



# Megiddo Message

*A*sk, ...  
and He  
will give you  
living water  
— John 4:10

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# Go With God

***"Neither will God be with thee, unless thou art agreed and of one mind with God. Think not to have God with thee, unless thou art with God."***

*—Author Unknown*

**C**an two walk together except they be agreed?" The prophet Amos asks the question and leaves us to supply the obvious answer: Of course not!

But the Prophet's statement is not without purpose. His words were intended to be a sharp rebuke to a people who *thought* they were all right—when they were all wrong. They *thought* they were walking with God, when in reality they were moving away from Him.

Amos, the speaker, walked with God—no one could honestly contest this. Whatever the issue, he took God's side and sought God's glory. Israel, on the other hand, did the opposite. They were a nation red-handed in rebellion against Him. They *said* they wanted to obey, and their works were totally contradictory.

What does the thought of walking with God imply? How does one walk with God? First, both parties must be traveling in the same direction. And if the directions of the two parties are different, who must change? Shall we expect God to alter His course for us, sinful creatures that we are?

If so, should He follow your direction, or mine, or whose?

No, when we decide to go with God, we must go *His* way. And His way is the way of absolute righteousness, absolute uprightness, absolute integrity and truth.

God hates sin, and requires purity.

"For the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; his countenance doth behold the upright" (Ps. 11:7). Again, "The way of the wicked is an abomination unto the Lord: but he loveth him that followeth after righteousness" (Prov. 15:9). Do we wonder, then, that "He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findeth life, righteousness, and honour" (Prov. 21:21)?

In Old Testament times, a certain brother named Enoch "walked with God" (Heb. 11:5). Enoch cultivated a deepening intimacy with God not on an occasional stroll but in a daily walk that covered 300 years, and even in a godless environment. What happened when God did not walk in the direction Enoch would naturally have gone? Enoch changed his direction. He broke with his godless contemporaries and went in the direction God was traveling. It did not matter what God commanded him to do, Enoch obeyed. God always moves along the highway of holiness. Had Enoch not fully believed God, or had he not accepted fully His standards and His will, had Enoch not been willing to give up his way for God's, his walk would have been a very short one. Enoch and God would soon have parted company.

But as it was, Enoch kept walking with God, and walking, and walking—until one day he was found no more, "because God had translated him" (Heb. 11:5).

*(Continued on page 26)*

## Megiddo means ...

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

## We believe ...

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

## Soon-coming events ...

### THE HERALD AND THE KING

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

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

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

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THY KINGDOM COME

Cover photo was taken at High Falls Gorge near Whiteface Mountain in New York, by David and Marie Sutton.

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# Ask... And He Will Give

God, the mighty God of creation, our great Heavenly Parent, He upon whom we depend for every breath, He who knows the thoughts that come into our minds "every one of them"—this all-powerful, all-knowing God has planned that we should tell Him our needs, that we should ask for what He has to give. Said Jesus, "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:...[so] shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him" (Matt. 7:7,11). A most gracious promise to His disciples is that "whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive" (Matt. 21:22). And looking ahead, He promised His disciples that "whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do" (John 14:13).

While much of God's abundant "giving" is reserved for the future, for the inheritors of eternal glory, we should by no means disregard God's "giving" to His children in the present time.

*His love has no limit, His grace has no measure,  
His power has no boundary that's known unto men;  
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus  
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.*

This hymnbook rhyme aptly expresses what Scripture has plainly taught, that God is the giver of everything we have, it is He in whom we "live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

God is eager to give, still He wants us to ask. The angel of the Lord appeared to the newly crowned king Solomon, with this message, "Ask what I shall give thee" (II Chron. 1:7).

Wherein lies the virtue of our asking? When God knows all, why does He need us to ask? When "his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings" (Job 34:21); when "the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth" (II Chron. 16:9); when "the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings" (Prov. 5:21); when "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3)—surely He is not depending upon our prayers for His information!



Obviously, the asking is for *our* benefit, not His. God's whole program with earthborns has behind it one purpose: to select and train those who shall be "heirs of salvation."

*He wants us to ask because by asking we acknowledge our need for what He has to give.* Far removed from Him are they who say, "With our tongue will we prevail; our lips are our own: who is lord over us?" (Ps. 12:4); who say to God, by actions if not in words, "Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways" (Job 21:14). God does not want us to feel that we are self-sufficient, that we can take care of ourselves, that we can disregard Him and feel no lack—because we can not.

*He wants us to ask because He wants us to acknowledge Him as our God, our Father, and the Provider of our needs.* "It is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Ps. 100:3). He wants us to be constantly aware of our littleness, and His matchless greatness.

*He wants us to ask because by asking we recognize our humility, our weakness, our mortality.* He wants us to "humble" ourselves, "and pray, and seek [His] face, and turn from [our] wicked ways", and promises, "then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (II Chron. 7:14). He does not want us to live in a dreamworld where we think ourselves immortal, but to say with the Psalmist, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away....So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Ps. 90:10-12). Or with Job, "We are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because our days upon earth are a

shadow" (Job 8:9). God wants us to realize that we depend on Him for every breath of air, every bite of food, every heartbeat.

*He wants us to ask because He wants us to appreciate what He has to give us.* Gratitude is one of the fundamental graces He is looking for. A most disgraceful shame was pronounced upon those who, "when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful" (Rom 1:21). And Paul admonished, "let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Col. 3:15). If we do not appreciate His gifts, He will find others who do.

The prophet Ezekiel (36:37) says directly that God wants us to ask Him even though He knows our need. He says concerning His people Israel, "I will also let Israel ask this from me and have it done for them" (Ezek. 36:37, Moffatt Bible). God does not impose His gracious purpose on us, but waits for us to desire it. He wants all our heart, all our eagerness, all our desire. We sometimes hear that God is really eager to bless us, but this is only after He has seen the proper conditions in us. He first must see a desire on our part. He is able to give, but He wants us ready to receive; He wants us in a frame of mind to appreciate His goodness. He can fully bless only when we ourselves are ready and eager for His blessing. He wants us to relish His blessing—because we come to it hungry.

#### **Ask—Seek—Desire**

There is yet another aspect to God's command to us to ask. *God wants us to WANT* what He has to give. This is one way God separates those whom He will eternally bless from the masses of mankind. When He makes the offer, He appeals to our inner love of life.

"He that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I Pet. 3:10). He appeals to those who love life so fervently and desire so much of it that they are willing to forego anything of the present to obtain it.

Some may argue that the initiative is all on God's side, that *He seeks us*, that we love Him "because he first loved us" (I John 4:19). This is true, God does seek out His human children; He is constantly searching for those special individuals who can fit into His finished purpose. He has a plan; He

*God wants us to realize that we depend on Him for every breath of air, every bite of food, every heartbeat.*

has designed that the earth shall be filled with His glory, and He is looking for individuals who will participate in that plan. But *He is seeking those who seek Him*. "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God" (Ps. 53:2). It is the same principle as "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me" (Prov. 8:17). God does not compel; He appeals. He is looking for those who, like the Psalmist, will respond to His "Seek ye my face" with, "Thy face, Lord, will I seek" (Ps. 27:8).

By seeking those who seek Him, God is separating the satisfied from the dissatisfied. Seeking is the result of a desire, and desire suggests a dissatisfaction with what is



at hand. We might compare it to one who is living in very small, crowded quarters. He sees others who have spacious homes, and as a result he becomes dissatisfied with what he has. This dissatisfaction leads to a *desire* for something better, and the desire moves him to take steps to actively *seek*—and find—a better living situation for himself.

This is how God finds children for His Kingdom, and also how they find Him. They all start in the common circumstances of life. But they are not satisfied. They see those who are actively pursuing the goals of this world, then after a short while must die and leave it all

**God wants us to  
WANT what He has  
to give.**

behind. They are not satisfied; they want something better, something lasting. Observing others creates in these more-far-sighted persons a desire for something more, and this desire moves them to seek God, the giver of life. Only He can give them *more* life. Only He can give them a life that does not end in the oblivion of death.

And so when God looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who are seeking Him, He sees these special individuals, and opens a way for them to come into His plan and be part of His purpose.

This point of desire is critical, because God does not compel. In His supremacy He never violates human freedom or obviates human initiative. He depends on it. He builds His whole plan around it. He does on His part, He gives this present life, and offers more—but we do

not get the “more” until we demonstrate that we are actively interested in it. He does not force anything upon us. If we do not really love life and want more of it, He is not going to give it to us. In fact, if our loves and longings for the things of this world are stronger than our desire for His favor and His Kingdom, we will be disqualified. He must come *first*; all else must be secondary.

Our seeking God cannot be something casual, something for our “spare time.” It must be our first, primary, all-out concern. Said Jesus, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matt. 6:33). God is a “rewarder of them that *diligently seek him*” (Heb. 11:6).

What about one who wants all he can get from this world—and the future too? God’s future eternal blessing is promised to those who “keep his testimonies, and that seek him *with the whole heart*” (Ps. 119:2). Anything less than this is not enough. The promise is, “Ye shall seek me, and find me, *when ye shall search for me with all your heart*” (Jer. 29:13). Again, “If...thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, *if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul*” (Deut. 4:29). God must—He *will*—have first place. Or else He will leave us to ourselves.

**Sure Success**

If we give our best to seeking God and life, if we are willing to let the world go by and wait for what God can give, is there any danger that we will be disappointed? This is a fair question, one which the apostle Peter asked long ago. “Lo,” he said, “we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or

lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life” (Mark 10:28–30).

