

Your course is over; but your long career
Sustained in triumph, closed without a fear;
And now the watching angels safely keep
The record of your life the while you sleep.

We miss you, Brother, but your radiant faith
Still keeps us growing stronger in God's grace,
Still stamps upon our minds a glowing seal
Of honor, courage, piety and zeal.

You did not wish to rest, beloved one,
But God knows what is best for ev'ry one;
All works for good; we would not rearrange
Nor once complain His greater will to change.

Not long shall kindred hearts have to regret
That for a single hour your sun has set;
It set so well; we've no cause to repine;
In just a little while, again 'twill shine.

And then, what matter if we sorrowed here;
What matter if a bitter trial endured,
If we can clasp your hand, and hear "Well done,"
And share your smile, and know we, too, have won!

— *Contributed.*

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 of all things, all men, and all life.

We believe

—in the Bible as containing the genuine revelation of God and His purposes for men, and as being our only source of divine knowledge today.

We believe

—in Christ the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was born of a Virgin, ministered among men, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to heaven, and who shall shortly return to be king of the whole earth.

We believe

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

We believe

—in all mankind as providing the nucleus from which a superior, God-honoring people shall be chosen to receive the blessings of immortal life.

We believe

—in ourselves as capable of fulfilling the precepts and principles given us in the Word of God, thus perfecting that high quality of character which God has promised to reward with life everlasting in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

We believe

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

Bible Quotations

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

NEB—New English Bible

NIV—New International Version

NAS—New American Standard

RSV—Revised Standard Version

TLB—The Living Bible

TEV—Today's English Version

JB—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition

Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English

Berkeley—The Modern Language New Testament

Weymouth—The New Testament in Modern Speech

Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation

RV—Revised Version

About Our Cover

Our cover photo was taken in Central Wales, Great Britain, in September, 1978, by Margaret Tremblay.

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The **MEGIDDO MESSAGE** is a religious magazine devoted to the cause of Christ, and published for the dissemination of Bible truth alone. Official organ of the Megiddo Church. L. T. Nichols, *Founder*; Newton H. Payne, *President and Editor*. Ruth E. Sisson, *Executive Editor*.

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

Seeking the Penitent

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 55:1-9

“WHEN thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek.” In these words the Psalmist relates the ready response of his own eager heart to the call of God. The first action was on the part of God: “Thou saidst.” God spoke, He gave command. And though His means of speaking is not disclosed, the command was, “Seek ye my face”; to which this ready heart replied, “Thy face, Lord, will I seek” (Ps. 27:8).

“Seeking” plays an important part in the divine scheme. It operates in two directions and both at the same time. Men seek God, and God seeks men. We can and must seek God if we would obtain His eternal blessings, and at the same time, God can and does seek members of the human family to serve Him. If we seek Him He seeks us.

The religious world lay great stress on God’s seeking after man and all but overlook the need for *us* to seek God. Actually, this is exactly the reverse of the Biblical emphasis, which repeatedly stresses our need to seek God—it is mentioned at least a dozen times to every single mention of God seeking us!

We Seek God

Let us first consider how we seek God.

Our seeking God is not an option but a command. It was the command to David: “Seek ye my face” (Ps. 27:8). Again and again we are told directly and plainly to seek God. “Seek ye me, and ye shall live,” admonished the prophet Amos (5:4). “Seek him that maketh the seven stars, and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning . . . The Lord is his name” (Amos 5:8). “Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live:

and so the Lord, the God of hosts, shall be with you” (Amos 5:14).

The young King Solomon was advised by his father David to seek the Lord. “If thou seek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forsake him, he will cast thee off forever” (I Chron. 28:9). Jesus also told us to seek. “Seek, and ye shall find.” And that seeking, if it is to be successful, is not by any half-hearted, weak-willed or occasional effort. As the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah years earlier: “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart” (Jer. 29:13).

Isaiah assumed that seeking the Lord was fundamental, and gave special directives concerning the time and manner in which it should be done. These are the words of the Lord as he echoed them: “Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: . . . Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts” (Isa. 51:1; 55:6-7). Yes, seeking the Lord means practical action: “let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts.”

The prophet Hosea told us to seek the Lord and to do it *now*. Why? “for it is time to seek the Lord, till he come and rain righteousness upon you” (Hos. 10:12). Yes, the time is *now*. If we delay, we will miss the “rain” of “righteousness.”

“Seeking” God’s face is one of the prerequisites to His hearing our prayers and forgiving our sins—we ignore it at our own peril. “If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways” (II Chron. 7:14)—each step is vital.

How We Seek God

Now what does this mean to us? Exactly what is this “seeking” we must do? How do *we* seek God?

Note: *Seeking the Penitent* is available as a complete church service on cassette. Price: \$3.00

We might compare our seeking God to a deep hunger, an earnest longing, a desire that moves us to action. *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* defines "seeking" as follows: "to search out (specifically in worship or prayer), to strive after, ask, beg, beseech, desire, enquire, request . . . to seek (lit. or fig.), to worship God, to be about, desire, endeavor, enquire."

What does this "seeking" mean to us? Certainly it includes seeking God's knowledge, though, God be thanked, we do not have to "seek" as did our founder to find the hidden treasure of truth. We who have been taught in the way of right have only to learn and apply what has already been sought out.

Still, we must seek God, He who is our Redeemer, our Protector, and in whom is all our hope of life to come. We cannot claim the merits of others' seeking. We ourselves must seek God. There must be in the heart of each of us a burning desire, a consuming eagerness, a longing that only God can satisfy. God wants us to be *gripped* by the hope He has set before us, to love it so much and to long for it so intensely that it will be constantly on our minds. So all-absorbing must it be that it will affect every aspect and attitude of our lives. Only then can we be said to truly seek God.

"He that will love life and see good days" is the criteria God has set. Never does He want us to take for granted the tremendous boon He has offered. We want *life*, we want *joy*, we want *happiness*, we want *fellowship* with God and His saints, and we want all these blessings *eternally*. And the only way to secure these is to *seek* God.

We might think of our seeking God as the initiative God expects of us. God does not force His way on us. He depends on us to use our inborn sense of values, our powers of mind and will, to *desire* something better than we can secure in this world. Even before this we must feel a dissatisfaction with things as they are. The limitations of this present life must arouse in us a deep longing for something more, something better, something lasting—which only God can give.

We Must Seek

Seeking God is one solid condition of obtaining the reward. And we must seek Him diligently. For "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6).

David expressed the longings of his own heart after God in these descriptive words: "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continu-

Do we seek God, or does God seek us?

ally say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me" (Ps. 42:1-4). And again, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary. . . . My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me" (Ps. 63:1-8). And again, "My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Ps. 84:2).

Do we feel the intensity in these words? Can we today say as much for *our* seeking after God? How much does God mean to *us* in *our* lives?

God Seeks Us

Now let us consider the other side of seeking: God seeking us. We know that God's whole plan for the glorifying and perfecting of our planet is in behalf of the living beings who will inhabit it, and to that end He is seeking men and women. The prophet Ezekiel (chapter 34) using the familiar figure of a shepherd and his sheep described the way God seeks: "As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day" (Ezek. 34:12). Come what may, His true sheep are never beyond the reach of His far-seeing eye.

Jesus pictured God seeking men in the Parable of the Householder who "went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. . . . And he went out about the third hour," again at the sixth, again at the ninth, again at the eleventh hour, seeking laborers to work in the vineyard (Matt. 20:1-8). God was seeking men.

In Proverbs 8, divine Wisdom, personified as a woman, is heard addressing humankind. "Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places, by the way in the places of the paths. She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors. Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of man" (Prov. 8:1-4).

Seeking the Lord means practical action: "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts."

Seeking "the Lost Sheep"

Among the most loved passages of the Bible is the parable of Jesus commonly known as the Parable of the Lost Sheep. It is popular not because of the truths Jesus used it to teach but because of a gross misinterpretation that has resulted. In this parable the religious world see ample support for their view of God's unconditional and unlimited love for the sinner, a love so deep that God sent Jesus to die on the cross to save the sinner from the penalty of death (we should immediately observe that the parable does not even mention this).

Let us look closely at the parable, recorded in Luke 15

to see what lessons it may have for us. We will study it from a standpoint somewhat different than we have taken before.

A man once compared his own learning experience to that of his child. He told how he set his very small son down in front of a large mirror. At first the child did not recognize the reflection as being himself because he was still too young. He quite obviously enjoyed seeing the small image that smiled at him from the glass wall, but there was no recognition. Then all of a sudden the expression on his little face changed as he began to recognize the similarity of the motions. He seemed to be saying, "Look! That's me!"

The same thing should happen to us when we read a parable of Jesus'. At first it is just an interesting passage of Scripture—until the reality of its meaning strikes us and suddenly *our* face, too, changes, and we are compelled to say, "There I am, actually. That's me." All of a sudden we realize that the parable is for *us*, that we identify with the hero of the parable.

This is what Jesus wants us to do with His parables. He wants us to see ourselves in them, and take the lessons to ourselves.

Let Us Pray . . .

O Lord our rock and our fortress, and our refuge in the day of affliction; our strength in weakness, and our stay in trouble: we come before Thee this morning with minds eager for fresh impressions from Thy Word and hearts longing for brighter visions of Thy great and precious promises.

