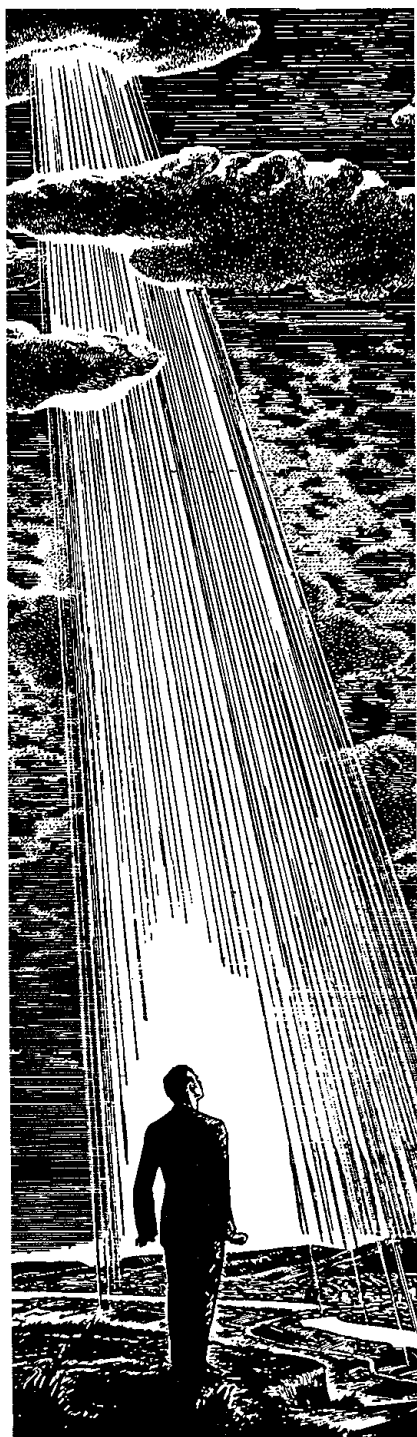


The Sword AND Staff

"Preach the Word" (II Timothy 4:2) • "Feed the Flock" (I Peter 5:2)



Perfecting and Exercising Faith—No. 7, Last Part

The Life of Faith

By JAMES E. GIBBONS—1535 W. Fairfield Drive
Mount Airy, NC 27030 USA

THE CHRISTIAN life is one of faith. This is true from beginning to end. The apostle Paul, having stated his readiness to preach the gospel at Rome, plainly declares, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel [good news] of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that *believeth*: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek [Gentile]. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from *faith to faith*: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith*" (Romans 1:15-17). He had earlier written in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and *the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith* of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Yes, Paul had been crucified with Christ when he turned to him. Then having died to sin in his body, he said, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should *walk in newness of life*" (Romans 6:4). And in 2 Corinthians 5:7 he states, "For we *walk by faith*, not by sight." Yes, "*The just shall live by faith*" (Habbakuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38), and this is true any way that we look at it (whether in becoming a Christian or in all phases of living the Christian life). The Christian life is a life of faith, and until we have learned to trust the Lord in every way, we have not entered into the fullness of our religion, which is called "*the faith*" (Jude 3).

In this article we wish to consider "The Life of Faith" from three perspectives: (1) The Sin Problem, (2) Material Things, and (3) The Experiences in Living. In doing this we hope that it will help us to better understand and perfect our faith.

Point I, "THE SIN PROBLEM," was considered in the last issue of this paper and now we continue with Point II, "MATERIAL THINGS," and Point III, "THE EXPERIENCES IN LIVING."—Editor

II. MATERIAL THINGS

Man Is a Dual Personality

Man is a dual personality, an eternal spirit clothed with a material body. The material body is temporal. In this body we live and move and have our being in our time spent upon this earth. In this body man was defeated in his first encounter with the devil (and it continues to be the

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

CONTENTMENT is enjoying what you have.

Sign that must always appear on a Christian's life: "SITE UNDER CONSTRUCTION."

Life is an unfinished story—how will the last chapter end?

The glow of a beautiful sunset lingers long after the sun has gone down and is not soon forgotten (and the same is true of a life well lived).

If you are not right with God, your life can never be right regardless of what you do.

The best kind of fasting is when you are so intently absorbed with spiritual matter that you have no desire to eat.

True Christian unity comes by being Christians (nothing more and nothing less).

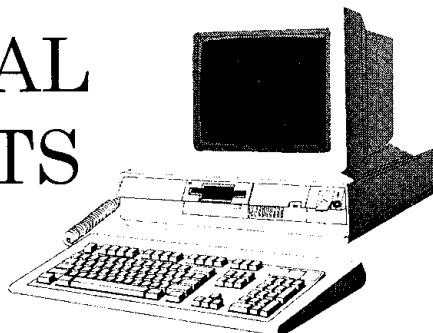
You will never "find" time to do anything for it was never lost; you must take and make time to get that done which needs to be done.

Young mother, you have the noble calling as a wife and mother to be a homemaker.

You will have no problem getting in the last word if that word is an apology.

Righteousness is a by-product of being right with God. □

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



A CHALLENGE TO EXERCISE YOUR GOD-GIVEN LIKENESS AND PREROGATIVE

MAN IS DISTINGUISHED from animals and the lower creation by the fact that he is made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26,27). Aside from being an eternal spirit (Hebrews 12:9; Ecclesiastes 3:21; 12:7; Matthew 25:46), a part of what constitutes this image and likeness is man's ability to think and reason. Blessed as he has been with this superior ability and capacity, man for the most part has not lived up to his potential and possibilities. With the fall of man, sin has mired the picture. With the deception of Eve (Genesis 3:1-6), and consequently with the acquired depravity (not inherited) of mankind thereafter (Hebrews 3:12-14; Romans 3:23), the thinking process of man has been corrupted and altered (at least in greater or lesser degrees in reference to God, and the things of God).

Notice these Scriptures that bear heavily upon this subject. Paul said that when men departed from God, especially with the Gentile world of his day in mind, they "became vain [empty] in their imaginations [thoughts], and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools" (Romans 1:21,22), and consequently went into idolatry, perverted homosexual practices, and all kinds of sins. In Ephesians 4:17-19 he further speaks of this when he says that "Gentiles walk, in the vanity [emptiness] of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness [hardness] of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness [sensuality], to work all uncleanness with greediness." (And he is quick to say, "But ye have not so learned Christ"). Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. Here Paul asserts that when "the world by wisdom [philosophy, humanism] knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe" (verse 21). But we must continually confront the problem that "the god of this world [the devil] 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" (2 Corinthians 4:4). This must be overcome in becoming a Christian.

