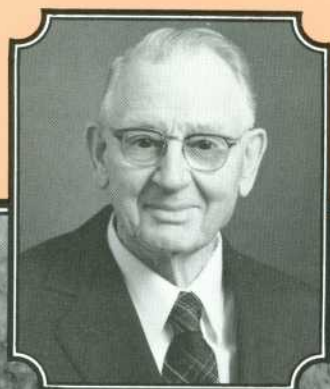


# Megiddo Message

*In Memory of  
Kenneth E. Flowerday  
President and Pastor, 1958-1985*



*In Love . . . In Gratitude . . . In Hope*

## A Faith Unmoved

*In Memory of Kenneth E. Flowerday  
President and Editor in Chief, 1958-1985*

In November, 1958, Kenneth E. Flowerday became pastor and president of the Megiddo Church. It was a troubled time, nevertheless he accepted the position with a firmness of faith aptly described in the words of our hymn:

O, for a faith that will not shrink,  
Though pressed by many a foe;  
That will not tremble on the brink  
Of poverty or woe;  
That will not murmur nor complain  
Beneath the chastening rod;  
But in the hour of grief or pain  
Can lean upon its God;  
A faith that shines more bright and clear  
When tempests rage without;  
That when in danger knows no fear,  
In darkness feels no doubt.

*Faith unmoved* is a solid thing, as solid as the Rock of Ages. A man once said that he often trembled, but that his Rock never did.

This was especially true of Brother Flowerday. To read his writings is to witness an honest, all-out dedication to truth; to see a servant of God as he wrestled with the great issues of Christian living, seeking always to instruct, encourage, upbuild, and exhort.

Throughout his editorship, Brother Flowerday was constantly rethinking and applying the principles of that faith. He was on good ground when exercising such faith, for the Epistles of Paul abound with such. In fact, here is the real beauty of faith, in its power to expand horizons, to change lives, to defeat sin, to reach goals. Herein lies the power of *faith unmoved*, the pearl of great price, for which one is willing to

forego everything of this world if only he can obtain it.

As editor, Brother Flowerday sought to give insight, spiritual depth and balance to our publication—a balanced diet of doctrine, prophecy, and practical Christian experience. At the same time he sought to emphasize the bright hope of every true believer, of living in the New Age; the confident expectation that Christ *is* coming, that God's promises are sure, and that living the Christ-life *is* possible even now. A scholar in his own right, nothing delighted him more than an opportunity to communicate to another the rich beauty of a gem of truth.

Combining profound understanding, spiritual sensitivity and zeal, his one concern was to uphold and defend the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3). It may not always have been couched in terms his hearers expected, it may not always have had the polish his critics would have preferred, nor was it always appreciated when and where it was said; but the note of truth always rang clear. Rather than taking the easy route of compromise, he maintained unflinching loyalty to the truth of God's Word and used both voice and pen to declare "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

A *faith unmoved* does not crumble, for that which is of God is not affected by the changes of time. Now, for a short while, as God sees fit, the work he did so well must be entrusted to lesser hands, but only for a while; for the great Dawning of God's Tomorrow is at hand. And then we shall have help from on high.

Until then we say with the assurance of the apostle Paul, "with hands outstretched to whatever lies ahead I go straight for the goal—my reward the honor of my high calling by God in Christ" (Phil. 3:14, Phillips).

We of the Editorial Staff of the *Megiddo Message* feel keenly the loss of our Senior Editor, Brother Flowerday. His passing leaves a void that cannot be easily—or equally—filled. The reason is obvious. Having served the Church for more than twenty-six years, he had become our stay and support. Even when his physical strength was failing, his insightful guidance, his judgment, his wisdom were priceless. In countless ways we relied on him to direct us in fruitful ways, to give us perspective, to keep our eyes focused on our goals.

Now he is no longer with us, and his resources no longer available to us. This diminishes us. But he would not have us stop, not for a moment. The work is of God, and with God's help we intend to carry on in the manner to which he accustomed us.

To his memory this issue is lovingly dedicated.

## Megiddo means . . .

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

### We believe

—in God the Creator of all things, all men, and all life.

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

### We believe

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

## Bible Quotations

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

- NEB—New English Bible
- NIV—New International Version
- NAS—New American Standard
- RSV—Revised Standard Version
- TLB—The Living Bible
- TEV—Today's English Version
- JB—The Jerusalem Bible, Reader's Edition
- Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English
- Berkeley—The Modern Language New Testament
- Weymouth—The New Testament in Modern Speech

## About Our Cover

Our cover photo was taken during the 1920s, somewhere in New York State. Nine Megiddo missionaries are standing outside their tent of meeting, in which they held services while traveling. Fourth from the left is Brother Flowerday, then in his thirties.

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November, 1985

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THE SIN OF DOING NOTHING

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

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





**Kenneth E. Flowerday**  
President and Pastor  
1958-1985

*In Love . . .*  
*In Gratitude . . .*  
*In Hope*

*On September 18, funeral services were conducted in the Megiddo Church for the Rev. Kenneth E. Flowerday, pastor and president since 1958. Following is the text of the service, delivered by Brother Newton H. Payne.*

**Scripture:**

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.

“And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

“And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

“ . . . these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

“And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.” —*Revelation 14.*

## Prayer:

O Thou before whose face the generations rise and pass away, who committest to us the swift and solemn trust of life, from whom we come, to whom we return, and on whom at every moment we depend, from our varied walks we come together today drawn by a common sympathy, a common affection, and a common love.

We, frail children of time and change, are grateful to Thee for preserving us in life. Despite our many failures in our struggle against sin, Thy mercy is still extended; and we dare to believe that through continued effort on our part and by Thy help we may yet be fitted for an eternal place in Thy Kingdom and receive lives as lasting as Thine own. In this high faith we have gathered today, in love, in gratitude, and in hope.

For Thy servant, whom Thou hast lent us and whom Thou now hast taken from us, we offer Thee our grateful and heartfelt thanks. We feel privileged that our lives have touched his, that we have known the sphere of his influence and the strength of his example.

We who have seen youth cut off in the springtime of life, thank Thee for this life fulfilled: by reason of strength and by Thy grace, more than four score and ten years. We who have seen death that is tainted with sin and laden with bitter memories thank Thee for this death that is clean and free from bitterness. We who have seen death without hope thank Thee for this life full of hope; not a passing dream but a lively, sustaining expectation that could not be dimmed, an unflinching vision of the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

For the rich heritage into which he was born, for the strengthening influences thrown round him in his

formative years, and for the steady-ing principles of truth to which he committed his life—and which, by Thy grace, are also ours—we give Thee thanks.

For his life of far-reaching usefulness and industry; for his firm dedication to truth, and for his keen discerning of life's true value in the perspective of eternity, we give Thee thanks.

For his unflinching candor, his vigorous, thrusting mind, his radiant example, and his relentless piercing of all pretense and sham, we give Thee thanks.

For his deep devotion to Thee, and so to us his congregation; for all who are richer because his life

touched theirs, for all who have been helped to believe in themselves because of his confidence in them, who have been ashamed to do shoddy work or be shoddy people because of his encouragement and high expectation, we give Thee thanks.

And now, dear Father, as we pursue the completing of our work, we pray Thy continued watchcare and blessing, that we may meet with joy in that soon coming Day of Resurrection and share together the delights of eternity. In the strong and abiding name of Him who is our Rock, our Shield, our Joy and our Salvation we pray. Amen.

## Text:

### Beautiful Living Is An Art

**B**EAUTIFUL living is an art. It is more than adherence to a code of clearly defined "do's" and "don't's." It is a delicate combining of rare skills, developed and refined by discipline under the loving watchcare of God.

Yes, beautiful living is an art! It is a "journey inward" toward Christian maturity, and a "journey outward" in Christian service. Just as the artist is devoted to giving form to the beauty of shape, color, or sound, just so is the true Christian devoted to transforming his or her life into a perfect expression of the will of God. Look at a great painting and you see in it something that captured the artist's imagination. It is called a "classic" because it expresses a value that is timeless. Look closer at this great painting, and you see even more—you see something of the artist himself. True Christian living is like that. It is the heart-expression of the artist, as he portrays eternal values in the matchless colors of virtue and goodness.

Every art has its basic elements. Painting has its basic colors; and almost anyone with pigment, brush and canvass can paint; but to capture great beauty, then combine the colors to produce a masterpiece: this calls for the skills of an artist.

Sculpture has its basic dimensions, and anyone with hammer and chisel can split a stone; but to see a thing of beauty in the unhewn slab, and to chisel and chip until there emerges from the rocky substance a form that lives in the hearts of people for centuries—this calls for the hand of the artist.

*(Continued next page)*

Music is made up of basic notes; and any amateur can take a pencil and write notes on a staff. But to hear a thing of beauty that takes hold of the imagination, and then to use notes to capture that inspiration and translate it into orderly, audible form—this is the task of the artist. This is what Handel was describing when, upon completing his writing of "The Messiah," he said, "I did think that I did see all heaven before me, and the great God."

Any schoolchild can use the basic sounds and symbols of the alphabet to form words; but to take those

that here is an artist.