We thank Thee for all the bountiful provisions for our lives, for life itself, for the vigor of health, the warmth of friendship, and for every gift of happiness and strength. We thank Thee, too, for the trials that come unbidden, that deepen us within and enrich us with kindness, patience, long-suffering and love; and that keep us looking forward to the glorious Day that shall know no pain or care.

We thank Thee for Thy Word, and the brilliant hope it sets before us. We thank Thee, too, for those among us who translate that Word into the flesh and blood of real life, who hold Thee in high honor in their lives and are an example and encouragement to us in the way of right. Help us to use all these gifts in ways that honor Thee.

Lord, we come seeking Thee and all that Thou dost offer us. Without Thee we are but creatures of a moment; with Thee we may belong to the ages. Grant us a keener sensitivity to any tendency to sin within us. Give us the wisdom to make the right choices, never sacrificing the greater for the lesser or giving first place to anything less than the very best.

Lord, we acknowledge with shame our waywardness and our forgetfulness. How many times we have gone astray and have had to seek Thy mercy and Thy forgiveness. How many times we have known the right and done the wrong. Grant us the honesty to see ourselves as we appear to Thee, the humility to acknowledge our wrongs, and the sincerity to repent and turn immediately, before our Day of salvation ends.

Lord, we pray not for lighter burdens but for greater strength; not for easier disciplines, but for grace to accept each experience of life cheerfully, as part of Thy discipline, a means to the great reward Thou hast in store for all who serve Thee faithfully.

We pray Thee to bless our homes, bless our church, bless our brotherhood and all those who belong to it who are absent from us today, who are making a definite effort to be part of Thy family. And hasten the day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the Kingdom of Thy Son forevermore. Amen.

At the time Jesus spoke the parable of the Lost Sheep, He had just given His parable of the Great Supper, in the house of the Pharisee. Then He had used two more powerful illustrations. There was the builder who commenced building without taking an accurate accounting of his resources; and the king, who went to war without evaluating the strength of his opposition. Yes, being a disciple of His was no spare-time commitment. It was a serious project requiring serious forethought and an all-out effort. Then followed those piercing words: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." In other words, if after all this you still want more, keep listening.

Continuing with the narrative, Luke says, "Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." The audience, it seems, included just about anyone who happened to be near, including those whom the religious elite of the day regarded as outside the pale of God's concern, even "publicans and sinners." The publicans were the hated tax collectors. It is likely that the "sinners" were simply Gentiles, or non-Jews, as this was a term commonly applied to them by the superior-feeling Jews.

The Pharisees and scribes were offended. Should they be obliged to listen to Jesus along with those who were less than nobodies? Their attitude of aloofness only occasioned another parable from Jesus to teach them another much needed lesson, that God respects not position but *disposition*; not pride but humility; not self-righteousness but penitence.

We all know the story, how the shepherd had one hundred sheep, lost one of them, then left the ninety-nine and went seeking the one that was lost. "And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:3-7).

The Call to Repent

In looking at the Parable of the Lost Sheep, what message may be here for us? Who are the lost, why are they lost, and what are the conditions by which God will reinstate them as His own?

Can we possibly miss the call to repent? Does it not echo through *all* of Jesus' teachings? The scribes and Pharisees were called to "repent," the publicans and sinners were called to "repent," His own disciples were to "repent." Those who observed the fate of the people on whom the tower of Siloam fell were called to "repent." The churches He later addressed in a series of

God does not force His way on us. He depends on us to use our inborn sense of values, to desire something better than we can secure in this world.

letters were called to "repent." And repentance is no simple statement of "I'm sorry," but an actual *turning from* sin.

Why was this necessary? Because God does not see as man sees. He judges not by accomplishments or prestige in this world but by the heart. He is seeking the humble, the penitent, the contrite, those who will acknowledge their sin and turn from it.

But someone may object: Are you forgetting that Jesus clearly says in the parable that the shepherd is seeking the *lost* sinner? We readily agree, but that "lost" sinner must be *penitent*. He has wandered away and has a desire to repent and return—or he would be where he wanted to be in the world, he would not feel "lost." Never did Jesus give us any basis for concluding that God prefers hardened sinners to obedient followers.

God's Love and Forgiveness

God knows our state. He knows we will stray into sin. He knows also that we can and must repent if we want life. And here is the lesson of the parable—not God's unconditional love for the sinner but for the penitent. He desires that the wicked "turn from his sin and do that which is lawful and right" (Ezek. 33:14). His appeal is always, "Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. 18:30-31). God wants us to realize the seriousness of sin, the dreadful consequences of straying from the narrow way to life, and to be anxious to repent and return.

And once we return, so great is His love and so abundant His forgiveness that the penitent one is completely reinstated. In fact, "none of his sins that he hath committed" shall even be "mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live" (Ezek. 33:16).

Can we be sure that God seeks those who are serving Him who sin and go astray? We know that He does. In

fact, Peter tells us that He is not willing that “any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (II Pet. 3:9). *Repentance* is God’s whole concern in working with men. “A heart broken with penitence, O God, never wilt Thou despise” (Ps. 51:17, Moffatt). The apostle Paul also recognized this attribute of God when he wrote, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4).

When we look for examples of those who went astray and were brought back, we immediately recall David, who sinned grievously. By the letter of the law, David should have died for his sin. What servant of God could go so far as to commit both adultery and murder? But did the Lord forsake David at this point because he had gone astray? Did He say, If David can do a thing like that, I’ll just forget him—there are better men than that! No, He sent a prophet to reprove the King; and David, humble and penitent, was the lost sheep brought back with rejoicing.

And who of us today, some three thousand years later, can read David’s heartrending prayer of penitence recorded in Psalm 51 and not be warmed and stirred as he pleads, “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin” (vs. 1-3).

Think, too, of the apostle Peter, one of Jesus’ own chosen ones, *denying* Jesus when his loyalty was needed most—and when he had even been *warned* in advance of what he would do. Was he not a lost sheep? But did Jesus condemn him to death because he strayed? Did He say, If Peter isn’t going to be any more dependable than that, I don’t need him!? No, Jesus turned and “looked” on Peter, and Peter went out, ashamed, humiliated, penitent. And only a short time later—after the resurrection—we hear Jesus sending a special message to His beloved Peter.

Zaccheus was another of the “lost sheep” who are the object of Jesus’ parable. What did this tax collector do to demonstrate the depth of his repentance? “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold” (Luke 19:8). Jesus’ response to Zaccheus is almost identical to that found in the parable of the Lost Sheep (Matt. 18:11): “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10)—that which was lost and is truly penitent, like Zaccheus.

A Lesson in Humility

Matthew’s account of the parable of the Lost Sheep is slightly different from Luke’s, though the point is the same. The setting of Matthew’s account is also an occasion teaching a lesson in humility, but the pupils are His own disciples, not the Pharisees. We are not sure that Matthew and Luke are recording the same incident or the same telling of the story, but the lesson is the same in both. Matthew 18:1 reads: “At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

We marvel at the self-seeking in these men who were so close to Jesus. Couldn’t they even *sense* what Jesus was teaching them by precept and example every day? But let us not judge too harshly—until we have looked closely *within*, and seen the pride that lurks in *our* hearts.

To teach them a lesson in humility, Matthew tells us that Jesus first used the illustration of a child, trusting and humble in mind. “Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.” And then He went one step further, directly applying the title of “child” to His ideal of the humble, believing, obedient disciple each of them should be, and said, “And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him

**No one ever *finds* life worth living—one always
has to *make* it worth living.**

that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matt. 18:1-6).

Then in verse 11 follows the same parable recorded in Luke 15. "For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish" (vs. 11-14).

Immediately after this Jesus points out the proper means of chastening or correcting an erring brother, with the powerful conclusion: "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (v. 18). What could be more contrary to the popular idea of God seeking vile and wretched sinners, than this high and exalted standard which compares standards among true followers on earth with standards in heaven!

Then follows another lesson in humility and forgiveness as Peter asks, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" In Peter's limited view, seven times seemed more than adequate; but Jesus was teaching a far-reaching lesson as He gave this astounding answer that left Peter almost breathless: "I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven" (vs. 21-22).

Let us now return to Luke 15, where the same point is once again clearly impressed—that the sheep that was lost and found represents the erring one who is contrite, humble, penitent. In fact, his *repentance* is the direct cause of joy in heaven. The shepherd is not rejoicing that the sheep went astray, or that the sheep is an avowed sinner, but that he repented and is willing to return.

Oh, that we could follow the divine Example and find our joy in turning from sin and doing right; in true, heartfelt, godly repentance!

The Parable of the Lost Coin

The next parable in the chapter is also about something that was lost—a coin. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice

God wants us to realize the seriousness of sin and the dreadful consequences of straying, and to be anxious to repent and return.

with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost" (Luke 15:8-9).

What did the woman do who lost it? She searched diligently, as for a thing of value. Jesus' comment on this parable is almost identical to His comment on the lost sheep: "Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." Again, his repentance—not the fact that he is a sinner—is the all-important point.