That is the overall picture of a world lost in sin, but there are more specific things that hinder or limit the thinking process today. It may simply be the multi-culture in which we live

with the many and various philosophies that permeate it. It may be the denominational religious traditions that have been accepted without question through the years. Too many are on the broad way, following their "Pied Piper" without even thinking. Certainly no man is an island, and no one is exempt from influences of which he may not even be aware. Colossians 2:8 warns, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the traditions of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." We live in a world where most of the universities and schools of the land seem to be under the influence and control of humanistic "thinking" people (although lip service is superficially given to "God" by some). Man is no more than an evolving animal. With God officially barred from the public schools and no absolute code of morals permitted, one gets the impression that sex and materialism are the only things that really matter. With the media daily bombarding our minds from this perspective, and with their obvious "in your face" agenda of promoting sodomy and dismantling Christian values, if a person is not alert and on his toes, he can become brainwashed and victimized. And with so little knowledge of God's Word, even among professed Christians, one can fall in line without even thinking. The influence of professing Christians is neutralized and so many of our young people become casualties to the cause of Christ.

Then the religious scene *per se* today is muddled with a lot of conflicting and fuzzy concepts. And to add to the confusion, encouraged by our multicultural sociologists, more and more non-Christian religions are becoming part of the picture. There are few that independently have studied out their convictions, and most consider it an affront to suggest that we should. Who has the time, or will take the time, to really do this? "Don't we have our religious leaders who have done this and can tell us what to believe? We have always believed this way, and that's good enough for me." But, if you profess to believe the Bible, this creates a problem. You must believe that only truth and Christ are acceptable (John 8:31,32; 12:48; 14:6; Acts 4:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12; Galatians 1:8,9), and truth does not contradict itself. Narrowing it down, the doctrines and traditions of men are unacceptable (Matthew 15:1-9). The apostle Paul admonished, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21). The Word of God is the final and only authority in religion (2 Timothy 3:16,17). Of the Bereans, we read, "These were more noble than those at Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11).

But modern man would "cop out," and in essence say, "It really doesn't matter what you believe, just so you are sincere."

We could list a number of important religious questions, like 1, 2, 3 or a half-dozen or more, just like that. Man with the mental capacity that God has given him, reflecting the likeness of Deity, should be able to handle them, searching out the truth and examining these subjects in the light of the Word of God. But would this happen? Would most do this? No. Response to the questions would be so filled with emotion that they wouldn't even be considered, let alone talked about. A mindset locked in tradition and cluttered and entangled by the cobwebs of disuse, is painfully disrupted and disturbed. The old traditional and well-beaten paths, although perhaps crooked and erroneous, are preferred.

Let us challenge you to be an independent student of God's Word. Be more than just a second hand Christian, if that. Lay aside the philosophies, the creeds, the doctrines and traditions of men. Forget them totally when you approach the Bible. The fresh, new and invigorating truths that you learn will be simply amazing. Study the Bible like you have never studied it before, and you will learn truths like you have never learned before. This writer years ago cut all ties with denominationalism and traditionalism after telling the local preacher in the denomination of which he (this writer) was a member, that he could not be a preacher in that denomination. The preacher wanted to know why. This-to-be writer's reply: I pointed out that Jesus said, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life..." (John 5:39). I had been doing this, and that I could not find sprinkling or the "baptism" of infants anywhere in the Scriptures. Therefore, I told him, I could not be a "minister" in that denomination and practice such things. I was really taken aback by his unhesitating reply. "Would you put your life between the covers of a book?" I was really shocked. He was relegating the Bible to "a book." Human tradition was on a par with the Bible, just another book. I therewith was determined to follow the Bible wherever it would lead me, regardless, and that has been my objective until this day, believing it will lead to heaven. It has led me out of denominationalism to be identified simply with Christ and the church of the New Testament, and that alone (and with everyone else who has done this). It is a thrilling experience and journey. We challenge you to exercise your God-given prerogative. You are made in the image and likeness of God.

For some entertaining and provocative thoughts complimenting the challenge of this article, read the "The Calf Path Poem" on the next page. "Think on these things" (Philippians 4:8).

The Calf Path Poem

One day through the primeval wood
A calf walked home as good calves should;
But made a trail all bent askew,
A crooked trail as calves all do.

Since then three hundred years have fled
And I infer the calf is dead.
But still he left behind his trail,
And thereby hangs my moral tale.

The trail was taken up next day
By a lone dog that passed that way.
And then a wise bellwether sheep
Pursued the trail o'er vale and steep.

And drew the flock behind him, too
As good bellwethers always do.
And from that day o'er hill and glade,
Through these old woods a path was made.

And many men wound in and out,
And dodged and turned and bent about,
And uttered words of righteous wrath
Because 'twas such a crooked path.

But still they followed...do not laugh,
The first migrations of that calf.
This forest path became a lane,
That bent and turned and turned again.

This crooked lane became a road,
Where many a poor horse with his load
Toiled on beneath the burning sun,
And traveled some three miles in one.

And thus a century and a half
They trod the footsteps of that calf.
The years passed on in swiftness fleet;
The road became a village street;

And this, before men were aware,
A city's crowded thoroughfare.
And soon the central street was this
Of a renowned metropolis.

And men two centuries and a half
Trod in the footsteps of that calf
A hundred thousand men were led
By one calf three centuries dead.

For men are prone to go it blind
Along the calf path of the mind
And work away from sun to sun
To do what other men have done.

(Continued in Next Column)

They follow in the beaten track
And out and in, and forth and back
And still their devious course pursue
To keep the path that others do.

They keep the path a sacred groove
Along which all their lives they move,
But now much wiser (?) we just laugh
About that first primeval calf. *

—*Sam Walter Foss*

** Some words of last two lines changed from original*

“One Thousand Years Is Not Enough”

FUTURISTS say the millennium will be a fulfillment of many Bible predictions of the kingdom of God. But wait a minute. Something does not fit. The only text that mentions a reign of Christ for one thousand years is Revelation 20. All other kingdom prophecies predict an everlasting, unending kingdom.