In seeking God we are seeking life, and—glorious promise!—we are sure of success. Those who truly seek will truly find. “The meek shall eat *and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever*”; “if ye seek him, *he will be found of you*”; “The hand of our God is upon all them *for good that seek him*”; And, “If thou seek him, *he will be found of thee*”; “Seek the Lord, and *ye shall live*”; “For thou, Lord, *hast not forsaken them that seek thee*”; “For whoso findeth me *findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord*” (Ps. 22:26; II Chron. 15:2; Ezra 8:22; I Chron. 28:9; Amos 5:6; Ps. 9:10; (Prov. 8:35; *italics ours*).

Now the critical question remains: *How* do we seek God? For He is not here where we can talk with Him. We cannot make an appointment and meet Him at His office. How can we seek God?

Our first course of action is to study the Guidebook He has provided for our instruction, the Bible. In this Book is our only source of knowledge about Him and the better life that He is offering. Here we find a record of His dealings with people in other ages, also a code of rules and principles for us to follow. Here, too, are incidents and lessons from the lives of others who served God, from whom we may learn what He wants us to be. Here, too, is the outline of His plan for the future.

Then, too, we seek God by prayer. God has arranged that He should never be out of the reach of

*(Continued on page 26)*



# Happiness in Hope

*I have just read the "Musings" that came this morning. It made a second spiritual breakfast. A good start for the day. We know not what it will bring forth.*

*Reading it this morning brought happy memories of Sunday School days. We had a happy, simple childhood. Now, having knowledge of the true faith, I feel the happy state is multiplied a thousandfold.*

*I love to sing of the many truths we privileged ones are looking forward to, truths of what we will be able to enjoy together during the Millennium, helping others to come to the grand knowledge which, if lived up to, will bring the Master's "Well done." I especially love to sing when doing chores. One day when I paused, my next-door neighbor asked me if I knew any more. I didn't know he had been in the yard listening.*

☞ *'Tis good to close one's mind against what is going on outside and feast at the Lord's table. I have been reading lately a book about Saint Paul, which had belonged to our late Sister Henschel, which came my way. Hers was the only home where I ever found an open Bible on the table early in the day. She advised me to read before night, not leave it until all chores were done and one was becoming tired.*

*People ask why I bother so much to spend my time with my Bible and tapes instead of watching TV or going to garden parties, theatres, etc. "So many good shows," they tell me. But I say with Brother Paul, "This one thing I do." Time gets away far too quickly as it is; to "do as the Romans do" would be disastrous.*

☞ *Looking after others has been my lot for seventy years, but I am still the happiest person in Crewe, having Truth to be with me all the day long. My younger sister, who lives with me, is sick and in bed, longing to be under the soil. Having not our outlook, she doesn't see anything to go on living for. Well, we live for God, and such happiness we have, looking forward to eternal life if now we conform to all His commandments.*

*I like to sew and darn and patch, make-do and mend. Times are better "moneytarily" than they used to be, but there is no sense in just discarding where a stitch or so gives more years of wear to a favorite garment. Besides, I can listen to a Bible tape on such occasions, making good use of the time.*

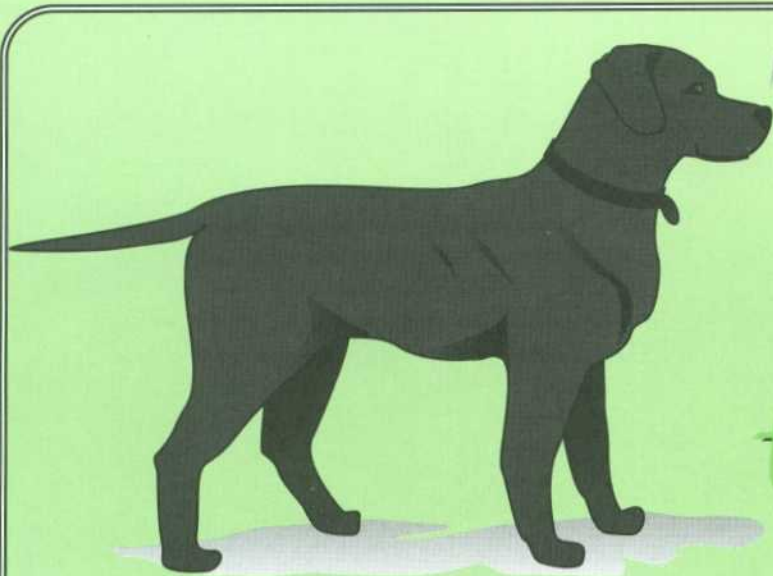
☞ *Just received a letter from Sister Jean—a real boost for the day!*

☞ *So much vandalism in our area, broken glass and forced doors are a common sight. But the truth keeps me all wrapped up in better times ahead, when our Lord will return. Many scoff at such, yet God's Word assures us, "He will come." The uppermost thought in my mind is, Shall WE be ready?*

*My elder sister used to advocate doing as you please, saying, "If you are pleasing self, at least you are pleasing somebody." This philosophy will never get one into the Kingdom; such is not pleasing to God. I'd rather be on His side, even though others are not.*

—Nellie Turnock, Crewe, England





## Chosen to Serve

A new method for finding leaks in buried pipelines has a strong parallel in God's methods of choosing individuals to do His work.

**L**eaks in buried pipelines have long been a distressing and costly problem. Digging up the pipeline and making the repair is difficult enough, but knowing precisely where to dig has been by far the most costly problem because these pipelines extend over many thousands of miles of ground, often frozen ground.

But a venturesome and imaginative company located in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, has achieved a near-perfect success rate in finding the leaks. Their secret: the very select and highly trained workers they employ—Labrador retrievers.

Officially the new technique is called Tekscent, the name assigned to a distinctly fragrant fluid substance which the dogs are trained to recognize.

How does the leak detection method work? Ron Quaife, a senior environmental scientist with Esso Resources Canada Limited who conceived and developed the process, explains:

"We purge a leaking pipeline of its contents, usually oil, gas or pro-

duced water, and inject the Tekscent fluid. Because of its high vapor pressure, the Tekscent surfaces at ground level directly above the leak source and the dogs indicate the precise location of the leak by vigorously digging at the site." This tells the company where to dig to repair the leak.

"The dogs' olfactory ability (their sense of smell) is astounding," he adds. "These dogs can detect leaks with Tekscent concentrations as low as one part per billion billions"—a concentration of the fluid that is equivalent to adding one drop of it to a reservoir the size of the State of Washington filled with water to a depth of one foot.

However, the owners of the Command Dog College are quick to point out that sniffing out leaks is not for every dog. The job requires a high retrieval drive on the part of the animal, a good nose and peak physical condition. They tell us that about 100 dogs have been evaluated for the job since the Tekscent venture began three years ago. Only 14 have been accepted,

and at present there are 10 in the program. "So, for every 10 or so we evaluate, we eventually purchase just one or two."

*Is this not parallel with the way God chooses men and women for His service? When there is a special work to be done, He searches first for the specific qualities (of character) He needs. Just as all the dogs on the earth do not qualify for entrance into the selection program for the Tekscent venture, neither do all the people in the world qualify to enter the training program for God's special service.*

*But who can say that God has not the right to set His own standards, and choose according to them? If a company can select dogs for a specific program according to specific qualifications they deem essential, why can not God do the same?*

After initial selection, the second qualifier is the training. Each dog that will be used must pass successfully through rigid training.



A training session at the facility in Calgary clearly demonstrates that Labradors are diverse in temperament. Ron Quaife describes a training session for two dogs, named Kitty and Buster.

"The door opens, and in charges 55 pounds each of barking energy.

"Bolting past the outstretched hands of the onlookers, the pair soon locate a small canvas pouch, called a 'bumper,' that has been injected with one to three drops of Tekscent. The dogs are then rewarded by their trainer with a game of fetch, which further reinforces the animal's drive to locate the Tekscent odor.

"As Kitty and Buster are led from the room, the trainer explains that some dogs are unsuitable for pipeline work because they display a low retrieval drive, and are easily distracted. As a case in point, watch black dynamo called Reff. She races into the room, gets off to a good start in hot pursuit of the bumper, then suddenly switches her attention elsewhere.

"We'll never be able to use Reff for Tekscent work," says the trainer. "If she can't handle indoor distractions, imagine how she'd perform with a great number of distractions outside."

*Here is another parallel to God's methods of selection. He, too, has mandated that those He uses shall pass through training. There is a goal to reach, a work to do, a prize to obtain. But here, too, there are distractions along the way. If one is easily distracted, can we not see why God will seek others on whom He can depend? He allows the distractions, not to be distracting but to test us, for unlike the dogs, we can change, we can improve. We*

*can keep our minds on the "bumper" and refuse to be distracted by whatever is around us if we will. But if we will not, if He warns us and we continue to be distracted by this and that around us, if the things of this world keep getting our attention and we run after this or that, we will soon find ourselves disqualified. God will have those who cannot be distracted or sidetracked. If we allow small things to distract us, we do not have the qualities He is looking for.*

Let's go back to the training room, where Punch and Juke are in

***Do we think the training tedious? Consider the benefits—those chosen will serve through ages upon ages, world without end.***

training. These two animals were the first to go out on a commercial assignment. In sharp contrast to Reff, Punch and Juke stage an impressive display of single-mindedness as they repeatedly track down the hidden bumper.

When the dogs are ready for the real searches, they are put in a harness with a 20-foot lead. They are not left to run free, Mr. Quaife explains, because they would tire too quickly. The harness keeps them under the control of the handler—for their own good, so they can be useful over a long period of time. It also keeps them from chasing other wild life they might encounter.