The Parable of the Lost Son

The third parable in the chapter also discusses something lost: a son, the prodigal. And again, the parable focuses upon repentance. The prodigal, contrary to the wishes of his father, goes out and wastes all his substance, then comes to himself, sees his mistake, repents and returns.

Who are the lost in the above? They are people like you and like me, who know God and His plan of salvation, yet who go their own way and walk contrary to what they know, who disobey, but who repent and return to God.

Can you and I not be sincerely grateful for this merciful provision of our merciful God? Have we not time and again needed His mercy when we went our own willful way? Are we not "lost" so far as God is concerned every time we allow our own evil ways to lead us? Are we not "lost" when we stubbornly refuse to obey? or when we know the right and prefer our own "comfortable" way, when we think our own thoughts and pursue our own course of action contrary to the advice of those who are over us in the Lord?

Oh, how easily we may be lost! And how dreadful if we continue in a "lost" condition, unrepentant and unaware of our plight!

Why "Lost"?

Let us also look closely at the reasons why the "lost things" were lost in Jesus' parables and see if there is not another lesson for our benefit.

Why did the "lost sheep" get lost in the analogy of

Jesus' parable? It may have been the result of its own pettiness. It did not keep its eye on the shepherd, it did not listen to the shepherd's directions and follow. Or perhaps it became preoccupied with some petty interest of the present, something near at hand—a bit of grass, a flower, a rock, or a tree. Translated into the temptations that face us today it may be some petty gratification, a bit of selfishness, a touch of forbidden self-satisfaction, or a boost of pride. Whatever the reason, the sheep goes astray. But God in His love and mercy gives a second chance. This is the shepherd seeking the lost. He warns, He reproves, He chastens, He instructs, He even shows us the way back to the fold and offers to help us return. But only as we ourselves *repent* can we be brought back.

If we may draw a lesson from the Parable of the Lost Coin, we observe that coins are different from sheep. The coin had no power to lose itself. It was not lost through its own wanderings. *Someone lost the coin.* Here is a lesson on the power of example. How seriously a wrong example can affect those around us. How easily others may be lost, through our carelessness. How easily others may go astray and all because of *our* wrong attitude or word. Oh, let us take heed. How easily another coin may be lost because we were not what we *could* or *should* have been. Yes, we are accountable, even for our example.

The lost son was lost by his own foolishness. He refused to listen to advice, bent only on satisfying all his "wants." But before long he began to realize how little the world had that was in any sense of

the word "satisfying" as he began to feel the pinch of real want, of longings for higher satisfactions, and so he came to himself and returned home, humble and penitent.

Is there not in each a lesson for us on the danger of going astray and the absolute need to be open and honest with ourselves, to be anxious to see our own faults, acknowledge when we have done wrong, and go to work earnestly to be reinstated as one who is again "found"? God does not expect to find those who never stray, who never disobey, who follow the shepherd perfectly from day one without a slip; but He does seek those who will return, repent and humbly listen to Him. In the words of the Psalmist, who spoke from the depths of his own bitter—yet blessed—experience, "God's sacrifice is a soul with its evil crushed; a heart broken with penitence, O God, never wilt Thou despise."

Oh, let us hasten to recognize every trace of sin that blots our record and separates us from God that we may repent and return while still there is time, lest the day of the Lord come upon us unawares.

Dear Father, we thank Thee for the knowledge we have of Thy fair dealing. We are grateful to know that Thou seekest us when we go astray, rather than let us go our own willful way to destruction without any warning of our danger.

And knowing that Thou dost seek us, may we be impelled to seek Thee, that Thou may someday accept us for a place in Thy Kingdom. Amen.

The Reason Why

YEARS after the last horse had disappeared from the streets of Marion, Indiana, hitching posts still remained around the courthouse square. Attempts to have them removed always failed because everyone believed that if they were taken out, the land on which they stood would revert to the heirs of those who had donated it to the county back in the early 1800's.

Almost everyone in town believed that the donors had made two stipulations when the land was given:

that no one should ever be sentenced to capital punishment in that courthouse, and that the hitching posts were not to be removed—ever. If either of these provisions was violated, the heirs could reclaim the land.

During a cleanup of the old building, stacks of documents were hauled out to be burned. Before they were destroyed, however, someone noticed among them the original deed to the courthouse square. Sensing its importance, he took it to a local newspaper editor, who published the contents. To almost everyone's sur-

prise, there was not a word about either capital punishment or hitching posts.

A misleading tradition had influenced the affairs of a city for well over a hundred years.

How much of what is popularly believed is founded on hearsay? This is why the word of the apostle Paul must stand: "Prove all things, hold fast that which is good."

The only place where "success" comes before "work" is in the dictionary.

That Carnal Mind

NO CHRISTIAN wants to be called "carnal" or "carnally minded," yet that is what the Bible calls us in our natural state, before we are remade according to God's standards. As the apostle Paul wrote to his immature brethren in Corinth, "I . . . could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ." The newer versions use equally unflattering words, such as "natural," "fleshly," "unspiritual," "sensual," "unregenerate," "worldly."

Carnality plagues humankind, professing Christians not excepted. Carnality is the ambitions of the natural man unrestrained, undisciplined, and undirected by the law of God.

Carnality is the desire to blame our weaknesses—including our carnal mind—on causes beyond our control. Even this desire is sure evidence that the carnal mind is still with us.

We are all carnal by nature, and there is no easy way to change. When we answer the call to "come, take up thy cross, and follow Me," we get our first glimpse of the higher values of the spiritual. We realize that the way of Christ is better, it has something to offer that is higher, nobler, happier.

But the transformation from a man of the flesh to a man of the spirit is a process involving time and a large measure of dedication. And it is a process not without its complications. It is a struggle. The apostle Paul described it in these meaningful words: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

Much as we recognize and acknowledge these facts, change is still problematic. It is so *unnatural*. If only we could lay off our carnal nature, our carnal desires, our carnal attitudes, as easily as we would lay off an old coat! If only we could, in one mighty gesture, be done with all that is carnal, once and for all!

But it is not so easily accomplished; for before the carnal nature can die, the new nature must grow; and growth takes time. And even when we think we have

the carnal nature under control, it will still show itself again and again.

Four-year old Jennie found a turtle in the back yard. Her older brother quickly picked up the turtle and ran to the shallow pond behind the barn, where he tossed the turtle into the water. As Jennie watched the turtle sink to the bottom of the pond, its head and feet withdrawn under the rim of its shell, she began to cry, "The turtle's drowned!" "Don't worry," explained her older brother. "He's not drowned. He'll come up again."

Our carnal nature is like the turtle. When we exert a moderate amount of effort to put it down, it withdraws inside a shell of respectability, and like the turtle pretends to be drowned. But give it a little time, and up it comes. The writer of the book of James said it this way: "What about the feuds and struggles that exist among you—where do you suppose they come from? Can't you see that they arise from conflicting passions within yourselves?" (James 4:1, Phillips). Feuds and struggles are evidence of the carnal mind.

Carnality is a dangerous and deadly thing, bitterly destructive to the spiritual life. In fact, it leads to spiritual death. "For to be carnally minded is death" (Rom. 8:6). It is a desire, secret or expressed, for that which God forbids. It is bent away from God and toward sin.

Jesus identified the source of this troublemaker when He said, "From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness" (Mark 7:21-23). All come from within us.

And the carnal mind is persistent. The apostle Paul rebuked his brethren for being "yet carnal" when he felt they should have advanced beyond the carnal to the spiritual.

How can we tell whether we are "yet carnal"? It is the responsibility of each of us to examine ourselves: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves" (II Cor. 13:5).

(Continued on page 21)

WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

AN INDIVIDUAL who travels widely is frequently asked this question: where do you live?—meaning, where is the traveler's residence, the place he calls home, the name of his town, borough or city.

But residence is not all a matter of geographical location. In another sense, the dominating interests of our lives determine where we live.

Some people live in a world of pleasure. They measure time from one thrill to the next. Others live in a world of business, where their one ambition is to increase their treasures. Nothing else matters. Some live in a world of medicine, medical research, health care, and social concerns. Others live in a world of arts and science, where they work constantly to increase their level of skill or knowledge.

Some people live with confidence and joy; others with gloom and hate. Some live in a godless world; others devote their whole mind and soul to God.

When John the Baptist saw the majestic figure of Jesus approaching and gave his testimony concerning Him, two of his disciples who heard it followed Jesus and enquired: "Rabbi . . . where dwellest thou?" He replied, "Come and see." They went, "and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour" (John 1:38-39). We do not know what they saw or talked about, but so impressed were these men with their visit that the following day one of the men whose name was Andrew, went and called his brother Simon, and said, "We have found the Messiah." In that short time they had become convinced of the verity of Jesus and His mission. They had seen where He lived.

Jesus' world was one of duty and devotion to the Father. His purpose in life was to be about His Father's business, and He was about it. He was among His disciples "as one that served." He healed the afflicted, preached the gospel of the Kingdom to the multitudes, denounced the proud and the hypocritical, and invited the heavy-burdened to come to Him. He sought not His own purpose in life but expressed His purpose in these words: "I do always the things that please My Father." As He went about doing good, He was radiant with the spirit of kindness. Being constantly in the company of the Father, He could truthfully say in the hour of trial, "I am not alone, the Father is with me." That is where He lived.