Daniel 2 predicts, following Babylon, the kingdoms of Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and God's kingdom. Together, the first four kingdoms lasted nearly eleven hundred years: from 606 B.C. to A.D. 476. Can you believe the kingdom of God will last less time than that? Can you believe the stone that destroys the image and becomes a great mountain filling the earth was destined to remain in power less time than the image? If so, Daniel strongly disagrees: “Shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed... it shall stand forever” (2:44). The four earthly kingdoms came to an end. This world will come to an end. But God's kingdom will stand forever! A mere millennium can never fulfill Daniel's kingdom prophecy.

The angel Gabriel agrees with Daniel. When he talked to Mary about the reign of her son, the angel said, “He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:33). One thousand years is far too short for the King of the universe to reign. A kingdom lasting only a millennium can not be the fulfillment of either Daniel's or Gabriel's prophesy.

Peter, who had the keys of the kingdom, wrote of “the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 1:11). In the book of Revelation, we read: “The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever” (Rev. 11:15). Any interpretation of Revelation 20 that limits the kingdom of Christ to one thousand literal years is simply not in harmony with the rest of Scripture.—*David Vaughn Elliott* □



The Life of Faith

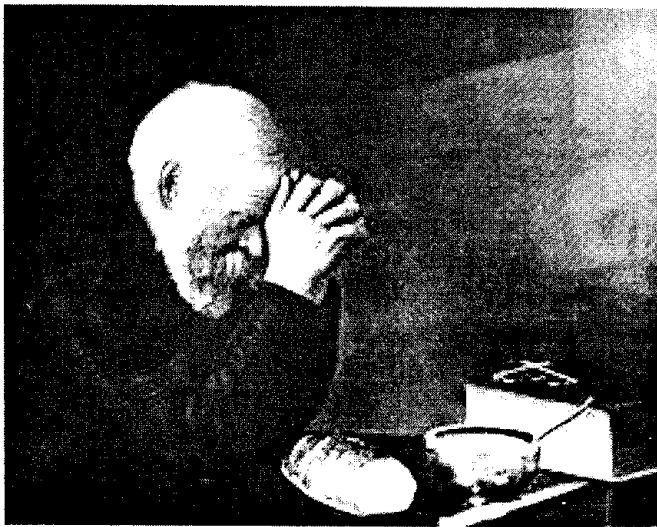
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arena of struggle, Galatians 5:17). Because of sin and death this body is destined to go back to the elements of the earth from which it originally came. The eternal spirit goes back to the God who gave it to face accountability and judgment (Ecclesiastes 12:7,13,14; Hebrews 9:27). Eternity now comes in view. As those who have accepted and followed the Savior, we know that our spirits will be clothed with a spiritual body that will never again be subject to death and decay (1 Corinthians 15:50-58; 2 Corinthians 5:1-4; Revelation 21:4). This is the hope of a Christian (1 John 3:2,3).

The Old and New Testaments

Interestingly, the dual personality of man is reflected respectively in the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament was largely a material system, but governed by morals, that prophetically pointed to the coming spiritual system, the New Testament (and era of man's restoration to God). In the material, it had a "shadow of good things to come." The children of Israel were promised a land that flowed with milk and honey, and consequent material blessing if they obeyed God. If they were not faithful, the land would "spew" them out. The very center of their religion involved a prestigious physical temple with a material emphasis. They exercised their religion within the bounds of an earthly kingdom. Now in the New Testament the emphasis is on the spiritual and the eternal (John 3:3-6,16; 4:20-24; Hebrews 12:28; etc.).

The Material in The Proper Perspective



The life of faith demands that we understand and maintain the proper relationship between material and spiritual things. We must ever keep the material in the proper perspective, as Paul said, "While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the

things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). The undertone of the Sermon on the Mount deals with this and both aspects of man's being. Here the Lord lays out his teachings about his coming kingdom, the church, and the righteousness that was to be practiced therein. Clothed in captivating picturesque language, what he says about material things is so well expressed that it would be well to lay these words out before us and carefully examine them. In particular, notice the following excerpt.

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life [be worried about], what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment [be worried about]? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought [be worried], saying, What shall we eat? Or, What shall we drink? Or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:24-33).

God and Mammon

Here God and materialism are pictured in conflicting juxtaposition with man's corresponding dual nature in view. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." Here avarice is personified, even deified, in the Aramaic word "mammon." This corresponds with what Paul says in Ephesians 5:5 and Colossians 3:5 where he labels "covetousness" as idolatry (idol worship). The word idolatry literally means to worship that which is seen. The material side of man under a false illusion that it is everything becomes obsessed with obtaining the material. Materialism dominates one's life, actually crowding out God and becoming "god."

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The Life of Faith

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Hating One and Loving the Other

The Lord Jesus emphatically stated, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other." This matter of hating one and loving the other could be literally true, or it could be the Hebrew expression that means to love less. Either way, it would be awfully hard for a slave to try to obey two masters, especially with such conflicting views. Another time Jesus said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). We know that "hate" *per se* is absolutely contrary to Christianity. Matthew 10:37, speaking of the same requirement in being a disciple, makes it plain that "hate" does not always mean hate in the sense we usually think of it. It reads, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me." Hate some times is a Hebrew idiom meaning to love less. This usage of this word can be seen as Jacob's love for Rachel and Leah is described (Genesis 29:30,31).

Anxiety As Opposed to Contentment

To serve the idolatrous god of materialism is to have a life filled with worry, and even problems of greater magnitude, especially in selfishly grasping for more and more. The Lord zeroes in on simple basic things, what we eat and what we wear, in calling our attention to what really matters in reference to the material. He illustrates from nature. Consider the fowls of the air. Consider the lilies of the field. In God's order of things, He takes care of these with sufficient food and being properly arrayed. Someone has said that God feeds the fowls of the air, but He doesn't put the food in their nest. This is true. If we put forth an earnest effort, as was God's intentions from the beginning, He will see that we are blessed and our basic needs will be met. Hebrews 13:5 admonishes, "Let your conversation [the way that you live] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Yes, as opposed to the anxieties in a life dominated by materialism, Paul reminds Timothy that "godliness with contentment is great gain," and he continues by saying, "And having food and raiment [those basic things of which Jesus spoke], let us be therewith content. But they that will be [aspire to be] rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For

the love of money is the root of all [kinds of] evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows" (1 Timothy 6:6-10).

Paul admonished the Philippian, "Be careful [full of care, anxious] for nothing: but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6,7). In the light of this, Paul went on to say, "I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (4:12,13). The Christian, whether rich or poor, learns how to accept his lot in life and therein be happy and content in the Lord (James 1:9-11).

Need Another Hand?