*The Christian, too, after being chosen for service, is no longer free*

*to roam at will. He is not physically restrained, but every aspect of his life is under the direct restraint of the law of God. As long as life lasts, the Christian is subject to the harness, the restrictions of the law of God—and for his own good. "Ye cannot do the things that ye would," said one of the chief trainers, who was himself in training (Gal. 5:17). If we belong to God, we cannot be chasing after this or that. We are not free to come and go at will. We have a special assignment to fulfill, and we cannot fulfill it and be free to do as we please.*

*But the restriction is also for our good. How much safer we are inside the harness, under the control of the expert Handler, who knows our needs and never denies us anything good.*

The Tekscent dogs are given 14 to 16 weeks of training before they are considered ready for commercial assignments. Initial training takes place inside and focuses on tracking down the scented bumpers. Subsequently, bumpers are buried six inches deep at frequent intervals along outside trails and dirt drifts, which serve as substitutes for pipeline rights of way. At this stage, the dogs are introduced to the harness and lead and are encouraged to indicate the locations of the bumpers by digging at the spot where the scent is most concentrated.

The first four to five weeks of the training are the most strenuous. Says the trainer, "We also cross-train the dogs by introducing different scents without reward, so the animals won't identify chemicals other than Tekscent when they are out on the pipelines. By the end of the second stage of training, the



## Chosen to Serve

dogs have attained a high success rate in locating the scented bumpers."

*Here is another parallel with our Christian training. We, too, must be cross-trained to recognize "foreign" leads, scents other than the true one, so that we will learn not to go after them. The Psalmist prayed for this training. "Let me not wander from thy commandments" (Ps. 119:10). God often teaches us what not to pursue by letting us pursue it and then letting us be chastened for our error. When this happens, if we are alert to His instruction, we will respond as did the Psalmist: "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies. I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments" (Ps. 119:59-60).*

Next the trainers concentrate on building the dogs' endurance. The dogs must be trained to hold out during long assignments, in searching over hundreds of miles of buried pipelines, and often in adverse weather. They also must have the drive to persist in their search when the pipeline is buried 12 feet below ground in solid clay, with three feet of snow and ice on the surface.

*God also tests His prospects to develop endurance, for the only successful ones are those who can endure (Matt. 24:13). To develop endurance He uses adverse conditions. Of what worth is one who can perform well only when everything is "ideal"? God is looking for those who will serve Him whatever conditions prevail, whether skies are balmy and the breezes warm, or whether the air is frigid and the ground frozen. The quality of service must be the same, what-*

*ever the conditions, whatever the pressures, and whoever is nearby.*

**Success Stories.** By the beginning of 1991, the Tekscent dogs had successfully located leaks, too small to be detected visually. The dogs had found leaks in a pipeline buried to a depth of 12 feet, and pipelines more than 30 years old and in buried lines insulated with 12 inches of polyurethane foam. The dedicated canines also located leaks in pipelines in many kinds of

***The quality of service must be the same, whatever the conditions, whatever the pressures, and whoever is nearby.***

terrain, from prairies to mountains, in both summer and winter, in soil conditions that ranged from freshly cultivated fields to frozen clay.

It is reported that one client called in the canines after more conventional leak detection techniques had failed repeatedly to locate small leaks in a fiberglass salt water disposal line. The four-legged snoops succeeded in sniffing out nine pinhole leaks—in a matter of minutes. Do we wonder why they were chosen to serve?

**Success Stories.** Because God's program of training is so focused and selective, the success rate of those chosen is 100%. In fact, those who pass successfully through all His training are guaranteed success. And their term of service will not be a few years on limited assignments but through all eternity.

*Do we think the training tedious? Consider the benefits—*

*those being trained are being chosen to serve on the earth made new, glorified and filled with the glory of the Lord. They are being chosen to serve through ages upon ages, world without end. They are being chosen for the highest honors ever given to earthborns. Can we think for a moment the training is too severe, or that God's program is too stiff, or that everyone who lives should be allowed to serve?*

*The dogs chosen to serve are literally a billion times more sensitive than the finest devices yet made for the purpose. And they can work faster in rough terrains and perform much more consistently in rain, snow and extremes of temperature.*

*But who would suggest that all dogs should be taken, or that they should be randomly picked, whatever their qualifications for the job? No, man is wiser than that—and shall God be less wise? He who has all the resources of the world—of the universe—at His disposal, who will say that He must work with inferior or below grade material, with those who are easily distracted, or who fight and protest and complain about the training?*

*If you are enrolled in God's training program, count yourself highly favored, be humble in His mighty hand, and realize that He knows what He is doing. He knows what He needs, and He knows what we need if we would qualify for His special service.*

*And if we fail the test, another will take our place. The loss will be ours, not God's.*

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Note: Quotations are from "Sleuths For All Seasons," by Juliet A. McGhie, published in *The Lamp*, Spring 1991, Volume 73, No. 1. Used by permission of Exxon Corporation.



# "Copy Me, As I Copy Christ"

**"You know how we lived among you. You remember how you set yourselves to copy us, and through us, Christ himself....You thus became examples to all who believe..." — I Thess. 1:5-7, Phillips.**

**W**hen God sent His Son into the world, He had a great purpose in view. Jesus Christ was no ordinary man. Though He was "made in all points like his brethren," yet His life was vastly superior to any other that had ever been on this planet. He came as the *Master* of men, the "model" of the life God desires.

After Christ, things could never be the same again, for Christ was the perfect Pattern. This was God's predetermined purpose: that henceforth, all who would be saved should, in the words of Paul, be "copies of the likeness of His Son....And [these]... he also invited; and whom he invited, those he also justified; and whom he justified, those he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29-30, Wilson's Diaglott). We copy His Son, and then He will justify and ultimately glorify! Who would not like to follow such a path to glory!

The apostle Paul writing to the Ephesians stated the same profound fact as he exclaimed, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love" (Eph. 1:3-4). Here is the standard fixed: that we must conform our lives to the pattern of Christ, that "we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

In his letter to the Philippians, Paul restated this same fact. Only "in Christ" and His high standard of righteousness could Paul satisfy his burning desire for life. "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord:...that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness,...but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:8-11). Christ had set the standard for righteousness, and it could not be fixed up or improved. There was nothing for anyone to do but copy it. And all who

would be saved *must* copy it.

We do not know when Paul received this "copy" command from Jesus, but he took it to heart. He was sent by Christ not only to *tell* but to *show* the Gospel. And so he wrote to his brethren, "Copy me, as I copy Christ" (I Cor. 11:1, Moffatt Bible). So carefully was he duplicating Christ that he could rally his brethren to greater holiness by saying, "You copy me, just as I am copying Christ"—so accurate was he trying to be in his own personal copy of the Pattern.

## **An Appeal**

"Copy me, as I copy Christ." Can we not feel the warm appeal in these words? No ordinary preacher here, none of the "Do as I say but not as I do" kind. Few, very few have been those willing to stand up and say, "Copy me," and fewer still could add "...as I copy Christ."

Do we hear in this exalted statement any ring of smug self-righteousness? Not from such a one as Paul, or his copy would not have been true. Paul was not yet perfect, but he was working at it so earnestly that his life was rapidly taking on the likeness of Christ. He had



seen the living Pattern and was persuaded that this was what *he should be*. Indeed, this is what *he would be*. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead," he said, and he meant it.

There is no argument for the greatness and power of true faith so irrefutable as the argument of the life it produces. Anyone can argue about words and their meaning, but who can challenge the picture?

**No argument for the power of true faith is so irrefutable as the argument of the life it produces.**

Who can dispute the living copy!

Paul's one concern was to copy *carefully*, not only in the great issues of life but in every particular. His copy, when finished, must be *perfect*. We can almost hear him checking himself again and again in the course of the day as he asked, in all candor, Is *this* what Christ would do? or, Is *this* how Christ would feel? Is *this* what Christ would say? For Paul realized the serious responsibility that was his in producing a copy of Christ for his brethren to copy. But oh, the shame, if he should see in a brother a flaw that was—alas!—a copy of a flaw in his *own* character! And should both persist in that wrong, at the judgment he—*Paul*—would share in the blame. It was a thought that kept him wide-awake and vigilant.

All of life is, in one sense, a process of copying. Each of us is consciously or subconsciously copying whatever we have set up for our

inner heart to admire. And little by little, point by point, we become like it. How important, then, that we honor the right character, that we esteem the right goals, that we cherish the right desires.

This was Paul's concern with his brethren. If he fell short of an exact reproduction by even a very small percentage, those copying him might fall short by a slightly greater percentage, and so on, until the copy would scarcely resemble the original.

#### The Meaning of "Copy"

When Paul said he was copying Christ, he meant that he was modeling Christ's faith, His patience, His courage, His obedience. And if we would be like Paul, if we would be among the saved, we too must "copy Christ." Point by point we must reproduce His exact moral likeness until we arrive at last at the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13).

So let us look to ourselves and ask: How is *my* copying of Christ? How much like Him have I become? Am I as patient as He was in the midst of petty irritations? Am I as intense, as committed, as heavenly-minded as Jesus was? Am I as sincere, as pure, as upright, even though I must live in the midst of those who have no regard for His high ideals?

How unfaltering is my courage when I must face a wrong, either in myself or in others? On the other side, how do I rate in mercy, goodness, and love? How about my integrity? Am I more concerned about *being* than *seeming*? Is my first, last and only concern my heavenly Father's honor?

When others offend, how do I react? Am I as kind, as long-suffering, as humble as was Jesus, fearing most of all lest I do wrong? And if I am caused to suffer because of

another's wrong, am I able to copy Christ and say, "Lord, forgive them, for they know not what they do"?

By copying Christ, we will be bringing into our own lives many "new" qualities. We will find again and again that we must say or feel or think in a way that is not natural to us. But is not this to be expected? For we cannot remain as we are and become "like Christ."