Now where do you live?

The world has its many vices. We need not mention them; suffice it to say that we have been called to live above them, on a higher level. Ours is to be a life consecrated to the Mas-

ter's service, for we can neither please God nor inspire others for our cause if we show but feeble interest ourselves.

We have been called to the highest life of which mortals are capable, a life totally devoted to God. Such a one experiences his own inner delights even now. The life that has struggled victoriously with the sinfulness of its nature enjoys an inner peace and serenity that even the fiercest strife cannot disturb. Think of the change in the one who has banished hatred and is ruled by love; who has conquered angry and bitter feelings and learned instead to be patient, compassionate, and forgiving; who has conquered resentment and retaliation and learned instead to overlook insult and injury; who has restrained the selfish motives and become generous and thoughtful of others! Such a change of residence is definitely for the better.

But in spite of all the advantages the changed life enjoys, in spite of the delights experienced by those striving earnestly toward the Christ-like state, the majority choose the line of least resistance and remain in the valleys of sin.

God is not asking the impossible of us. The way to the top is difficult, certainly; but it is not beyond us. And think of the reward that awaits the successful! Because we fail to reach the summit at our first bound is no reason for despondency. The greatest danger lies in being equipped for the higher yet too easily satisfied with the lower. We are built to soar, yet have been content to crawl in the dust. Like the sea gulls, made for the wide ocean and open sky, spending their days in a backyard mud puddle; so we, who are called to the heights of perfection and the noble service of God, have spent weary days in the mud and muck of our own small, selfish satisfactions. Unhappy? Yes, for there is no power

on earth that can make the man happy whose mind is divided between two worlds; who is conscious of wrong within and fails to correct it.

Jesus lived with a sense of a high calling and a divine mission. He who lives in Jesus' world will share His calling, far above the swamp, the petty aims and unworthy purposes of this world. To live in Jesus' world is to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." It is to be able to say with Him, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me," whatever that will may include.

We live in a world of contempt when we know what the Lord requires of us, and fail to do it; when we comprehend the grandeur of the reward He offers, and do not strive for it with all that is in us. Still worse is it when we declare our intention to serve God and then fail to live what we profess.

We need not live in a world of gross iniquity to be undesirable. We may be respectable enough outwardly, and yet inwardly be poor, mean, petty and purposeless. When we are faced with duties that call for self-sacrifice; duties that require humility, determination, or will-power; if we fail to meet the challenge, all we can do is remain in our small, unhappy world.

The Scriptures tell us where we should live, and where safety is found. The Psalmist prayed for light that he might be led to God's *holy*

hill. He put his trust in God and declared that he would make his refuge in the *shadow of His wings*. The Wise Man wrote that the righteous run into the *strong tower*. And the prophet Isaiah invited all to hide in their *chambers* and shut the door. All these are but synonymous terms for living a dedicated, honest and upright life before God.

As Christians our life should be as a city on the hill that cannot be hid. We must radiate such peace and joy that those who see us, even if they are not attracted to our faith, will at least have no evil to say of us truthfully. Those who live the Christ-life in this age have the promise that they shall live with Christ in His glory.

Let us look up and see something higher and brighter than earthworms and darkness. Let us look above the earthly, sensual, and devilish to the heights of holiness. Why suffocate in a valley of sin when by climbing we can enjoy the pure, fresh air of the mountaintop?

Look up. There is something better, higher, and brighter than you have reached. Do not be content with the level you have attained. Climb higher.

Disappointments in life may be many, but God will never allow the sincere seeker of the eternal to be disappointed.

Where do you live? The choice is yours. You can live just as high or as low as you choose—according to the price you are willing to pay in self-sacrifice and self-control. MM

**Only by means of intense concentration
can faith be preserved.**

Disciples in Clay

9 WONDER how you would like to be on an investigating committee? There are some people in Washington who enjoy that sort of thing.

Suppose you had been on such a committee nineteen hundred years ago, to inquire into the qualifications of those who sought to become disciples of Jesus. Suppose you had been one of a group with authority to examine the credentials of the men who presented themselves as candidates for discipleship. How would you have voted on them?

Let us imagine we were there on an examining board.

Here comes the first candidate.

He has just come up from the beach. His fishing boat, drawn up on the pebbled shore has worn seats, patched sails, and the high rudder that is characteristic of Galilean fishing craft.

As you can judge from appearance, he is just about thirty years old. His hands are rough and calloused. His fingers are strong. He smells of fish. He is an uncouth person, blustering, blundering, clumsy, impulsive, he does not strike us as being material for the ministry.

If I am any judge of appearances, this man will be stubborn, set in his

ways. He is a rough man, and he has lived a rough life. His vocabulary is typical of the common people of the town. When provoked, he might even burst into profanity. Can you imagine this big fisherman as a disciple of Jesus? He would not be your choice, would he? No, we'd better send Simon back to his nets.

THE NEXT candidates are brothers; they come together. They, too, like Simon Peter, are fishermen. They come from the same village, from the same colony of rough, strong men who work with their hands for a living.

But you are not going to hold that against them, are you? Let no

*Would you have chosen
the men Jesus chose to
be His disciples?*

social snobbishness sway our judgment. Remember the Lord Himself was a carpenter. There is no shame in manual labor, and would it not be to a preacher's advantage to know what it is to do manual labor? Would it not be excellent preparation for the ministry?

They too have strong hands and nimble fingers. They make quite a team, these brothers. They operate a

boat in partnership, and they are very successful. In fact, it is a mystery to their competitors how they always manage to find the fish, always catch more than the other boats and somehow manage to get better prices for their catch. This, naturally, does not increase their popularity among the fishermen.

But it is chiefly their attitude that irritates the others. They are not modest men. They are sold on themselves, self-confident, self-assured, always ready to talk about what they have done. Yes, quite honestly they are boastful. Through cupped hands they sometimes like to shout taunts to the other fishermen hauling on their nets. They have earned for themselves the nickname "the sons of thunder" because they are always rumbling about something.

They are ambitious men, if the stories are true, that are whispered about them, they have been brought up to believe that if you want anything in life—grab it. Their mother had taught them that to get on in the world you have to push.

If you take these men on as disciples, you will find that sooner or later you will have to give them some pre-eminence, or they won't be able to stay with you. They want to be in place number one. That is their goal in whatever they attempt. They have the instinctive feeling

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that they were made to be "up front." If they become disciples of Jesus, they will naturally want to be His first lieutenants, one on His right hand and the other on His left. If we take time to hear all the testimony from people who know them, our verdict is going to be unanimous that James and John simply will not do.

SO, LET us pass on to the next candidate.

There is a wild gleam in his eyes—no wonder. He is a leader of the Underground. He seems to be of the fanatical type, impatient and nervous. See—he cannot keep his hands still—his fingers clench and unclench. They itch to reach up and haul down the hated pennants of Rome that hang in desecration from the walls of old Jerusalem. His blood fairly boils when he is forced, by some clanking legionnaire, to make way on the pavement and step into the gutter. He dreams of the day when the Kingdom shall be restored to Israel, when the Messiah comes to restore the Kingdom. It is his meat and drink. His eyes dance at the thought of the Messiah, at the head of a liberating army, driving the hated Romans into the sea. Yes, from the hill country they would come, and from the cellars of the Holy City, they would rise up to bring back the glories of David and of Solomon. He wants, more than life itself, to be a part of that glorious campaign. But this young man might be too dangerous. He is highly inflammable material. He is likely to become violent, and his impatience will burn him up. He is a risk—a very great risk. We could not take a chance on Judas. We dare not.

WE ARE not doing very well in selecting disciples, are we? But think of the material we

have to choose from!

Well, what about this fellow? He too is a fisherman. Let's not hold that against him. If you are not a tradesman, or a farmer cultivating a bit of land, dressing some fruit trees or tending grapes, if you have no sheep or goats, there isn't much else for you to do but fish. For people have to eat, and fish is the best money crop in this part of the country.

This man might have it in him to be a disciple. He is not impulsive by any means. He will not be swept off his feet. He is very cautious, slow to convince. He must have been born in some little Palestinean "Missouri." You have to show him. He demands proof for everything. He'll take nothing on faith. Now this twist of mind and character will always slow up the work of any group to which he might belong. He will be like the rusty little tramp steamer in the convoy. He'll slow down the others to his own wheezy seven or eight knots. In fact, he has only two speeds, dead slow and stop. Can you imagine him as a member of the apostolic band? "Caution" is his signal. He is always advocating delay. "This is not the time," will be his theme song. "Let's wait and see", will be his advice. But the Kingdom is a venture of faith, not of doubt. It is a matter of perception—not of proof. How could Thomas possibly fit into this picture?

NOW IF we were Jews living at the time the disciples were originally chosen, we would boo or hiss at this next candidate who enters, for he is a Quisling. He has sold out to the army of occupation and is collecting taxes for the Roman government. Think of how the collaborators were regarded in Norway and France, and you have some idea of the feeling that runs against this man. Tax collectors are

seldom the most popular men in any community, and this fellow is no exception. He has devised his own particular racket and it is making him many enemies and making him rich as well. But that's not all. He has a mind like an adding machine. He has been counting money all his life. Money and evidence of wealth alone impress him. That's bad enough, but there's worse to come. He is a genealogist. He is one of those men whose passion is

It is modern heresy to think that human nature cannot be changed.

family trees. He will bore you with long recitals of the best families—where they came from, whom they married, how many children they had, and whom they married and so on—and on.

