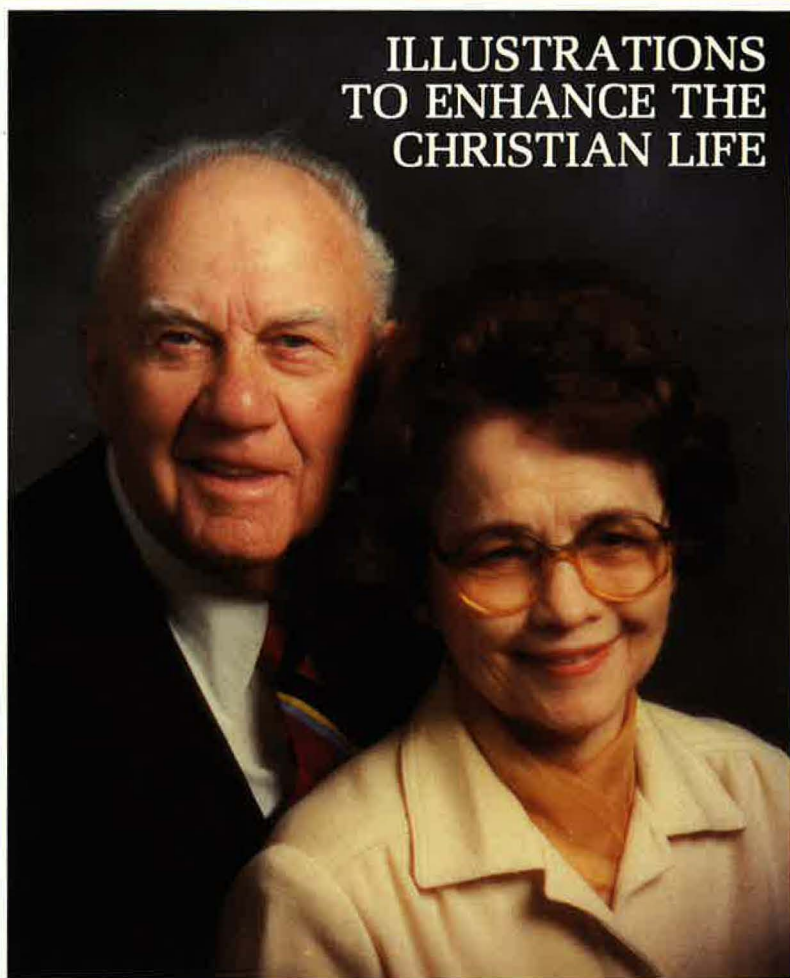


PERSONAL VIGNETTES

ILLUSTRATIONS
TO ENHANCE THE
CHRISTIAN LIFE



Boyce Mouton

Personal Vignettes

Personal Vignettes

Boyce Mouton

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. . . As His Spirit leads

. . . And for God's glory

. . . You are encouraged to use this material

. . . . For the building up of His Body

. . . . And for the evangelization of the world

Dedication

To my mother and father:

They loved me before I was born.

They cared for me when I was helpless.

Their commitment to each other gave me a firm foundation.

Their sacrifice and service propelled me in times of need.

And their example in parenting has been a guiding light.

On The Cover

The picture on the cover is Mr. and Mrs. Henry Boyce Mouton on their Golden Wedding Anniversary. Vignettes about them are pages 117, 119 and 121.

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INTRODUCTION

Personal Vignettes

“Vignette” (pronounced “veen-YET”) comes from the French word for “vine.” It’s primary reference is to an ornamental border design on the page of a book. If an author wishes to enhance, or to draw attention to something which he has written, he can frame those words with an ornate border, much as an artist uses a picture frame. Those who initiated this practice frequently designed borders with tendrils, leaves, and clusters of grapes, hence the borders were called “vignettes.”

The word, “vignette,” is also used of short literary compositions which are characterized by compactness, subtleness, and delicacy. Rather than write an entire biography, for example, it is possible to write merely a brief synopsis which would epitomize the essence of a person’s life. This compact, abbreviated history would serve as a picture frame, or “vignette” to draw attention to their lives and to enhance our interest and understanding.

This book is a compilation of “PERSONAL VIGNETTES.” I pray that they will be of practical significance to you as you serve Jesus Christ. Some will read these words for their own personal

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

enjoyment and inspiration. Others will find them a source of interesting illustrations to use in teaching and preaching the Word of God.

We have divided these stories into several broad classifications which may help you to utilize the illustrations in a more practical manner.

You are certainly encouraged to repeat, or to reproduce this material in any way that will advance the cause of Jesus Christ.

"Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work" (II Thess. 2:16-17).

BACKSLIDING

Hello Demas!

Hello Demas! Man, it's good to see you again. I've sure been thinking a lot about you lately.

Yeah! I can understand the way you feel. It's kinda tough to say good-bye to friends and family and spend your whole life like some sort of weird mis-fit in society. It isn't easy to work 12-14 hours a day while your neighbors play ball at the beach or lounge at the lake. It's pretty tough to burn the mid-night oil for a bunch of professional complainers who snarl and bite at a helping hand. I know what it is to feel lonely and forsaken . . . cheated and misunderstood. It almost seems unfair, doesn't it Demas, for one man to have a dozen jobs to do when most people don't even have one. It's hard to understand!

Let me tell you what I've seen, Demas. I've seen a good friend fired from a scrawny little church just because he stood up for the scriptures. He loved those people . . . and even volunteered to preach without pay. They rewarded that love with a campaign of criticism and demanded his resignation. I know of great men trapped in small pulpits. Some who have said "no" to

high salaried executive positions to referee the little play pen skirmishes which characterize the childish church of our generation. One friend came out of the big war with an opportunity to fly for the airlines. He chose instead a thankless \$35 a week and the eternal struggle of trying to pump spiritual life into the collapsed veins of a shriveled little congregation in the Midwest. I know of one preacher's wife who suffered a nervous breakdown because the brethren were too tight fisted to rent a parsonage. Her makeshift home was the back of the church buildings where the Sunday school classes met.

I've seen great shepherds die with broken hearts - overwhelmed by their compassion and concern for the wayward sheep. I've seen the shiney suits and slick tires . . . the borrowed tools and the threadbare couch.

But Demas . . . I'm still asking you to come back. Beneath the hay and stubble are many vessels of pure gold in the church of our blessed Lord. People who would lay down their lives and fortunes without a whine or a whimper . . . thousands who have never bowed the knee to Baal . . . regiments of redeemed souls whose lovely lives are beautiful benedictions to the prayers of any preacher.

Demas . . . even as bad as the church might be it is nothing to compare with the hellish world in which we live. Beneath the smiles and the veneer of self confidence the world is a snarling jungle of contradiction and confusion. Thousands plunge from sex to suicide . . . from pre-occupation with business and scholarship to infatuation with mind expanding drugs and Oriental mysticism . . . like the troubled sea, their lives are a turmoil of blind plunges and restless agitation. The frustrations of youth are multiplied by passing years and culminate in the bewildered screams of the dying.

Demas! A man is not foolish to give up what he cannot keep to gain something which he cannot lose. The paltry pleasures and tinsel trinkets of earth are nothing to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to the sons of God. The pathway from

HELLO DEMAS!

Bethlehem to Calvary was meant to provide us with an example that we might follow in His steps.

And so, Demas, with all that I am or ever hope to be I ask that you return.

HISTORICAL NOTE: The name Demas means “popular.” He is mentioned but three times in the Bible. He is first mentioned as a fellow laborer of Paul (Col. 4:14, Phile. 24) but then forsook the apostle because he loved this present world (II Tim. 4:10).

COURAGE

He Was Faithful (William H. Seward)

“ . . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

In each of our lives there are moments of transition and temptation when it is not easy to be faithful.

For example, I think it is easier to be faithful in high school than it is in college. A great many are faithful until college.

It is easier for some to be faithful while single than it is when they get married. Lots of people are faithful until marriage.

Still others are faithful until sickness . . . or tragedy . . . or persecution . . . or adversity . . . or retirement . . . or prosperity . . . etc.

The crown of life, however, is for those who are faithful until death.

Trial Magazine (July, 1984) contains an interesting article by David S. Shrage. The article is about William H. Seward. Mr. Seward was the principle founder of the Republican Party. He became a distinguished Governor and Senator from New York,

and ultimately was the Secretary of State under President Abraham Lincoln.

William H. Seward achieved fame, or perhaps infamy, by engineering the purchase of Alaska from Russia. Backyard politicians chided him for his "ignorance" and called our 49th State "Seward's Folly" or "Seward's Icebox." History has been kinder to Mr. Seward than it has been to his critics.

Early in his career Seward revealed his courageous character by volunteering to defend a black named William Freeman who was accused of the vicious murder of four people. Freeman, despite repeated claims of innocence, had previously served five years for allegedly stealing a horse. In jail he had been beaten and flogged many times, once he had been hit over the head with a board with such force that he was left permanently deaf and possibly insane. At the time of his trial for murder he could not hear his accusers, nor utter an intelligible sentence.

Seward said, "I am not the prisoner's lawyer, I am indeed a volunteer on his behalf; I am a lawyer for society, for mankind. . . ." A position which certainly did not make him popular at the time. He said to the jury:

" . . . the color of a prisoner's skin . . . is not impressed upon the spiritual, immortal mind which works beneath. In spite of human pride he is still your brother and mine in form and color accepted and approved by his Father, and yours, and mine; and bears equally with us the proudest inheritance of our race — the image of our Maker. Hold him, then, to be a man . . . and make for him all the allowance, and deal with him with all the tenderness, which under the like circumstances you would expect for yourselves."

In his concluding remarks to the jury he made this impassioned plea,

" . . . in due time gentlemen of the jury . . . my remains will rest here in your midst. It is very possible they will be unhonored, neglected, spurned! But, perhaps, years hence, when the passion

HE WAS FAITHFUL

and excitement which now agitate this community shall have passed away, some wandering stranger, some lone exile, some Indian, some negro, may erect over them a humble stone, and thereon . . . 'He was faithful.' "

William Freeman was found guilty and sentenced to be hanged. That sentence was reversed, but Freeman died in chains in 1847.

The wishes of his early life have been fulfilled, however, and William H. Seward outlived his client by 25 years. On the tombstone which marks the presence of his earthly remains are engraved those last three words which he spoke to the jury those many years before, "He was faithful!"

When our last summons is received and we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, may we be found faithful. The Great Judge of the universe does not require that we attain to success or prominence, prestige or power. He does, however, demand our faithfulness. And, thus, may the blessed Savior step to our side and testify on our behalf in the words of William Seward, "He was faithful!"

Breaking Barriers

(Chuck Yeager)

The name of Chuck Yeager is famous for a number of reasons. He was a World War II flying ace who shot down five German planes on a single mission. He even bagged a Messerschmitt jet with a propeller driven P-51. A veteran of 61 combat missions he was once shot down over occupied territory, made his way to freedom, and by special order of General Eisenhower was permitted to remain in the war despite orders to send him home.

He will probably be most remembered, however, as the first man to break the sound barrier.

It happened in 1947 in a supersecret plane called the Bell X-1.

At sea level the speed of sound is 760 m.p.h. At 40,000 feet it is 660 m.p.h. Everyone has had the experience of opening the window of a speeding automobile and feeling the force of the onrushing wind. This "compressibility" of the air increases as your speed increases. Airplanes flying at 700 m.p.h. had actually experienced "shock waves" which led to the widely held belief in the existence of a "sound barrier." This was thought to be an invisible wall that would disintegrate any airplane that tried to fly through it.

Early in 1947 the famous British test pilot Geoffrey De Havilland, Jr. was blown to pieces trying to break the "barrier" in a tailless experimental plane called the "Swallow." It disintegrated at .94 Mach.