#### Do As I Do?

In copying Christ, Paul was producing a replica for others to copy. Each of us is doing the same, for in the words of Paul, none of us live to ourselves alone (Rom. 14:7). What can we say about the quality of *our* copy? Is it such that we really want others to duplicate it?

We may hope, for instance, that others will learn from what we *say*, but they pick up far more from what we *do*. We may talk loud and long about what we believe about integrity, but how impressed will they be if they see us taking advantage of a neighbor, a fellow worker, our employer, or a subordinate, even in some small detail?

Or we might hope that others will see the esteem that we have for God and His Word, how readily we quote it, how ably we defend it, how diligently we study it—but they will remember far more what they learn from watching us, if they see us self-righteous in our judgments, short-tempered when challenged, or defensive when criticized.

We may hope that others will learn from our spirit of the "meekness and gentleness of Christ" (II Cor. 10:1), but they will see much more readily if we are reluctant to admit a fault, if we are quick to justify ourselves and condemn others, or if we hold tightly to our opinion even when we have been proven wrong.

We may tell others what the



Bible says about hope, but they will remember far longer how worried we were in the face of difficulties, or how sullen and downcast when things went against us.

We may tell others about our ideals of brotherly love and kindness, but they will be impressed far more if they see us touchy, crabby, and fretful, quick to find fault, quick to suspicion.

We may talk about that "perfect peace" that nothing can offend, but will they remember what we *said* if they see us indignant or irritated at trifles? Oh, let us look well to ourselves before we attempt to say with Paul, "Copy me, as I copy Christ."

What we *say* may be what we hope to become, but the sermon we preach most clearly is the sermon of what we are. And until we actually produce the likeness of Christ in our lives, any copy we make will be a mixed copy, with some features of our old self still showing.

Are we inclined to think of Christ as a moral giant whose goodness is unattainable? His holiness, His humility, His dedication and lifelong self-sacrifice—do they seem towering heights far beyond anything *we* can reach? They are not. They are precisely what we *must* copy, because it is written that everyone who shares the hope of being made physically like Christ "purifieth himself even as he (Christ) is pure" (I John 3:3). There is no other way to cherish this hope than to copy His moral likeness.

This is what Christ did in copying His Father. He gave flesh and blood likeness to the character qualities of God—by practicing them. He brought the heavenly virtues down to earth and showed them in human form, in the loveliness of a sinless life. He didn't just *talk* about truth, mercy, love and

holiness; He *was* Himself those virtues. In Him the principles of truth became living, warm, glowing. In Him the power of God became a power that grips you, love that warns, courage that heartens. In Him the ideals of patience were turned into steady endurance; hope grew out of obedience, and humility glowed with the supreme happiness that comes by submitting to the Father's will.

Do we say, "But that was Jesus"? Hear His message to us: "I have given you an example...The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master" (John 13:15; Luke 6:40). Or as it is phrased in the Revised Standard Version, "Every one when he is fully taught will be like his teacher." Here is our pattern to

touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). Jesus was tempted "in all points like as we are." He had to resist, just as we must.

But should we ever wonder if we can make a successful copy, along comes one to lift us from our despair. Here is a man of like passions with us, a man who experienced the same struggle between flesh and Spirit we experience and in all the intensity that ever raged in a human breast. So desperate was the struggle at times, he writes, that "we despaired even of life" (II Cor. 1:8). But through his noble life come lessons from Christ to us. Christ is our pattern, but in Paul we see a proper translation of that pattern into a language *we* can read. In

***Jesus brought the heavenly virtues down to earth and showed them in the loveliness of a sinless life.***

copy. It is the only way we can ever hope to share His salvation.

Even the best exhortation is worthless if we contradict it by our action; if, like the proverbial Pharisees, we "say and do not." For even while we are *saying*, we are also *showing*—and a picture is worth a thousand words.

We are all models to one another. Like it or not, someone is watching our responses, our attitudes, our perspective. It is the law of life. And, unfortunately, a poor example is often emulated far more readily than a good one.

Does Christ's goodness seem to elude our faltering steps, we who stumble and rise only to stumble again? Praise God! we have not "an high priest which cannot be

Paul we see how the life of Christ may be copied even as Christ patterned His goodness after His Father's.

Yes, we need both the Original and the copy. We need the Original for its perfection, and the encouragement that comes from a fellow imitator. In Christ we have the finished statue, exquisite in proportion and perfect in beauty. In Paul we have the sculptor vigorously hewing at the rude block of his own daily life in a noble and determined effort to reproduce Christ's excellence.

In Christ we have the finished product; in Paul we have the earnest believer struggling daily against the weaknesses we confront.

In Christ we see the King in His  
(Continued on page 17)



# *We Saw The Morning Break!*

*Looking back from Millennial Year 400*

The setting for this poem is some four hundred years inside the millennium. The speaker is someone from our day who lived to see the Morning break, the great Day of the Lord. The audience is a group of young mortals, Ishmaelites, whose cup of blessing is fuller than they can realize.

*O come, my children, while I tell  
Of former times we knew so well,  
The age before Christ came to dwell  
And make all things anew.*

*Oh, there were just a handful, few,  
Who would believe God's Word so true,  
The only ones on earth who knew  
The morning soon would break!*

*But oh, we watched with longing eyes,  
For we knew He would bring the prize  
To all the ready, working, wise—  
And He would not be late.*

*We turned the pages of God's Book  
To learn the things for which to look,  
While for our pattern Christ we took,  
His life of holiness.*

*And when the Scriptures we rehearsed,  
We read Elijah would come first;  
When things were at their very worst  
The Prophet great would come.*

*Again we read the promise clear  
That Christ would come, we need not fear,  
Come quickly! oh, the Day was near!  
The Day of glorious triumph!*

*With powers of wrong on every hand,  
Still God's great cause we did defend,  
And for His truth we did contend—  
The cause of Christ our Lord!*

*The best of tools that men could make  
We purchased for the Savior's sake,  
To publish far, "Your sins forsake,  
Our Lord is coming soon."*

*Prophetic signs we saw so plain,  
We knew things could not stay the same—  
Full soon our Lord would come to reign—  
It could not be too long.*

*At times, 'twas hard to keep faith bright  
'Twas very hard to keep the right;  
It was not like this age of sight;  
Ours was an evil time.*

*That age was dark with sin and hate,  
The world was in an awful state;  
Vast millions had no God but fate—  
No love, no hope, no faith.*

*They talked as if all faith were vain,  
They even gave each other pain,  
Their selfish ways none could restrain—  
Their Maker they denied.*

*Men everywhere did wrong and not  
A judgment came—they quite forgot  
That God would bring them to account  
For all their evil ways.*

*So greedy for material gain,  
They wrecked another's upright name  
Without a twinge of guilt or shame—  
So hardened were their hearts.*

*Even small children, young in years  
Victims of terror, lived in fear  
Of losing what to them was dear—  
A new age had to come.*

*But though the world was dark with sin,  
No more than this could I take in,  
For I was working hard to win  
My crown of life eternal.*

*I had to be so careful lest  
I fail in some small trial or test  
And lose my share in this sweet rest—  
It was a rousing thought.*

*We read God's Word to make us strong,  
To help us through the midnight long,  
To fill our days with hope and song  
O glorious coming Day!*



*We worked together, one on one,  
To help each other faster run,  
For we had much that need be done  
Before the Morning dawned.*

*For well we knew each one who'd win  
Must keep himself in fighting trim—  
Must free himself from every sin,  
'Twas not an easy task.*

*So few believed God's promise then;  
So few had faith to fight the trend;  
So few were standing faithful when  
We saw the Morning break.*

*You ask, Did we have angels then?  
Oh yes, they were our constant friend,  
Yet never did we see their form—  
Because we walked by faith.*

*For though we had the angel near  
His warning voice we did not hear  
When tempted from the right to veer—  
Ours was an age of faith.*

*What do I mean, by "faith" or "sight"?  
'Tis this: You know when you walk right—  
We had to walk as in the night—  
None told us when we erred.*

*But oh, you ask, "What was the night?"  
My dearest ones, 'Twas lack of light,  
As if you had no gift of sight—  
We had to trust in God!*

*How oft our hearts were bent with care,  
As we each other's loads did share,  
With sick and suffering everywhere—  
We longed to see the end!*

*You wonder what I mean by "sick"?  
Well, I can tell you all right quick  
You would not like it one least bit—  
And neither, friends, did we!*

*But oft it was a passing test  
That helped us in our God to trust,  
That gave our hope and faith new thrust  
To work for better times!*

*And as the years went speeding past,  
With prophecies fulfilling fast,  
It seemed the moment could not last—  
The Day was almost here!*

*So near it seemed, so very near  
There scarce could be another year  
And yet God's mercy tarried more—  
So gracious is our God!*

*Oh! our good God, long-suffering, kind,  
He seemed to lengthen out the time,  
So we would not be left behind—  
How boundless is His mercy!*

*God had His eye upon the few  
Who would among His own prove true,  
Who would become all clean and new,  
His chosen, precious ones.*

*He knew we needed time to be  
Made clean from all impurity,  
Add patience and humility,  
Before our day was done!*

*You wonder we had much to do?  
My friends, we were made just like you;  
We had to be all spotless, too,  
Before we could be crowned.*

*No prophet spoke to us, no seer;  
Yet evidence grew more each year;  
We had no cause to doubt or fear  
The promise of our God.*

*We looked above to stars of light,  
A myriad worlds, all shining bright.  
Whence came these wondrous orbs of  
night?  
They were the work of God!*

*Then opened we His Book to see,  
And read they were God's family,  
All clothed with immortality,  
Now looking down on us.*

*And how we prayed, Lord Jesus, come,  
Come, bring to us the things we love,  
Blest peace and purpose from above—  
Oh, let the Morning break!*