Can you imagine this man as a friend of Jesus, a statistician walking with the Carpenter from Nazareth, a man who had a god of money? No, Levi, or Matthew, if you like, must be rejected.

WHAT about this fellow Andrew—does anyone know about him?

I have heard it said that he's a nobody. He has no personality of his own, he is simply Peter's brother. I know of no good reason why he should be chosen.

There are others still waiting—Bartholomew, Thaddeus, Philip and another James, and a man called Simon from Canaan. They are all of the same rough and ready stock, common country folk, but all interested in becoming disciples, but I

God hasn't given up on you. He can still do great things for you, in you and through you.

know of no particular reason why they should be. We would not vote for any of them.

Yet, these are the very men whom Jesus chose to be His disciples.

9 feel sure you would not argue with me if I suggested that these men had more influence on the course of human history than any other dozen men who ever lived.

Each man was different. As someone has commented "Philip looks before he leaps; Peter leaps before he looks. Thomas was a dogged unbeliever until the last minute. Judas sought regeneration through revolution, instead of revolution through regeneration. James and John wanted to get rid of people who differed with them, instead of getting

rid of the differences so that they could get the people."

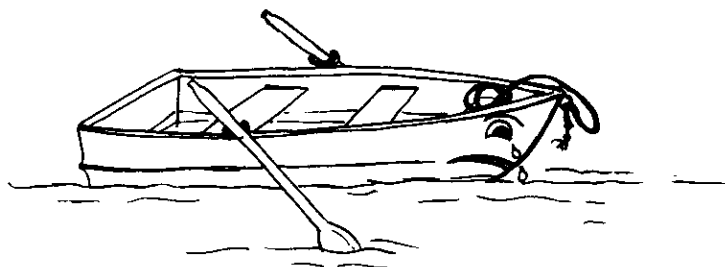
Had you and I been members of any investigating committee we would have rejected everyone of them. Yet Jesus chose them. Why?

Mark tells us in his Gospel that Jesus chose them "in order that they might be with Him" and that He might send them forth to preach and to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils."

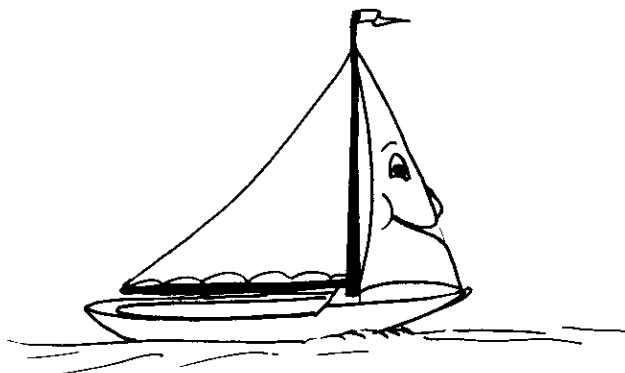
Well, they were with Him for three years, in intimacy of fellowship.
(Continued on page 20)

How Do You Go?

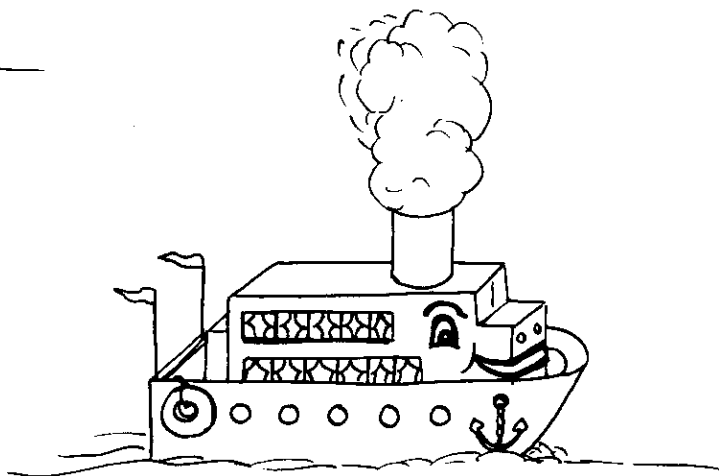
Three types of people respond to the call to service



Some are like **rowboats**—have to be pushed.



Some are like **sailboats**, always going with the wind.



Some are like **steamboats**—they make up their minds where they ought to go and go there, regardless of wind or weather.

Inhabitants on Other Worlds?

WE HAVE received this question from a subscriber:

"You say that there are other inhabited glorified worlds out there. . . . This is a new thought to me. Can you please explain?"

We cannot say that we are able to explain; the wonders of creation totally defy explanation. However, the brief insights which have been given us by our great Creator capture our imagination and lead us to believe that there is more—much more—to His creation than is visible to us.

Are there inhabitants beyond our earth? On the basis of what we read in the Scriptures, we answer yes, definitely yes. This earth is only a small part of a vast creative process stretching from eternity past to eternity future.

Why do we say this? Let us look at a few of the Scriptures which support this thought.

First, the Bible speaks distinctly of the heavens and the earth; the heavens as belonging to God; the earth, to men. "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's: but the earth he hath given to the children of men" (Ps. 115:16). The earth is for the children of men, the heavens belong to the Lord and those who share His nature.

God dwells in heaven. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool" (Isa. 66:1). We also read of the Father's throne being "in the

heavens" (see Ps. 103:19; 11:4; Matt. 5:34-35).

When Christ was taken from the earth into heaven (Acts 1:11), we are told also that He was taken to His Father's throne, indicating that the Father's throne is in heaven. The apostle Paul spoke several times of Jesus' being at His Father's throne or in heaven. He spoke of Jesus, "who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom. 8:34). Christ, he said, is set "at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion" (Eph. 1:20-21). Jesus, by His own testimony in His post-ascension message, is seated with His Father in His throne (Rev. 3:21). The apostle Peter recognized on the day of Pentecost that Jesus was already "by the right hand of God exalted" (Acts 2:33).

Second, the Bible contains some three hundred direct references to the angels, real living inhabitants of some part of God's vast creation—and where is their home, if not in heaven? We know that they are not living on the earth.

Note these statements about the angels:

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them" (Ps. 68:17).

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him" (Dan. 7:10). Or as it is translated in the Moffatt Bible, "Millions

of angels were at his service."

"Ye are come . . . unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels" (Heb. 12:22). Or as rendered in other versions of the Bible, "to countless hosts of angels," "gathered thousands upon thousands," "myriads," "countless multitudes of angels."

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14). Or as translated in the American Bible, "Are not the angels all spirits in service, whom he sends on his errands for the good of those who are destined to possess salvation?"

If there are no inhabited regions except our little earth, where live all these myriads of angels? Where live the angels that Elisha's servant saw "filling" the mountain, or the "multitude of the heavenly hosts" who announced Jesus' birth?

The apostle Paul spoke of a whole family of beings inhabiting both heaven and earth. These are his words: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named" (Eph. 3:14-15). God is the "Father" of living family members bearing His name and dwelling both in heaven and on earth.

The apostle Paul also speaks of Christ receiving worship from beings "in heaven" (Phil. 2:9-10), indicating that there are inhabitants

other than on earth.

It was said of Gabriel that he was caused to "fly swiftly" when he came to visit Daniel—he was not already on the earth (Daniel 9). several hundred years later the same angel came to visit Mary to inform her that she would bear a son. We read: "And the angel . . . said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings" (Luke 1:19). The angel Gabriel had come from the "presence of God"—from the real abode of real beings where dwells the great Creator Himself and the members of His glorified family.

It would seem difficult to imagine that a great Creator who had always existed would not have created a single habitable world until He made this little earth. Isaiah the prophet, speaking of God as the Creator of these many worlds, said: "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number" (Isa. 40:26).

Until the discoveries of this century our galaxy was thought to be the entire universe. Now the astronomers tell us that our galaxy is only one among billions of galaxies.

The Psalmist speaks of the mercy of the Lord as "from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; to such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them" (Psa. 103:17-18). Shall we think that a God who has mercy from everlasting to everlasting has not had *someone* on whom to bestow that mercy "from everlasting"?

Another indication of heavenly inhabitants is found in the frequent reference in Scripture to "the Lord God of hosts" (see II Sam. 6:2; 7:26; Psa. 24:10; 46:7; 48:8; Isa. 6:3; 8:13; 47:4; 51:15, etc.). Who

are these "hosts" of which He is Lord God if not heavenly beings, angels, inhabitants of other worlds?

Nehemiah 9:6 speaks of the heavens "with all their host." We read: "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, . . . and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." "The host of heaven"—heaven is distinct from the earth, and it has a "host" of inhabitants. This would strongly indicate inhabited worlds besides our earth.

The prophet Jeremiah extols God as "the Great, the Mighty God, the Lord of hosts" (Jer. 32:17-18) when speaking of His vast creation.

The Lord's Prayer tells us there are living beings beyond our earth, for how can God's will be done in heaven if there is no one in heaven to do that will? This is why Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). It is currently being done by the inhabitants "in heaven," and someday it will be done "in earth"—by the inhabitants of earth—in the same manner. Is it not a glorious promise?