All indications were that breaking the barrier would be a complex and risky undertaking. Therefore, they determined to go at it by inches instead of steps.

The X-1 was strapped beneath a B-29 and carried aloft. First they glided it to earth with no fuel on board. Gradually they added fuel and fired the four rocket engines one at a time. As

their speed inched higher they came closer and closer to that frightening "barrier."

Finally, on October 14, 1947, Yeager flew at 1.07 Mach, or a speed of 700 miles per hour at 42,000 feet and thus created the first sonic boom ever made by an airplane. The Machmeter only registered to 1.0 Mach.

Yeager wrote:

Suddenly the Mach needle began to fluctuate. It went up to .965 Mach — then tipped right off the scale. I thought I was seeing things! We were flying supersonic! And it was as smooth as a baby's bottom. Grandma could be sitting up there sipping lemonade. . . . And that was it. I sat up there feeling kind of numb, but elated. After all the anticipation to achieve this moment, it really was a letdown. It took a . . . instrument meter to tell me what I'd done. There should have been a bump on the road, something to let you know you had just punched a nice clean hole through that sonic barrier. The unknown was a poke through Jello. Later on, I realized that this mission had to end in a letdown, because the real barrier wasn't in the sky, but in our knowledge and experience of supersonic flight. . . .

The "sound barrier" was therefore much like other barriers. It was more of a mental barrier than a physical one.

The world is filled with haunting voices that speak with authoritative tones informing us that airplanes flying at 700 m.p.h. will disintegrate, that man will never run a four-minute mile, that Jews and Gentiles will never live in peace with one another, that a lion will never lie down with a lamb. Each time we hear such news another mental brick is placed in the barriers of our mind.

Not only have men broken the "sound barrier" with airplanes, but our astronauts have "walked" in space at 18,000 m.p.h. and not even worked up a sweat.

I don't know what barriers you face in your life but I believe that virtually all barriers can be broken . . . and when they are,

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

we too may discover that they were a "poke through Jello."
Adapted from Yeager — An Autobiography
by Gen. Chuck Yeager & Leo Janos
Bantam Books

A Different Drum

(Henry Thoreau)

Henry David Thoreau was born in Concord, Massachusetts in 1817 and died in 1862 before his 45th birthday. Though he possessed a marked literary ability only two of his works were published during his lifetime. The first (1849) he paid for himself and was only able to sell 200 of the 1,000 volumes he had published. His second, "Walden" (1854) did somewhat better.

Yet, Thoreau, lived and died in virtual obscurity. He devoted the major portion of his time to the study of nature; reading Greek, English, French, and Latin literature; meditating on philosophical problems; and in extended conversations with his neighbors.

He distinguished himself by his unique approach to life and is famous for these words: "If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music which he hears, however measured or far away."

Thoreau was true to this philosophy. When he graduated from Harvard in 1837 he refused his diploma because he thought he had a better use for the \$5. From 1845-1847 he lived on the shores of Walden Pond in an unobtrusive little hut which he constructed for \$28. He was not actually an ascetic, though, for even at Walden Pond he went to town almost every day and welcomed many visitors to his crude and humble dwelling. A home, which incidentally was never locked. He disdained the world's mad rush for wealth and was content to walk in the woods and supply his meager needs by means of odd jobs. The originality of his thinking is reflected by the fact that he was scarcely on the popular side of any question. While there are areas of his life with which we are compelled to disagree, we must commend him for the courage of his convictions, and seek to imitate the inclination in his life to listen for a different drum.

In a day of lockstep fads and fetishes it is refreshing to read of a man like Thoreau. At a time when the masses react like rats in a maze for the bell ringers of Hollywood . . . when the prostitutes of Paris become pied pipers for the dress fashions of the civilized world . . . when a handful of unwashed and obscene "musicians" can reign like tyrants over the mental and moral values of millions everywhere . . . then my friends it is time to step out of the parade and listen for the sound of a different drum. Let the boobs and buffoons climb on the bandwagons of public approbation. Let the mindless and indolent ape the actions and parrot the creeds of conformity. The revolt of the thinking Christian is past due. It is time to shake off the shackles and be free from the social slavery that chains us to the grist mills of carnality.

The bones of many martyrs are strewn along the highways of human progress. The madmen and heretics of history have frequently emerged as heroes whose daring and courage have blazed new trails for the benefit of all mankind. But let us ever be mindful that heroes often walk alone.

The Saviour of the world sent out His disciples like "sheep in the midst of wolves." He warned them of the fickle public which would garnish the tombs of the prophets whom their fathers murdered in cold blood. He reminded them of His own cross and invited them to follow Him and die. He spoke of a narrow way which only a few would find. He looked down from Calvary with pity and forgiveness for those who drove the nails into His calloused and innocent hands. While nature was thrown into convulsions and while God Himself hid His face in amazement, the careless public passed by unconcerned and the soldiers gambled for His garments.

Each thinking man must inevitably come to the crossroads of conviction and conformity. With bugles blaring and banners waving in the breeze the parade throngs by and beckons to the well-paved thoroughfare of convenience and compliance. The broad way is strewn with the wreckage and debris of indolence and in-

A DIFFERENT DRUM

difference. Please stop and listen for the call of a different cadence. Before the mind is addled by the frenzy of the music . . . before the final plunge with Judas from the cliffs of Aceldama, before the screams of the damned are ringing in our ears . . . let us pause and listen for a different drum.

Patton's Principles

(Gen. George Patton)

Porter B. Williamson was a close friend and associate of the late General George Patton. His book *Patton's Principles* was published by Simon and Schuster in New York.

Williamson writes:

Many historians have written about General Patton's ability to move men into combat. It is my opinion a greater talent was his ability to change battle plans quickly. I remember General Patton's words at some of the briefing sessions: "We must be able to move around like a boxer. The faster we move the easier it will be to kill the enemy. If we cannot change battle plans, it's the same thing as digging a foxhole where the enemy will find us and put us in our graves. We have to be able to change or we will get the . . . shot out of us, and we would deserve it! When we are not moving we are losing. Nothing stays the same in war."

On another occasion he said:

"We have the speed to move behind enemy lines. It will be lonely behind the enemy lines, but that's where wars are won. The natives behind the lines will not shoot much because they will not have any heavy guns. If we get behind the enemy, they will not shell us because they would be hitting their own kinfolk. No soldier likes to fire into his hometown. We will go in and take whatever we have to take, but we will not waste time on taking any position we have to defend unless we will gain in killing the enemy. The quickest way to win a war is to cut the enemy away from supplies. We are self-contained! We have everything we need to last behind the enemy lines for days. We can capture any gasoline we might need. We will not mind being lonely because we know we can fight our way back to friendly troops. The best plan is to raise hell until the friendly troops can come to us. Nothing goes faster than success. When we have the enemy on the run, we'll keep him running. Night and day we will drive and never stop. We will never rest when we are winning . . . we will

keep driving whether we have rations or not. We can always eat our shoes, our belts, or each other. We will be like the horse cavalry. We will feed off of the land. We will capture food and gasoline from the enemy . . . they will think they have us surrounded. We will teach the . . . that to surround us is to make sure they will die. When we are surrounded we can fire in any direction and hit the enemy. . . ."

Some will recall that famous incident during the Battle of the Bulge when American troops were surrounded. When the Germans demanded that they surrender the reply was "Nuts!"

We may find some of General Patton's language a bit salty and offensive. We, as Christian soldiers, have no personal desire to kill anyone. Yet, we surely can learn something from this legendary General whose genius has been recognized by friend and foe alike.

The church has never been more successful than when it was on the move. When we pause to dig our foxholes, or erect our fortresses, we inevitably lose some of the lustre and momentum of victory. Someone has said that Christianity is like riding a bicycle, you go forward or you get off.

Because the church of our blessed Lord is described in Scripture as a "body" we, too, possess the capacity to be flexible and to adapt to differing circumstances. When the door was closed to Bithynia Paul turned to Asia. When the door was closed to Asia he moved into Macedonia.

Moving deftly but with a great sense of direction Paul was able to evangelize from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum in only ten short years.

Fighting behind enemy lines, Patton learned the lesson of improvising from what was available so that he would not be tied down with cumbersome supply lines that would ultimately prove impractical in waging spiritual warfare.

We can always learn from one another . . . and sometimes the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of Light.

Never Quit

(Glenn Cunningham)

In January 1979 Glenn Cunningham was honored in Madison Square Garden as the outstanding track performer of the 20th century. Yet at the age of seven he had been told that he would never walk again.

Glenn was the victim of a school room fire that took his brother's life and nearly made him a permanent cripple.

It was February 1916 when Floyd Cunningham attempted to start a fire in the coal stove which heated their one room school house. Someone had filled the five gallon kerosene can with gasoline. There was an incredible explosion.

Glenn was standing nearby at the time and the force of the explosion threw him back against the wall. Both boys were on fire. They ran outside and rolled on the ground begging someone to throw sand on them. The ground was so frozen that nothing could be done.

Somehow these boys made it two miles to their home where Floyd died and Glenn lingered for many weeks near death. There was the ever present danger that even if Glenn lived his legs would have to be amputated. The agony and pain from the burns was compounded by boils and bed sores.

It was in August of that year when the doctor took his temperature and tried again unsuccessfully to bend his stiff legs . . . then turned to the patient and said . . . "Glenn, for six months you have been telling us that you are going to walk again, do you still believe it?"

"Yes sir" he said.

Then with the encouragement of his mother and doctor Glenn tried to walk again . . . but failed. Bracing himself upright in bed with one hand he used his other hand to inch his right leg off the edge of the bed. Slowly he did the same with the left leg.

Sweat broke out on his body as he tried to stand. If his mother

and doctor had not been there to catch him he would have fallen. He wept bitter tears.

Though Glenn was now beyond the danger of amputation there was a serious question as to whether he would ever be able to use his legs again. In order to move across the room he would lie down on the floor and drag himself forward on his elbows, dragging his useless legs behind him.

Glenn was a boy, however, who never quit trying. They placed a chair by his bed and it became his exercise machine. Daily he would work by the hour learning to stand and ultimately to inch his way around the chair.

At night his mother would massage his legs and watch the tears glisten upon his cheek. One leg was shorter than the other and it seemed that he would never run again.

Glenn, however did learn to walk. At least once each day he would hobble up to the back of a cow and grab hold of her tail. As she dragged him along he learned to increase his speed.

Soon Glenn was joining his brothers hunting rabbits on foot. Even with a hippity hop gait he was developing speed.

Before the flesh had even grown back over some places on his legs he entered a mile race at the annual Farmer's Fair. Competing against eight high school boys who were much older and larger it seemed at first a comical contest. Everybody had on track shoes and trunks except Glenn. He wore homemade woolen shirt and pants and thick soled canvas sneakers with heavy socks. Even fully clothed he weighed but a scant 70 pounds.

Nevertheless Glenn outran them all. Since he had never run such a race before he ducked under the string at the finish line.

People began waving excitedly and a man called out: "Son, you gotta break the string to win."

Glenn rushed back just in time to win his first gold medal. When Glenn's father found out about the race he got a whipping for his father did not believe in racing.

When in the sixth grade Glenn earned some extra money corraling an escaped bull and was able to take his brothers and

sisters to a movie in Elkhart. On the newsreel was the great Finnish runner Paavo Nurmi setting a new world's record. Glenn left the movie announcing: "Some day I'm going to break a record."

Even though his father disapproved of public displays of athletic ability Glenn was permitted to run in track in Jr. High School. In the seventh grade he broke the school record for the mile run by 18.9 seconds.

In 1929 at the age of 20 he ran the mile at Stagg Field in Chicago and set a new world record for the interscholastic mile.

In 1936 at the Olympic Games he was billed as "Mr. Clean" because he had promised his mother that he would never drink or smoke or bring embarrassment to his family.