*But what if I were left behind?  
This thought, it lingered in my mind—  
It made me work right hard to find  
The evils in my heart.*

*For what if He should come and find  
Me angry, impudent, unkind?  
I kept this ever on my mind  
Lest I should be condemned!*

*Yes, all my work could be in vain—  
If I would not give God full rein  
Within the precincts of my mind,  
I'd be but worthless clay.*

*You wonder I could be defiled?  
My little ones, I have to smile—  
It seems but such a little while  
Since we were just like you.*

*And most of all, we knew not when  
Our Saviour might the midnight rend  
And bring probation to an end—  
It kept us on the watch.*

*And then, one ordinary day  
As we were gathering to pray  
We saw a stranger come our way  
A man we'd never seen.*

*A noble man—oh, could it be  
The one we'd waited long to see—  
God's man Elijah, was it he?—  
Was this the crack of Dawn?*

*We had not long to wonder, for  
He soon disclosed his mighty power;  
I never will forget that hour—  
The miracles we saw!*

*Oh, we had never seen the like!  
'Twas not our lot to walk "by sight"—  
We were accustomed to the night—  
Ah! this man was from God!*

*And then—we saw the daylight break!  
The heavens rent, the earth did quake!  
Oh, Day of days for all the saints!  
Grand Day of Christ our Lord!*

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*Our badge of fame let none forget,  
We who the midnight vigil kept  
While all the world in darkness slept  
Before the Morning broke.*

*This our distinction long shall be,  
From age to age eternally:  
The handful who were blest to see  
The glorious Dawn arise.*

*Of all the kings and priests today,  
Only a special few can say,  
"We saw the first faint streaks of Day,  
WE SAW THE MORNING BREAK!"*



### God Helps

We should be using all our mental powers to better our lives in these last days. With God's help we can, if we will. We should remind ourselves often that we really can't do anything without His help—not even breathe. We receive so much from Him, so we should gladly learn and do His will.

Our heavenly Father has been so good to us all, more than we deserve. May we have new courage, strength and hope each day.

And may we be mindful to do all we can each day to build characters that will be pleasing to Him.

*South Carolina*

H. C.

### Your Best Today

I like very much the motto, "Giving your best today is the best recipe for a better tomorrow."

We must as God's children give our very best in our home first. It is so easy to be at our best in company and yet be very slack with our family life. Our workplace is another place to leave a good example of God's love. Our employer expects our best, and we should give it. But most of all our Creator expects our best. He will never ask us to do anything which we will not be able to do, if we put our whole mind to it.

If we give our best today we will get that better Tomorrow.

*Ontario, Canada*

M. G.

### A Great Reward

For reasons that transcend our understanding, our Father in heaven has decided that we should know the Truth possessed by Christ and be given an opportunity to equip ourselves with a righteous character that will allow us to gain eternal life. The full implications of such an offer are just staggering to the mind when you meditate and fully explore all the possibilities. Paul said that it was "exceeding abundantly above all" that we can ask or even think, that it has not entered into the mind of man what the Lord has prepared for those who love Him.

*Louisiana*

D. K.

### From A Mail Carrier

I am a rural mail carrier and I delivered your magazine to a customer on the route. When I looked for the delivery address I noticed the poem right above it and my interest was piqued.

I love your magazine and asked the lady getting it for a card to order from. That is where I got these but there weren't enough. I hope there isn't a limit to the number of people I can send them to.

*Texas*

M. W.

### In Training

*We love you Lord, we often may say,  
But are we as ready His will to obey?  
Let's heed what God would have us do  
For that's how to show Him a love  
that is true.*

There are many things a soldier cannot do when warring against sin. When anyone joins the armed forces, one of the first questions is, For how long they wish to serve: 5, 10, 15 or 25 years, which is considered for life. For us, being a soldier of Christ means much more. It really does mean for the rest of our days. Jesus' words in Matt. 24:13 make the same vital point, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved." It's not something we can be all for one day and forget the next.

Joining one of the armed forces means a stiff medical exam, followed by six weeks of the most grueling training of their lives, and many a young man can't complete it. If only the young men could realize that after the six weeks life would greatly improve and that the things they were made to suffer were for a purpose, really to find out what they were "made of"! The armed forces don't want anyone who isn't dedicated.

Now what of us, can we be called dedicated Christians? We have no cruel taskmaster standing over us; all we are asked to do is no more than someone joining one of the forces. It should be a joy for us to serve the Lord our God and keep His commandments with singing in our hearts all our days. So let us say we are ded-

icated soldiers in the army of our soon-coming King in the battle against sin, and with the Lord's help who can be against us?

*England*

J. T.

### Thinking

I have been thinking a lot recently about Christ's second coming. Every year I wonder how much longer things can go on as they are. We see so many signs portending His return, and every year the signs become stronger and more compelling. My mind says, "Yes, the time of the return of Christ's herald cannot be far away." Then I stop and ask myself, "Does my heart believe it as strongly? Am I working hard enough to get rid of the sin in my life before the time runs out?" It is one thing to acknowledge the imminent return of Jesus with our minds and voices, and quite another to acknowledge it by our lives. What good will it do us to know these things if it doesn't change our lives and put the fear of God in us? Our lives will have been worth nothing if we are refused entry into the Kingdom of our Lord.

I am awed by the physical creation of God here on earth, how the different plants and animals grow and live in their varied environments. What causes the changes in our weather, the movement of the earth, sun and stars through space? Everything is so precise that man has been able to calculate years in advance just when a certain thing would occur, when a particular satellite would reach a predetermined location, or when a particular comet would re-appear in the skies.

No, we cannot doubt God and His promises; they will be fulfilled. If we choose to ignore the times and signs and put off preparing ourselves, we will have no one to blame but ourselves. We know what needs to be done and we know we have very little time left to do it in. So let us put every bit of our energy into perfecting our lives, removing the spots from our garments so they'll be clean and white for the marriage feast.

*Texas*

P. F.



(Continued from page 13)

beauty; in Paul we have an earnest, eager soul pressing hard for a place in that Kingdom. If he could do it, why can't we?

### **Paul the Man**

Paul was a man of heart, of passion, of will, of sincerity, of vivacity; preacher, thinker, writer, and through it all a friend. His heart throbs through his Epistles; he loved his converts as his own family. He had a genius for friendship, and bound them to him with bands of steel—men like Barnabas, Silas, Timothy, Luke, Titus. What a privilege they had in having a brother like Paul to copy!

And Paul invited them: "Copy me!" Have we this same earnestness, this concentrated enthusiasm, this same warm glowing affection for Christ and all who belong to Him? Are our interests divided, or are we Christ's men from head to foot? Have we scattered ourselves in the pursuit of many small goals, or are we truly following the pattern of Christ and gathering all we have and are into one rushing mighty river of energy to follow Him?

If you wish to kindle anything by the rays of the sun, you must first collect those rays and focus them to a fiery point. If you would have a Christian character glowing with an ardor that will burn its way in the face of all resistance, you must first focus your whole soul upon it. This is what Paul did.

### **Learned and Received, Heard and Seen**

Paul left one brief sentence on the record that tells us the ABC's of the copying process. It is found in his letter to the Philippians. "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you" (Phil. 4:9).

Do we realize what this is saying? Let's begin by breaking the verse into two two-verb pairs. "Learned" and "received" become the first pair, and "heard" and "seen" the second. The first pair summarizes the verbal instruction Paul gave his brethren in all matters of doctrine and practice, the lessons he taught them as their spiritual "teacher" or "coach." "Learned and received" summarize Paul's example to them as a man of firm conviction, deep understanding, and consistent reason.

The second pair relates to the application of these teachings, the lessons they learned silently, everyday, by watching. These were the things which they had "heard" and "seen," things they could learn by watching Paul in the crucible of human experience. If Paul in the first half of the verse was saying, "This is what you need to know," in the second half he was saying, "And this is how you do it!"

Paul was not afraid to be firm, both about doctrine and about practice. He was not afraid to "step on someone's toes," so to speak. His first concern was to be true to the one who had appointed him to be His minister. And so he warned wherever he saw danger and vigorously condemned sin and heresy. Did he ever say, "It doesn't really matter what you believe, as long as you're sincere"? No, he began by insisting on right belief. He taught right belief with zeal and courage. Paul did not avoid any essential point of faith. As he said to the Ephesians, he shunned not to declare "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). If a certain point made some brethren uncomfortable, or was unpopular, he did not avoid it to keep peace. As God's faithful spokesman, he preached "all the counsel of God."

Paul insisted on right doctrine,

right belief, right understanding (II Tim. 3:16-17). Then he taught that salvation will come only by the diligent applying of those right beliefs. "Glory and honor and immortality, eternal life" come by one's "patient continuance in well doing" (Rom. 2:7). The believer is to be a "new creature" "in Christ," with new habits, new interests, new concerns, new ambitions (II Cor. 5:17).

Then, too, he taught by reproof and warning. In II Corinthians 7 he is reflecting on a stern rebuke he had given, and is overjoyed with the good fruit that it produced among the brethren. He writes:

***Unselfishness was  
part of every stitch and  
thread that went into  
the tents Paul made.***

"Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what affection, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter" (II Cor. 7:8-11, NIV).

Paul had the courage to address



the wrong head-on, so that it could be corrected. He did not gloss over the sin, or tell them it was just a little thing and really did not matter. He addressed sin as the serious issue it is, a violation of God's holy laws, which if not corrected will bring the wrath of God upon us. "As my beloved brethren," he wrote, "I warn you." That was what Paul did. And what were they to do? The same. Here was more example to copy.