"Seek Ye First the Kingdom"

As the eternal part of us, the spirit should control and use the body for high and noble purposes (not the other way around). That is what the Lord had in mind when he said in the Scripture from the Sermon on the Mount, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you [your physical needs will be met]" (Matthew 6:33). This corresponds with what he had said in confronting the temptation of the devil, "Man

shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). But he was quick to say "a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15). It is to be found in the area of the spiritual for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (1 Timothy 4:8). Yes, "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). In your life of faith ever keep Matthew 6:33 before you. Look out (!) when the dominance of the material and worry crowd God out!

III. THE EXPERIENCES IN LIVING

With the problem of sin dealt with and man's life in relation to material things put into proper perspective, let us now look at the experiences in living.

A World of Sin and Death

Life is filled with all kinds of experiences, both "good" and "bad." But overall we should always remember that we live in a world of sin and death. Paul asserted, "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Romans 8:22). Even we, as Christians, are not exempt from this. Paul continues, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body:" (8:23). Our souls may have been redeemed, but the body hasn't. We still live in a world of sin and death.

"Why Not Me, Lord?"

Therefore, as Christians, it is good that we have the proper perspective of experiences involved in living. When "bad" things happen to them, sometimes people ask, "Why me, Lord?" That may be the wrong question. Perhaps it would be more fittingly to ask, "Why not me, Lord?" All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). Sin is an awful thing to God. Some times it is said that certain people are living on borrowed time. But, really, all of us are living on borrowed time. We have been ever since we came to the age of accountability and committed our first sin. "For the wages of sin [singular, just one sin] is death..." (Romans 6:23). God could have carried out the sentence for sinning right then, but He didn't. We were spared. Through the grace of God we have been living on borrowed time ever since. In becoming a Christian, we have taken advantage of this borrowed time to get right with God (and now to live in hope). But the sentence of death still hangs over our bodies. That is the common lot of all of mankind (Hebrews 9:27).

Adorning the Doctrine of God

As we live the life of faith, things that happen are not without significance. In fact, any and every thing that a Christian does and experiences is full of the utmost purpose and meaning. The bottom line is the glory of God. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). When sickness and hardships come, God may see fit to answer our prayers and give us relief. Then again He may not (2 Corinthians 12:7-9; 2 Timothy 4:20). It is appointed unto man once to die (Hebrews 9:27). Paul speaks of how we should "adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things" (Titus 2:10). By letting our lights shine, even (and especially) in the midst of the most difficult circumstances, we "adorn" the doctrine of God. It is made to appear beautiful in the eyes of the world as it is seen that our faith sustains us and we can persevere even in the most trying times. The apostle Paul himself is an example of this (Philippians 4:6-13). As a believer he could write from his Roman imprisonment, "Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice" (Philippians 4:4). Then carrying this to its conclusion, the Scriptures speak of "by what death" a person would "glorify God" (John 21:19). The death of a saint is like an "amen" at the end of a beautiful prayer. His experience in living and dying has brought glory to God.

A Key Verse of Scripture

Romans 8:28 is a key Scripture to keep in mind as we live the life of faith. It reads, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is reasonable to believe that the "good" will always "work together for good." But here it says "that all things work together for good to them that love God." The kind of God that we worship can take the bad, even the worse things that can happen, and turn them into good. And the worse thing that ever happened to us may be the best thing that ever happened to us if we don't let it get the best of us.

Illustrations of This Truth

Let us notice what God can do. A classic illustration is seen in Joseph in the book of Genesis. Out of hatred, jealousy and envy his brothers sold him into slavery. For a seventeen-year-old his future indeed looked bleak. But we know the rest of the story. Through the providence of God he ends up being second to Pharaoh over all of Egypt. During the famine when his brothers came to buy grain, he reveals himself to them. "And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that

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The Life of Faith

(Continued from Previous Page)

ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life" (Genesis 45:4-8). Later he would say, "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good" (Genesis 50:20).

Another illustration that caps them all is that of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was crucified on a cross, the way that slaves and the worst kind of criminals were executed. Death is usually looked upon as defeat, the end of everything. No doubt, the devil thought this would be the case with this Jesus called the Christ as he inspired wicked men to do what they did. But, no! This only expedited God's wonderful plan of redemption (Acts 2:23,24,36). That which appeared to be the most awful and tragic thing ever to happen became the most wonderful. Salvation for all of mankind was accomplished! "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18). That's what our God can do.

Furthermore, let us illustrate once more, the persecution upon the early church, lead by Saul of Tarsus, looked like the devil was really going to wipe the church out (Acts 8:1). But did this happen? No! As the church was scattered, the gospel was scattered. We read, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). Instead of the church still being bottlenecked up in Jerusalem, as they were hesitant to reach out, now churches sprang up everywhere throughout the region and beyond. And Saul of Tarsus became the most vocal advocate of Christianity. God turned defeat into victory. That's the kind of God we worship.

Keeping the Right Attitude

As we face the experiences of life, we need to keep the right attitude. James instructed his readers, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [various trials]; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:2-5). What is James saying here? We are challenged to accept the negative experiences in life with a positive attitude (even with "joy"!). Like we said, the worst thing that ever happened to us could be the best thing that ever happened to us, if we don't let it get the best of us. As our faith is being tried, we are to pray for wisdom to be able to see the spiritual good that can come from

this. One spiritual result of trials, as he points out here, is the learning of patience.

The Attitude of John and Paul

The attitude of John in Revelation 1:9 is most admirable. This reads, "I John, who also am your bother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and

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BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. In the book of Genesis what man died, but was never born, and what man was born, but never died?
2. How old was Joseph (1) when Jacob moved back to Canaan? (2) when his brothers sold him into Egyptian slavery? (3) when he stood before Pharaoh second in command? (4) when he saw his father Jacob again? And (5) when he died?
3. What false prophet in the Old Testament in veiled prophetic language seems to have (ultimately, through David) prophesied of the coming of Christ?
4. Into what three equal periods of time can the life of Moses be divided?
5. What was the name of Samuel's mother?
6. What man in the Bible had a name that meant fool?
7. Who in the Bible said that he would not offer "unto the LORD my God of that which doth not cost me nothing"?
8. What finally happened to king Ahab and his wicked wife Jezebel?
9. What outstanding Old Testament prophet had a wife who was a prophetess?
10. What book in the Old Testament was written by a cupbearer to a king?
11. Where were Jesus and his disciples when Peter made the great confession, and Christ said, "Upon this rock I will build my church"?
12. How extensive was the tithing of the Pharisees?
13. In what language did Christ speak to Saul of Tarsus when he appeared to him on the road to Damascus?
14. Where were the followers of Christ first called Christians?
15. Where in the book of Acts do we find a short epistle written from the church in Jerusalem (and what was it about)?
16. What single word vividly defines covetousness?
17. Is Spain mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures (and if so, in what connection)?
18. What New Testament letters were written by the apostle Paul to churches that he had not started or visited before?
19. In how many and in which epistles of the New Testament is Timothy's name included with Paul's in the salutation?
20. In which epistles of the New Testament is the name of Silas included with Paul and Timothy in the salutation?