When he was honored at Madison Square Garden the program read:

Glenn Cunningham, the dominant mile and 1500 meter of the 1930's, has been selected as the outstanding track performer of the century of Madison Square Garden history. . . . In that eight season span (1933-1940) Cunningham, a product of the University of Kansas, raced in 31 Garden Miles or 1500 meter races and won 21 of them. In these distances he established six world records. Cunningham is credited correctly with making the mile the glamour event in indoor track.

He never quit.

Adapted from *Never Quit* by George X. Sand

DEATH

The Sword of Damocles

In the fourth century B.C. Dionysius the Elder was the ruler of Syracuse in Sicily. There was a young courtier named Damocles, who sought the favor of the King. According to a story recounted by Roman writers he frequently made reference to the happiness and grandeur of rulers. He thus hoped to elevate himself to positions of power and wealth. Soon Damocles was invited to a banquet spread with delicacies fit for a king. The young courtier was overwhelmed with happiness as he dined in regal splendor. Suddenly, however, he was overcome by terror . . . for casting his eyes upward he saw a sharp sword suspended above his head by a single thread. Damocles thus learned that even in times of luxury, wealth, and comfort, death and destruction may only be moments away.

How practical this lesson is for the millions of America. We too dine in regal splendor. While most of our world's inhabitants go hungry we suffer from surplus. Someone said recently, that though we have but 10% of the world's population we consume 60% of the world's natural resources. We receive more money

for less work than any people who have ever walked upon this earth. We would like to believe that the banquet would never come to an end. We can hope that nothing will interrupt our felicity and prosperity . . . but the sword of Damocles sways gently above our heads.

People have a way of hearing only what they want to hear. We train ourselves to shut out unpleasant noises and thoughts. Mr. Average American can walk down a busy street oblivious to the sounds of traffic and the roar of the crowd . . . but should you drop a coin upon the pavement you would immediately arrest his attention.

It is therefore to be expected that a nation would reject its prophets of doom. The average life span of a nation is approximately 200 years. The citizens of every fallen empire had essentially the same philosophy . . . "It can never happen here". . . but they were wrong. Every nation that has risen has also fallen. There is only one Kingdom that shall not be destroyed or left to another people, and that is the Kingdom of Christ.

It is time that Christian people were shaken from their lethargy and indifference with an awareness that only what is done for Christ will last. Our nation, regardless of how great it is today, is not eternal. The signs of decay in the foundations of our society are unmistakable. Only the longsuffering of God stands between us and doom. The sword of Damocles is discernable to all who have eyes to see.

Yesterday is a cancelled check —
Tomorrow is a promissory note —
Today is the only asset you have.
Spend it wisely.

Come Before Winter

(Clarence Edward Macartney)

Clarence Edward Macartney was the famous preacher of the Arch Street Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. In 1915 he delivered there for the first time his famous address "Come Before Winter." Thereafter, he repeated the message each October for the remainder of his ministry.

Without detracting from the brilliance and eloquence of Mr. Macartney, may I suggest that the primary reason for the success of that message lay in its truth. The facts of the message are much more important than the manner of its presentation. The exposition of this section of scripture pierces the heart with the tragic and painful effects of procrastination. "Come Before Winter."

Paul was in prison. The end was near. "The time of his departure was at hand." His course was finished. Before he donned the martyrs crown he wrote one last message to mankind. In the concluding sentences of that letter he made several requests which provide an interesting insight into the austere life of an apostle. He had no large estates to dispose of or money to disperse. His final days were free from the entangling affairs of finance and commerce. He asked for his coat to be brought from Troaz, he also wanted the books . . . but especially the parchments (II Tim. 4:13). The "books" were probably early copies of the gospel and the "parchments" might well have been the Hebrew Scriptures. How utterly touching and beautiful that the apostle who labored more abundantly than they all would ask only for something to keep him warm and for the precious words of scripture.

. . . but time was of essence "Do thy diligence to come before winter" (II Tim. 4:21). In winter no ships would sail . . . the following spring no doubt would be too late. Before winter or never! The fragile strand that bound this man to earth was soon to be severed by a Roman sword . . . come before winter . . . or never!

A student at the Jefferson Medical College heard this message from Macartney and sat down to write his mother a letter that was long over-due. The very next day after the letter was mailed he received a telegram that she was dying. He left immediately for that farm so many miles away and hurrying up the stairs he found his mother still living. A faint smile of recognition swept across her face . . . and beneath her pillow was that precious letter which he had written only the Sunday night before.

The saddest sentence in English literature is felt by some to be found in the diary of Thomas Carlyle. He wrote despondently of his neglected wife. "Oh, that I had you yet for five minutes by my side, that I might tell you all." So genuine was his grief at her passing that he had these words inscribed over her grave,

For forty years she was a true and loving helpmate of her husband, and by act and word worthily forwarded him as none else could in all worthy he did or attempted. She died at London the 21st of April, 1886, suddenly snatched from him, and the light of his life as if gone out.

Those of us who treat our loved ones as though we would always have them with us should read with reverence this further admonition from Carlyle:

Cherish what is dearest while you have it near you, and wait not till it is far away. Blind and deaf that we are, O think, if thou yet love anybody living, wait not till death sweep down the paltry little dust clouds and dissonances of the moment, and all be made at last so mournfully clear and beautiful, when it is too late.

Macartney concluded his message with these words,

Once again, then, I repeat these words of the Apostle, "Come before winter," and as I pronounce them, common sense, experience, conscience, scripture, the Holy Spirit, the souls of just men made perfect and the Lord Jesus Christ all repeat with me,

COME BEFORE WINTER

"Come before winter!" Come before the haze of Indian summer has faded from the fields! Come before the November wind strips the leaves from the trees and sends them whirling over the fields! Come before the snow lies on the uplands and the meadow brook is turned to ice! Come before desire has failed! Come before life is over and your probation ended, and you stand before God to give an account of the use you have made of the opportunities which in his grace he has granted to you.

Come before winter!

Condensed from *Christian Herald*, Oct., 1972

Faithful Unto Death

(A Tribute to W. Frank Kling

Born June 15, 1937 – Died July 3, 1975)

Faithful unto death . . . not until graduation . . . or college . . . or until you purchase property at the lake . . . or until you get that promotion at work . . . or until you retire . . . but the First and the Last, the One who was dead and is alive again, declares “. . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life” (Rev. 2:10).

The word faithful, is used in the Bible in two different ways. First of all it refers to someone who is reliable or trustworthy; secondly it describes those who believe, trust and rely on God. Both of these descriptions seem appropriate in our remembrance of Frank. He was so reliable and trustworthy that he was made the treasurer of our church. He not only kept books and made payroll for our church, but somehow managed to budget his spare time to do the same thing for several local businesses as well. His faithfulness to the doctrine of Christ is demonstrated by the fact that he became probably the youngest man to ever serve this church in the capacity of an elder.

It is a common thing for men to eulogize the dead. Once a man is gone we have a tendency to play down his faults and speak out of his virtues. I have tried to honestly assess my own feelings in this regard and I have still concluded that any objective observer would have to view the life of Frank Kling with admiration and respect. He gave his heart to Jesus back in 1958 and from then until the time of his death he was consistently striving to be acceptable to God.

Frank and Jeanne were the first persons to be married in the facilities of the Fairview Christian Church. Because he was regular in attendance and diligent in his Christian growth he became a deacon, a Bible School teacher, and then an elder. The fact that he was made the secretary of the elders is another indication of his character and dependability.

Though quiet and unassuming, his qualities of leadership were evident in every area of his life. It caused him to be promoted at work . . . to become a leader and council member in the scouting program . . . and to be highly esteemed in his community and his church.

I have never been much interested in bestowing pointless praise upon a person simply because they happened to die, but I am profoundly interested in incorporating into my own life the virtues which I have seen in Frank. I would not only like to see them in my own life but also in the church. If every member of our church was as diligent and dependable, as willing and as constructive, as generous and as humble, as Frank Kling we would shift out of neutral and move like a mighty army for God. I have, therefore the highest motive in extoling the virtues of this Godly life. May we be imitators of him, even as he was of Christ.

Members of his family have remarked upon the intensity of his life. Like a man with a deadline to meet he has burned the midnight oil for many years. The finale to his life appropriately came while Frank was in the pursuit of "true religion." His heart was burdened for the fatherless and he and his family were returning from Ft. Chaffee where they were making arrangements to care for orphaned refugees. The circumstances surrounding his death cause us to believe that God was there. Only Frank was taken. His wife and children escaped death by inches. Their car flipped upside down on the spot where a firecracker stand had been located just a short while before — someone decided to move it because they thought it might be too close to the road. The utility pole which they struck protected a small grocery store where four people were providentially spared from suffering and death.

Selfishly, we were not ready to let him go . . . but our faith leads us to trust God even where it is impossible for us to test Him. Frank died in the harness. His life was a worthy example for his children, his church, his community, and his world . . . and he was faithful unto death. Someday, may the same be said of us.

Ignaz Phillip Semmelweis **(1818-1865)**

When I with my present conviction look back upon the Past, I can only dispel the sadness which falls upon me by gazing into that happy Future when wherein the lying-in hospitals, and also outside of them, throughout the whole world, childbed fever will be no more. . . .

But if it is not vouchsafed me to look upon that happy time with my own eyes, from which misfortune may God preserve me, the conviction that such a time must inevitably sooner or later arrive will cheer my dying hour.

Thus were the words of Ignaz Phillip Semmelweis, the man who accomplished more for the mothers of this world than any individual since Jesus Christ. And, true to form, he died estranged and rejected by the society which he served. We learn so slowly . . . we have stoned and martyred the saviours of every generation. We have burned and crucified the heroes of history as they bravely trespassed traditions in a valiant quest for new horizons of truth.

Dr. Semmelweis was born in a world of dying women. A savage epidemic swept across Europe leaving millions of young mothers in its dreadful wake. The finest hospitals lost one out of six to the scourge of childbed fever. Weary surgeons labored long into the night as the shrieks and moans of the doomed and dying echoed down the corridors of every clinic. Doctors everywhere were faced with the constant transformation of a young healthy mother into a grotesque and swollen corpse. This was an era of unbelievable ignorance. Filth and putrefaction abounded but no one associated such contamination with disease and infection. The doctor's daily routine began in the dissecting room where autopsies were performed on those who had died during the preceding twenty four hours. He then made his way to the hospital to make pelvic examinations upon expectant mothers

without every pausing to wash his hands. Dr. Semmelweis was the first man in history to associate such examinations with resultant infection and death. He kept careful records and instituted the practice of washing in a chlorine solution to disinfect anything that would contaminate his patients. In eleven years he supervised the delivery of 8,537 babies with the loss of only 184 mothers. An unbelievable mortality record of 0.02%. These remarkable statistics were published in medical journals and incorporated in a book entitled *The Etiology, The Concept, and the Propyylaxis of Childbed Fever*. Dr. Semmelweis spent the prime and vigor of his life in lecturing and debating with his colleagues. He answered thousands of objections with statistical and scientific facts — yet virtually no one believed him. He lost his position in Vienna and was rejected in Budapest. Doctors and midwives had been delivering babies for thousands of years without washing in a chlorine solution and no outspoken Hungarian was going to change them now. His articles were the objects of scorn and his lectures derided and ridiculed.

Morton Thompson, in his book *The Cry and the Covenant* records these words from the third lecture which Dr. Semmelweis delivered to a medical society (June 15, 1848):

I have now shown, on three occasions before this body, that puerperal fever is caused by decomposed material conveyed to a wound. I have shown that it is a pyemia, a pus in the blood. I have shown that a man can infect a woman with this pyemia and that a man can infect another man with it — for so Kolletschka died. I have shown that it can arise after surgery as well as after childbirth and in the non-pregnant as well as the pregnant. I have shown that it can be prevented. I have shown how it can be prevented. I have proved all that I have said with facts, with records, with laboratory experiments, and with human beings. I have talked a great deal. But while we talk and talk, gentlemen, women are dying. And doctors are killing them. There is no lying-in hospital where women are not dying of childbed fever. And their children with them. And we talk, gentlemen. We talk and talk and talk. And it is not necessary to talk. I am not asking anything world-

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

shaking. I am asking you only to wash. In the name of pity — stop the murder of mothers, gentlemen. Wash your hands. Wash everything that contacts a patient. Stop this murder. For God's sake — wash your hands.