How beautiful, and how rare, is such a life—you stop and gasp for breath at the magnificence and sheer achievement of it. Your heart beats faster as you realize that one can take the same basic substances common to all, and out of them create the mental and moral likeness of the divine. Here is life resplendently beautiful.

Here is the ideal to which each of us is called. And here is the goal to which Brother Flowerday dedicated his life. And while we realize fully that the final judgment rests with

worked to develop a strong, self-mastering spirit, an integrity of mind that was independent of his surroundings—and his final months showed the extent to which he succeeded. Afflicted, confined, and helpless, he was consistently radiant with his bright hope of future life. Instead of dwelling on the unpleasantness of mortal afflictions, his mind was in another world—where pain and sickness and death are unknown. When he could speak only a few words, and with great effort, they were invariably to encourage others. "Mortality shall be swallowed up of life," he said, or "Our great hope is the main thing." Even when he knew that there was no hope of recovery, he continued to welcome each new day with gratitude; his spirit was never overwhelmed. One day someone asked him how he was feeling, when he had been bedfast for several months. His quick reply was, "I feel like pressing on!" His mind was not at the mercy of his circumstances or his spirit the slave of disruptive situations.

During the last few months his years of investment in conscientious self-discipline paid rich dividends, making life more pleasant both for himself and those who cared for him. Through a full six months of total helplessness and confinement, with its inevitable discomforts and pains, he never once was heard to complain. Nor did the long hours of waning strength and weakness ever bring from him the slightest sign of dispiritedness, depression or despair. Unfailingly patient, he expressed gratitude for every service in his behalf, however small. His nurses all testify that never had they seen anything like it.

Brother Flowerday has been an integral part of the Megiddo Church during almost all of its history—during all his ninety years he was

***All people are equipped with the same basics of body and mind. But when someone takes these gifts and uses them to fashion a character of matchless loveliness, you realize suddenly that here is an artist.***

same sounds and symbols and put them together in such a way that hearts are stirred and lives are changed, this needs the skill of the artist.

All people are equipped with the same basics of body and mind in greater or lesser measure. All breathe, and eat, and sleep; all have the capacity to reason, remember and reflect. But when someone takes these same gifts of body and mind and uses them to fashion a character of matchless loveliness, a life that makes truth real and visible in everyday situations; a life that transforms theory into living fact and godly principle into daily conduct; a life that is possessed and sustained by a hope so vital and so compelling that its vision never fades even in the face of acute suffering—when you see such a life, you realize suddenly

God, we feel confident that his was such a life. If his earnestness, his searching self-honesty, his years of constancy in the disciplines of faith, his matchless submission and his unfailing patience in suffering be not worthy of reward, where is there hope for any earthborn?

We speak often of the hundredfold God gives us even now for faithful service. This hundredfold was clearly visible to those who knew Brother Flowerday. He took the trials of final sickness with the same even spirit that he took the trials of active years—with a will that was superior to circumstances. He was a living illustration of the words we know from his sermon, "Nothing external shall take command of me."

But it was not automatic. Throughout his life, Brother Flowerday



involved with its founder, its leaders, its missionaries and its varied ministries, both temporal and spiritual. I believe each of us here today is richer for his life in more ways than we can realize.

Brother Flowerday was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on July 23, 1891, to Edward and May Flowerday.

When he was just four years old, his parents became persuaded of the worthwhileness of Brother Nichols' cause and decided to cast their lot among his followers.

His childhood memories centered around time spent with Brother Nichols and his wife, to whom the Flowerday family lived neighbor. (His far-sighted parents intentionally provided for this, by building a house right next to Brother Nichols' in Ellington, Minnesota when young Kenneth was just five years old.)

In fact, Brother Flowerday enjoyed almost constant association with our founder until the time of Brother Nichols' death, and many were the personal lessons he derived from this acquaintance. As Brother Nichols would have wished, the early association left a permanent impression upon his young mind, giving him a keen sense of faith and purpose that stayed with him his whole life through. Building on the impressions of those early years, he developed an abiding love for God, a deep reverence for His Word, and an unshakable confidence in the solid realities of faith to which Brother Nichols was committed.

When he was ten years old, the Flowerday family was among those who sold their property and moved on board the Mission Ship *Megiddo*. Together with some eighty other members, they shared all the delights, disciplines and adventures that came with more than two years of floating home life and intensive missionary work, as they traversed the Mississippi and its tributaries. When the boat was sold in 1904 and the group located permanently in Rochester, New York, Brother Flowerday was among them.

Through his young adult years he was active in all aspects of the group's missionary activities, being one of their most zealous missionaries. His means of financial support, as interior decorator, was at best part-time, as he contributed major portions of his best working years to the missionary field.

Between 1915 and 1924, he was boat builder, mechanic, and pilot of the three yachts used by the organization.

After the yachts had accomplished their purpose, he was among those who conceived a new mode of missionary work, a Gospel Car, capable of housing the missionaries and also serving as their vehicle of transportation. This was before the days of mobile homes, and the Gospel Car was a unique invention. Brother



**Before the days of mobile homes, the Gospel Car (above) was a unique invention. Brother Flowerday contributed largely of time and effort to the design and construction of this body, which served as the missionaries' home away from home. He also participated actively in the many meetings which they held. He is third from the left in the picture below.**



Flowerday contributed largely of time and effort to the design and construction of this body, which served as their home away from home. He also participated actively in the many meetings which they held in churches and halls around New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and New England.

Years later, when this mode of missionary activity seemed no longer practical, he used his own funds to build a house trailer with which he used to make yearly trips to the southern part of the United States. There

*Blessed are the pure in heart,  
For they our God shall see,  
And from His presence ne'er depart  
Through all eternity.*

*They shall be My delight,  
Who here delight in Me,  
And they shall walk with Me in white  
Who seek for purity.*

*No more in thought they err,  
They're free from ev'ry stain,  
They've washed their robes of character,  
And spotless they remain.*

was just one purpose in all of the travel and missionary effort: to encourage people to study the Bible and to prepare for the coming of Christ.

In addition to the missionary efforts, Brother Flowerday also gave his active interest and support to the church's ministry of music, serving many years as a member of the choir and band, giving freely of his talents in the praise of God.

Brother Flowerday found numerous applications for his decorating skills in the maintaining and upgrading of the church buildings. The last time the church was redecorated, he contributed a major work of art to the interior of the church auditorium, handpainting ten large Scripture murals on the walls.

All through his life, Brother Flowerday showed a deep and thoughtful appreciation for the real meaning of our beliefs, and frequently used his pen to communicate those appreciations. Even during his most active years he contributed numerous articles for publication in the church periodical, the *Megiddo Message*, of which he became editor in 1958. For a period of several years during the 1940's, in addition to his regular work he filled a need in the publishing department, compiling material and

setting type for the *Message* and other church publications.

Upon the death of Brother Thatcher in November, 1958, the pastorate of the Church fell to Brother Flowerday—a responsibility which he did not seek but which he filled masterfully with exceptional qualities of leadership, wisdom and dedication. Wholehearted, unassuming, never satisfied with even the best he could do, he spoke often of what he called his “inadequacy” for the task, but I do not believe the inadequacy was visible to any but himself.

One of his greatest talents was that of lending helpful advice. Having a wealth of spiritual insight and experience from which to draw, an intuitive knowledge of human nature and an uncommon amount of common sense, he was invaluable as a counselor. And he was never too busy to be interrupted—in fact, he gave you the feeling that his most pressing obligation at that moment was to talk with you, and his parting words were always “Come again.”

Though his days in a schoolroom were very limited, he was among the ranks of the self-educated. A student by nature, he had a keen interest in practical knowledge and early in life acquired a profound knowledge of the Bible. Gifted also as a teacher, he had an immense capacity for making Bible truths simple and clear. His teaching had also the further quality of sincere personal belief, which added a dimension of real depth to what he said. He said often that God gave us minds to *use*, and He intended us to think. Many of us cherish the memory of the hours we spent in his Bible classes, as he did his best to make Bible truths plain and practical. And he took it seriously. When we failed to grasp the meaning of a passage, he was grieved.

When in 1958 he became editor of the *Megiddo Message*, he immediately went to teaching with his pen, spending countless hours answering questions and clarifying our understanding of difficult passages.

It was my own privilege to know Brother Flowerday at close range for as long as I can remember, and I shall remember him as a man with a great mind, a great will, and a great goal. His accomplishments would fill a book. Always strong in his adherence to truth and principle, conscientious in meeting his responsibilities; always ready to lend a hand in any work of the Church; doing his part to promote brotherliness and goodwill; with a sincere dedication to truth, a profound love of life, and an overpowering desire for future life—we can all be better by following his example.

“Every day a masterpiece” might well have been his motto as he worked seriously to make each day his best.

Brother Flowerday wanted nothing so much as to live to see the great Day of the Lord arrive. But he knew, also, that God's ways are not always ours, and was prepared to accept whatever was the Lord's will for him, saying “Thy will be done.”