(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)

READERS'

...Response

APOLOGY: Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. □

GEORGIA:

■ "Please put me on your mailing list. I got the copy that I have in a doctor's office and have enjoyed it very much. I am enclosing a check...for the bound volumes that I have checked."

VIRGINIA:

■ "Thank you for the good paper you print. We thoroughly enjoy reading *THE SWORD AND STAFF* and can count on it being true to the Word.

"Keep up the good work and may God richly bless you for your labor."

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ "Thank you for this great publication. I enjoy this paper immensely. I am in a growth group (weekly) and want to share these poems [*POEMS OF THE SOULS AND PROVERBS*] with them.

"God bless you in wonderful ways. I am truly blessed by reading and re-reading your paper(s)."

■ "Just a little note to thank you again for your marvelous, marvelous magazine! We've been receiving it for over 30 years and we absolutely love it!

"I'm enclosing a small contribution that I hope will help in some way. We are trusting God to multiply it. I only wish we could send you a larger sum but hopefully that day will not be far off. In the meantime, please accept this contribution with out love, prayers, and sincere wishes for many more years of effective ministry through your fabulous publication. It has blessed our lives through the years and countless others through us."

■ "I have a copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*, Vol. 38, 2000, Number 1. In it is part 1 of 'An Examination and Overview of Ephesians 4:11.' I need part 2. Please send

it or a copy of the publication that followed that particular issue. Also, I am requesting permission to print these articles for a Bible study.

"I am alarmed at the extent to which the brotherhood is straying from the churches leadership structure outlined in this passage of Scripture.

"I am enclosing a token of appreciation for your ministry. I am sorry I have been neglectful in this matter. Please forgive."

NEW YORK:

■ "Please remove us from your mailing list." (E-mail)

MICHIGAN:

■ "Please remove from mailing list. Thank you."

OHIO:

■ "Enjoy *THE SWORD AND STAFF* very much. Enclosed is a donation to help keep 'The Word' before as many as possible."

■ "Enclosed is my check to help...continue to print *THE SWORD AND STAFF*."

"I look forward to each mailing and the articles are excellent! There is so much to learn from each one and 'The Moving Impetus of Faith' # 6 was great!

"It has been 16 years now that I have been on your mailing list..."

INDIANA:

■ "Please remove our congregation from your mailing list. Thank you for your prompt action in this matter."

■ "May His grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.

"What an extreme blessing to receive your uplifting publication. I find it a perfect blend of humor, wit, and wisdom for an informative publication. But of course much more than that. It is filled with articles of all spirit and truth from the Scriptures. One of the best of all time.

"I am joyfully sending you a contribution at this time so you can continue your beloved work in our Lord's vineyard.

"Here is something you might consider in a future publication: **The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing in the right place, but to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment**'."

KENTUCKY:

■ "Please remove my name."

■ "Keep up the good work. I enjoy every lesson you print. Enclosed is my renewal and a little extra."

■ "Please send me a complimentary copy of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I visited your church web site this morning. Great site. Lots of helpful info. Thank you and God Bless." (E-mail, Web page response)

MISSOURI:

■ "I have appreciated your efforts over the years, but have failed to let you know. I have used many things from the paper and thank you for your stand...I feel sad

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

for those who ask to be taken off the mailing list. They will miss so much truth."

ARKANSAS:

■ *"Enclosed find my contribution..."*

"The magazine THE SWORD AND STAFF is the best I have ever read. It teaches the truth from the Bible.

"Keep doing the good work. Thank you."

LOUISIANA:

■ *"Enclosed find check...I enjoy THE SWORD AND STAFF and it is all truth and very helpful. May God continue to bless you..."*

TEXAS:

■ *"THE SWORD AND STAFF is a very good publication. Thank you very much for sending it."*

NEBRASKA:

■ *"Enjoy reading your publication and enjoy the strong Bible teaching!" (E-mail)*

COLORADO:

■ *"I am just wanting to let you know I really do enjoy receiving your newsletter. And I pray that God continues to bless your paper, your efforts to minister to others by it."*

IDAHO:

■ *"You may cancel our subscription to THE SWORD AND STAFF." (E-mail)*

NEVADA:

■ *"Please send a complimentary copy..." (E-mail, web page response)*

CALIFORNIA:

■ *"Please send our congregation a complimentary magazine. I personally have been reading your magazine for about 5 years and am very impressed with your articles. Thank you for your wonderful work, and may God continue to bless you and your work."*

UNITED STATES:

■ *"I was looking for some questions for Acts 21 and found your site. Very nice. Refreshingly simple and sticks with the point. I like your 'heart' of the Bible. Nice work on the questions. I will come back." (E-mail, Web page response)*

■ *"I read your articles on Easter, faith, baptism and denominationalism. I agree with your understanding. My question is the name of the church you are associated with. You mentioned 'church of the New Testament.' Wouldn't 'Church of Christ' be more appropriate?" (E-mail)*

Answer: Certainly "church of Christ" is a good identifying expression, showing ownership, but the church has no "John Doe" name that I have found in the Bible. Churches of Christ (Romans 16:16), church of God (1 Corinthians 1:1), and other Scriptural expressions are simply that, expressions, not names. They are trans-

lated with a little "c" in church, not with a capital "C" as in "Church of Christ." We can be against denominationalism but "re-invent" it with a name, as the word denomination means to divide and name, even with a so-called "Scriptural name" (if used artificially and exclusively). With that mentality, we are in essence saying that we belong to the "Church of Christ" church. Others, of a different persuasion, belong to the "Church of God" church, and the expression "church of God" is found in the Scriptures many times. When I say that I "belong" to the church of the New Testament that is not a name. Locally I "belong" to (more exactly, have fellowship with) the church at that location. I am a member of the one body of Christ (there is only one, Ephesians 4:4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Colossians 1:18). Let us not defeat our good intentions in striving to be the undenominational church of Christ. Really, I belong to Christ, not to a church or a denomination.—**Editor**

BRAZIL:

■ *"It's a pleasure to continue receiving THE SWORD AND STAFF. I'm also pleased to hear that brother Elliott will be publishing his prophecy material in book form..." (E-mail)*

GHANA:

■ *"I send you my heartfelt greetings in His name. I have been given a copy of your paper and I have come to like it very much. Please enroll my name on your mailing list..."*

■ *"I just cannot tell you how glad I was and very much uplifted in Spirit to receive the 4 copies of bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF, volumes 31-38. Brother James, I must tell you that THE SWORD AND STAFF publication is my number one greatest treasure.*

"I always repeat my thanks, asking God for you, that he may always have you in His grace. Thank you so much and may you keep on keeping the wonderful and soul saving work of God..."