Ignaz Phillip Semmelweis died insane at the age of 47. His wash basins discarded, his colleagues laughing in his face, and the death rattle of a thousand women ringing in his ears. His son, Bela, committed suicide at the age of 25, despairing that his father's teachings would never be accepted.

Sir Wm. Joppa Sinclair, professor of Gynaecology and Obstetrics, from the University of Manchester wrote, "The great revolution of modern times in Obstetrics as well as in Surgery is the result of the one idea that, complete and clear, first arose in the mind of Semmelweis, and was embodied in the practice of which he was the pioneer. . . ."

God help us to learn from history. . . .

Armageddon

(In the Honor and Memory of Eugene Morain
November 6, 1912 – May 20, 1983)

. . . For they are the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon . . . (Rev. 16:14-16).

The word "Armageddon" is found but one time in all the Bible (Rev. 16:16). Perhaps a more accurate spelling would be "Har-Magedon." The word *har* is the Hebrew word for "mountain." *Magedon* is generally associated with Megiddo. This association, however, is by no means certain.

First of all, there is no mountain at Megiddo. The mound at Megiddo is more of a small hill than a mountain. Mt. Tabor, however, to the North is in plain view of Megiddo.

There is also some question regarding the association of *Magedon* with Megiddo. The extra "d" and the missing "n" are sources of concern.

A wide variety of theories, both ancient and modern, have excited the inhabitants of every generation. There will be a great final battle, but the time and the location of this battle are subject to different interpretations.

If this battle is to take place near Megiddo it will be at the site of several other famous battles. It was here that Barak defeated the Canaanites (Jdgs. 5) and that Gideon triumphed over the forces of Midian (Jdgs. 7). It was here that Saul was slain in battle (I Sam. 31:8) and that King Josiah perished at the hands of the Egyptians (II Kgs. 23:29).

Some have suggested that the final battle was not to be actually fought at Megiddo, only that it would begin there. The area

is actually quite small and it has been suggested that perhaps the major battle would occur along the River Euphrates which is also mentioned in the narrative.

Since even the scholars are not quite certain about this battle, permit me to recount for you a theory which was advanced by one of the elders of our church, Gene Morain. One evening after prayer meeting he came up to me and quietly said, "I have a personal theory that the Battle of Armageddon is an individual struggle which everyone of us will face with the enemy of death." He then politely went on his way leaving me to ponder the wisdom of his words.

Quite frankly, I am impressed. Many prophetic scriptures have more than one fulfillment. Therefore, Brother Morain's concept would not negate a future fulfillment in some other part of the world.

It is a fact, however, that Eugene Morain no longer has to worry about Armageddon. He suffered a serious heart attack on Thursday, May 19. Beset by great pain and nausea he said to his family . . . "I hate to leave you but I think I am going. . . ."

Somehow he managed to survive a few hours longer. At a little after 6:00 on Friday morning he was able to have a ten-minute conversation with his doctor. "Will I make it, Doc?" he asked. The doctor responded that it was too soon to tell. Then with the doctor looking on he suffered a massive heart attack. The doctor was in the cardiac care unit of a new hospital and had everything at his fingertips which modern medical science could provide. In a few short minutes the battle was over and Eugene Morain had broken through the enemy line into eternity.

Like the Armageddon of Revelation 16 he had been expecting this battle . . . yet it still came as a thief. So, also, it is a battle which the "whole world" will be summoned to fight. Preparation for this battle involves "keeping his garments" so that the shame of our nakedness does not appear.

Gene told his doctor, "If I can live I would like to, but if this is my time to die I'm ready for that, too!"

ARMAGEDDON

Nobody who knew him has any doubt that he was prepared for his summons to Armageddon . . . and that he has now been crowned with victory.

Home At Last

(Mike Durre)

I had tentatively expected a phone call from Gerald Durre on Monday, January 9. On Tuesday I phoned him. He apologized and said, "Of course, you have heard that my oldest son, Mike, was killed yesterday." I had not. I was stunned! Mike was a preacher from a family of preachers. He died "on the way." He and his family were en route to help someone when the fatal wreck occurred. Mike and his two-year old son, Will, were killed. Erin, his wife, and their son, Damon, were in the hospital in Mt. Vernon, Ohio. I have been deeply humbled by the unswerving devotion and beautiful trust in the lives of these people who are sold out for Jesus. Here is a tribute to Mike Durre which was written by his father.

Mom doesn't have to wait up for the telephone call this time. She knows Mike and Will made it all the way home. They're safe in the arms of Jesus. Our boys have always been "front page" news in the church papers across the country where dad has been. I'm so proud of every one of our kids and their mates. Wish I could edit Heaven's Journal this edition, but I know God's got the news out loud and clear. They're home!

Our family has decided we know exactly what Mike's doing about now. He's cornering Paul and asking, "Just what IS woman's place in the church, anyhow?" And he's flooding Moses with all those questions he's always wondered about. And just in case things might get boring, he turns to say, "St. Peter, did you hear the one about. . . ."

Gene Mullins of Oklahoma City, says he knows Mike is asking, "Lord, which do you want first, the good news or the bad news?" "The bad news is that Jones isn't going to make the team tonight. And the good news is that I'm going to take his place."

One thing we know for sure: Mike's found someone up there to help. It may take food from the table or time from the family, but he'll break his back until he finds someone he can help. Praise the Lord! Isn't that great!

Mike always seemed to go "upstream" in the river of life. Seldom did things go easy for him. Yet he had some rules he sought always to live by. First, SET YOUR GOALS . . . HIGH. At age six he was baptized into Christ. But not until he had come forward the third time in two consecutive Revival services. Dad sent him back to his seat the first two times. What difficult decisions parents do have. He determined soon thereafter to be a Preacher. But really he wanted to teach in Bible College. He "didn't want to babysit with a bunch of Elders," he used to say. And yet he soon learned to work most harmoniously with these men of God. His goal was to be the best of whatever he was doing at the time even though he generally considered himself far from this goal.

SECOND . . . STAND UP FOR YOUR CONVICTIONS! How often he stood alone. Generally he had thought it out very thoroughly and stood right where he should have. How many of his peers have said that Mike's stand was the very stability of their own lives. Thank you, Lord, for giving him a level head. Oh, he paid a price for his stand. But he considered the end result well worth the cost. And now he has "kept the faith, he has finished the course" and there is "laid up for (him) a crown of righteousness." Yes, Mike, it's always worth it.

Again, LET GOD GIVE THE SIGNALS. I have seen Mike on his knees often, praying for God to guide. The Lord has never disappointed him. People have, but not the Lord. In 28 years Mike packed so very much into life. Unselfish in helping others, he died as he lived. His New Year's message at Killbuck was, "Lord, Come in 1978!"

Mike and his youngest son, Will, (age two) have received their promotion. They have graduated from the everyday grind of this life into the perfect peace of His presence. All because of Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Erin says she awoke several times in the hospital with the awful sense that Mike was carrying Will all over heaven, and she wasn't there. Her mother, Barbara, then told her that we had buried Mike and Will together in the same casket. Will's head rests on the left shoulder of Mike, and Mike's arms encircle his son. Now, Erin can remember this beautiful sight instead of the awfulness of the wreck. Praise God.

Mike is doing just what he always has wanted to do — go on ahead and get everything ready for the coming of the rest of us.

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

See you at home, Mike. Take good care of Will.
— Dad

Written by Gerald Durre upon the death of his son Mike

Shall We All Please Bow Our Heads

(Mike Pratt)

Each of us develop in life certain traits of character or personality by which we are recognized and remembered by those around us. The phrase, "Shall we all please bow our heads" will always remind me of the late Mike Pratt, for it seemed to be the hallmark of his personality and every public appearance. Mike was sensitive to any distraction that would detract from that reverence which belongs only to God. Therefore when he would stand up to sing he would invariably request that we listen to his music with bowed heads. Such an approach enabled us to focus our attention on a message instead of a man . . . a principle instead of a person. The bowed head is a beautiful symbol of submission and faith. It is used of Moses who interceded with God in behalf of a wayward nation. It is used of a publican who was so aware of his own imperfections that he would not so much as lift his eyes to God. It is used of Jesus at Calvary who "bowed his head and gave up the ghost."

On December 24, 1974, Mike Pratt and two companions perished in a plane crash two miles North of Swedeborg, Missouri. Though it is impossible for us to reconstruct all of the events which led to that rendezvous with destiny, I will always believe that Mike died as he had lived, with a head bowed in submission to God.

Many of you will remember that Mike graduated with honors from the Ozark Bible College in Joplin. He was a capable preacher and teacher and some were perhaps disappointed when he did not accept a "full time pulpit ministry" but elected instead to return to the farm. He did, however, preach and teach on the weekends as doors of opportunity were opened unto him. Mike was working in our church at the very time he was wrestling with this difficult decision and though many would misunderstand, he did what he

felt constrained by God to do . . . and to have done otherwise would have been bowing his head in the wrong direction.

Thus the Pratt farm became a sounding board for the gospel. A place where troubled teens and a disillusioned college students could find a friend. A place where Christian mottos and meaningful scriptures were plastered on the walls. A place where Christian records were played, Christian songs were sung and Christian books were read. A place where a voluminous library of cassette tapes offered a veritable treasure of sermons, lectures, and lessons regarding the Christian faith. Some of his neighbors found it difficult to understand such a strange life style, but Mike was marching to the beat of a different drum and his head was bowed in reverent submission to the authority of heaven.

Mike was possessed with a keen awareness that the body of Christ is an organism, not an organization. On various occasions he would muse on Romans 12:8 and wonder if God might not have endowed him with the sacred responsibility of distributing wealth. Perhaps this will help some of you to understand the strange paradox of a young man in ragged jeans and broken glasses writing out a check for several thousand dollars to some Christian cause.

The simple explanation for his unusual behaviour is that Mike regarded himself a slave to heaven and would therefore do virtually nothing without a prayerful consultation with his heavenly master. The purchase of every item was made by a deliberate decision after considering his role in the body and the stewardship of his life. His airplane was no exception, for he felt it would be a tool to magnify his ministry. In a similar way, each trip he took seemed to assume the role of a mission involving the happiness of others or the furtherance of the kingdom . . . his final trip was no exception.

And so dear Jesus we surrender to your will and commit him to your care . . . and though we do not understand . . . out of love for you . . . and respect for him . . . our heads are still bowed.

DECEPTION

Lessons From Julian The Apostate

Julian, the Emperor of Rome, was born in A.D. 331. He was the nephew of Constantine the Great, and cousin of Constantius. He was only six years old when his uncle, Constantine the Great, died.

Constantine, as you will recall, is known as the first Christian Emperor, and his nephew Julian received a nominal Christian upbringing under the direction of an Arian bishop named Eusebius of Nicomedia. He was baptized, he prayed, fasted, celebrated the memory of the martyrs, paid the usual reverence to the bishops, besought the blessing of hermits, and read the Scriptures. He was even educated for the clerical order and ordained a lector.

By his own testimony, at the age of 20 he no longer believed in Christianity. He continued, however, to go through the motions of serving Jesus while secretly sacrificing to Jupiter and

Helios. He kept on the mask for ten years but in 361 revealed his real loyalty to pagan gods, and the same year became the sole head of the Roman Empire.