I can think of nothing more appropriate than to apply to Brother Flowerday a thought that he gleaned from a passage in Revelation. In it the Revelator is speaking, and the message seems especially beamed to the time of the end. “And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them.” How might their death be “blessed . . . from henceforth”? Because their work is done, their reward is sure, now they can “rest from their labors” and trials—to give their brethren a little



more time to complete their work. Death will be "blessed" for these select individuals in the sense of its brevity, so short will be their sleep, so soon will come the morning of the Resurrection. So short will be the time before they will awake to pick up the tasks they laid down that it will seem like little more than a good night's sleep. Only a little while, until he shall awake.

And now, dear Brother, if you could speak to us once again from this pulpit, what would you say? We know your message would be the same that we have heard so often. You would warn us not to be too absorbed with things of here and now, to make every move count for the Kingdom, with an earnestness that amounts to enthusiasm, knowing that what God has promised He surely will fulfill. And you would conclude with a reminder that the coming of the Lord is just as sure, just as certain, as that tomorrow's sun will rise. The day of the Lord *will* come and we had better busy ourselves getting ready.

May this hour be to each of us a steppingstone, may it be a time of heart-searching, a time to realize as never before the seriousness of sin and the need to use to the maximum each day, each hour that is extended.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord . . . that they may rest from their labors." So rest, beloved leader, while we complete the work assigned to us; for it will not be long. The Day of the Lord is near—nearer than it has ever been before.

Only a little while and, if faithful, we shall see you again, in the light and power and glory of God, and surely we shall love you more than ever.

MM

## *When the Angels Sing*

*When the azure blue is riven in twain,  
And the Great King comes to the earth again,  
When the trumpets sound and the saints acclaim  
And they own and bless His sovereign Name,  
When the thunders roll and the heavens ring,  
Oh! I want to be there—*

*When the angels sing.*

*When He comes with power to reward His own,  
And the Great Judge sits on His mighty throne,  
When the saints come forth from among the dead  
And the Court is set and the names are read,  
And the thunders roll and the heavens ring,  
Oh! I want to be there—*

*When the angels sing.*

*When the marriage feast for the Bride is set—  
A glorious Day they shall ne'er forget—  
When myriads of angels shout as one  
And praise the Bride for her work well done,  
And the thunders roll and the heavens ring,  
Oh! I want to be there—*

*When the angels sing.*

*When sin and sorrow are gone for aye  
And the night is lost in eternal day,  
When struggle and toil are forever done,  
All the earth is the Kingdom of God's own Son,  
And the thunders roll and the heavens ring—  
Oh! I want to be there—*

*When the angels sing!*

—Contributed.

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# Bliss Eternal

by Kenneth E. Flowerday

Published in the Megiddo Message, January 20, 1951

THE thought of enjoying a condition that might fittingly be described as bliss, appeals strongly to every one of us. Dreamers have dreamed of the existence of a golden age where people could live relieved of fear, hate, and the many evils that now perplex us; freed from the perpetual struggle for the means of existence, and where pain and grief no longer could enter to cause sadness and despair.

At a meeting of the Associated Press managing editors some years ago, it was proposed that those present indicate the news story that they would most like to see spread across the pages of the next day's newspapers. The large majority voted for the story that would announce a reconciliation between the world's two most powerful nations, the removal of the tensions caused by the fear of another world war.

Another welcome announcement would be a "liquidation of all public debts in the country, federal, state and national, with an end of all taxes above those needed for the actual cost of current expenses."

The editors agreed, "We would like to see a headline announcing the final conquest of cancer, infantile paralysis and heart disease."

The editors reminded us that "although we live in a world of fact our

minds constantly invite us into a world of fancy. The ideal may be far from the factual yet there is nothing to prevent us from soaring out among the stars, picturing the perfect conditions under which we would wish to live if we could reshape the world."

Their fascinating dream over, they got down to earthly realities again, to the realization that such a state of affairs, however transporting, does not and cannot exist. We agree with them that in man's world no such state of bliss can prevail. But how stimulating the thought that there is somewhere in the universe a Power that *can* bring about such a state of affairs as we all long for. It is still more stimulating to be assured that it is possible that we ourselves can experience that bliss firsthand.

The fact that man has misappropriated the natural wealth of the world and so mismanaged affairs that human problems have become hopelessly knotted is no evidence that it was the Creator's plan for such to be the case. He foresaw that man's free moral agency would bring him to this impasse, and forewarned us of the things that would come upon the earth; but He is in no way responsible for their existence.

The Word of God pictures a state

of bliss which shall one day be the portion of all the blest inhabitants of the new world. Listing war as the No. 1 enemy of mankind, as an institution it definitely will have to give way to a blessing of universal peace. We read: "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder" (Ps. 46:9). And again: "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Mic. 4:3).

Peace on earth and goodwill toward men shall some day become a reality. "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Isa. 11:9; Ps. 72:7).

With the passing of war and strife shall pass the plague of fear. The prophetic forecast is: "They shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid" (Mic. 4:4). A blissful state, indeed!

During the Millennium, the glo-



rious reign of Christ and His saints, sickness and death shall be unknown to the inhabitants of earth, hence there will be no further need for the services of the medical profession. "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; . . . and they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them, . . . and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands" (Isa. 33:24; 65:20-22). Dying in infancy shall be unheard of, premature death a thing unknown, while the life span will be so extended that one dying at the age of 100 years shall still be accounted as a child. Men and women shall painlessly grow old and fall into death's sleep without pining sickness or months of emaciation.

But even a golden age such as this leaves much to be desired, for anything that ends in death cannot fulfill our desire for bliss that is eternal. The cessation of life at one hundred years, two hundred years, five hundred years, one thousand years would be just as real and just as tragic as at sixty-five. The longer one lived under such ideal conditions the sweeter life would become, and the more he would hate to give it up. Hence a bliss to satisfy fully our yearnings must be eternal, and, God be praised, He has offered us just such a bliss. "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life" (I John 2:25). And drawing again from the words of Isaiah, we read: "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end" (45:17).

Now that we have immutable proof for the duration of our bliss let us for a moment examine its

scope as the Almighty has projected it for us in His Word. At the onset we must realize it is impossible for us with our finite minds even faintly to grasp the glories awaiting us if faithful. We might as well try to fathom infinite time or space. It simply is beyond our comprehension. So says the apostle Paul in I Cor. 2:9, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

*We now may let our minds expand  
With all their powers combined,  
And yet we cannot comprehend,  
The joys we there will find.*

And again the great Apostle, his heart lifted with appreciation to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, could exclaim: "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20).

During Jesus' ministry He pictured the bliss awaiting the worthy ones. His words are recorded in Luke 20:35-36, "But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection

from the dead, . . . are equal unto the angels; neither can they die any more."

In the book of Revelation, John the Revealer saw in vision the dawn of that Day of eternal bliss when he wrote: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (21:3-4).

Who could fail to thrill at the thought of living when the tabernacle of God is with men and all sorrow, sickness, pain and death shall be forever banished from the earth; and life, life, endless life, be the happy portion of the inmates of God's glorious Kingdom upon earth? This is no flight of fancy, no soaring out among the stars into some imaginary Utopia, but a hope backed up by the unequivocal promise of Almighty God Himself: "And he that sat upon the throne said, . . . Write: for these words are true and faithful." MM

Sometimes God permits a shadow  
To cross our willful way,  
And turns His smiling face aside  
Until we stop and pray.

He knows the way before us,  
The shallows and the deeps,  
The end from the beginning;  
"He slumbers not, nor sleeps."

So when the way grows thorny,  
With no star to break the night,  
Seek His presence with a prayer,  
And the dawn will burst with light.  
—Selected



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# The Man I Knew

*Brother Flowerday was privileged to be acquainted personally with the founder of the Megiddo Church, Rev. L. T. Nichols. The following is his story, which he originally prepared for the centennial observance of the birth of our founder (October 1, 1944).*

I DOUBT if there is a brother present here this morning whose recollections of Brother Nichols carry him back to as early an age as do mine. In fact, my acquaintance with him antedates my memory. When I first met him, I was probably about four years old. I was born in the city of Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1891. Brother Nichols' home at that time was in a rural community about 80 miles north of Minneapolis, known as Ellington. Living near him were a number of families who had been attracted to his teaching. Also near his home was a small church, which he and his followers had built for their own use. In the city of Minneapolis, another small group of his followers met and held services in a hall. Brother Nichols made frequent business trips to Minneapolis; and combining service to his God with business, whenever possible he would arrange to go on weekends so as to spend Sunday with them and preach to the congregation there. My parents were newly found members of this group.

As my parents become more fully convinced of the genuineness of Bible teaching presented by our founder, they came to feel more keenly the need for closer fellowship with him, so they decided to move to Ellington to live, deeming the opportunity for spiritual growth well worth the effort. My fifth birthday came during the time when Mother and Father were in Ellington negotiating for a small piece of land where they could build a small frame house for themselves, my two sisters, and myself. This was midsummer. And before winter had set in the place was sufficiently complete to allow habitation. This move found us living right next door to Brother Nichols. And from that time, until the day of his death, I enjoyed almost constant association with Brother Nichols.