MALAYSIA:

■ *"I visited your web site while on a search and found it very informative.*

"I would like to request a free copy of THE SWORD AND STAFF to be sent to my address..."

"Thank you." (E-mail, web page response) □



The Life of Faith

(Continued from Page 8)

for the testimony of Jesus Christ." Really, legally and from the viewpoint of the world, John had been banished and exiled on this ten-mile-long rocky islet called Patmos off the coast of Asia Minor because the Romans classified him as a criminal. We understand this island was commonly used for the banishment of undesirable people as they were sentenced to slave in the rock quarries isolated from the rest of the world. But did John look upon this as his fate?

No, he was there for a higher purpose, to receive the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ (as the ages were unfolded before him). Likewise, the apostle Paul spoke of himself as “the prisoner of Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 3:1), not a prisoner of the Romans. The Lord had a higher purpose for him. He was “an ambassador in bonds” (Ephesians 6:20), even to “Caesar’s household” (Philippians 1:12,13; 4:21,22). It was all in the context of his mission to preach the gospel to “every creature.”

“All Things Work Together for Good”

Briefly we now outline some of the Scriptures that show different ways of looking upon the things that happen to us (as we are admonished by James to exercise wisdom and see the spiritual significance, James 1:5). These are some of the ways “that all things work together for good to them that love God” and “are the called according to his purpose” (according to the Word of God).

- ***Produces Patience:*** “Knowing this that the trying of your faith worketh patience” (James 1:3); “...We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience” (Romans 5:3).
- ***Sins Are Purged:*** “...Through manifold temptations [many trials]: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perish, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:6,7). “Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin” (1 Peter 4:1). (Also read Psalms 119:67,71).
- ***Chastisement from God:*** “...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...” (Read all of Hebrews 12:4-11 to get the full picture).
- ***Causes Humility:*** “...There was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, than am I strong” (2 Corinthians 12:7-10).

● ***Enhancement of Hope:*** “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope...” (Romans 8:22-25). (Also read Romans 5:3-5).

● ***Preparation for Eternity:*** “For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

“All Things Are Yours”

Ever keep these truths in mind as we live the life of faith. We should never be the victim, but we should be on top of the heap of whatever happens to us. According to Paul, everything belongs to the Christian (and should serve him in living the Christian life). The Corinthians were glorying in men (preachers) instead of simply recognizing that they were God’s servants (and theirs) in the gospel (and it is inappropriate to glory in slaves). These preachers belonged to all of them, not just a particular preacher to a particular faction. This lead Paul to say, “Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours. And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s” (1 Corinthians 3:21-23). What a statement! In essence, everything belongs to a Christian. Everything should be looked upon as servants, or means, to bring glory to God and to advance our spiritual well being. What a challenge! What a way to look at things!

Great and Reassuring Scripture

As we live from day to day, some great truths found in Romans chapter 8, following that key verse 28, are always good to keep in mind. These verses are most reassuring. Paul prods our minds with pointed questions to get our attention so that we will be sure to listen to the wonderful things he has to say. “What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?...Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 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, which is in Christ Jesus our

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The Life of Faith

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Lord" (Read Romans 8:28-39). Whatever comes in life, always remember this Scripture. Our lives are lived in the context of God's love.

"If The Lord Will"

As we close out this point and this article, we point you to one more admonition. Listen to what James says: "Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that" (James 4:13-15). Whether it involves material pursuits, spiritual pursuits—*anything*, what we plan and what we do should always be conditioned with the words, "If the Lord will." The apostle Paul likewise used this mode of expression. He told the Corinthians, "I will come to you shortly, if the Lord will" (1 Corinthians 4:19). Acts 18:21 finds him using these words again. It is simply a humble recognition that our lives are lived interwoven with God and his intentions for us. It is this matter, again, of putting God first in what we do (Matthew 6:33). Any and everything in our lives has purpose and meaning in relation to God. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28) any way that you look at it. Amen! □



The Founder of Christianity

IN JESUS CHRIST was the fulfillment of all history, human and divine. In Him culminated the revelation of God to the world concerning redemption. In Him would be the fullness of the Godhead bodily and the ideal human in virtue and piety. In Him is solved the problem of religion, reconciliation and fellowship with God. As Jesus ended the Old Testament He opened the endless future and inaugurated an age of hope of eternal life for mankind via His blood. As the Author of a new creation, the church, He was "the head of the body the fullness of him, that filleth all in all." He brought a universal infusion of ways and means to be spiritually guided by heavenly dominion. Because He lived, the human race could face all tomorrows, history had an ending and man could see the beginning of a glorious eternity.

Jesus Christ was born during the times of Augustus Caesar, Herod the Great and Quirinius the governor of Syria. His mother, a maiden in the royal line of David, the king, bore Him in Bethlehem. As a wedded maiden and virgin who was overpowered by

the Holy Spirit, she brought forth Him who would be "Jesus and Immanuel." The world was at peace which secured Him a hearing for the message of peace which otherwise would have been drowned out by the clamor and passion of war. He renewed hope for low or rich, young or old, civilized or not, Jew or Gentile.

He grew up quietly and unnoticed in the mountain village of Nazareth, in Galilee, in a carpenter's shop, far from Jerusalem, gifted schools, or libraries. He had no instruction but that of the humblest and the care of godly parents who took Him to the synagogue and feast days in Jerusalem designed by the Law. He fulfilled all types and recorded prophecies of the Old Testament concerning His character, mission and medium of activity. All attempts to say He derived His teachings from existing schools of the Pharisees, Sadducees, traditions of the Elders or Essenes utterly failed. From the Pharisees and Sadducees He differed and incurred their deadly hatred and hostility and He never visited the Essenes. Independent of human learning and literature He was neither scholar, artist nor orator. Yet, He was wiser than the sages of the ages. He spoke as no other and was so profound all marveled at His authority.