Philip Schaff in his *History of the Christian Church* (Vol. III, p. 47) states, "He considered it the great mission of his life to restore the worship of the gods, and to reduce the religion of Jesus first to a contemptible sect, and at last, if possible, to utter extinction from the earth." Julian hoped to accomplish his goal by first of all the restoration and reformation of heathenism, and secondly the suppression and final extinction of Christianity.

As to the first part of his plan he reinstated, in its ancient splendor, the worship of gods at public expense. Pagan priests were called out of their concealment and given all of their former privileges and shown every honor. Soldiers and civil officers were encouraged to worship at pagan shrines and so many sacrifices of animals and birds took place that the continuance of some species became a subject of concern.

Julian himself set the example. Every morning and every evening he sacrificed to the rising and setting sun. Several times a day, surrounded by priests and dancing women, he sacrificed bulls, himself furnishing the wood and kindling the flames. He used the knife himself and searched with his own hand the secrets of the future in the reeking entrails of his sacrificial victims. He was so radical and devout in his devotion to these pagan gods that not even the most violent storms could keep him from his worship.

In retrospect, we see him aping many aspects of the Christianity which he claimed so vehemently to despise. He lived chiefly on vegetables, fasted often, wore common clothing, usually slept on the floor, let his beard and nails grow, and practiced a strict chastity. His zeal, however, found no echo and he was considered as ridiculous even among the cultivated heathen themselves.

Will Durant in *The Age of Faith* (p. 17) quotes Julian in a letter to his pagan priests:

Act towards me as you think I should act towards you; if you like, let us make this compact, that I am to point out to you what are my views concerning all your affairs, and you in return are to do the same for me concerning my sayings and doings. Nothing in my opinion could be more valuable for us than this reciprocity. . . . We ought to share our money with all men, but more generally with the good and the helpless and the poor. And I will assert, though it will seem paradoxical, that it would be a pious act to share our clothes and food even with the wicked. For it is to the humanity in a man that we give, and not to his moral character.

It seems that Julian was attempting to model his pagan priests after the example of Christian leaders. He forbade them to study immoral books, or to visit a tavern or theatre. He required strict chastity, temperance, and hospitality, and demanded that they pursue no dishonorable trade. In short, he borrowed almost every feature of then prevalent idea of Christian behavior. He also borrowed from the church concepts of discipline and excommunication, absolution and restoration, teaching and music.

Again Philip Schaff observed:

But of course all these attempts to regenerate heathenism by foreign elements were utterly futile. They were like galvanizing a decaying corpse, or grafting fresh scions on a dead trunk, sowing good seed on a rock or pouring new wine into old bottles, bursting the bottles and wasting the wine.

The failures of paganism under the reform of Julian provide the Christian world with an important and profitable lesson about religion without power. It serves to remind us that it is also possible for church members, even in this enlightened age, to “ape” the actions of the Christian without the power of the Holy Spirit and also without any lasting success.

But Julian was not content merely to advance paganism, he also sought to put down Christianity. Three centuries of bloody persecution against the church had proved that violent measures

were fruitless. Therefore he sought to destroy Christianity through subtility and intrigue. Whatever toleration he may have displayed to the Christians resulted from a hypocritical mask which concealed his fanatical love of heathenism and his bitter hatred for Christianity.

Though not burned at the stake, as in the days of Nero, Christians none the less became the victims of discrimination. They were removed from military and civil office, deprived of former privileges, oppressed with taxes, forbidden to teach in all state schools, and harassed by society in general. The judicial system gave mild punishment to pagans, severe punishment to the Christians. Sometimes Christians were deprived of their property with mocking reference to the teaching of Jesus about turning the other cheek and giving their cloaks to an enemy.

Julian's crowning effort to embarrass the Christians was his determination to rebuild the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. Since Jesus had predicted the destruction of the Temple, Julian reasoned that its restoration would discredit the Christ and cause many to become apostate. Nothing gave Julian greater joy than to cause a believer to deny Christ and he even held out the temptation of special rewards for all who did.

Thus, we have before us on the pages of history a confrontation between Christianity and paganism that reminds us of Elijah's duel with baal worship on Mt. Carmel.

On the one hand we have an apostate emperor with all of the personal and powerful resources of the Roman Empire behind him. On the other hand we have a group of believers who are devoid of political power and most of whom lived in abject poverty.

Julian began the project by exempting the Jews from burdensome taxation and encouraging them to return to Jerusalem. He provided them with money from the public treasury and entrusted his accomplished minister, Alypius, with the responsibility of supervising the construction. Upon his return from the Persian war he promised to honor them with his own presence at the

reconsecration and restoration of Mosaic sacrificial worship.

The Jews poured in from East and West into the holy city of their fathers. Since the days of Hadrian they had been forbidden to even visit Jerusalem. With fanatical zeal they began their work with the hope that a speedy reconstruction would usher in the reign of the Messiah. Women brought their costly ornaments and turned them into silver shovels and spades to aid in the work of construction. Earth and stones were sometimes carried to the building site in silken aprons.

Ammianus Marcellinus, a friend and companion in arms to Julian, tells us more particularly that Julian was desirous of perpetuating the memory of his reign by some great work, and selected the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem as his personal project.

It is a fact, however, that the temple was not rebuilt. A number of unusual events frustrated the workers and the Christians were convinced that God had intervened. All agree that fiery eruptions came from subterranean vaults and others testify to the presence of whirlwinds, lightning, earthquakes, and even miraculous signs.

Historians such as Warburton, Mosheim, Schrockb, Neander, Guericke, Kurtz, Newman, Robertson and others testify to the remarkable nature of events at Jerusalem which caused the construction of the Temple to be abandoned.

Julian intended to personally handle the project himself when he returned from Persia . . . but he never returned from Persia. During an insignificant nocturnal skirmish he was mortally wounded by an enemy arrow. He died on June 27, 363 in the 32nd year of his life.

Later, and somewhat doubtful accounts indicate that he died saying, "Galilean, thou hast conquered."

Whether this be true or not, we learn another lesson from Julian the Apostate. Though empires may rise and fall, and though the heavens and the earth may pass away, the Word of God remains forever true. The combined forces of earthly kingdoms and demonic legions are not sufficient to frustrate one

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syllable of prophetic truth, or one event of God's great calendar.

For you, it is important to remember that ultimately every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10-11).

These are lessons we learn from Julian the Apostate.

A Lesson From Ahaz

Ahaz, the King of Judah, came from a godly dynasty. His father Jotham, his grandfather Uzziah, and his great-grandfather Amaziah were among the best of the Davidic line (II Chron. 26:4-5; 27:6). His son Hezekiah was the most noted for godly faith in the entire history of Judah (II Kgs. 18:5-6).

Ahaz, however, was an unfortunate exception. "He walked in the way of the kings of Israel and even sacrificed his son in the fire, following the detestable ways of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites" (II Kgs. 16:3).

Early in his reign his closest neighbors to the north, Israel under Pekah, and Syria under Rezin, determined to destroy the Davidic line and install a foreigner named Tabeel upon the throne of Judah (Isa. 7:6). Syria carried away a great number of captives to Damascus and Israel killed 120,000 warriors of Judah in one day (II Chron. 28:5-6). All of this, the Bible states, was because Judah had forsaken God (II Chron. 28:5,6,19 ff).

Rezin and Pekah, however, could not prevail against Jerusalem (Isa. 7:1). It was at this point that Isaiah was sent by the Lord to Ahaz. The besieged King was encouraged to ask God for a sign . . . he would not. God gave him a sign anyhow ". . . behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel . . . (Isa. 7:14)."

Ahaz was at the end of his rope. He was utterly desperate. Instead of turning to the Lord, however, he did exactly the reverse. He took the silver and gold from the temple of the Lord and gave it as a gift to the King of Assyria (II Kgs. 16:8). He further prostituted his faith by going to Damascus and sending back detailed instructions on how to build a pagan altar (v. 10). He was in such a rush to profane the House of God that the pagan altar was completed by the time he returned from his journey and replaced the true altar in the Temple of God (vv. 14,15).

Moreover, he removed the laver where the priests of God

purified themselves and the covered entrance which was intended for the Kings of Judah he prepared to accomodate the King of Assyria (vv. 17,18).

At his lowest moment he sought for help . . . but not from God. He bankrupted his nation financially, politically, and spiritually to please the King of Assyria . . . but he did nothing to please the God of Heaven.

In the short term his strategy worked. Assyria came to his defense and gave him temporary protection from Israel and Syria. In the long term he found that Assyria was a good servant but a poor master. In the end “. . . the Lord brought Judah low because of Ahaz King of Israel; for he made Judah naked and transgressed sore against the Lord. And Tigathpilneser King of Assyria came unto him, and distressed him . . .” (II Chron. 28:19-20).

There will undoubtedly be times in virtually every life when we come like Ahaz to the end of our rope. The enemy has made great progress and we feel on the verge of utter collapse and defeat.

At such a time as this we must never resort to a quick fix or a short term solution that offends the God of Heaven. Never should we bow and scrape and sacrifice to anyone or anything but the Lord.

There are moments when we face some fiery furnace that it may seem expedient to bow down to a golden image. There are times when we are tempted to avoid some den of lions by neglecting our commitment to God. We agonize in Gethsemane and dread the dark Friday afternoons when Godly people are condemned and the imps of hell dance with delight.

When times like this beset you . . . don't make the mistake of Ahaz . . . follow in the footsteps of Christ. Sunday's coming!

A Christian Gangster?

(Micky Cohen)

Myer Harris Cohen, known by friends and enemies as "Mickey" was at one time the number one gangster in Los Angeles. Born in poverty in New York he became a New Jersey punk and strong-arm man. Later he moved to Los Angeles and became a self-styled gangster in the tradition of Al Capone whom he admired.

Cohen was tough to the core. Contracts had been repeatedly put out on his life; his home had been bombed, and his car machine-gunned.

By 1949 Cohen was the top man in the L.A. underworld handling a million dollars a day from illegal gambling and crime. He had a luxurious home, a glamorous wife, and an iron grip on Los Angeles. Prominent police officers and other powerful individuals were on his payroll.

One night in 1949 Cohen received a phone call from one of his employees named Jim Vaus. Jim was an electronics wizard who was one of the original wire-tappers. He had even worked for the police before establishing contact with the underworld. Since Vaus seemed urgent he was invited to Cohen's home. Here he explained that he had attended a Billy Graham Crusade in L.A. and had become a Christian. Consequently he was canceling all commitments to the crime syndicate.

Mickey was willing to allow Vaus to back out from his employment but other underworld figures were not so understanding. When Jim told some of his contacts in St. Louis about this decision they assured him that they would be coming for him. When the musclemen arrived Vaus assumed he would be crippled or killed, but 45 minutes later, after hearing his testimony, they left and never bothered him again.

Jim Vaus was so repentant for his crimes that he even sold his house and car to pay back some of the money he had stolen.

Cohen, who was a Jew, thought all gentiles were "Christians" and had little or no concept of conversion. Intrigued, however, by what happened to Jim Vaus, he went to a special meeting of select individuals like Stuart and Suzy Hamblen, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, etc. to hear Graham preach. That night Mickey Cohen raised his hand to receive a free copy of the Gospel of John.

When the I.R.S. finally caught up with Cohen he was sentenced to five years in jail. He was released in October of 1955 and returned to L.A. a broken man.

Before going to prison Vaus had introduced Cohen to a leading layman in the Los Angeles area named W.C. Jones. Jones was delivered by Christ from a life of addiction to alcohol and gambling and was well qualified to witness to Mickey Cohen. Ultimately Cohen even repeated the penitent's prayer and flew to New York to see Billy Graham who was then in a crusade in Madison Square Garden.