While we were living neighbor to Brother Nichols he took a keen interest in the mental and physical development of my sisters and me, and at the same time never missed an opportunity to impress upon our youthful minds the practical lessons of Christian living. If our conduct during the week was not what it should have been, he would sometimes mention it openly in his Sunday sermon in the little church located near his home.

It was at the turn of the century, during the tenth year of my life, that the divine command for God's people to gather together and appoint themselves one head impressed itself upon Brother Nichols' mind, and a plan for a missionary boat on the Mississippi River, where the gathering together and sounding of the midnight cry could be accomplished at one and the same time, took shape. It was around Thanksgiving time in the year 1901 when the *Megiddo* steamed south on her maiden voyage.

Much training and discipline was necessary for the children—and the grown-ups as well—to transform them to an extent that so large a group of people could live together peaceably in such cramped quarters. The rule was stern: No quarrels among the children, and no cross words or disputes among the older ones. Each individual had to learn to consider the interests of the others—a great change from life in a private home with only the members of their immediate families.

While we were living on the Mission boat, Brother Nichols took a keen interest in the welfare and growth of the children. A schoolroom was provided, and he would make occasional visits to the school to speak a cheery word, and note the progress of the pupils. Occasionally at the evening gathering of the group, part of the time would be devoted to giving the children exercises in mental arithmetic or spelling lessons, as he wanted to develop our young minds and teach us to think. We derived much pleasure and profit from these exercises, and were especially elated when it was our good fortune to go to the head of the class.

Traveling on the boat was delightful, especially when passing between the wooded bluffs on either side of the upper Mississippi. Helping to erect the large gospel tent in preparation for a series of meetings in a town or city was an event of especial interest to us boys, as was the cleaning and arranging of halls and public places for services.

Brother Nichols was a powerful and magnetic speaker, and having the real truth to proclaim to the people he would often hold his audience spellbound by his eloquence and logical arguments. Even now I can picture his towering form addressing the crowds in the brightly lighted tent, in the park on a warm summer afternoon, or from the rostrum of the large Tabernacle at Nashville, Tennessee, where we conducted services for a number of months.

Amid the stress and strain of holding almost continuous public meetings, and in addition to the countless duties arising from the management of so large a missionary enterprise, Brother Nichols never lost sight of the more important work of perfecting his own character and sanctifying the congregation, preparing a few to shine in his crown through eternity; and some of his most powerful and soul-searching sermons were preached to his immediate followers on board *Megiddo*. First, last and always, his chief aim was to save himself and those that heard him. His life was an inspiration to me.

After the group sold the *Megiddo* and located in Rochester, New York, which was in my thirteenth year, it was still my privilege to be associated with him daily and have many practical lessons of character-building impressed upon my youthful mind. Among other things, he taught us that we must be strictly honest even in the smallest matters. He always said that anything worth having was worth asking for. I might cite one instance of this sort that comes to mind in which I personally was concerned.

Those being the days before the advent of the electric washing machine, the family washings were usually done in a wash tub; and of course, a wash bench, or some other suitable support for the tub, had to be provided. With a few spare boards one handy with tools could easily make such a contrivance, and a number of such benches had been made by the different members of the group.

One day, when I was in my early teens, one of the older sisters asked me to make her one of these benches. House-building being the major industry among the members of the group at the time, new and used lumber was abundant. Feeling the few boards needed to make the bench too insignificant a quantity

to offer to buy and pay for—and knowing Brother Nichols would not accept pay for them anyway—I picked up a few boards of what I considered “waste” lumber, and shortly the job was finished. (At the time Brother Nichols was buying all the building materials for the construction of the houses, and selling them to the brethren at cost, hence the lumber was his.)

A few days later Brother Nichols’ attention was called to the fact that I had taken this lumber without asking for it; someone felt that I should have a lesson to more firmly impress upon my mind the aforementioned principle that anything worth having was worth asking for. So at the gathering that evening Brother Nichols took occasion to mention the matter publicly. In the course of the talk that followed, someone suggested that I should pay Brother Nichols for the lumber. When I asked him the price, he answered, “A cent and a quarter.” I had a ten-cent piece with me at the time, and while I hesitated, a little puzzled about how to make the change for the quarter of a cent, he spoke up and said that all he wanted was for the sister for whom the lumber had been taken to put the “right scent on the last quarter of her life.”

He never failed to encourage a willing worker. One summer, feeling I wanted to do my bit in the Lord’s work, I took it upon myself to mow the lawns in front of the Mission buildings before and after work. One morning as I was finishing the mowing outside his window, Brother Nichols came out and handed me a ten-dollar bill.

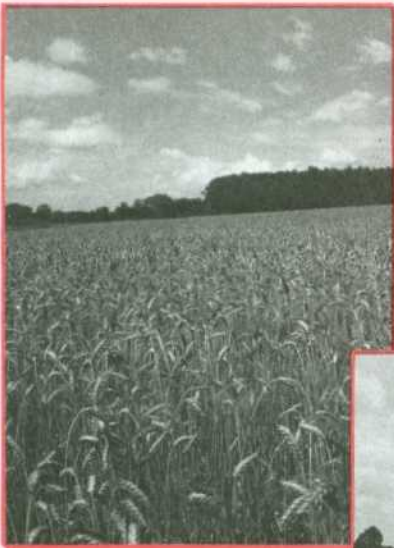
Brother Nichols believed in starting the day out right, and it was not uncommon on warm summer mornings—as he would step outside to get the first breath of fresh morning air—to hear him chant aloud,

*“Better today than ever before,*

*Let us sing this new song as we turn the leaf o’er.”*

Witnessing his uncompromising stand for truth and righteousness was a constant source of strength to me. Without his example to pattern after I doubt that I could have escaped the pollutions of the world to the extent that I have, or formed the Christian character that I have been able to form. Our fruitful association continued unbroken until my 21st year, when death suddenly snatched from me my friend.

But that was not the end. He only sleeps. And I am confident that at the Resurrection morning I shall meet my benefactor, and I fervently pray that the intervening years may have been lived in such a way that I may receive a warm handclasp and merit his approving smile.



## *Lines to Live By*

### **Unanswered, Yet . . .**

*I thank Thee, Lord, for prayers unanswered yet,  
Unanswered save Thy quiet "Nay,"  
Yet it seemed hard when heavy cares  
Did cloud the day.*

*I wanted joy; but Thou didst know for me  
That sorrow was the gift I needed more,  
And in its depths I learned to see  
Rich, heavenly store.*

*I wanted health; but Thou didst bid me sound  
The secret treasures of pain,  
That I might know Thy greater gifts  
And lasting gain.*

*I wanted wealth; 'twas not the better part;  
There is a wealth that's poverty within;  
Who knows what greater loss were mine  
If I had wealth.*

*I thank Thee, Lord, for these unanswered prayers,  
And for Thy quiet, kindly "Nay"  
'Twas Thy withholding that didst draw  
My heart Thy way.*



## A Prayer

*THAT I may grow a little braver to face life's trials and never waver  
From high ideals that I have made. To face life squarely, unafraid.  
That I may yet more patient be with those, who faltering lean on me.  
To profit by mistakes I've made and let them from my memory fade.  
That I may always faithful be to those who put their trust in me.  
For these, dear heavenly Lord, I pray that I may prove worthwhile today!*

To try each day His will to know;  
To tread the way His will to show;  
To live for Him who gave me life;  
To strive for Him who suffered strife;  
To sacrifice, nor think it loss,  
To daily bear my little cross,  
To trust God's greater joys to see—  
Let this my joy, my portion be.

*ONE THING I know, we get just what we should,  
Each man is paid according to his worth.  
This fact, I think, if better understood,  
Would help to solve our problems here on earth.  
We cannot hope to sow the seeds of sloth  
And then the harvest that it brings evade:  
No, by the care with which we cut the cloth,  
So, in the future, is the garment made.  
One thing I know, there is no halfway mark:  
No thin veneer can hide a life of shame.  
Our actions are revealed in light or dark;  
And when we sin, well, we must take the blame.  
We may avoid the issue for a day,  
May seem to come into unearned success.  
But in the end, this is not God's just way—  
We get what we deserve, no more, no less.  
—Selected.*

## Heart Gratitude

*My God, I thank Thee who hast made  
The earth so bright,  
So full of splendor, and of joy,  
Beauty and light;  
So many glorious things are here,  
Noble and right.*

*I thank Thee, too, that Thou hast made  
Joy to abound;  
So many gentle thoughts and deeds  
Circling us round;  
That in the darkest hours on earth  
Love may be found.*

*I thank Thee more that all our joy  
Is touched with pain;  
That shadows fall on brightest hours;  
That thorns remain;  
So that earth's bliss may be our guide  
And not our chain.*

*I thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast kept  
The best in store;  
We have enough, yet not too much  
To long for more;  
A yearning for a deeper peace  
Not known before.*

—Selected.

## Points for the Month:

- Week 1:** Whatever your lot in life, cultivate it.
- Week 2:** You cannot *wish* yourself good. You must *make* yourself good.
- Week 3:** If we think low thoughts we slide down. If we think high thoughts we climb upward.
- Week 4:** May we have a supply of patience equal to the testing that will come today.