He began His ministry at the age of 30 after the Messianic inauguration by the baptism of John. A three-year ministry condensed the deepest meaning of religion and salvation. No greater life moved so swiftly and more humbly with such universal consequences and lasting interest. He was aware of his impending humiliation by crucifixion and witnessed it by saying, "If I be lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto myself."

He chose twelve apostles, not from scholars or leaders, but lowly illiterate fishermen of Galilee. He had no home, earthly possessions and few friends among the rich and mighty. His purse was filled by the pious and stolen from by a son of perdition. In His association with the publicans and sinners He set before them a means of reformation and redemption. He never courted favor with the "great," but incurred their wrath. He never flattered, but rebuked vice, self-righteousness and hypocrisy. He never encouraged a carnal Messianic hope. He wearied himself with work for His Father, but was never weary of His work.

Jesus Christ was born in poverty, reared in obscurity, never traveling widely, possessed neither wealth nor influence, had obscure relatives, no formal education, founded no colleges or libraries, heeded not the multitudes, never marshaled an army, but led more volunteers than any other leader. He never wrote a book but set the pens of thousands to writing of His earthly stay and heavenly promises. Each week the

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The Best Thing to Give...

to your enemy ***is forgiveness***;
to an opponent, ***tolerance***;
to a friend, ***your heart***;
to your child, ***a good example***;
to a father, ***deference***;
to your mother, ***conduct that will make her
proud of you***;
to yourself, ***respect***;
to all men, ***charity***.

—Lord Balfour

BARBS... with a Point

YOU CAN reason with a reasonable person, but with others you cannot.

"Religious nuts" are not the fruit of real New Testament Christianity.

Our desire is to bring Christianity into every facet of life, not to bring every facet of life (the world) into Christianity.

Some people think that if you don't blink your eyes just like they do, you can't even see.

To some people "the faith" is only a set of doctrines to be learned, not a personal relationship to be experienced with the living Christ.

When most people do their "thing," it just involves things.

Today, too many times, that which is called worship is man-centered entertainment rather than actually being worship.

Pride is more easily detected in others than in ourselves.

The practice of politics (national and otherwise) and the relationship among nations many times seems to be off-limits in the practice of Christianity.

Freedom must be in the context of responsibility or it is self-destructive.

Sectarian prejudice is a strange and an amazing phenomenon; it opens ones eyes to see that which is not even there, and at the same time blinds one to seeing that which is obvious.

To "hit the nail on the head," you have to come straight down on it.

In a society where religion is banned from the public schools young people get the impression that religion is irrelevant to life.

Good works do not save us, but we cannot be saved without them.

Hollywood, television and the entertainment industry are largely a cancer in our society that works havoc with the morals and institutions of our nation.

What's so great about winning the rat race, if we are still a rat?

How can a church expect spiritual results (real conversion and spirituality) when they make their appeal to the world on a carnal basis?

In true Christian unity, we must be one with Christ before we can be one with one another.

If you don't believe the Holy Spirit dwells in you, He doesn't (and won't) dwell in you because He dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:16,17).

Truth is to be enjoyed for the sake of truth, not for the sake of argumentation.

We still have a denominational mindset when we identify ourselves religiously in reference to a religious movement instead of simply and only by the Word of God.

People who are as rough as a keg of nails can let the air out of your tires pretty quick.

When we learn new religious truths, and there are new truths to be learned every day, instead of making an issue out of them to divide the church, let us humbly accept them as part of growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (and be patient with those who do not understand them yet).

Whatever takes the place of God in your life is "God" in your life.

The person who limits himself to only one translation of the Bible and does not make word studies beyond that has tied himself in to being a pretty shallow student of God's Word.

I wonder why people never name their little girls "Jezebel," but don't hesitate to adorn themselves like her.

The trouble we have today in many places is that many people who claim to "belong to the church" don't even belong to Christ. □

Different Personalities

WE ARE all different personalities shaped that way by genetic transmission and personal experience, and the sooner we recognize this truth, and stop judging others and trying to shape them after the image of our own personality, the better off we will all be; each person is unique and should be respected accordingly as such. □

The trouble with "our" society is that when "we" speak of values, "we" think in terms of dollars and cents. □

The Founder of Christianity

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wheels of industry stop to give way to worship this Divine One. He lived 2000 years ago and still lives today. Men sought to destroy Him, the grave tried to hold Him, but He arose and ascended to the right hand of the Father to become our Mediator and Savior. Surrounded in death by foes, a loving mother, disciples and the heavenly host, He said, "It is finished," and arose in three days to say, "O foolish men, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Behooved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory?" The story of Jesus Christ was written in childlike simplicity, but the glory of it is beyond all that men may think or imagine. He commanded unconditional trust and obedience that must rise above party or sect. He addressed the heart and conscience of mankind. His pronouncement that a mighty kingdom not of this earth would grow from a small seed to be mighty, never before considered by mortal man. Miracles, signs and wonders accompanied His teachings to exhibit His power over all nature. His doctrine was sealed with the holiest of private and public living.—*Don Hatch* □

BILL GATES SAID IT!

BILL GATES, computer software czar and reputed world's richest man, is reported to have said the following at a high school in California (Mt. Whitney High School, Visalia, CA). Whether you like him, or dislike him, he hits the nail on the head. To anyone with kids of any age, or anyone who has ever been a kid, here's some advice Bill Gates recently dished out at a high school speech about 11 things they did not and will not learn in public schools. He talks about how feel-good, politically correct teachings have created a generation of kids with no concept of reality and how this concept set them up for failure in the real world.

Rule 1: Life is not fair—get used to it.

Rule 2: The world won't care about your self-esteem. The world will expect you to accomplish something before you feel good about yourself.

Rule 3: You will not make \$40,000 a year right out of high school. You won't be a vice-president with a car phone until you earn both.

Rule 4: If you think your teacher is tough, wait 'til you get a boss.

Rule 5: Flipping burgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for burger flipping—they called it opportunity.

Rule 6: If you mess up, it's not your parents' fault, so don't whine about your mistakes. Learn from them.