Paul's teaching also included words of encouragement. He felt a genuine love for those who shared his love for the cause of Christ, and was always looking for an opportu-

***We have all the essentials to keep us moving at top speed, but where is the heat—the intense, animated, boiling earnestness?***

nity to affirm and encourage, to strengthen and upbuild. The young with their problems, the middle-aged with theirs, the elderly with theirs—none were too small to be his personal concern; all could be examples to one another.

Besides, Paul made the extra effort to remind them of the fond affection he felt toward them; indeed, they were his crown and glory. "We loved you so much," he wrote, "that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.... You are witnesses, and so is God, of how holy, righteous and blameless we were among you who believed. (Here is what they "heard and saw.") For you know that we

dealt with each of you as a father deals with his own children, encouraging, comforting and urging you to live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.... But, brothers, when we were torn away from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan stopped us. For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy" (I Thess. 2:8, 10–12, 17–20, NIV).

Whenever Paul spent time with these believers, his personal example shone like a light from heaven. As a living model of Christ's character, as a Christian traveler a few steps ahead of those he guided, he let them learn from the things he said and did. What could help them more!

Whatever Paul was doing, his one ambition came shining through: "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:10).

See the love and encouragement in his letter to Timothy, his own "beloved son" (I Tim. 1:2). Paul called Timothy a "man of God," even though he was still young and inexperienced. And when Paul gave Timothy leadership responsibility, no doubt many an oldster in the church raised his eyebrows. But Paul saw the potential in this young man, the good and honest heart, the eagerness to learn and grow that would in time mature into a strong godly character. He knew he had the faith and devotion that would carry him through. He did not belittle him by saying, "You're too young to be worth anything yet" but said instead,

"Be strong... endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ... Fight the good fight of faith.... Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (II Tim. 2:1, 3; I Tim. 6:12; 4:12). It was another way of saying, "You set the example, Timothy, and let them copy it,"—and he might have added, "just as you are copying me, and I have copied Christ."

There is nothing like this power of example. There is nothing to equal the personal challenge of "I did it—so can you."

Just read his Epistles, and hear how his words ring with encouragement. Imagine receiving a letter addressed to you personally, which started off with words like these: "I thank my God always when I mention you in my prayers, for I hear of your love and faith towards the Lord Jesus and towards all God's people. My prayer is that your fellowship with us in our common faith may deepen the understanding of all the blessings that our union with Christ brings us. For I am delighted and encouraged by your love: through you, my brother, God's people have been much refreshed" (Philemon 4-7, NEB).

#### **Tentmaking, Plus...**

Paul spent much time with some of his brethren, and we can be sure his personal company was a coveted inspiration. Imagine the eighteen months he was with Priscilla and Aquila. But we can be sure he was not spending his time with them discussing the politics of Rome, or the local town gossip, or even tent-making and the prospects of selling it. They were building each other up in their most holy faith. Paul was encouraging, admonishing, speaking with them of the sublime hope and shining joy that filled his



heart and theirs. His bright prospects for the future radiated through every stitch he took in those rough tents. The tents were not the limit of his thinking—he was thinking beyond, to broader fields of Christian service, to more ways in which he could minister to his brethren and help them toward the Kingdom, toward which he himself was pressing.

And what did they see as they watched him at work in their tent-making shop? We can be sure that they saw carefulness, diligence, perseverance. They saw one who was patient and composed, day in and day out. They saw one who was strictly honest and aboveboard, both with them his brethren and with strangers. They saw a man of dedication and prayer, to whom God was very near. They saw one who was genuine and kindly, who could set aside his own interests to help another. They saw one who could work without complaining whether he felt rested or tired, whether the work went well or not, whether he was feeling well or not.

They also saw one who didn't have to have everything done his way but was glad to let others have their way. And when something came out wrong, they saw one who was very careful not to blame another even when he thought he was not at fault. Such unselfishness, such patience, such composure, such happiness—it was an experience for them and for Paul.

For here was the one who could say, "I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). Unselfishness was part of every stitch and thread that went into the tents Paul made.

Do we wonder that Paul could say, "Copy me, as I copy Christ"!

We can be sure that there were times his brethren did not like what he said or did. There were times when some hated him for his bluntness, for his forthright denouncing of their sin, for his open and unsparing rebukes. After one such counterattack, Paul returned with, "The more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved"; or "You were doing splendidly. Who was it that prevented you from obeying the Truth?" (Gal. 5:7, Moffatt). But it was all part of his example. And while he was helping others, he was steadily adding to his own stature in Christ.

Paul led a disciplined and thoroughly Christian life. He obeyed his own command to persevere in tribulation (Rom. 12:12); and when at the end of his life he could say to Timothy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith," (II Tim. 4:7) he knew no one could honestly challenge his words.

Paul did it all so well—are we truly copying him? How is our example to others? Is our loyalty to Christ the first and most important concern in our lives? Do others see us justly proud of the cause we represent? Is our example always a radiant pattern of goodness, always building up, never fault-finding, harsh or critical?

Are we growing in our own relationship with God so that we can see His hand in our life? Are we continually taking on more and more the likeness of God? Can the beauty of Jesus be seen in our lives?

*Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me,  
All His wonderful passion and purity,  
Oh, Thou Savior Divine,  
All my being refine  
Till the beauty of Jesus be seen in me.*

Finally, what kind of pace in the Christian life are we setting? Do others see our lives as examples of diligence, discipline and persever-

ance? Do they see us taking this business of righteousness very seriously, as something they too should do more of? Are we ready to be a model of Christ in every aspect of our lives, to let others learn, receive, hear and see in us the things that will lead both them and us into the Kingdom?

In his farewell letter to Timothy, Paul again referred to his example: "You have followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance, persecutions, and sufferings" (II Tim. 3:10-11, NRSV). Paul could not separate right example from right living.

Paul put faith into work-clothes. This is what we all must do, if we would follow Christ's example. We must ask ourselves as did he, What am I living for? what in my life is worth dying for?

The story is told of a Scottish steam-driven train engine unable to reach the top of the mountain. The engine ran slower and slower and slower until it finally stopped.

"Whatever is the matter?" came the shout from the engine room. "Haven't you any water up there?" "Oh, yes," was the reply, "plenty of water, but it's not boiling." "Get the fire burning!" came the command. "Fire it up!"

We all need "firing up." We have all the essentials to keep us moving at top speed, but where is the heat—the intense, animated, boiling earnestness? Our faith needs firing up! Let us keep it at white heat, boiling, producing the power we need to finish our work. Everything we want, everything we have given our lives to obtain, is just ahead—life, glory, happiness, and everlasting joy! What can keep us from securing it—if only we copy Paul as he copied Christ?

And when that great Day comes, can we even faintly imagine the joy if there is someone who says, "I'm here, because I copied you!" MM



# God's Spiritual Creation

## The Garden of Eden

*Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.*  
— Isaiah 27:6

*A **garden** enclosed is my sister, my spouse.* — Song of Solomon 4:12

*Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd: and their soul shall be as a watered **garden**; and they shall not sorrow any more at all.*  
— Jeremiah 31:12

*And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered **garden**, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.*

— Isaiah 58:11

*For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the **garden** of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.*  
— Isaiah 51:3



**T**he location of the Garden of Eden is an enigma which has intrigued the minds of students through the ages. Fundamental Christianity has taught that Almighty God made a literal garden in which He placed a literal man whom He commanded to till and cultivate the land.

Scientists and archeologists have searched in vain for any evidence as to the location of such a Garden. And why in vain? First, they did not search in the right place, namely, the Bible, to gain information as to its location. Second, they had no idea of anything more than a literal garden and a man and woman placed in it to cultivate the soil and grow literal fruit.

Instead of searching in the Scriptures for the solution to the problem of the Garden of Eden, the majority have simply lost interest in the story because they could not understand it.

As we have seen, the Bible frequently explains its own symbols and metaphors. What is the Garden of Eden? Where is it? Who has ever seen it?

Let us look elsewhere in the Bible to understand this very special garden. Is the term "garden" used anywhere else in Scripture where the symbol is defined?

#### **What Is the Garden of the Lord?**

In searching for the site of a literal garden, men have displayed their ignorance of true Bible teaching. As we investigate this subject, we should keep in mind continually that we are considering these first three chapters of Genesis from the standpoint of a spiritual creation. Therefore, when we come to the Garden of Eden, let us examine it as an illustration of a deep spiritual truth which cannot be understood literally, as a part of the beautiful allegory of the plan of the Almighty

Creator for the perfecting and glorifying of this planet; for the Lord has told us that the Church, His people, compose the garden.

We are admonished by the apostle Paul to compare "spiritual things with spiritual" (I Cor. 2:13), that we may understand the mind of God as expressed by the prophets, Jesus and the apostles.

The first definitions of the word "Eden" as given in Gesenius' Hebrew and English Lexicon are: "Delight, pleasure." The original word for "garden" is *gan*, which has for its definitions: "The garden of Eden planted by God. A garden enclosed, Canticles 4:12; figuratively used of a chaste woman—Cant. 4:15; 6:2."

Canticles, often called Song of Solomon, creates a representative picture of the love of Christ for His Church, using the love of a bridegroom for his bride. Chapter 4:12, to which the Lexicon refers, reads as follows; "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed." The word "gardens" is used again in verse 15: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." Notice particularly how the Lexicon defines this symbolic use of the term "garden": "Figuratively used of a chaste woman." This chaste woman could suggest the Bride of Christ composed of both men and women, the faithful of the six-thousand-year day of probation. A similar representation occurs in Isa. 58:11, where the faithful are termed "a watered garden."

Like the rest of the first three chapters of Genesis, this expression cannot be understood literally, but it is part of the beautiful allegory of the plan of the Almighty Creator. These three chapters have no reference to the literal or physical creation, but to the spiritual creation,

the spiritual garden or vineyard of the Lord, in which men and women are being cultivated to become "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. 8:17).