# A Meaningful Life

A Sermon by Kenneth E. Flowerday

*Scripture Reading: Romans 13:8-14*

**T**HE QUESTION is often asked, "What is life?" First, life is a gift from God to man, a gift of sufficient consequence to hold the interest of every thoughtful person. It is the gift which is the key to all other gifts.

To the modern scientist, life is the end product of perhaps billions of years of orderly evolution, an exceedingly complex and undefinable phenomenon of "nature."

To the cynic, life is a brief and discreditable episode on one of the minor planets, a moment of time between two eternities.

To the average, thoughtful individual who appreciates and enjoys beauty, love, accomplishment, helpfulness, and sharing with others, life is the opportunity to realize these virtues.

But to every human being, life is brief. To James, writer of the New Testament Epistle bearing his name, life is "as a vapor that appears for a little season, and then vanishes away."

To the Psalmist, life is as a "handbreadth," a strictly limited succession of days which must be carefully numbered and budgeted, if we would use them wisely.

To the Patriarch Job, the days of life pass so rapidly that they can be likened to a swiftly flying shuttle, relentlessly flying forth and back, forth and back, until before we realize it, life's web is complete, the pattern of the fabric finished; and whether artistically designed or shoddily formed, the weaving must witness for itself.

Pascal, although he wrote three centuries ago, is strangely modern when he says: "When I consider the brief span of my life, swallowed up in eternity past and to come, the little space that I occupy, lost in the immensity of space of which I know

nothing and which knows nothing of me—I am terrified."

For old as well as young, time is an enemy, a threat. For the young, time passes too slowly; they cannot wait to do what they want to do—to *live*. For the old, time has passed too quickly and there seems to be so little of it left.

But too often in the passing of time the meaning of life has been overlooked. Much of the precious time that should have been redeemed has been spent sowing to the flesh, gratifying our own carnal natures. And when at the Great Assize we are asked, "What did you do with the years?"—as the man who appeared without a wedding garment in Jesus' parable of the marriage of the King's Son, we will be "speechless."

Time is given us for a purpose. Life is an opportunity which comes to us but once. We can either use it or squander it. God leaves us free moral agents to choose our own course of action. We can serve Him and fit ourselves for the life to come, or we can do as we please, invest our all in the world of today, and lose the world of tomorrow. How essential then that we heed the words of our loving Father, "Consider your ways." We will be tomorrow only what we make of ourselves today. We will be no better than we force ourselves to live, and no worse than we allow ourselves the freedom to be. Daily, as life is passing, we are deciding; we are creating ourselves.

Left to ourselves, we should be as a ship without a rudder, a car with no steering mechanism. Our lives would be as purposeless as the life of the grasshopper who hops from one position to another all during the warm summer months, with no urge to lay up anything in store to feed himself during the inevitable winter months, or build any shelter from the storms and cold.

Living with meaninglessness is also a danger with professed life-seekers. We say we want security; we want salvation in the world to come; we want to have

Note: *A Meaningful Life* is available as a complete church service on cassette. Price: \$3.00

laid up for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life. But often our actions belie our words.

Even now we are offered spiritual food so potent that it will build in us strong, healthy, godly characters; and protection that will shield us from the frigid temperatures of an unbelieving world, and cold rejection by the great Judge at Judgment Day. But how often we have refused to take these steps to provide for our future safety!

The Psalmist asks the question: "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?" A place of protection is promised, but to whom? "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart." Open your Bible and let us read the remainder of Psalm 15 as a formula against living a life of meaninglessness: "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." The Christian must live meaningfully.

And for the future we are offered rewards greater than it is possible for the human mind to contemplate. Isaiah 33 promises the righteous doer not only shelter, but also sustenance: "He shall dwell on high, his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." And to quote Paul again, he urges us to lay up for ourselves "a good foundation against the time to come," that we may "lay hold on eternal life." Nothing of intrinsic value comes to us without effort, neither can the blessings of eternity be ours without effort.

In a recent communication, an interested friend suggests some personal questions which, if asked, should deter us from living lives of meaninglessness: "What caused me to act the way I did today? Was it because I was keeping the commandments of God, or did the 'old man' have a good hold on me? What do I want from life, riches and honor? Who am I living for, for ME, or for the longsuffering and merciful God?" If we answer these questions honestly, it should help to jar us out of our lethargy, and alert us to our true position with God.

On the surface, life may seem to be simply a round of physical survival, social peace, and emotional gratification. But with the Christian the problem is to intro-

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***Life is an opportunity which comes to us but once. We can either use it or squander it.***

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duce the element of depth to life. We naturally are so shallow. There must be a depth, a definite purpose to life, and it is at this level that hope and faith operate. Jesus said: "But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). And the prophet Ezekiel had already voiced the same radiant hope: "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, . . . and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die" (Ezek. 18:21).

The very raising of the question of the meaning of life is the beginning of its answer. As long as a man struggles only with the problems of his everyday existence, he is not very much above the animals. He begins to be a man only when he starts to wonder what life is all about, and to be wise in God's sight he must decide to use his life to the full.

To ask seriously, What is the meaning of life? is, in itself, the spirit of God working in us. Our old Adam nature would prompt us to live just as we please, to eat, drink and be merry, and let the future take care of itself. But the Word of God comes as a sharp reminder of what we can be, and of what we must be to live in God's Kingdom.

This question of the meaning of life is forced upon us from another direction—that of the collapse of man's self-confidence. Said the educator: "Knowledge will produce the meaning of life." Scientific and technological progress will expand the horizons of knowledge, give us ever greater control of the universe, and with it abolish the element of uncertainty." But education has failed to provide the answers. With all our progress, the human question, "Why am I here?" becomes ever more pressing. The Word of God provides the answer: We are not here to dream, to drift, to move in idleness through earth. There is work for God to be done; there are loads to lift for our brother. "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:15-16).

Finally, the question of the meaning of life is an immensely personal one. Each of us is responsible for his own destiny. What is the meaning of events in the lives of the people of this twentieth century? Why



should they endure the pressures of everyday living? Is the pressure leading somewhere? The juggling to balance the family budget, the family taxi service to innumerable clubs and activities, the round of social affairs, the endurance of the daily routine?

And we who claim to be striving to do all to God's pleasure and glory, are we really living up to the best that we know? Are we making eat and drink, our homes, ease, temporal security, self-gratification, our aim in life? If this be our chief concern, then we are unaware of the real purpose of life, and are living the meaningless lives of pagans.

Jesus' words in Luke 21:34-36 (Moffatt's translation) are pointed and concise: "Take heed to yourselves lest your hearts are overpowered by dissipation and drunkenness and worldly anxieties, and so that Day catches you suddenly like a trap. For it will come upon all dwellers on the face of all the earth. From hour to hour keep awake, praying that you may succeed in escaping all these dangers to come and in standing before the Son of man."

*"To breathe, and wake, and sleep,  
To smile, to sigh, to grieve,  
To move in idleness through earth,  
This, this is not to live."*

## Let Us Pray . . .

O Father of lights, who in Thy creative power didst say, "Let there be light!" and there was light, we thank Thee for revealing to us Thy divine light. We thank Thee for the countless material and spiritual blessings that surround us. We thank Thee for giving meaning, purpose and direction to our lives; that we are not left at the mercy of the blind forces of nature, but that if we are intensely dedicated to Thee, Thou dost go with us, and wilt never allow us to be tempted above that which we are able to bear.

Father, lift our minds from the littleness of our lives to contemplate the height, the depth, the length and breadth of Thy eternal plan and purpose, and may we make a major effort to prepare for that Day which is so certain to arrive.

As we contemplate Thy love and forgiveness, may we practice love and forgiveness toward one another. In it may we discover the purpose for our own lives.

This is not the purpose for which we were placed here on earth.

### Belonging to a Purpose

The tumbleweed is a striking example of a purposeless life. It is a plant that upon maturity breaks away from its root and is driven about by the wind. One moment the tumbleweed is going in one direction, the next moment, in another, depending upon how the wind blows. A man living a purposeless life is a tumbleweed. His life is confined to the moment and loses meaning because it is related to no end. It has been truly said: "Without purpose, existence increasingly shrinks to the zero-point."

Even little purposes, when they are worthy, bring happiness and significance to life, for an hour or a day. To win the contest, to finish reading the book, to achieve a skill, to complete one's self-imposed task, each brings its measure of satisfaction. But these small purposes alone are not enough for life's enrichment. They must be bound together and related to some great central cause. And what cause could be greater than the quest for eternal salvation. It is this determination that gives meaningfulness to our lives.

The larger purpose is needed for a man to come to

May we always show hospitality to the highest ideals: when we know the right, may we always do it; when we see the beautiful, may we be encouraged to develop the beauty of holiness in our own lives; when we know the truth, may we always speak it; when we know a thing is a divine command, may we fly to obey it.