Later Cohen would say, "Jones, you never told me that I had to give up my career. You never told me that I had to give up my friends. There are Christian movie stars, Christian athletes, Christian businessmen. So what's the matter with being a Christian gangster? . . . If I have to give up all that, if that's Christianity, count me out."

Cohen lived out his final years quietly and died of cancer on July 29, 1976. He was alone when he left this world. His wife had divorced him . . . there were no body guards or dancing girls there . . . not even newspaper reporters clamoring to cover the story.

Charles Colson in reflecting upon Cohen's life used him as an example to underscore the need for repentance. When Cohen inquired about the possibility of becoming a "Christian Gangster" he was echoing the sentiments of millions who lack the audacity to state their case so bluntly. C.S. Lewis referred to such as "hyphenated Christians."

In reality Jesus must be the Lord of all or He will not be Lord

A CHRISTIAN GANGSTER?

at all. We cannot scrape him off the crumbs of our life like we would do a mongrel dog on the back porch. He is the Creator of all things who will someday summon us to His coronation day where every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

May we never make the mistake of trying to be a "Christian Gangster."

Condensed from *Loving God* by Charles Colson

You Bet Your Life . . . Mr. Huxley **(Julian Huxley)**

Julian Sorrell Huxley was born June 22, 1887. He is well known for his overt athiesm and his leftist political views. He is both admired and highly esteemed in the world of evolutionary thought. His grandfather, Thomas Henry Huxley, was known as "Darwin's bulldog" and is credited with the popularization of Darwin's evolutionary theories. The Huxley name is time honored and trustworthy to thousands of "intellectuals" the world over.

The book *Evolution in Action* (Harper Bros.) is a collection of lectures which Julian delivered at Indiana University and later over the B.B.C. The following quotation is found on pages 41, 42 of this book, ponder it closely.

A proportion of favorable mutations of one in a thousand does not sound much, but is probably generous, since so many mutations are lethal, preventing the organism living at all, and the great majority of the rest throw the machinery slightly out of gear. And a total of a million mutational steps sound a great deal but is probably an understatement . . . after all, that only means one step every two thousand years during biological times as a whole. However, let us take these figures as being reasonable estimates. With this proportion, but without any selection, we should clearly have to breed a million strains (a thousand squared) to get one containing two favorable mutations; and so on, up to a thousand to the millionth power to get one containing a million.

Of course, this could not really happen, but it is a useful way of visualizing . . . the fantastic odds against getting a number of favorable mutations in one strain through pure chance alone. A thousand to the millionth power, when written out, becomes the figure one with three million noughts after it; and that would take three large volumes of about five hundred pages each, just to print! Actually this is a meaningless large figure, but it shows what a degree of improbability natural selection has to surmount, and can circumvent. One with three million noughts after it is the measure of the unlikeliness . . . the odds against it happening at

all. No one would bet on anything so improbable happening; and yet it has happened. It has happened, thanks to the working of natural selection and the properties of living substance which make natural selection inevitable.

The faith of an evolutionist literally staggers the imagination. In one breath he acknowledges that it "could not happen" and a moment later affirms that "it has happened." The chances that it has happened are described as one chance in "a thousand to the millionth power." Mr. Huxley concedes that it would take three 500 page volumes just to print this number . . . and says "NO ONE WOULD BET ON ANYTHING SO IMPROBABLE HAPPENING . . ." Mr. Huxley . . . you are wrong! You bet your life you are wrong! You have taken a position which according to your own figures could only be true once in billions and billions and billions of chances (one with three million noughts to be exact) and yet you gamble your everything upon these fantastic and incredible odds.

This puts me in mind of a story about the late Robert Ingersoll. Someone was reported to have asked him, "Mr. Ingersoll, are you sure there is no God?" "Of course I'm sure," replied the athiest, "why do you ask?" "I'm counting on you Mr. Ingersoll, I'm counting on you."

And so, Mr. Huxley, not only do you bet your life, but you are encouraging thousands of others to bet their lives too. Russian Roulette is kid's stuff in comparison to your game. The idiot who spins the chamber and tries to blow his brains out has five chances out of six. Sure he's a screwball but he is so much smarter than the man who would bet his life on evolution that there is little comparison.

Mr. Huxley, only a fool would say in his heart that there is no God. Only a fool would fall prostrate in worship before such a mathematical absurdity when the Father waits with open arms to help and forgive. You are wrong Mr. Huxley . . . and I fear that soon you will be dead wrong. You bet your life, Mr. Huxley.

Machiavelli

Most Americans are so saturated with the Judaic-Christian code of ethics that we find it difficult to understand the political thinking in much of our world. The term "machievellian" is used to describe an ethical standard much different from our own. Webster defines the term as "characterized by cunning duplicity, or bad faith."

Most of us have adjusted to the idea that politics (and politicians) are generally crooked. We are therefore not too surprised when we discover that someone has welched on his campaign promises or been caught with his hand in the public till. We figure that such individuals are basically good and were simply overcome by temptation. Idealistically we expect to see them manifest some sort of shame or repentance—like a hound dog caught in the hen house tucks his tail between his legs, or a preschooler looks down at the floor when forced to relinquish a forbidden cookie.

I MUST RESPECTFULLY SUGGEST THAT WORLD POLITICS CANNOT BE EXPLAINED BY SO SIMPLISTIC A STANDARD. Some political systems are basically bad. They exonerate evil and promote duplicity. The gears of their government are designed for depravity and are oiled by human blood.

While political evil is as old as recorded history, the principles of such conduct have been best summarized by Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527). In 1512 he lost his post as communal secretary in Florence and retreated to Alberghaccio where he assumed a rustic mode of living. During the daytime he hunted and chatted with peasants . . . and at night he read history and wrote down his infamous guidelines to power.

It is significant to note that the *American Peoples Encyclopedia* states, "Machiavelli neither loved nor respected his fellows." The state, therefore, was considered a vehicle of power for the despot with virtually no regard for the moral or material

betterment of the populace. Continuing to quote from the above mentioned Encyclopedia,

The ruler must gain the support of the strong by cajolery, or if this is ineffective, by force or deceit. Since people are taken in by appearance the ruler must appear devout and loyal. Yet in the last analysis, it is better to be feared than loved. Treaties are useful things both to observe and, when opportune, to break.

The machiavellian despot is therefore not ashamed of stealing someone's personal property or of failing to keep the agreements made in a treaty or truce. Such evils in his warped mind are considered as virtues. Isaiah denounced this very philosophy when he said: "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter . . ." (Isa. 5:20).

All of which serves to emphasize the fact that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood. The struggle we face is a conflict of ideas . . . a battle of philosophies . . . a discrepancy of ideals. And it has always been so. As long as satanic influence is felt in the world the followers of God will be faced with the task of dispelling darkness and replacing error with truth.

II Cor. 10:3-5 puts it like this:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; . . .

Surely this includes Machiavelli.

The Voice Of The Devil

G. Campbell Morgan in his excellent book, *The Voice of the Devil* (Baker Book House) observes that there are only three times when the voice of the devil is recorded in Scripture. His deeds are recorded all through the Bible, but his voice, that which gives expression to the deepest truth concerning his personality, is heard only three times.

To summarize, he is first of all heard in the Garden of Eden; secondly, in the presence of God regarding Job; and finally in the wilderness temptations of Jesus. Each time he is heard he is a slanderer. When he was in the presence of man he was slandering God, and when he was in the presence of God he was slandering man. His final slanders came in the presence of Jesus who was both God and man.

Eden

The devil in Eden did three things. First of all he questioned the goodness of God. Secondly, he denied the severity of God. Finally, he slandered the motive of God. This was not only the nature of the original sin, it is the nature of all sin.

Every time we transgress the law of God we are giving open expression to these fundamental lies. God is good and man's greatest happiness can be realized in harmony with God. The consequences of sin are severe and all human experience proves that the way of the transgressor is hard. God is not motivated by selfishness but by His overwhelming desire to benefit mankind. Truly the devil is a liar and the father of all lies.

Job

When Satan appeared in the presence of God he was slandering Job. Earlier he had attacked the goodness of God but

in the presence of God he not only admits His goodness but uses it as an attack against Job. "Yea, doth Job serve God for nothing." The implication is, that the only reason that Job is religious is for what he can get out of it.

Satan was able to fool man about the nature of God, but he was not able to fool God about the nature of man. The Lord knoweth them that are His. He discerns the thoughts and intents of our hearts. He knew that Job had higher motives for His religious convictions than selfish egotism.

Job confirmed God's confidence in him when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust Him."

Jesus

When the arch deceiver was in the presence of the God-man he offered grandiose rewards in return for selfishness. Each temptation boiled down to a denial that God was sufficient and inferred that Jesus had better look out for Himself.

Just as the original sin involved exchanging a relationship for an object, the temptations of Christ offered "things" as an incentive to deny God.

Submit . . . Resist

The divine prescription to conquer the devil is found in James 4:7, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." You cannot do the one without the other. You cannot resist the devil without submitting unto God and you cannot submit unto God without resisting the devil.

Speaking Of The Devil

Have you ever noticed how uncomfortable it makes many people when you start talking about Jesus Christ? If Bob Hope or Johnny Carson should suddenly work Jesus into their monologues it would put some real starch into the audience. The same thing can happen almost anywhere. Even those who profess to be Christian may begin to perspire at the mention of His name in the wrong kind of company.

Remarkably, however, we can speak about the Devil with the greatest of ease. Anyone in almost any place can strike up a conversation about the occult or the satanic and feel very comfortable about the whole situation. Hardly anybody gets sweaty palms or a tight throat talking about the Devil. Most of us can approach such a subject in a very relaxed and dispassionate matter.

Perhaps one reason for this strange phenomenon is that Jesus demands everything, and the Devil seems to demand nothing. Jesus insists upon being the Lord of all, or He will not be our Lord at all. No one becomes a follower of Jesus by accident. The Devil, by contrast, dangles before us a deceptive kind of self-indulgence. He leads us to believe that we can do what we want to do . . . when we want to do it. His lethal trap is camouflaged so carefully and baited so skillfully that we can drift and dream our way to eternal destruction. It is easy to go to hell by accident . . . all you have to do is "nothing."

There is, however, a real paradox in these relationships. The Lord Jesus demands slavery and gives freedom, the Devil offers freedom and gives slavery. The Lord demands death and gives life, the Devil offers life and gives death. The Lord offers you a cross and gives you a throne, the Devil offers you a throne and gives you a cross. The Lord requires all but gives everything, the Devil requires nothing but takes everything. The Lord asks you to be last that He might make you first. The Devil asks you to be first that he might make you last. Jesus is the Light of the World and

the Devil is the Prince of Darkness. Jesus is truth and the Devil is the father of lies. Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" and the Devil is called in Scripture the "god of this world" (II Cor. 4:4). This world will pass away and all its elements will melt with fervent heat. The Kingdom of Christ is eternal, imperishable, and fadeth not away. The way up is down, the way to be exalted is to be humbled, and the recognition that you are lost is a key to being saved.

For some strange reason it is easy to speak about the Devil. Books on witchcraft and the occult are in great demand and conversations about them abound on every hand.

For some strange reason it is difficult to talk about Jesus. To confess Jesus Christ is so profoundly difficult that the Scriptures teach that no man can say that Jesus Christ is Lord but by the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 12:3).

There are, however, some wonderful blessings for those courageous souls who confess Him upon the earth. Chief among them is the beautiful promise that whoever confesses Jesus upon the earth, He will confess before the Father which is in heaven.

When He comes again . . . may He find us speaking about Jesus!

His Place (Saul)

“Saul came to Carmel, and behold he set him up a place . . . ” (I Sam. 15:12).

Saul had seemed so humble before he became King. When Samuel acknowledged that honor which was to befall him he replied, “. . . Am not I a Benjaminite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Israel? wherefore then speakest thou so to me?” (I Sam. 9:21).