#### **What Is the Vineyard?**

In searching the Scriptures we find that the vineyard of which Jesus and the prophets speak is the same as the Garden of Eden. The meaning of the original word for vineyard is given in the lexicon from the Hebrew: "A field set with plants of a nobler quality, especially

***What is the Garden of Eden? Where is it? Who has ever seen it?***

a vineyard....A vineyard is also sometimes used by the prophets as an image of the people of Israel—Isa. 5:1; Matthew 20:1."

Let us listen to the prophet Isaiah: I will "sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well-beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: and he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it...and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" The entire picture is representative. How can we know? The



Prophet himself tells us: "For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant; and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry" (Isa. 5:1-4, 7).

What is the vineyard or garden of the Lord? The house of Israel—spiritual Israel—His people, whether Jew or Gentile (Rom. 2:28-29). What were the plants He was cultivating? "The men of Judah" (Isa. 5:7). What was the tower? We are told in Proverbs 18:10: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." What kind of harvest was the keeper of the vine-

***God's call is still sounding to all who will hear, to all who have ears attuned to the heavenly message, "Come, work in the vineyard of the Lord."***

yard seeking—literal grapes? No, "He looked for judgment,...for righteousness."

We showed before that the Garden of Eden is not literal but refers to God's people, the bride of Christ. Now we have shown that the vineyard is the same, and represents God's people.

The lexicon cites Matthew 20 to illustrate how Jesus employed the term in the same symbolic sense: "For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vine-

yard....And he went out about the third hour...and said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you...And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle...He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire."

In the morning of the "day of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2) for the inhabitants of this planet, the Almighty God began to call laborers into His vineyard or garden—His Church. Adam, though not the first man to inhabit the earth, was the first called; this was during the early morning hours. Again during the third hour, Noah's day, God called laborers into His garden. In the sixth hour, the days of Moses, He was still calling. And in the ninth hour, the days of Jesus, He repeated His call and confirmed it by many wonderful signs and miracles. The resurrection of Jesus, confirmed by living witnesses, made a profound impression, and in the Apostolic Age more heeded the call than in any age before or since.

Now we are living in the eleventh or last hour of the day of salvation, and the call is still sounding to all who will hear, to all who have ears attuned to the heavenly message, "Come, work in the vineyard of the Lord." At the close of this hour the Lord of the vineyard will call His laborers to account, and will pay them according to what they have accomplished while working in His garden.

In Genesis, where God outlines His plan of salvation in symbolic language, Adam and Eve are said to have heard the voice of the Lord in the "cool of the day" calling them

to account. In the "cool of the day," the evening of the day of salvation, the last hour, Christ will come to judge His servants.

### Plants for the Vineyard

When we think of a garden, we do not picture a desert waste of barren sand but a productive plot of fertile soil in which are thriving trees, plants or vines capable of yielding a harvest for the benefit of the gardener. Likewise, the garden of the Lord is filled with spiritual plants which are now under the most diligent cultivation.

The Psalmist likened the nation of Israel to a vine under God's care and cultivation. "Turn us again, O God of hosts, and cause thy face to shine; and we shall be saved. Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it" (Ps. 80:7-8). God brought His vine, Israel, His chosen people, out of the land of Egypt, cleared the Promised Land of many of its wicked, worthless inhabitants, and transplanted His vine in Canaan.

"Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land" (v. 9). Ideally located, it flourished so as to cover the mountains in the south and the cedars of Lebanon to the north. It spread from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates.

But what has happened to these productive plants? God has permitted them to be damaged. Speaking especially of His chosen vine, Israel, He tells how the walls of the vineyard have been broken down, and those passing by "pluck and ravage its fruit" (Moffatt Bible).

### The Harvest

We read further in Ps. 80:11, 14-15, of this beautiful vine: "She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river....Return, we beseech thee, O



God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine; and the vineyard which thy right hand hath planted, and the branch that thou madest strong for thyself." These words are prophetic of the time when Christ will return. As Lord of the harvest, He comes to examine the fruit of the vine. No imperfections nor immaturity will pass unnoticed. If, after we have been planted in the garden of the Lord "a noble vine, wholly a right seed," we turn into "a degenerate plant of a strange vine" (Jer. 2:21), if our vine produces only the foul rank growth of malice and self-importance instead of the precious fruits of patience, humility and kindness, then we shall most certainly be rejected by the Master. The wheat shall be gathered into the granary; the tares bound in bundles and burned—destroyed. For those who have not borne good fruit "the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and of desperate

sorrow" (Isa. 17:11). Then shall be impressed upon the unfaithful the truthfulness of the axiom: As a man sows, so also shall he reap.

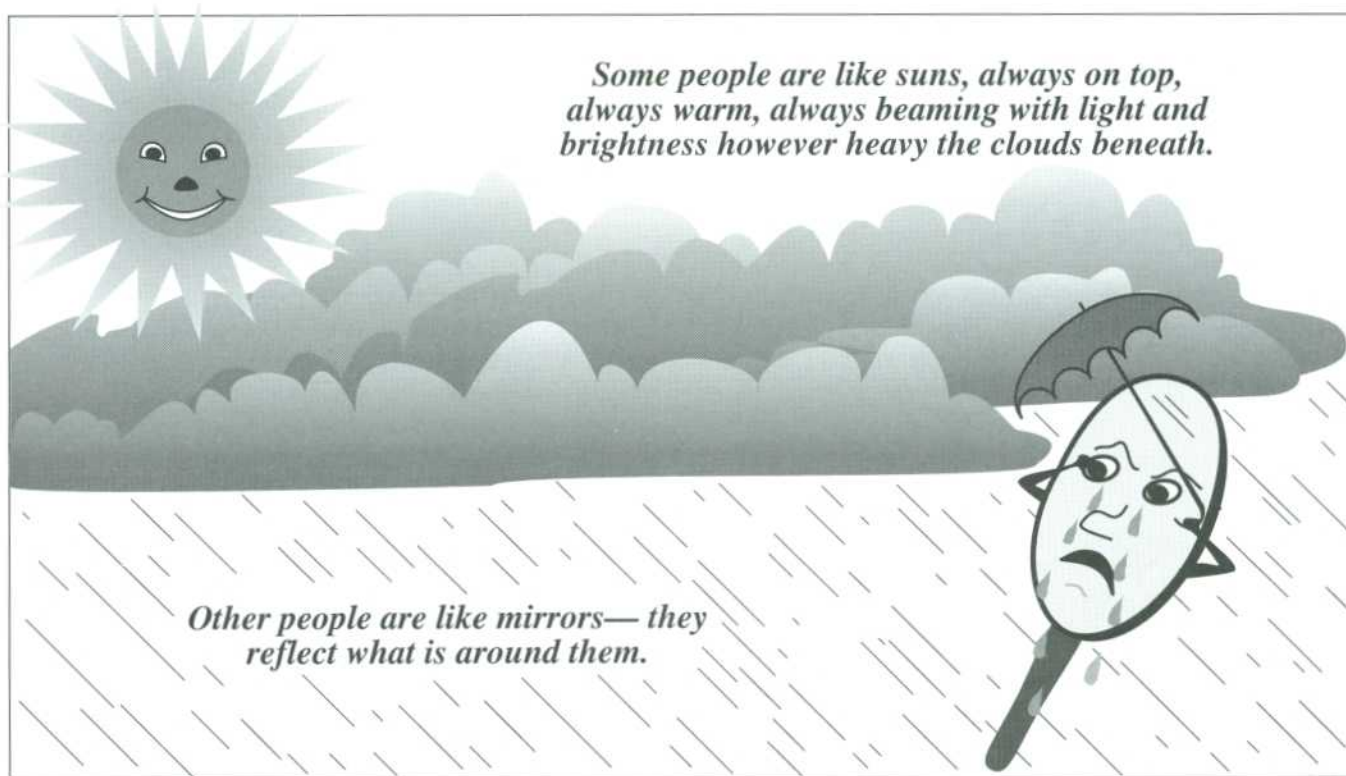
While the harvest is to the unfaithful a time of "desperate sorrow," to the faithful it is the beginning of "everlasting joy." Christ "shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit" (Isa. 27:6). "In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely" (Isa. 4:2). If we are a part of this "garden" we shall be in a beautiful place for evermore.

Then shall Psalm 96:11-13 be fulfilled: "Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to

judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." These are the people who bear the fruits of righteousness: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, good-

***The garden of the Lord is filled with spiritual plants under the most diligent cultivation.***

ness, faith, meekness, temperance." If we bear these fruits of the Spirit now we shall be permitted to remain in the Garden of God and continue to partake of its lovely fruits throughout eternity. MM







## **“The Lord Cometh with Ten Thousands of His Saints”**

**“Please explain the words of Enoch in Jude 14, ‘Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints.’ Who are the ten thousand saints?”**

“Saints” is a term describing the cortege that will accompany Christ when He returns. The various versions use different words: “myriads of holy ones” (Moffatt); “his holy myriads” (RSV); “myriads of angels” (NEB); “thousands of his holy ones” (New Catholic Edition).

Several times when Jesus spoke of His return He mentioned the angels who would accompany Him. He did not state a number but spoke as though there would be many. For example, Matt. 16:27: “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels....” Again, “...when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38). Hebrews 12 is more specific, that Christ will return with “an innumerable company of angels” (Heb. 12:22).

Christ will not be coming alone. He was taken away by angels, who carried Him to heaven; (Acts 1:10-11), and He will come again “in like manner,” though when He returns He will not need to be carried—He will be on His own, being the immortal King of the whole earth.