Father, we pray that Thy many-splendored love may minister to every one whatever his need. Where lines of communication have been broken, with the understanding of love may they be restored. Where any of Thine are lonely, or defeated, or bereaved, or tragic-stricken, we pray Thy help as Thou seest their need. Hasten the day when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, when all people shall be reconciled one to another, and the resources of this planet be vested in tools for life rather than implements for death.

Father, we implore Thee to be with us in this service, and may it be conducive to greater strength in the divine life. Be with those absent from us who would desire to be with us. Bless all everywhere who are striving to learn and live Thy holy precepts, and may Thine angel encamp about all such preserving them from harm and evil, so that Thy great plan and purpose for the earth may be fully consummated; for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

complete fulfillment of himself. And what purpose could be more fruitful than the development of complete self-control. Said the wise author of the book of Proverbs: "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Prov. 16:32). Over the ages the conqueror on the battlefield has been held in high esteem, but the Word of God lists the man who can rule himself under a much higher rating.

By belonging to a great purpose, by putting life and soul into a noble cause, a man learns to render a great obedience. When the Word of God makes a demand upon us, we must fly to obey it. God's Word, through Moses the great Lawgiver is forthright; it speaks with undisputed authority: "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it" (Deut. 12:32). And for obedience to be acceptable it must be immediate. Delayed obedience is but one form of disobedience. When Jesus appeared to Paul on the Damascus highway he was immediately obedient to the heavenly vision.

Furthermore, by living a purposeful life a man can achieve a great freedom: freedom from himself, freedom from the corroding evils that only make life miserable for him, and provide no hope of a future. In this way we can attain a great excellence; we can so enhance our value in the scale of Almighty God that, as we learn from Ps. 4:3, He will choose to set us apart for His very own. True freedom is not the freedom to do as we please—that would be leading a life of meaninglessness—but the freedom to do as we ought. Christ's freeman is the man who has won freedom from himself through slavery—through complete surrender to Him. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Gal. 5:17).

By belonging to a purpose one may secure great happiness: "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom"; "If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them"; "Happy is the man whom God correcteth"; "Happy is that people, . . . whose God is the Lord." "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God"; "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: . . . If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye" (Prov. 3:13; John 13:17; Job 5:17; Ps. 144:15; 146:5; I Pet. 3:14; 4:14).

It often happens that belonging to a purpose becomes allegiance to a person. This is especially true when a man enlists in the great Cause of the Kingdom of God. Jesus becomes the Lord whom he obeys, the Source of his freedom and excellence, the Chief Joy of his life.

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***By belonging to a great purpose, by putting life and soul into a noble cause, a man learns to render a great obedience.***

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This is a sure antidote for living a life of meaninglessness!

#### **Meaninglessness vs. Going Somewhere**

Abraham, honored by both Judaism and Christianity, was a man who went on a willing pilgrimage. Verbs of action mark his story: "he departed . . . went forth . . . passed through . . . journeyed on."

Note that Abraham's action was response to the heavenly call. It is written: "Now the Lord had said unto Abram (Abraham), Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee" (Gen. 12:1). What if Abraham had not heard the Word of God? What if he had said, "Lord, I don't want to pull up stakes and move to unfamiliar territory; I want to stay with my flesh kin. I am happy with things just as they are"? He would have been unfit for his honored position as "father of all who believe."

What about all those who are insensitive to the summoning voice? What about the young man upon whose shoulder a hand is laid, but the youth does not know it is there? Suppose Moses had failed to see the burning bush? How many miss the adventure, the worthwhile life, the arrival at a destination, because they have made themselves insensitive to a summons? What is the summons? Christians believe in what they name the "call" of God. God speaks and a man responds by making his life an answer to the spoken Word of God. However, God's calls are not standardized; they follow no pattern. God's call often comes to a man where his talent and some human need intersect. Even though God does not speak with audible voice, yet He calls just the same, through His written Word, and it is for us to listen, then obey. The Psalmist declared; "I will hear what God the Lord will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly" (Ps. 85:8).

There is a goal toward which life moves when life becomes an answer to a summons. How empty life becomes without a worthy goal and a noble objective.

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***True freedom is not the freedom to do as we please—but the freedom to do as we ought.***

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Imagine a ship at sea filled with happy travelers, enjoying the voyage. Suddenly one day the captain announces that the ship will never arrive at any port. It simply will go on riding the high seas until such a time as a storm destroys it, or other mishap occurs. How would the passengers receive such an announcement? If the captain's words were unalterable, and true, the magnitude of despair that would overtake those travelers would be fantastic. Take away a port of arrival and see how empty life becomes. Alternatively, set before the human spirit a worthy goal and a noble objective. Watch, then, the transformation of life that follows!

There is indeed a goal toward which life moves, and to the Christian that goal is salvation; to be placed beyond the possibility of pain, sickness, old age, death. In short, we long to be placed beyond the limits of mortality and be saved for time and eternity.

It has become popular among the theologians to discredit the idea of eternal salvation, or the hope of eternal rewards to be given at the resurrection of the just. One might check over dozens of sermons by leading theologians, and the thought of reward righteousness is conspicuously absent. It is their considered opinion that salvation is not life's highest goal, that right living should bring its own rewards in peace of mind and satisfaction, as one passes through life, and nothing more can be expected. But Almighty God offers more, much more than that.

Increased service for God, increased interest in the welfare of our brother, a higher standard of moral excellence, are sufficiently worthy ambitions to attract a man or woman who appreciates virtue; however, they are not incentives strong enough to impel a man or woman to go the whole way, and perform the entire will of God. Our aim should be to be saved for eternity, to be made equal to the angels never to die. Salvation is the highest goal in the Christian's life, and the only incentive strong enough to lead a reasoning man or woman to renounce everything of a fleshly nature, to take up his or her daily cross of self-denial, and die with Christ to the rudiments of the world, to have no confidence in the flesh or surrender to any of its

bewitching desires. It was for the joy set before Jesus that He "endured the cross, despising the shame," and it is the goal of eternal salvation that will urge you and me on to make a full and complete surrender.

But between the summons and the goal, between the departure and arrival, lie decision and discipline and work. The command is, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Let us show our wisdom by living meaningful lives!

### **Complete Commitment**

Living a life of meaningfulness demands that we be a Christian here and now, that we commit ourselves unreservedly to God's leading. To accomplish this, we will need a generous supply of spiritual gumption. The word "gumption" as ordinarily used implies the quality to start a project and see it through to a finish; stick-to-itiveness; a practical approach to a problem. Webster defines the term as "common sense, enterprise, initiative." In what better way could the alert Christian show his common sense, his enterprise, his initiative, his wisdom and good judgment, than by investing his life in the quest for eternal salvation, than by surrendering wholly to God's leading?

It was to this complete commitment that Paul referred when he said: "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God . . ." (Rom 8:38-39). Could we truthfully say that we are thus persuaded?

Paul's practical approach in the application of his commitment to his ministry was shown in his letter to the church at Corinth: "I shall stay here in Ephesus . . . for there is a great opportunity of doing useful work" (I Cor. 16:8-9, Phillips Translation). He wanted to be where he could accomplish the most for God. Paul the Apostle was in an actual living situation, that of being Christian in an unchristian world. When the Holy Spirit said *go*, he went; when it said *stay*, he stayed. And that is our own situation. Let us commit ourselves wholly to the leading of God's Word!

Our commitment must be here and now. Ephesians 5:15-16 (Moffatt trans.) pictures our Christian duty in words are clear and understandable: "Be strictly careful then about the life you lead; act like sensible men, not like thoughtless; make the very most of your time, for these are evil days." This is no time to be nominal Christians, carrying no name, upholding no standard, living lives of meaninglessness, or even bordering on that unchristian attitude. It is for us to be dif-



ferent from the world, alert to the dangers of indifference, all on fire with our sublime hope of life in the world to come, acting like sensible men, not like thoughtless. Without living a fully consecrated life we cannot know the joy of complete commitment to the Christian faith that we profess.

It is for us to do as Paul said he did: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13-14). Paul was a one-idea man; his commitment was complete, "this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Let us copy Paul as he copied Christ!

To what is it, then, that we as Christians are committed without reserve so that our commitment controls our lives?

I) We are committed to an interpretation of life and its meaning—the Christian interpretation, which says that behind all of life is God, that life makes sense when it is seen as subject to His purpose, to His judgment, to His will. How many of us have actually considered the purpose of God for us and our lives, for example, for us in the daily operation of our business? our intercourse with others at our work? in our association with our brothers and sisters in the faith, and especially our attitude toward the members of our own household? To the people of the world, even to suggest the idea of complete commitment sounds absurd, if it does not make them absolutely uncomfortable. And yet, what other course is there for us as Christians? Every part of our lives must be directed from above if we would live meaningful lives.

II) We are committed to a way of life, so that we are no longer on our own; we are to live the lives that our Christian commitment sets for us. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh"; so that we cannot do the things that we naturally would; but within those limits we find the very freedom of God. Our situation is much like Paul's, a "living situation" of being Christian in an unchristian world. At times the uncommitted will think of us as "fools"—or worse, even as a danger—because we do not act and think as they do.