The book of Revelation gives us some bright glimpses of the inhabitants of the new world on earth, and among these are many references to the angels and the inhabitants of other worlds. For example, Rev. 5:11, "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round

about the throne . . . and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." The angels round about the throne are not residents of the earth. They live elsewhere in God's vast universe, and simply come to earth to take part in the coronation ceremonies.

It would seem reasonable to believe, in view of God's "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11), that other worlds similar to our own are now in a similar stage of development. Were we to cut off the possibility of life elsewhere in the universe, i.e., other than on earth, we would be cutting short the whole plan of God and the Bible—which is that mortal beings like ourselves, if worthy, can *become* angels just as the inhabitants of other worlds have done. Jesus promised that those who would be worthy to obtain "that world and the resurrection from the dead" will be made "equal unto the angels, . . . neither can they die any more" (Luke 20:35-36). Worthy mortals will be made "equal unto the angels." And if this is to be done on earth, it has been done and is being done elsewhere as well. All of God's work is according to His "eternal purpose" (Eph. 3:11)—which is far beyond our ability to fathom.

Yes, in the words of the Psalmist, "When I consider thy heavens" (Ps. 8:3), even the "heaven of heavens with all their host" (Neh. 9:6)—certainly there *is* life beyond our little sphere. There *is* life elsewhere in the universe, and one Almighty God sustains it.

MM

**It is easy to exaggerate the importance
of the unimportant and to underestimate the
importance of the important.**

Every Day, Every Day

Peace An Imported Product

"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:7).

Paul not only fused grace and peace, but he also tied God and peace in an inseparable relationship. He consistently referred to the Heavenly Father as the "God of peace." This beautiful combination is evident throughout his epistles: "The God of peace be with you" (Rom. 15:33); "The God of peace shall bruise Satan" (Rom. 16:20); "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly" (I Thess. 5:23); "The Lord of peace himself give you peace" (II Thess. 3:16).

Because peace comes from God, it is an imported product. Peace has its source only from above, from the God of peace. There is nothing at the earth level that will produce it. Man can put together tranquilizers, sedatives, and rest inducers, but none of these give permanent relief. When their effects wear off, the same old symptoms reappear.

The only peace importer and imparter is our God of peace. The only way to have this peace is by keeping God's law.

The Meaning of Long-suffering

"The fruit of the Spirit is . . . longsuffering" (Gal. 5:22).

Long-suffering is love under pressure, love that suffers long without complaint. It is the capacity to hold up regardless of adversities. It is free from impulsive outbursts and unpredictableness. It is persistent in looking and hoping for the best. Long-suffering is almost interchangeable with patience and forbearance. Long-suffering is the ability to hold on, and hold in when emergencies hit with full fury. Patience is the ability to hold out when one would be justified in giving up.

Before we develop the virtue of long-suffering, the

marks of our immaturity, impurity, and immorality are in the form of four "imps": (1) *impulsiveness*—outbursts of anger; (2) *implacableness*—merciless striking back to even accounts; (3) *improvising*—settling for an inferior substitute; (4) *impatience*—resorting to rash, rude, and radical action.

These four "imps" cause more tangles than it is possible to unravel. They are like the proverbial little foxes that spoil the vines. God offers an important solution for these rebels within our own households. That solution is seen in bearing the fruits of the spirit—love, joy, peace, patience, long-suffering.

May we continually grow in the mastery of patience in the home, in the office, and wherever we go.

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Disciples in Clay

(Continued from page 16)

They walked with Him, they lived with Him. They heard His incomparable parables. They listened to every sermon He ever preached. They saw with their own eyes, each one of His wonderful miracles. They saw the blind receive their sight, the lame throw away their crutches. They saw withered limbs become straight and strong. They even saw the dead raised to life.

All these things they saw and heard. Yet, these things did not change these men. For during the last week of Jesus' earthly ministry, they were quarreling among themselves. James and John wanted the chief places in the cabinet of the Kingdom. They were jealous of each other.

They were not very brave. When Jesus was arrested they all ran away. After He died, they scattered. They met behind closed doors. No, they were not very brave. They did not have much faith. Thomas refused to believe that the Master had risen from the dead until he had proof. He even stipulated what that proof had to be. Of course these three years did something to them and in them. The fuel had been laid on the fire, but it was not lit. The seed had been sown, but it had not germinated. All the possibilities of change in them had been created, but the changes had not yet happened.

What did change them? Not the crucifixion but the Resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Not until these men had seen Jesus crucified and risen again and ascended into heaven, not until they were filled with the Holy Spirit did cowardice give place to courage, unbelief become a flaming faith and conviction that nothing on earth could shake. Not until then was jealousy swallowed up in brotherly

love, self-interest was killed and became a ministry to others, fear was banished, and they were afraid of no man, no threat, no danger.

THIS is a day of little faith—of few convictions—a day when men, seem to have no great cause and no great passions. So in frustration, in disappointment they are inclined to say "You can't change human nature."

It is modern heresy to think that human nature cannot be changed.

But nothing could be further from the truth. Human nature can and *must* be changed. God doesn't want us—any of us—just as we naturally are. We must change, we must correct the wrong situations that make our lives uneasy and our hearts sore, if we are ever to fit ourselves for eternal salvation.

All that is needed is to let go of your own desires, along with a willingness to confess your stubborn selfishness and sinful ways and to face up to yourself as you are. When you acknowledge your sins and begin to see yourself as God sees you, and ask God's forgiveness, you are on the way to becoming a new person. When you yourself have begun to be a new person, then there is hope for your problem, whatever it is—hope for a solution to those strained relations in your life, hope for better understand-

ing at home, hope for a new spirit of happiness you had thought was gone forever, hope for a new meaning to your life and a solid reason for a living hope. . . . hope. . . . hope. Don't give up. There's still hope.

God hasn't given up on you. He can still do great things for you, in you and through you. God is ready and waiting and able. What about you, and me? We are, after all, like lumps of clay. There are brittle pieces, hard pieces. We have little shape or beauty. But we need not despair. Remember, there is a Potter, and there is His wheel. We are the clay.

The old song has it right: "Have Thine own way, Lord, Have Thine own way. Thou art the Potter, I am the clay; Mould me and make me, after Thy will, While I am waiting, yielded and still."

That's it. "Yielded and still." Submissive. If we do on our part, God will make us according to the pattern for which, in His love, He designed us. And it will be for our good—for our eternal good. And then someday, when our vessel has been fully fashioned, polished and smoothed, He will take this bit of human clay and transform it into His own glorious image.

Therein lies our hope, that we are disciples in clay, and there is still the skill of the Potter. MM

WITH GREAT dramatic skill, a Sunday School teacher was telling his class the story of Abraham and his obedience to God in preparing to sacrifice his beloved son Isaac. As the story neared its climax, a little girl pleaded, "Oh, please don't go on! This story is too terrible!" Another girl in the class spoke up, "Don't be silly, Mary! This is one of God's stories, and God's stories always come out all right!"

Yes, God's stories come out right because they are true and they all work according to His promise: "All things work together for good."

Swift to Hear

TIME seems to pass so swiftly, although sometimes when we have to wait, it drags, especially if we must wait in the cold, or the heat of a summer's sun, or if we are confined illness. If we aren't careful we may find ourselves wishing it would pass by more speedily.

But the fact remains, whether we wish time to go slowly or speedily, that it goes right on at the same pace, and a very fast pace it is. No sooner have we greeted the dawning of a day than it has slipped by forever, no more to be recalled. When we begin to count our days, we may be stunned at the speed with which they pass away. No wonder the Psalmist exclaimed: "... So teach us to number our

days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom. . . . We spend our years as a tale that is told . . . for it is soon cut off and we fly away" (Psa. 90:12, 9-10).

We must move with "alacrity." This is a good word for every life-seeker to add to his vocabulary. Alacrity means 1) quick willingness; eager readiness; 2) quick, lively action; briskness. This word "alacrity" is descriptive of all successful life-seekers. We must always be ready and eager to obey the Lord's every command and do it with lively action. One short phrase in James 1:19 sums it up well: "swift to hear."

These are action words. To be swift we must always be "on the

alert, ready." A weak start loses many contests. There is also the sense of preparedness. We cannot be swift in a marathon unless we have first made preparations. Our health must be at its best, our muscles tuned finely, our loins girded.

If we are what God calls "quick to hear," our ears will be so attuned that we do not hear everything but only those things which God would have us hear. We will not hear, for example: "It's all right to drive a little faster than the speed limit. The law officers expect us to, and make allowances for it." But we do hear: "Obey the law. Speeding is breaking the law." To be swift to hear is to be selective about what we hear. Otherwise we will find ourselves running down the wrong race track.

The word "hear" also has a sense of active obedience, as: "attend to business; pay close or strict attention, strain one's attention, not relax one's concern; concentrate on; study, be obsessed with." MM

That Carnal Mind

(Continued from page 11)

"Examine yourselves." And what if the examining reveals that we are yet carnal; what then? What is the treatment we should give this carnal mind within us? Should we gratify it, satisfy it, mollify it, pacify it?