### **◆ Who Was the Twelfth Apostle?**

**“Why do you say Paul was the twelfth Apostle? Wasn’t Matthias chosen and numbered with the eleven in the place of Judas—see Acts 1. This would make Paul the thirteenth Apostle.”**

We know from Revelation 21 that there are only twelve Apostles of the Lamb, no more. John saw in the symbolic city “the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb” (Rev. 21:14).

The choosing of Matthias was not by Jesus. Jesus previously had bidden His Eleven to “tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). After Acts 1, we hear no more of Matthias. We do know that Paul was directly chosen by Jesus Himself (see Acts 9). Paul himself testified that he had been sent by Jesus (see Acts 22:14; 26:16-18). Paul called himself an apostle in almost every letter as he addressed his brethren. For example, “Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God” (Romans 1:1); or “Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God” (I Cor. 1:1); or “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God” (II Cor. 1:1); or “Paul, an apostle, [not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead]” (Gal. 1:1), etc. From reading the Epistles of Paul we have no question about his apostleship; and we hear nothing about Matthias.

### **◆ Locusts in Revelation**

**“I would like to understand the part of Revelation about the locusts coming up on the earth to torment wicked people. I surely want to understand this. I have never heard it explained, but I have read the Bible many times, I love God’s Word, and I believe it and do my best to obey it.”**

The text in question is Rev. 9:1-11.

The book of Revelation is, according to its own statement, concerning “things to come,” a book of prophecy for the future time when Christ returns to bring all the forces of earth under His dominion and set up His everlasting Kingdom of righteousness and peace. The nations of earth will resist His righteous rule, and He will have prepared different methods to



force them to comply with His dictates. This is the only way that the earth can come under the total jurisdiction of the new government and the Kingdom of God be a worldwide success for the benefit of all who live.

The book of Revelation is highly symbolic, and we do not know what the locusts and all the individual symbols represent. One message, however, comes through clear and strong: that the forces of Christ will triumph, that all who oppose Him will be destroyed. As far as the exact methods of their destruction are concerned, we do not know.

The last two verses of Revelation 9 show the effects of the punishments described in the chapter, that in spite of all the judgments poured out, still "the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues...repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood:...Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts" (vs. 20-21). Mankind will not willingly give up their "right" to rule themselves, and do as they please.

But notice earlier in the chapter, the order was given that none should be harmed who had "the seal of God in their foreheads." This should be our great concern, to get this seal in our foreheads, the Word of God and the mark of approval which will designate us as being on the side of Christ and the saints and so be spared when His judgments are poured out upon the evildoers.

#### ◆ God Uses Blindness?

**"What does John 9:3 mean when it talks about God using blindness to manifest his works?"**

John 9:1-3 reads, "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."

It was a common idea in Jesus' day, as it also is even today, that sickness or physical disability is the result of sin. Jesus said that it is not, that the man's blindness was not caused by the sin of either the man or his parents. But why did He seem to say that the man was born blind so that "the works of God should be made manifest in him"?

In a sense, anytime God acts He is using a situation that needs correction in order to show His power over that situation. Jesus made a similar statement at the time of Lazarus' death, prior to the miracle, that Lazarus' sickness was "for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby" (John 11:4).

Jesus knew that He was going to use the death of Lazarus to demonstrate God's power to resurrect. God does indeed use a situation to manifest His works, though it is perhaps more a way of speaking than an actual "use" or reason for the miracle. But there really is no other way. If God is going to show that He can restore one to life, He must use someone who is dead. If He is going to show that He can cure sickness, He must use someone who is sick. But God does not first cause the sickness or cause the death in order that He might show His power; these conditions are already existing, part of the mortal scheme under which we live. In performing a miracle, God only makes use of these to show that He is superior to these conditions. He did not need to plan in advance that the condition should exist so that He would have opportunity to show His power.

#### ◆ What Translation?

**"What Bible translation is most accurate for studying the atonement or the role of works in salvation?"**

We use principally the King James, however some of the newer translations are more accurate, having been translated from earlier manuscripts than were used for the King James translation.

As for the particular study of the atonement and the role of works in salvation, our only suggestion would be that a good translation is better than a paraphrase. In the paraphrases, the authors do not literally translate the words used by the inspired writers but rephrase them according to their interpretation of the writer's thought. Sometimes this is useful; at other times it only makes erroneous teaching sound as though it were Biblical.

#### ◆ About Arminius

**"Did Jacob Arminius move the church away from Augustine and toward Pelagius? To what degree?"**

Your question is beyond the scope of our discussions, but we might say that from the records of history, Arminius was one who, during the Sixteenth Century, disagreed openly with the doctrine of predestination as it was being taught by Calvin and others. Though he did not understand all the true teachings of the Bible, he could see that this doctrine was grossly in error, that the Bible taught the free will of man, man's own free choice and man's ability to choose either to do right or wrong. We are not prepared to comment on the effects of his teachings, though we might say that his thinking was more in line with Pelagius than other teachers of the early centuries.



(Continued from page 6)

His children but "near." "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Ps. 145:18-19). "After this manner... pray ye," said Jesus, and He proceeded to give His disciples the perfect pattern for prayer. He did not say "If you pray..." but He commanded them to pray. Again He said, "Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is" (Mark 13:33).

There is one more aspect of our asking that we want to consider: Has God really promised to give everything we ask? When Jesus said, "Ask, and ye shall receive," did He mean that God would provide according to our whim?

All of our asking must be in accord with what God has promised to give. He has planned that He will give, and wants us to ask; but our asking must be according to His will. If we do not ask according to His will, we, technically, have not asked, because God has not heard any request. The apostle John was speaking of this aspect of the Divine arrangement when he wrote, "If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us" (I John 5:14). Again, our own personal lives must be in subjection, we must be doing the things that are pleasing in His sight. Here again we have the word of the apostle John, that "whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (I John 3:22). God's offer to give is not free for all. There is a

condition we must meet. If we receive our request, it will be "...because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

But what could be more wonderful than the satisfactions He offers. In the words of the Psalmist, "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light" (Ps. 36:7-9). Life and light and sure, abundant satisfaction for ever—if only we ask, seek, and "do those things that are pleasing in his sight."

MM

## Defending the Bible

(Continued from page 25)

The Bible tells of the drastic turning away from true doctrine which occurred during the early centuries of our era, following the ascension of Christ. The apostle Paul predicted that even among his own church people there would be "men coming forward who will distort the truth to induce the disciples to break away and follow them" (Acts 20:30). He said also, speaking prophetically, that the "time will come when they will not stand wholesome teaching, but will follow their own fancy and gather a crowd of teachers to tickle their ears. They will stop their ears to the truth and turn to mythology" (II Tim. 4:3-4, NEB). This prophecy was literally fulfilled, and very soon after the time of Paul. MM

## Go with God

(Continued from page 2)

Enoch was determined to give up his way and go with God, and God rewarded his obedience.

Before two can walk together, there must be a harmony of sentiment and purpose. There must be inner accord before there can be any real fellowship.

On the other side of the same law, a lack of harmony causes division. Where there is no agreement, one will go this way, another that. In walking with God, there can be no unity except as we conform our will to His. It cannot be expected, or even desired, that God should bend to our whim. Human ignorance must give way to Divine wisdom; human error and sin must bend to Divine holiness. Such is the teaching of the law and Gospel.

Do we cherish our own way? Do we like ourselves and our notions, our opinions, our judgments, better than any other? Then God will go His way, while we go ours, and we will not walk together. And the end of our walking will be—? Our Lord said it in these words: "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat" (Matt. 7:13).

We can go our own way—God does not compel us to go with Him—but the end will be total oblivion. Why not show our good judgment by giving up our way and *going with God*—and reach His destination, for He alone is offering life, even life for evermore!

MM



**Communication in the Home** Paul says, "Speak the truth in love." In many homes people pride themselves on speaking the truth as they see it, but their words lack love. Sarcastic and critical tones can wreck a home. At the other extreme are people who are not completely honest because they fear hurting another's feelings. Such a relationship will inevitably be superficial because so much of the iceberg is under water.

Consider why Paul said, "Speak the truth—in love."

*Deceit at first may have its sweets,  
But these are brief, decaying;  
So speak the truth as God directs,  
For all your words He's weighing.*

Stop adding up your troubles and start counting your blessings.

*We go from strength to strength because we  
go from struggle to struggle.*

The most glorious victory over an enemy is to turn him into a friend.

*When we cannot see our way,  
Let us trust and still obey;  
He who bids us forward go,  
Cannot fail the way to show.  
Though the sea be deep and wide,  
Though a passage seem denied;  
Fearless let us still proceed,  
Since the Lord vouchsafes to lead.*

*There lies thy cross; beneath it meekly bow;  
It fits thy stature now;  
Who scornful pass it with averted eye,  
'Twill crush them by and by.*

*To bear the cross of Christ is no single action done once for all. It consists of continual practicing, day after day, the small duties of life. "And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). Ask yourself, In what way am I taking up my cross daily?*

*Every morning, receive with gratitude your own special cross from the hands of your heavenly Father.*

When the mind thinks nothing evil, when the soul covets no wrong, when the body acts nothing contrary to the will of God, this is perfect sanctification.

*Keep your lamp trimmed and burning, and let God place it where He will.*





# Thy Kingdom Come

*On Zion's hill God sets His Son,  
To Him each knee is bending;  
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done  
Through ages never-ending.*

*What alleluias rend the skies!  
What shouts of acclamation!  
Angelic hosts in heav'nly choirs  
Now voice their adoration.*

*O nations all, break forth in praise  
And set the joy-bells ringing,  
For Christ shall rule in righteousness;  
Great blessings He is bringing.*

*Ring on! ring on a thousand years!  
And then ring on forever!  
Earth's joy and peace and happiness  
And glory ceasing never!*