III) We are committed to a Person (and this is the heart of it) so that we have a Master; we have a Lord; we have a Saviour. And through Him we are committed to the great God of the universe who

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***To the Christian the goal toward  
which life moves is salvation; to be  
placed beyond the possibility of pain,  
sickness, old age, death.***

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in His greatness cares for all His children.

We are committed to a trust in the essential rightness of all this, and we are committed to make our decisions in the light of this commitment as Christians. This is not something that we "take or leave at will or whim," for because of our commitment we are "under orders"—not ours, but His.

And this total commitment to God must be central for each of us. Jesus defined as the first and greatest of all the commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength" (Mark 12:30). Without this kind of commitment, we are really lost; without this commitment we do not understand what the meaning and purpose of life in God's service is: without this commitment we do not have the strength and the incentive to live by our best understandings and insights; without this commitment we do not have the faith that prompts us to go on trying to do our best for the sake of a purpose not yet realized—God's purpose for us and His loyal servants—the hope of winning rewards that can be seen only by the eye of faith, and we will grow weary in well doing.

To be uncommitted is to lead one kind of life; to be committed is to lead another kind of life. Jesus was depicting the fully committed life when He said: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

This way of life—this Christian way of life—cannot be a separate and impractical theory of a life found in a Book which we accept with a fragment of our minds, and then deny with our deeds. This way of life is not something that is satisfied by an occasional gift to the church, spasmodic attendance at worship, "busyness" with affairs of the church, the repeating of a memorized text of Scripture at a Morning Prayer Service. This commitment is God's way for us—for everything about us; it affects every area of our lives.

But it cannot be fulfilled by half-hearted effort, or by a surrender that is conditional. Every vain imagination

must be cast down, every wandering thought brought into captivity. Our lives must be transparent. If fully committed to God, we will have nothing to hide.

Another dimension of meaningfulness is discovered. The in the word creativitydivine intent for man is to become a partner with God in completing creation. He wants to make something of us. God's purpose is to create a "man,"—a composite individual including every member of Christ's body or church—"in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. 4:24); to include man in a dynamic, continuing creativity. "The perseverance of the saints," says an excellent old adage, "is made up of ever new beginnings."

God wants us to grow. We could not improve on Paul's description of this growth, Eph. 4:11-13, 15: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for

the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ . . . But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things which is the head, even Christ." *May grow up into Him in all things.*

The spirit of God works in man to create, not to destroy; to open new windows to holiness, not to deface the work of His hands; to expand man's horizons and his appreciation for goodness and truth, not to cripple or shrivel his sensibilities. The true meaning of life comes to us when we participate with God in this creative process. Let us therefore be "workers together with God" that it may be His good pleasure to invite us to share a place in His eternal home, and become a part of His innumerable heavenly family! MM

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## That Little Member

**P**ERHAPS the greatest challenge we face is that of learning to rule our tongue. Why do we find it so hard? We rise in the morning to greet a new day, as yet undefiled. With all-out determination we intend to meet every challenge victoriously. But alas, sooner or later it happens: a shady thought, a worldly distraction, a perverse thought and—inevitably—a slip of the tongue.

Paul describes this problem in colorful words in Romans 7:21-23, "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

Oh, such words of strength to the striving Christian! How many of us would have already fallen by the way had we not had the comforting words of the great apostle Paul, that he had this same struggle himself and overcame! "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."

It has been noted that the longer we have had a bad habit, the more effort is required to break the bars of

bondage and free us from its grip. But the unruly tongue is more than just a bad habit, and to control it will likely be the hardest task of our lives. "For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison" (James 3:7-8). James meant that we need the help of God to control it; he did not intend to have us believe we could not overcome, for he says a little later, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be" (James 3:10).

If we expect to share eternity with Christ and the saints, we must control this unruly member. ". . . I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:36-37). Life or death is in the tongue. For the tongue is, after all, only an extension of our thoughts. Control the thoughts and we will have learned to control our tongue.

We have a great work to do. We must be patient in well doing. We must learn to accept trials and disappointments. And we must have faith in ourselves that we can accomplish the work set before us by the one and only God in whom we put our complete trust, that He can and will fulfill all that He has promised His obedient children. This done, we *cannot* fail. —Contributed

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# Sharing

## the Membership of the Saints

*The following article by Brother Flowerday was addressed to a men's fellowship campfire meeting in September, 1974. It was published in the Megiddo Message of October 10, 1974.*

**Y**OU share the membership of the saints. This was written centuries ago in an important letter which bears the title, "The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians." The translation is by the famous New Testament scholar, James Moffatt.

Do we share the membership of the saints? Are we truly part of the one living brotherhood whose aim and object it is to gain eternal salvation? If this be our common goal, how we should strive to help each other, to stimulate and encourage one another.

Christians are duty-bound to believe in the communion of saints. To them, those who died in the faith—recently or ages ago—are not extinguished and forgotten. If written in the Lamb's Book of Life, they are only sleeping for a short period, to be awakened at the return of Christ when He comes to gather together all the loyal members of the body.

Every time we meet, even if our congregation seems numerically small, "we" are not all present. The thousands of known and unknown men and women who in their day kept the faith, fought the good fight, and served God's cause loyally, are part of our company.

We owe a tremendous debt to all of them, those who went before us, who stood for truth and right, for justice and brotherhood with God. We should feel encouraged by the thought that we may fellowship with the saints of every age. So many of them lived through difficult times; yet they knew that what seemed to be a grim end could be a divine beginning of something better and far greater.

We are not alone. We are part of a great tradition; we are in a noble succession of the servants of God. As the writer of Hebrews (12:1-2, RSV) declared: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God."

The holy men and women enumerated in Hebrews 11 were all masters of faith. They lived and worked in difficult times. They took many steps in the

*(Continued on page 25)*



## ● Concerning the Devil

*"If it is not too much trouble, I would like your explanation of II Corinthians 4:4."*

A large part of the theological world take the position that "the god of this world" in II Cor. 4:4 supports their belief in an all-powerful personal devil. The text reads: "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

What is "the devil"? Could it be the same as what the apostle Paul calls "the god of this world"? The meaning of the words translated "devil" and "Satan" is: "a calumniator, one in opposition to God." In the Bible, the term "devil" is used of men—as Jesus said to His disciples, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" not "one of you is *possessed with* the devil or some mysterious superpower of evil you cannot resist" (John 6:70).

Actually, when we understand how we are tempted, we realize that there is no place for a literal devil. James 1:13-14 tells us: "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed."

II Corinthians 4:4, when presented before this background, presents a different picture than when viewed from the angle that the devil is an all-powerful being that tempts and seduces us at will. A god is an object of worship, and there are many such gods to attract the interest of the aspiring Christian if he allows himself to be attracted by them. There are gods of pleasure, fame and even self. There is the glamor of those material things which appeal to the "lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life" (I John 2:16), which prevent men from seeing the light of the gospel.

True believers will not allow themselves to become prey to the "god of this world." Their honesty of mind and love of truth keep them sensitive to true spiritual values, making them immune to the corrupting power of the world and worldliness.

The unbeliever who becomes the victim of the god of this world is the man who makes a deliberate choice of godlessness. He doesn't believe in God because he

doesn't really *want* to believe in Him. He rejects faith because the way of faith demands too much of him. As a result of what appear to be trifling decisions, God is thrust into the background, and spiritual values are obscured.

The attraction of the world is a form of worship. Instinctively every person must have something to adore. Money, power, position, and popularity can so easily become the object of that adoration.

The god of this world is everywhere, and unless the alert Christian is ever on the watch he will be led astray. So let us be watchful.

## ● On the Origin of the Devil

*"Would you please explain Revelation 12:7-9. Does this tell us where the devil came from?"*

The passage reads: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

If we look in Revelation for an explanation of how the devil arrived upon earth, we are looking in the wrong place, because Revelation 1:1 states that the message was sent from Jesus "to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass"—future events, not past. It is impossible that Revelation 12 could describe the casting out of the literal devil, for those who believe in the literal devil think he was already on the earth at the beginning, tempting Eve in the garden of Eden—several thousand years before Revelation was written!

Revelation 12:7 says there was "war in heaven." How can we imagine war in heaven, where all are "equal unto the angels, neither can they die any more"? Does the God of holiness, who cannot tolerate any evil, have beings in His presence who are evil-minded? (see Hab. 1:13).

And how can "the great dragon" be "cast out into

the earth" with his angels? Surely there is no sense or reason to such thinking. Our little planet is only a dot in an immensity of space and stars too numerous to count.

No, Revelation 12 is highly symbolic; the great red dragon is a symbol of the powers of evil that will threaten to devour the newly born "man child," Christ and His saints newly established in their places of authority. The result will be conflict, even the Battle of Armageddon. It is all prophetic language and far removed from any devil folklore common in Christendom. The fall of this "great red dragon" from any place of power will be the falling "from heaven" which Jesus said, speaking prophetically, that He saw (Luke 10:18). He and His saints will be victorious over all powers of evil, which will fall "as lightning" before His superior divine power.