The apostle Paul prescribes another sort of treatment: "Mortify . . . your members which are upon the earth. 'Put to death your earthward inclinations'; 'crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts' (Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:24). Strong terms are these, but Paul knew what needed to be done; nothing gentler would suffice.

Nothing gentler could assure the survival of the "new," spiritual life. As the same Apostle wrote in Romans 8:13, "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Or as phrased in the New English Bible, "If by the Spirit you put to death all the base pursuits of the body, then you will live."

It is one or the other, either the carnal or the spiritual. If the carnal lives, the spiritual must die. If the spiritual is to live, the carnal must die.

With anything less, the turtle may sink, but he is sure to come up again. MM

Narrow, but . . .

"NARROW is the road," said Fritz Kreisler, the famous concert violinist, "that leads to the life of a violinist. Hour after hour, day after day, and week after week, for years, I lived with my violin. There were so many things that I wanted to do that I had to leave undone; there were so many places I wanted to go that I had to miss if I was to master the violin. The road that I traveled was a narrow road and the way was hard."

Yes, narrow is the road that leads to any worthwhile achievement. Narrow is the road that leads to life. But who would wish for an easy, well-traveled road—that ends in destruction?

Only the "strait" and "narrow" way leads to life eternal; only through discipline is greatness achieved. MM

Life in the Waiting Zone

"The vision has its own appointed hour, it ripens, it will flower; if it be long, then wait, for it is sure, and it will not be late."

— Habakkuk 2:3, Moffatt Bible

THE prophet Habakkuk lived in a time when the children of Israel were at the point of despair. For years they had lived in oppression. Their land was devastated, their children taken into captivity, and their temple profaned. For years they had prayed for deliverance, but deliverance had not come. They had waited for rescue, but rescue did not come. Now they had just about reached the breaking point. So Habakkuk opens his prophecy by exclaiming, "O Lord, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear! Even cry out unto thee violently, and thou wilt not save!"

In response to this plea the Lord gives to Habakkuk this very strange, prophetic message: "Write the vision and make it plain, so that he may run that readeth it." Write the vision, He says, clearly enough, and plainly enough, so that whoever gets it may read it on the run, in haste—speed-read it, if you will. There is no time for casual, hesitant pondering; no time to relax and peruse in leisure. Nor is this a message to be tucked away in your library and forgotten. There is an urgency here. You must read the vision in haste—on the run.

But what makes this so strange is the next verse in which the Lord says: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time—though it tarry, wait for it; for it will surely come, it will not be late."

What can be so urgent about a message that you have to read it running, you have to speed-read it, when in the next phrase it talks about tarrying, and "waiting for it"?

Here is a prophecy for the time of the end, for the time when it might seem to delay, when the urgency would seem to be absent and its reality a long way off. What is the message for this special time of waiting? It is not waiting in the sense of idleness or time for relaxation. Judgment is coming; deliverance—or defeat—is

coming. And now, while the vision seems to tarry, is the time to prepare.

This is the message of Habakkuk. This is the kind of life for the waiting zone.

With this same vivid imagery and the same feeling of imminence, Jesus came preaching the imminence of divine intervention. "Repent," He said, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He referred to Himself over and over again as "the Son of Man" who would be coming "in clouds, with power and great glory," with saints, and angels and trumpets.

Among Jesus' words are those that tell of the signs that would precede His second coming. He told how there would be "signs" in the sun and moon and stars, the political powers of earth. He said there would be great distress among nations, with perplexity, men's hearts failing them for fear.

And just before He bade them farewell, He said, "If I go away, I will come again," sealing the promise of His return.

The promise stands today, unchanged, unshaken. Christ *is* coming. It is a reality that should be with us constantly, just as it was with the authors of the New Testament. So real was it in their minds that they saturated their writings with the promise. Everything they spoke of was planned and viewed and done with this one great inevitability in mind. When they met in the marketplace or along the street they would whisper to one another, "Maranatha," meaning, "The Lord cometh."

Nor can we afford to let slip, even for a moment, the reality of this promise. Wherever we are, whatever we are doing, we should keep it in mind: *Jesus is coming, and I must get ready.* Do we not partake of the Lord's supper each year that we may "show forth the

Lord's death till he come"?

What the second coming does is to radically call into question all of those false gods to which we are so accustomed to giving allegiance, and the false securities with which we prop up our lives—money, status, influence, prestige. The second coming says to us that these, too, will pass away.

I can have my choice. I can go my own way, I can ignore this solemn message from the God who made me. But one night when my barns are filled with wheat, and I am sleeping soundly on my soft pillows, God will whisper in my ear, "Thou fool, thou fool."

The force of Jesus' words remains: I will come again. We should remember it constantly. It should hang over our heads like a Damocles' sword, ready to fall upon us and shatter our petty pretensions into a thousand smithierines.

"Write the vision and make it plain," says God to Habakkuk. "For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie—though it tarry, wait for it, for it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Hab. 2:3).

There is much we would like to know about the end-time which we are not told. We would like to know how Christ will come, and the changes that will take place when He comes, and so on and on. There is so much in the realm of the unknowable.

Especially we would like to know *when* He is coming. But God has not seen fit to tell us. We know that it is "an appointed time," a fixed day in the plan of God, a time prepared and known aforehand—but only to Omnipotence (Hab. 2:3; Acts 17:31). It is a time not revealed to us. We are in the dark.

In the meantime, we are expected to get ready, and for this very reason: because we do not know *when* the hour will come.

It is here, in the waiting zone, in the commonness of daily life, that most of us have our greatest difficulty being faithful. Yet we are forced to spend much of our lives waiting for one thing or another. We wait for a certain letter which we hope will come in the morning's mail; we wait for examination grades to be posted, or for the doctor's report to be released; we wait for week-end, or weekday.

So much of life is lived in the waiting zone. How, then, are we to wait while the vision seems to delay?

It is not the kind of waiting with nothing to do and wondering what to do next. No. There's an urgency in this waiting. Something to do. Something to be. Something to become. "Write the vision and make it plain," said God to Habakkuk, so that whoever gets the message may read it on the run, may speed-read it.

This kind of waiting has been called revolutionary patience. It is the kind of waiting that feels the stretch and strain between having and not having, between knowing and not knowing. It is the kind of waiting that is active, busy, doing all that can possibly be done in the interim.

While we wait, we wonder and we worry; and sometimes, if we are honest with ourselves, we know that there are moments when the world is too much with us, when we are thrown back on ourselves and are tempted to set aside the urgency of the hour. Let us guard carefully against this temptation. It could prove fatal.

We stand in whatever waiting room of life we find ourselves. Nothing is ours. But if we are Christ's, and we know Christ is God's, then we are secure—as was the apostle Paul, in the "patient waiting for Christ."

Do you hear the message? Don't give up. "If it be long, then wait, for it is sure, and it will not be late."

Our watchful, expectant waiting shall be rewarded.

MM

Reminiscing: Take Heed!

LIFE is too rare a gift for thoughtless living,
Would that I had known in bygone days ;
But youth finds age so tender and forgiving,
It never thinks to change or mend its ways.

Now I am older grown, and life no longer
Lures me out to pleasure's rosy way.
Had I been wiser, now I should be stronger,
Braver and fitter for my task today.

I have been foolish in my selfish-seeking,
I dashed my friendships, run my chances thru,
Injured good people by my careless speaking,
Spoiled by sorrow much I tried to do.

My record's down, and sadly now I view it,
I am not all I had the strength to be.
I took the gift of life and soon ran through it
As though life would renew the gift for me.

Some take the gift and squander it in pleasure;
Some stain it dark with little sins and mean;
God pours out life from His abundant measure
And age too late learns what it could have been.

—Selected

• The Destiny of the Devil

"What is your understanding of the destruction of the devil in Hebrews 2:14? 'Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.'

"They say Jesus had to destroy himself because his body was the devil. One Christadelphian writer wrote that when the body of Jesus hung on the cross, it was the devil hanging there dead."

What Scriptural basis is there for saying that the Son of God had to "destroy himself because his body was the devil," and that "when he died it was the devil hanging there dead"?

How could He who was described as "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26) become the devil, even in death? (This would also seem to assume belief in a literal devil, which the Bible does not support.)

What does Hebrews 2:14 say? The text says first that Jesus was flesh and blood like His brethren; and therefore subject to death. (If we imagine that Adam before he sinned was *not* subject to death, he must not have been flesh and blood either!) Because of Christ's being flesh and blood like His brethren, He was able "through death" to "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

If we say that Christ destroyed death and the devil by His own physical death, we have only nonsense, because both death and "the devil" are still very much with us today.

In the Bible the term "devil" is used of an "adversary," all that opposes God, as a personification of sin and evil—which *do* have the power of death, and which bring death. Now what "death" can destroy this "super" devil, or personification of evil and sin? It is the death which Paul said Jesus died in Romans 6, the spiritual self-crucifixion, the death of our sinful tendencies, death to sin (Rom. 6:6-11). Through the crucifixion of this "body of sin," through the giving up of His ways

for His Father's, Christ broke the power of sin and death over Himself, becoming fully eligible for the crown of immortality, and as a consequence, "death hath no more dominion over him" (Rom. 6:9).