Rule 7: Before you were born, your parents weren't as boring as they are now to you. They got that way

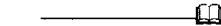
from paying your bills, cleaning your clothes and listening to you talk about how cool you are. So before you save the rain forest from the parasites of your parents' generation, try delousing the closet in your own room.

Rule 8: Your school may have done away with winners and losers, but life has not. In some schools, they have abolished failing grades and they'll give you as many times, as you want to get the right answer. This doesn't bear the slightest resemblance to anything in real life.

Rule 9: Life is not divided into semesters. You don't get summers off and very few employers are interested in helping you find yourself. Do that on your own time.

Rule 10: Television is not real life. In real life people actually have to leave the coffee shop and go to jobs.

Rule 11: Be nice to nerds. Chances are you'll end up working for one.—*Selected* □



A Memorial for Their Son (Reportedly a True Story)

THE WOMAN in a gingham dress and the man in a homespun suit got off the train in Boston and made their way to the office of the president of Harvard University. They did not have an appointment. They entered the outer office where the secretary looked at them with disdain, taking in the gingham dress and homespun suit.

"What can I do for you?" she snapped.

"We wish to see the president" the man said quietly.

"He's busy all day" she snapped again.

"We'll wait" said the man.

Hours passed, and the secretary began to fidget. These people had no right to be here taking up valuable time.

Finally she could stand it no more and doing the chore she always regretted, she interrupted the president of Harvard University. "Maybe if you see them for a few minutes, they'll leave," she said to him.

He sighed in exasperation and nodded. Someone of his importance obviously didn't have time to spend with them, and he detested gingham dresses and homespun suits cluttering up his outer office. The president, stern faced and with dignity, strutted toward the couple.

The lady spoke, "We had a son who attended Harvard for one year. He loved Harvard. He was happy here. But, about a year ago, he was accidentally killed. My husband and I would like to erect a memorial to him, somewhere on campus."

The president wasn't touched...He was shocked. "Madam," he said gruffly, "we can't put up a statue

*A Strong Woman
Versus a Woman of Strength*

A strong woman works out every day
to keep her body in shape,
but a woman of strength looks deep inside
to keep her soul in shape.

A strong woman isn't afraid
of anything,
but a woman of strength shows courage
in the midst of her fear.

A strong woman won't let anyone
get the best of her,
but a woman of strength gives the best
of her to everyone.

A strong woman makes mistakes
and avoids the same in the future,
but a woman of strength realizes life's mistakes
can also be blessings and capitalizes on them.

A strong woman walks
surefootedly,
but a woman of strength knows
when to ask for help.

A strong woman wears the look
of confidence on her face,
but a woman of strength
wears grace.

A strong woman has faith
that she is strong enough for the journey,
but a woman of strength has faith
that it is in the journey that she will become strong.

—*Author Unknown*

to every person who attended Harvard and died. If we did, this place would look like a cemetery."

"Oh, no," the lady explained quickly. "We don't want to erect a statue. We thought we would like to give a building to Harvard."

The president rolled his eyes. He glanced at the gingham dress and homespun suit, then exclaimed, "A building! Do you have any earthly idea how much a building costs? We have over seven and a half million dollars in the physical buildings here [that was years ago—*Editor*] at Harvard."

For a moment the lady was silent. The president was pleased. Maybe he could get rid of them now. The lady turned to her husband and said quietly, "Is that all it costs to start a university? Why don't we just start our own?"

Her husband nodded.

The president's face wilted in confusion and bewilderment. Mr. and Mrs. Leland Stanford got up

and walked away, traveling to Palo Alto, California where they established the university that bears their name, Stanford University, a memorial to a son that Harvard no longer cared about.

You can easily judge the character of others by just how they treat those who they think can do nothing. —*Selected* □

The Sign of the Cross

TO MANY it is an ornament to be worn around the neck.

To the architect it is a symbol, adorning church buildings.

To the scholar it is a goad, driving one on to intellectual pursuits.

To the preacher it is a sermon, filling the need of the hour and eternity.

To the skeptic it is a superstition, clouding the human mind.

To the Roman it was an instrument of execution, obnoxious and hated.

To Constantine it was a sign by which to conquer, turning defeat into victory.

To Paul it was a symbol of glory pointing the way to heaven.

To Mary it was a memory of agony, piercing her soul.

To the motley mob on Golgotha it was a holiday, carnal and horrible.

To one thief it was the door to perdition, horrible and cursed.

To the other it was the gate to paradise, wondrous beyond the work of mortals or angels.

To Christ it was a bier and a throne, a paradox of time, the way to God.

To multiplied millions of storm-tossed people, it is a symbol of hope, and object of faith, and a means to love.—*Trinity Calling* □

**Answers to:
BIBLE QUESTIONS**

1. Adam (Genesis 2:7; 5:5); Enoch (Genesis 5:18,23,24); 2. (1) Six years, Genesis 30:23-25; 31:41; (2) Seventeen years, Genesis 37:2,23-28; (3) Thirty years, Genesis 41:46; (4) Thirty-nine years, Genesis 45:11 (41:29,30; 41:46) (5) One Hundred and Ten years, Genesis 50:25,26; 3. Balaam, Numbers 24:17; 4. Deuteronomy 34:7; Acts 7:23; Acts 7:29,30; Deuteronomy 29:5; 5. 1 Samuel 1; 6. 1 Samuel 25:25; 7. 2 Samuel 24:21-25; 8. 1 Kings 22:1-40; 2 Kings 9; 9. Isaiah 8:3; 10. Nehemiah; 11. Matthew 16:13-20; 12. Matthew 23:23; 13. Acts 26:14; 14. Acts 11:26; 15. Acts 15; 16. Lust, Romans 7:7; 17. Romans 15:24; 18. Romans and Colossians; 19. Five, 2 Corinthians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 20. 2 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:1. □

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NATIONS, AWAKE!

► *"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."*

(Proverbs 14:34)

► *"The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all nations that forget God."*

(Psalms 9:17)

► *"Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall."*

(Proverbs 16:18)

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Things I Needed To Know in Life I Learned from Noah's Ark

One: Don't miss the boat.

Two: Remember that we are all in the same boat.

Three: Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.

Four: Stay fit. When you're getting up in years—Noah was 600 years old—you may be used of God to do something really "big."

Five: Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.

Six: Build your future on high ground.

Seven: For safety's sake, travel in pairs.

Eight: Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.

Nine: When you're stressed, float a while.

Ten: Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs; the Titanic by professionals.

Eleven: No matter the storm, when you are with God, there's always a rainbow waiting.—*Selected* ☐

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