A man of such humility can become a vehicle of great power in the hands of God. Thus, when the Ammonites threatened to gouge out the right eyes of the men of Jabesh and make slaves of them, the Scriptures record “. . . and the Spirit of God came upon Saul when he heard those tidings . . . ” (I Sam. 11:6). The children of Israel rallied behind him and when the battle was over the Ammonites were so utterly defeated and scattered that no two of them were left together.

The secret of Saul's success was God. This was the same Lord that had advanced Moses and Aaron, and brought Israel up out of the land of Egypt (I Sam. 12:9). But if they would obey the voice of the Lord and rebel not against His commandment, they would enjoy God's blessings and companionship (I Sam. 12:14-15).

It is remarkable that in only a little more than two short years Saul had forgotten the humility that had made him great. Typical of this change of heart is the “place” which Saul erected at Mr. Carmel.

The Hebrew word for “place” is *yad*. It's primary meaning is “hand” but it came to mean authority, dominion, strength and possession. To be in someone's “hand” meant to be under his authority of dominion.

The monument which Saul erected was not to honor God, but himself. It was “his place” with a small “h.” The NIV translates the passage like this: “Saul has gone to Carmel. There he has set

up a monument in his own honor. . . ." The N.A.S. has it "Saul came to Carmel, and behold he set up a monument for himself. . . ."

Earlier in the narrative God had given Israel victory over the Philistines at the very place where they had experienced a humiliating defeat some twenty years before. In honor of that victory Samuel set up a stone between Mispah and Shem and called the name of the place "Ebenezer" saying "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us" (I Sam. 7:12).

But when Saul returned from the slaughter of the Amalakites there was no humble prayer to acknowledge that to God was the "kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever." Instead, there was a blasphemous monument to himself. Instead of slaughtering all of the Amalakites as God had commanded, Saul had preserved a few trophies that he might savor the glory of his amazing victory and display them before a nation of admirers.

When Saul was little in his own sight, God had made him King over Israel (I Sam. 15:17) but when he became great in his own eyes God rejected him (I Sam. 15:26).

What a dramatic lesson this ought to be for each of us. Someone has said that one of the fastest growing religious movements in the world is man's worship of himself. Such a philosophy is fatal to our spiritual well being. We need to focus our attention on God who is the ultimate source of all that is perfect and good, and to constantly remind ourselves that without Him we are nothing. Paul put it like this, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God . . . " (II Cor. 3:5).

The man who looks back to admire the furrow which he plows is not fit for the Kingdom of God, and monuments which we erect to our own glory write Ichabod across our lives, our ministries, and our destiny.

Ahab – The Governor Of Israel?

“Dost THOU not govern the kingdom of Israel . . . ” (I Kgs. 21:7).

Ahab, the king of Israel, wanted a vineyard. It was right next door to his palace in Jezreel. Ahab was willing to give the owner a better vineyard in exchange, or perhaps to pay cash for the vineyard.

Naboth, the owner of the vineyard, refused. He said: “The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee” (I Kgs. 21:3).

Naboth undoubtedly had reference to those provisions in the law which forbade the transference of family property from one tribe to another.

So shall not the inheritance of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe: for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers . . . (Num. 36:7).

Thus it didn't matter what Naboth wanted to do, from his perspective the Lord had forbidden it. Ahab's lucrative offer notwithstanding, Naboth was content to let the Lord govern the affairs of his life.

The rejected Ahab went back to his house and began to pout like a little child. He laid down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would not eat.

At this juncture his wife Jezebel poisoned his deluded mind with a fatal idea: “Dost THOU now govern the kingdom of Israel?” The implications of this concept are absolutely devastating. In other words, Ahab was being encouraged to exalt himself above God. God had commanded Naboth not to sell his vineyard . . . that ought to have settled the matter forever! Ahab, however, ruled over a few square miles of territory in the Eastern

part of the Mediterranean Basin. His tiny kingdom had even recently been blessed with a victory over the Kingdom of Syria. Since Ahab could order around a few thousand servants and even intimidate a vassal king, he actually dared to harbor the ridiculous notion that even God could not stop him from his intended course of action.

Jezebel seemed eager to handle the grisly details of this treasonous plot. She had Naboth murdered and then assumed that no one would ever be capable of preventing them from taking what they wanted. She was wrong!

The God of Heaven is still upon His Magnificent Throne! Lucifer and legions of angels have not been capable of usurping His unique position as the absolute Sovereign of the Universe. Certainly such a coup d'etat could never be pulled off by a petty dictator like Ahab.

God stayed on His Throne . . . Ahab and Jezebel were killed!

The kind of death they died was nothing new or revolutionary. It has been very much in vogue since Eden and is as up-to-date as the morning news. As ridiculous as it is, it seems that every generation has been plagued with the blasphemous notion that man can defy God and get by with it. Truly, it is the fool who says in his heart that there is no God.

But now let us remove our gaze from Ahab and focus it upon ourselves. Every day for each of us is a day of decision. Ultimately the perplexities of life boil down to something quite basic and simple. Either we allow God to rule our lives, or we try to rule them ourselves.

This was the very question of Gethsemane. Whose will was going to be done? Fortunately, for us, Christ said: "Not my will, but thine be done."

May God grant to us the courage and wisdom to say the same!

Delilah's Knees

(Samson)

“. . . And she made him sleep upon her knees . . . ” (Jdgs. 16:19).

There is no doubt that Samson was a sexual being. The Scriptures made reference to his lust for the women of Timnah and chronicle the sad story of the night he spent with a harlot in Gaza. It would be natural, in light of his nature, to assign some sexual connotation to sleeping on the knees of Delilah. This was not the case.

The word translated “knees” in our text is the Hebrew word *berek*. It is used some twenty-five times in the Old Testament Scriptures and not once was it ever used with sexual connotations.

It is used with relation to submission as in Isaiah 45:23 “. . . every knee shall bow . . . ” and was therefore associated at times with prayer as in I Kings 8:54.

It is used to describe fear and weakness as in Daniel 5:6 where we are informed that Belshazzar’s knees smote one against the other.

It is also used, however, to describe the way that a mother cares for her child. II Kings chapter four: relates the beautiful story of the barren woman of Shunem. Through the blessing of Elisha she conceived a son. When that son was grown he became the victim of some fatal accident or illness. The Scriptures chronicle the event with these words:

And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, “my head, my head.” and he said to a lad, carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died (II Kgs. 4:18-20).

This is precisely the situation described for us by the inspired

author of the book of Judges. Delilah was not just some sexual plaything to satiate the physical desires of her brute lover. She was also like a mother to him. When he was tired, or sick, or emotionally distraught, he came to her and she would cradle his head upon her knees. Samson gave to her the same blind and loving trust that the Shunemite boy had given to his mother in those last moments of his earthly life. When the pains of life become too great to bear we need a place of refuge where we can lie down and sleep with the utter confidence that we are under the watchful eye of someone who will endeavor to care for and protect us.

Herein we perceive a new dimension in the hellishness of sin and the deceptiveness of Delilah. Satan is described in the Scriptures as the "accuser of the brethren." He dangles before us the physical pleasures of sin, but far worse than that he lures us by his cleverness and subtlety to abandon our own vigilance and judgment and to place our utter trust and confidence in him. Once our head is resting upon his soft and comfortable lap he lulls us into a fatal slumber with soothing assurances that everything is all right.

Can you imagine the utter devastation which Samson must have felt when he at last came to realize that Delilah had betrayed him. I can see her now in my mind's eye pointing her hideous finger in his direction and cackling at his stupidity.

This is what the Devil will do at Judgment for those who have been stupid enough to trust him. He is the accuser of the brethren. He talks us into trouble and then accuses us of the very trouble he talked us into.

The lesson we can learn from Delilah's knees is profound enough to have eternal consequences. It is easy for us to guffaw and snicker at the stupidity of Samson while the Devil tricks us into the same identical mistake by merely using a little different bait. There are millions who could never be tricked by Delilah who will still place their trust in science, or medicine, or government, or riches.

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

Let others make the mistake of sleeping on the wrong lap, but as for me and my house we will trust in the Lord who made the heaven and the earth.

A Lesson From Death Valley Scotty

(Walter E. Scott)

Though records are not completely accurate, Walter E. Scott, better known as Death Valley Scotty, is thought to have been born on September 20, 1872 in Cynthiana, Kentucky. Scotty had been around high spirited horses since his birth, and in 1890 his equestrian skills earned him a position with the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show which was at that time the best known troupe of its kind in the world.

The success of "Buffalo Bill" undoubtedly lay in the hands of his press agent, "Major" John Burke. Burke had the amazing ability to advertise someone in such a grandiose manner that his own mother would not recognize him. He took a shy farm girl named Annie Oakley and turned her into the sensational heroine of countless gun battles. He let his own hair grow shoulder length and took the name "Arizona John," claiming to be a desperado who had killed fifteen men. He took a nobody named William Cody and turned him into the millionaire "Prince of the Plains."

For twelve years Scotty stayed with the troupe and absorbed the techniques of the "big-time operators." Then he launched out on his own.

In April, 1902, Scotty walked boldly into a banker's office at 358 Fifth Avenue with two gold nuggets which he claimed were from his gold mine in Death Valley. He located the mine "130 miles S.W. of Fenner" which we now know missed the southern tip of Death Valley by some 100 miles. The \$1500 grub stake which he earned was undoubtedly due to a combination of the banker's greed and Scotty's showmanship. During the next four years Scotty sent 33 letters and 50 telegrams to his backer, most of them containing requests for more money. The banker, Julian Gerard, invested more than \$10,000 in the Death Valley Mine,

but never had anything to show for it but two gold nuggets and a pile of correspondence.

In the meanwhile Scotty was keeping the Press "informed" of what was going on. On February 28, 1904, he reported that he had been robbed of \$12,000 in gold dust, but shrugged it off because he had plenty more. Scotty could spend a few hundred dollars and make it seem like thousands. He always stayed in swank hotels, tipped lavishly and paid for everything with large denomination bills.

In 1905 Scotty is thought to have acquired a new backer and promptly deposited \$4,000 with the Santa Fe Railroad, hiring a special train to take him and a stray dog to Chicago. Scotty claimed to have bought the mongrel a \$1,000 collar and now wanted to take him for a train ride. Scotty and the dog were the only passengers, and the train made it to Chicago in record time. Newspaper reporters were waiting at every stop, and screaming crowds lined the tracks. Scotty became a national sensation.

In retrospect we now know that Scotty was a fraud. The man who seemed to have gold nuggets by the bushel and money running out of every pocket was in reality a morally bankrupt con man. Yet, somehow, he managed to keep his name in the headlines for decades and deceive not only the public but also a wide assortment of investors. His castle in Death Valley is even yet a tourist attraction that draws some 150,000 curious visitors every year.

That is the saga of Death Valley Scotty, but what is the lesson? The lesson is this: never measure a man by means of public opinion. The public lauded Scotty and crucified Jesus. People with press agents may not be all that people think they are.

This is the lesson we learn from Death Valley Scotty!

Information taken from *Death Valley Scotty*
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EVANGELISM

The Lord Seeth Not As Man Seeth (Dwight L. Moody)

These words occur in the Bible in connection with God's selection of David to be the King of Israel. Samuel reminded them that man looketh on the outward appearance but the Lord looketh on the heart (I Sam. 16:7). God has always selected his great leaders by a different standard than men seek to select theirs.

A striking example of this is found in American history. On April 21, 1855, a young shoe salesman in Boston, Mass. decided to become a Christian. The young man had a very poor education. His silent reading was poor and his reading aloud was worse. Samuel Holton said of him that his public attempts at reading sounded like blackbirds chattering. Many words were so far beyond him that he left them out entirely and the majority of the others he mangled fearfully.