This is the same achievement for which we strive, to break the power that holds us in bondage to mortality, the power of sin. Sin brings death, and only when we have met the requirements for salvation, only when we have fully died that death which is appointed unto every believer to die, only then will death no more have dominion over us. We might or might not have to sleep for a brief period; in either case, our crown of immortality will be sure.

• Why Jesus' Death

"The Christadelphians believe that by the violent death of Jesus this objective was achieved: that God thereby displayed openly what He would, could, or should have done to every sinner by doing it to His sinless son. They say that this was a representative display of punishment, but not a substitutional display."

The "objective" seems wholly incongruous with the character of a holy, innocent, blameless Son of God. Why would God make Him suffer as a "representative display of the punishment" that God "would, could, or should have" given directly to every sinner? Truly this is mercy to the sinful—at the expense of the innocent!—which is utterly inconsistent with justice and wholly beyond reason.

And it is not supported by Scripture. We know that Christ "bore the treatment of a sinner" (I Peter 3:18), but that ill treatment was not inflicted by His heavenly Father. As Peter said at Pentecost, addressing the Jews: whom "ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it" (Acts 2:22-24).

How unjust God would be to punish His innocent Son for the sins of humankind!

Regardless of the terminology, the basic fact is that

Jesus suffered a death that He did not in *any* way deserve.

"Robert Roberts once wrote: 'For himself, it was unnecessary that he [Jesus] should have been nailed to the tree except as part of the obedience that the Father required at His hands. It was for us he was thus slain: for this violent death was the penalty due to "the many offences" that hold us captive and which God laid upon him.'"

Such a position makes God responsible for Jesus' death and thus guilty of human sacrifice—a concept that is not Biblical in any way. Every man shall "receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (II Cor. 5:10). God purposes to reward "every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12).

Punishing the innocent for the sins of the guilty has never been God's way, and it never will be. He is just and righteous, and "he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done" (Col. 3:25).

"They (the Christadelphians) argue that we do not deserve just death for our sins, but we deserve to be beaten with few or many stripes."

Let us look at the parable from which this illustration is drawn and see if we can understand what Jesus meant by this illustration, and how God "laid upon him" our "many offences."

The parable is that of the Faithful and Wise Steward, recorded in Luke 12 (vs. 35-48). The returning lord, arriving unannounced, found some of his servants with "loins girded" and "lights burning," ready to open at his earliest knock. Others he found eating, drinking and making merry, not watching, saying instead, "My lord delayeth his coming."

Who in the parable was punished? Not the watching, faithful servants—much less their returning lord! No, the unfaithful servants themselves had to suffer for their negligence. We read: "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. . . . He that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (vs. 47-48). None but the unfaithful servants themselves suffered.

How unreasonable to think that God punishes Christ for *our* offenses.

MM

Rules for a Transformed Life

*Human nature is weak and needs stimulating:
It requires reading, daily reading of the Word;*

careful meditation;
prayerful self-criticism;
humble confession of faults;
chaste conversation coupled with fear;
godly example in everyday life;
heartfelt, sincere exhortations;
rebuking in love;
watchfulness for each other's welfare;
fervent desire to do right;
deep sense of self-respect;
an abhorrence of evil;
purity of motives;
kindness of words and purpose;
unbiased judgment;
love unfeigned;
courtesy to all;
stability of character;
uprightness in dealings;
fervency of spirit;
diligency in business;
reverence for superiors;
truthfulness in telling;
holiness in conversation;
cleanliness of person;
loving the right, hating the wrong;
true godly sorrow when we have done wrong;
aiding the needy;
chastening the guilty;
upholding the righteous;
crucifying all flesh that tempts to do wrong.

We should rejoice with the lowly;

weep with the truly penitent;
give the water of life to the thirsty,
and bread to the hungry;
ever be merciful;
dare always to do right;
be thankful for favors;
never find unnecessary fault;
live unto God, and not unto men;
never be weary, but walk in the light;
do unto others as we would have them do to us;
be easily entreated;
throw all stubbornness away;
have no relish for error.

—Rev. L. T. Nichols.

To Catch the "Big Fish"

Trials should act as spurs to spur us on to higher ground.

A reporter interviewing a politician who had recently had heart surgery, asked what effect this had on his career and what changes, if any, he had made in his life.

His answer is revealing.

He said that up to that time he was like most of us are, when health is surging through our veins, and youth our daily lot. He had really just drifted with the tide. But when the heart trouble struck, he suddenly realized he was not immortal and began to get his priorities in order.

Times of trouble should make us review our doings, and certainly get our priorities in order.

Number one priority is always to make sure we catch the big fish, and hopefully it will not turn out like most fish stories, only a story about the big one that got away.

"Thou who hast given me eyes to see

And love this sight so fair,
Give me a heart to find out Thee
And read Thee everywhere."

Manitoba

E. H.

Be On Guard

Time passes us so quickly. It should cause us to stop and wonder, "What have I done this past year? Have I made any progress toward that perfection of character which the Lord requires of us? Am I running as quickly as I should be and truly doing my best each and every day?" We have to do deep soul searching to learn just where we stand and equally important, we have to be completely honest with ourselves. God will not accept anything less than our very best.

It is a full-time job to take command of our body, mind and heart. Our thoughts and actions so easily rule us rather than we controlling them. How often do we have to stop our thoughts, turn them around, and set them on things above? Then, there is our tongue which is called "an unruly member." It gets us into all sorts of trouble because it runs on without our control, saying things that aren't to the glory of God.

We have to be on guard at all times lest we forget and find ourselves just short of the kingdom and the glorious reward that could have been ours.

New York

L. S.

God Will Reward

There is no greater work a person could be engaged in than to kill the "old man" of the flesh. If we can overcome the flesh and our carnal thoughts, God surely will reward us for our victory, for He is faithful in His Word.

While in this life, the most important thing is to obey what we know, and keep learning. If we can incorporate into our life the death to sin, we will certainly have an entrance into the everlasting Kingdom of God.

Haiti

E. D.

Few

Just as Jesus foretold, there are only a few in the narrow way. Multitudes followed Jesus, but only one hundred and twenty tarried in Jerusalem to receive power from on high. There were only eight saved in Noah's day. Let us not be discouraged but press steadily on.

Mississippi

R. S.

Be Listening!

*God does not always shout to make Himself heard.
Sometimes He only whispers.*

What Do I Lack?

LACK is a meaningful little word.

The crop failed to grow because the soil *lacked* moisture. Or the fruit was not sweet because the vine *lacked* sunlight. The building was destroyed by flames because the firemen *lacked* water. The student failed to graduate because he *lacked* credits. Another was barred from entrance to the school of his choice because he *lacked* credentials.

The artist fails to sell his painting because it shows his *lack* of skill. The salesman, the statesman, the sailor, the musician, the sculptor, the teacher, the preacher, the doctor, the lawyer, the merchant, the farmer—all may fail if they *lack* certain requisites of success.

Failure in any enterprise may often be traced to a certain lack.

Knowing that lacking spells failing, are we not wise to ask the question, What do I lack?

We would not condemn for a moment the traveler ready to embark across the ocean who takes a moment to glance over his luggage and ask, What do I lack? And if he discovers that he has forgotten his wallet, isn't he thankful he took the time to survey his needs?

If just before setting sail for the South Pole Admiral Byrd had asked, "What do we lack?" and one of his faithful helpers and fellow travelers had come rushing in saying, "Admiral! someone put a box of hay in our cargo instead of a box of food!" wouldn't Mr. Byrd have been very grateful to his friend for detecting the mistake?

Suppose an airline mechanic today spies a leak in a gas line, a faulty latch, a missing bolt, or a crack in the airline body, would the pilot begin to argue? Would the eager passengers waiting to depart resent the delay which could very well save their lives?

We have begun a journey far more adventuresome than that of Admiral Byrd, and our responsibility will not lessen until the journey is completed. It is destined to end in a land that flows with milk and honey, with

wealth and health and happiness exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think! The reward is a million billion times greater than any earthly reward or satisfaction. And while the dangers of the voyage may be great, our safety is guaranteed if we seek and follow the advice of our Heavenly Pilot. And how shall we seek His help? By asking the question, "What do I lack?"

The rich young lawyer came to Jesus asking what he lacked, but he did not really want to know, for when Jesus told him, he went away sorrowful. This incident was recorded for us to remember. When we ask, "What do I lack?" we should ask with a desire to know, and be thankful for the knowledge gained. We must be willing to obey, whether it means parting with some bit of earthly treasure, a mess of pottage, or a stubborn will.

"What lack I yet?" The question is important, because it is a matter of eternal life or eternal death. We know that we have the ability to succeed, or we would not have been called. But if we lack in anything our journey will end short of full success. How earnestly, then, we should inquire, "What do I lack?" remembering that he who keeps the whole law, "but for a single point," is "nonetheless a lawbreaker" (James 2:10, Phillips), and will be barred from the great things he has set out to find. MM

The only way to demonstrate that Christianity is the best of all faiths is to prove that it produces the best of all men. The important thing is not words, but deeds.

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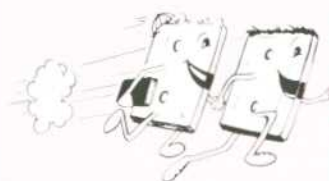
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