### • The Prince of the Air

*"What is the meaning of the "prince of the air" in Ephesians 2:2-3? I would appreciate your comment."*

The text reads: "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

The Apostle is describing the former sinful state of his brethren: "Wherein in time past ye walked [or lived] according to the course of this world." These expressions are forceful as regards moral behavior. The Ephesians had not sinned casually, but continually; they had *walked* in trespasses and sins; they had followed the course, or mode of living, of the world around them.

Paul says further that the old way of life is "according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." In mentioning the "prince of the power of the air," he was not upholding the idea of the existence of a demon or devil; he merely was speaking to the Gentiles of Ephesus in their own language, alluding to a belief popular in that age, an idea borrowed from Zoroaster of an ancient Persian religion.

The latter part of verse 2 is self-explanatory: "The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." Disobedience is the opposite of obedience; both are voluntary acts of the will. Hence, the spirit that works in the human heart is the spirit of rebellion against God, the same spirit as is pictured in Romans

8:5-7: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit [governed by the words of life, John 6:63] the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

The ancient Persians believed this spirit of evil to be so all-pervading that it was as close to each human being as the air surrounding him; hence, the appropriateness of the phrase: "the prince of the power of the air." Wherever one might go, he could not escape this evil influence. (We should note how accurately this describes our natural rebellion against Divine law.)

Before we were quickened by a knowledge of God's saving law, "we all had our conversation. . . in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." That is what we were doing when governed, not by the mind of God as revealed in His Word, but by our own fleshly minds. We were walking as other Gentiles.

No, there is no hint here of a literal devil or super-power that tempts to evil.

MM

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## Sharing the Membership of the Saints

*(Continued from page 23)*

dark, entirely by faith, and they now await their reward. Of them it was said: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them."

Let us also be persuaded; let us show the same strength of faith. Let us know beyond a shadow of doubt that the things we look forward to will likewise be realized. The Day of the Lord *will* come; as covenant-makers we shall stand before the Judgment seat of Christ; we shall be rewarded for all that we have done, whether good or bad.

Let us believe these things with a conviction that cannot be diluted. Let us keep reassuring ourselves that no effort for God and righteousness will go unrewarded. And let us constantly renew our determination that nothing shall separate us from our profound hope—of securing life eternal in the world to come.

MM

## "Still More Work To Do"

I thoroughly enjoyed your article in one of your back issues, about "Iron Shoes." Now, when something goes wrong or I get tired or have a tendency to get discouraged, I say to myself, "Courage, it is just the 'Iron Shoes' you are wearing."

A few months back I was standing on the sidewalk outside the library waiting for my ride when I noticed a small, round, granite rock that looked so smooth and beautiful. I thought, "What a perfectly smooth rock." I picked it up, and to my surprise, it did not feel as smooth as it looked. The bottom side was still quite rough and not yet beaten down smooth. I thought, how true to life. We sometimes think we are getting all polished up, until we discover more rough spots underneath.

I kept the rock, and every time I see it, it reminds me: "Still more work to do."

Maine

R. D.

## Only for Overcomers

Really, there is no way that we can be a part of the coming kingdom if we have not overcome. We understand that the kingdom is only for the overcomers, because in the book of Revelation the promise goes out to them that overcome. This shows us that a preparation is necessary before the coming of the great day of rest.

Oh, this is the time to get ready. There is nothing in the world so important as to get ready. Really we cannot spend our time with the things of the world, for if we do we will not belong to the few that will be saved.

Haiti

M. D.

## Making the Break

The lesson of Elisha keeps coming back to my mind. We must burn all our bridges behind us, kill the oxen and burn the plow. The break must be complete, else in a weak moment we may decide to go back to the old ways of self.

The Megiddo Church publishes a booklet entitled *What Must We Do To Be Saved*. There could also be a book written entitled "What Must I Do To Be Lost". Every page of this book would be filled with phrases like "Just do nothing, leave all your bridges intact."

Time is fast running out for us to finish the work and correct the ways of self.

Manitoba

E. H.

## Phenomenal Power

Seeking to put our Great Creator first in our lives is—or should be—our deepest concern in life. Then, as our Great Example has truly stated: "All the other things shall be added."

We cannot and should not discount God's phenomenal power which is exceeding great to usward who believe, as writes the apostle Paul. So then it falls to us to be continually searching self and asking, What lack I of being what He requires me to be?

So vastly above and beyond our thoughts is the great unexplainable which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither has entered the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him!

Wyoming

J. A.

## Life Indeed

I get such pleasure from reading the Bible, and the more so since having the Bible Study Series.

As Bro. Flowerday said in one sermon, we are doing more good than we are aware of, sowing seed, starting streamlets. I, too, have many things to rejoice in, having that inner peace which nothing can destroy.

The cassette tapes stir me anew, the thought of eternal life, to soar aloft over that mighty ocean to see you all. But I am content to go in thought and imagination to that front seat and feast at the Lord's Table with all who are there. I am the happiest person in Crewe. To be able to work for such a crown of glory in my own ordinary surroundings, to someday have the right to the Tree of Life. Yes 'twill be Life indeed. In the words of the song, "Let all the world go as it may, I'll walk with Christ in narrow way."

England

N. T.

## The Key

Time holds the key to our future. It can bring us success or it can bring us failure. It is the key to eternal life or everlasting destruction. The decision is ours, and ours alone.

God gives us everything we need to work out our salvation. He gives us opportunity and knowledge—knowledge that is the key that unlocks the door to our future.

It takes all of our time, study, effort and devotion to reach perfection. No matter where we are or what we are doing, we cannot forget God.

No matter what we say, think, feel or do we must ask ourselves, Would Christ be doing this?

Georgia

C. P.



## Appreciative

I would like very much to receive your booklets and the *Megiddo Message*. I enjoyed reading it while waiting in the dentist's office.

California

K. F.

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## Obituary

### M. Dorothy French

On September 22, death took from our midst another Friend and Sister, Marion Dorothy French.

Sister Dorothy French was born in 1907, at Lima, New York. In 1909, the family moved to Rochester to join the Megiddo Church and remained dedicated members until both parents were separated by death in 1966.

Although never robust physically and suffering physical problems which would have discouraged many people, she was a dynamo of energy. The words "lazy," "idle," or "slothful" were no part of her vocabulary, nor was she ever heard to say, "Let someone else do it." In music, she played the piano, organ, violin and horn. She sang in the church choir, and for a time directed both the choir and the orchestra. She took an active part in Church dramas and programs. She also had outstanding ability as a dressmaker—a skill from which many of our members benefited.

Funeral services were conducted on September 24, Brother Newton H. Payne officiating. Interment was in Mt. Hope Cemetery, where rest others of our beloved dead awaiting the bright morning of Resurrection.

## FINALLY, BRETHREN

# The Sin of Doing Nothing

**I**N JESUS' parable of the Talents as recorded in Matthew 25, a departing master dispensed various responsibilities to his servants. One man was entrusted with five talents, another with two, another with one. His instructions were to *use* the talents during the lord's absence, for when he returned they would be asked to give account of what they had done.

The master went away, and in due time returned. And what did he think of what he found? How well had his servants done? Both the five- and the two-talent men had done well. Each had invested the lord's money and had a goodly amount of return to present to him.

What about the third servant? This man was cautious—so cautious that he did nothing. To be on the "safe side" he decided it was better simply to keep the trust safe, then he could return it to his lord in exactly the same condition in which he received it. This would be sure proof of his good stewardship!

Was the returning lord pleased with this? We know he was not. Jesus had no words of praise for the man who did nothing. In fact, he gave him the worst denunciation: "thou wicked servant," he called him. "Wicked" is one of the strongest words of denunciation in the Bible. And what did this man do that made him so "wicked"? He did nothing.

It was not a case of flagrant violation of any command or precept; certainly not open rebellion; there had been no underhanded dealing or deceitful conduct; the man was not a thief, or a liar, or even a prodigal who wasted the money. The servant did not even have any words or feelings against the lord; his sin was simply that of doing nothing.

Which says to us that merely refraining from what we know to be wrong is not enough. There must be positive action for good. God wants us to *do something*. We are not to sit idly on the trust committed to us. What we have is ours to *use*. If we fail to use it, we sin.

James says it this way: "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (Jas. 4:17).

It is a case of duty slighted, or neglected, or ignored.

What about us? Are we using the trust that is committed to us? Where are our priorities? Are we an example to one another of one who is fully committed and growing in Christ?

We are responsible for bringing up our children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." We may not *mislead* them, but if we do nothing about directing them aright, we sin.

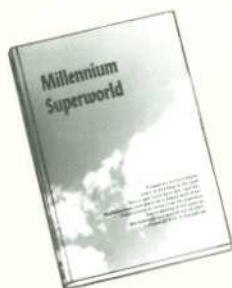
Whatever we have we must use if we are to hear those welcome words, "Well done, good and faithful servant." Doing nothing will never merit a "well done."

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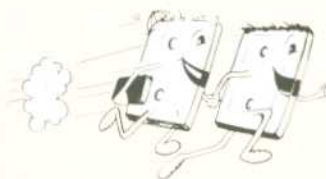
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