The shoe salesman wanted to be a soul winner. He returned to his home in Northfield seeking to win his six brothers and two sisters to Christ . . . he failed. He was considered such an

ungrammatical bluster that one of the deacons took him aside and asked him to serve the Lord better by keeping still. It didn't work! The cultured ladies appealed to the preacher. The preacher said to him, "Don't you think you could serve the Lord by keeping silent?"

In spite of all opposition the young man wanted to be a Christian and applied to the church for membership. The examining committee said that they "seldom met an applicant who seemed more unlikely ever to become a Christian of clear and decided views of gospel truth, still less to fill any sphere of public or extended usefulness." He could answer but haltingly, chiefly in monosyllables, and then only when the question was the simplest and its answer was obvious. Here was the chief question and its answer — the longest that he gave. "What has Christ done for us all — for you — which entitles Him to our love?" His answer — "I don't know. I think Christ has done a good deal for us; but I don't think of anything in particular, as I know of."

The minutes of the church, item No. 1079 stated that this man became anxious about himself. Saw himself a sinner — hated sin and desired holiness. He had been baptized. He loved the scriptures. He prayed. He desired to be useful. He was not ashamed to be known as a Christian. He was 18 years old. Still they voted to deny him membership in the church.

Two members of the examining committee were appointed to watch over him and teach him the ways of the Lord more perfectly. Almost a year later their minutes item No. 1131, indicates that he had made some progress. He had maintained his habits of prayer and Bible study. He vowed he would never give up his hope, or love Christ less, whether admitted to the church or not. "His prevailing intention is to give up his will to God." He was admitted on May 4, 1856.

That same year he moved to Chicago and became a part of the Plymouth Congregational Church. They treated him as did "Boston's cantankerous deacons" and he transferred to the First Methodist Church. He was never really accepted, however, until

he began working with a little mission on North Wells St. He moseyed in one day and asked if he could teach a Sunday School class. He was told that they had all the teachers they needed, but he could use their facilities to teach if he provided his own class. The first Sunday 18 barefoot, ragged, and dirty students showed up for his first class. Within a year that class had grown to 650 . . . and soon to over 1000.

With no formal training or seminary education he launched into a campaign for souls. He toured Scotland, Ireland, and England. He evangelized among the troops who fought in the Civil War. Thousands came to Christ during this ministry but still he never escaped the stigma of an unlettered farm boy. Everywhere the cultured were shocked by his brashness. Criticism came from every side, but he never swerved from his desire to serve Jesus. The Philadelphia Press described him as very "unevangelical looking." Reporters said that he spoke too rapidly, that his voice was unmusical and even harsh. The sophisticated frowned upon his "highway and hedge" evangelistic methods. Some accused him of being inaccurate in the quoting of the scriptures.

Only eternity will reveal the full impact of this man's life, but suffice it to say that he probably accomplished more than any of those who found the time to criticize his efforts. His name was Dwight L. Moody. These facts came from a book entitled *They Call Him Mister Moody* by Richard Curtis. Remember "The Lord Seeth Not as Man Seeth."

Ahimaaz

“And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings” (II Sam. 18:27).

The Kingdom of Israel was involved in a tragic civil war. The forces of David were in battle with the forces of Absalom in the woods of Ephraim. Twenty thousand men died in a single day.

David’s men forbade him to be anywhere near the conflict. “. . . thou art worth ten thousand of us. . . .” they said. The forces of Absalom had specific intentions to kill David.

Thus, David was miles away from the battle standing between the gates of Mahanaim eagerly awaiting news. The watchman on the roof informed him of the approach of two runners. When the first runner appeared alone David correctly concluded that he was bringing tidings. Many men running toward the city would have indicated that they were running for safety or refuge. One man indicated news. The first runner, however, was overtaken by a swifter messenger whom the watchman identified as Ahimaaz. David, on the basis of this identification, concluded that Ahimaaz would bring him good news.

This verse has always been a source of interest to me. While I cannot in good conscience be dogmatic about it, it seems to me that Ahimaaz had established a reputation with the king of always bringing good news. There may be some other explanation which escapes my attention. Perhaps there was some prearranged agreement with Joab, for example, that one runner would bring good news, and another bad. Be that as it may, it seems to me most plausible that the reason David felt Ahimaaz was bringing good news was simply that this was what he always brought. Regardless of the circumstances, Ahimaaz always brought a positive report.

Earlier in the narrative (II Sam. 15:32ff) we informed that David had a system of espionage to keep him informed of Absalom’s plans. Hushai the Archite would give messages to Zadok

and Abiathar the priests. The priests would then confer with their sons Ahimaaz and Jonathan. The sons would then run to David with the news. Perhaps you will recall that Ahimaaz and Jonathan once had to hide in a well to escape detection by Absalom's men (II Sam. 17:17ff).

I have noted in my own life that there are some people who are consistently positive. Every time they take me aside to tell me about something I come away smiling. Regardless of what news they bear they communicate it in such a way that it is good.

There is an old story out of World War II about the American General who refused to be defeated. Regardless of the overwhelming odds against him he established a track record of victory. Once when completely surrounded by German troops he informed his men of their circumstance with these words, "Well, the Germans have got us surrounded again . . . the poor devils." The American troops then achieved another astounding victory.

Ahimaaz must have been this kind of man. A man who was predictably positive. The very sight of him running on a far horizon was an indication that good news was on the way. Let Cushie or somebody else make front page news out of Absalom's corpse swinging from an oak tree. Let some other reporter bring back ghastly reports of twenty thousand soldiers lying dead in the pitiful residue of their own gore. Let someone else mourn the many problems of trudging back to Jerusalem to pick up the pieces and patch together a wounded nation. Ahimaaz was a good man and the King knew he would be bringing good news. He was right!

May God give us more men like Ahimaaz!

. . . And Phillip Ran

This simple statement of fact provides us with an interesting insight into the explosive power and growth of the first century church. The Holy Spirit provided Phillip with an evangelistic challenge . . . and Phillip ran (Acts 8:30). There was no dismal delay . . . no poisonous procrastination or postponement . . . no slothful approach to the commands of Christ . . . Phillip ran. News from a panting messenger is permeated with a note of urgency. It contains an aura of excitement that is absent from a fireside chat. It exhilarates the intellect and stimulates our being in a manner which is difficult to understand or describe. It leads us to believe that Christianity can be caught as well as taught. The same bell that chimes us into a deep sleep can assume the alacrity of an alarm clock by simply increasing its speed. The same trumpet can either put us to sleep . . . or wake us up . . . depending, of course, on how it is played. The fact that Phillip ran to that chariot had something very eloquent to say to the African executive who was puzzling over the Scriptures.

The solution to the problems of a sleeping church is not for every personal evangelist to spit out words like a machine gun or to preach in a lather like a man fighting bumble bees. Such a course of action may actually impede our progress. But I must emphatically assert that evangelism without urgency is less than God intended evangelism to be.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray for the will of God to be done on earth in the same manner that it was done in heaven. This leads us to the rather obvious question "how is the will of God done in heaven?" A clue to the answer is found at the time of Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane. When Peter attempted to defend Christ, Jesus rebuked him with the reminder that God could send 12 legions of angels to His rescue if He so desired. The answer to when these angels would arrive is explained by the Greek word

arti which means “now” . . . rendered by many versions as “at once” (Matt. 25:53). Angels do not “table” their instructions from God, neither do they postpone His commandments until a more convenient season. They obey God “now” or “at once,” just like Phillip did. Dusty Bibles and casual calls are not effective instruments to generate enthusiasm.

The scriptures declare “Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:14-17). The word translated, circumspectly, is *akribos* which means accurately. The word walk is used figuratively to indicate our manner of life. “Redeeming the time” means to take advantage of every opportunity for doing the will of Christ. In other words, the Christian is to make a deliberate, accurate, attempt to live in such a way that we take advantage of every opportunity to advance His kingdom. That’s what Phillip did.

Phillip was alert and his manner of life was “accurate.” There was no lacadaisical, slip-shod, half-hearted approach to evangelism in his life. I like to believe that this contagious enthusiasm rubbed off on the eunuch and enabled him to evangelize the Ethiopians. I see him in my imagination hurrying to his Queen and redeeming every opportunity to share his faith with those about him. I do know that the church in his part of Africa became strong and influential. Historians call it the “Coptic” church. Perhaps it all began because Phillip ran . . . I wonder what would happen if we would do the same.

Andrew

Andrew, one of the twelve apostles, was from Bethsaida in Galilee (John 1:44). He was the brother of Simon Peter and his father's name was John (John 1:42). We know very little of Andrew. His name occurs but 13 times in all the Bible. An analysis of these brief appearances upon the stage of inspired literature provides an interesting insight into a practical and useful ministry.

Andrew's name occurs in each of the four listings of the twelve apostles: Matt. 10:2; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14, Acts 1:13. His name occurs nine other times in six different settings.

First of all we see him on the banks of the Jordan as one of our Lord's first two disciples (John 1:35-42). *His first act as a disciple was to bring his own brother to Jesus* (John 1:42). If it were not for Andrew, Simon Peter may never have become a Christian.

Next we see him on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, dropping his fishing nets and *accepting the challenge to become a fisher of men* (Matt. 4:18, Mark 1:16).

He then appears in Capernaum, *opening his house for the proclamation of the gospel* (Mark 1:29-34).

The next specific mention of Andrew occurs near Bethsaida Julius when *he brought a lad with five loaves and two fishes to Jesus* (John 6:8-9).

We see him again in Jerusalem *bringing some Greeks to see Jesus* (John 12:22).

Finally we find him in a quiet consultation on the Mt. of Olives. He was *asking questions of the Master and seeking to know His will more perfectly* (Mark 13:1-4).

Andrew was quiet, dependable, helpful, thoughtful, and sincere. His name did not make the headlines, then or now. His service, though overshadowed and obscured by others, was essential to the work of Christ and is essential to the functioning of

ANDREW

every congregation. Not everyone can be a Simon Peter, but everyone CAN be an Andrew. Every person can engage in the same meaningful ministry. You may never be noticed by your friends and worldly acclaim may never make its way to your door. But you may be assured that your service will not be forgotten by God. On that day when the last shall be first, Andrew and those like him, will finally stand up and take a bow.

FAITH

Simple Trusting Faith (Minucius Felix)

Minucius Felix was originally a Roman orator and rhetorician. When he was converted to the Christian faith he directed all of his talents toward the defense of that which he once hated. The following quotation is from a treatise which he published about 210 A.D. Following the best style of the day it was in the form of a dialogue between Caecilius, a heathen, and Octavius, a Christian, with Minucius sitting as moderator between them.

After a lengthy harangue by Caecilius the unbeliever, Octavius begins his remarks by admitting that Christians held in contempt the gods of the heathen. Here are some of his words:

The mice, the swallows, and the bats, gnaw, insult, and sit upon your gods; and unless you drive them away, they build their nests in their mouths; the spiders weave their webs over their faces. You first make them, then clean, wipe and protect them, that you may fear and worship them. Should we view all of your rites, there are many things which justly deserve to be laughed at — others that call for pity and compassion.

When you lift up your eyes to heaven and survey the works of creation around you, what is so clear and undeniable, as that there is a God, supremely excellent in understanding, who inspires, moves, supports and governs all nature. Consider the vast expanse of heaven, and the rapidity of its motion, either when studded with stars by night, or enlightened with the sun by day; contemplate the almighty hand which poises them in their orbs, and balances them in their movement. Behold how the sun regulates the year by its annual circuit, and how the moon measures round a month by its increase, its decay, and its total disappearance. Why need I mention the constant vicissitudes of light and darkness, for the alternate reparation of rest and labour? Does not the standing variety of seasons, proceeding in goodly order, bear witness to its divine author? The spring with her flowers, the summer with her harvests, the ripening autumn with her grateful fruits, and the moist and unctuous winter, are all especially necessary. What an argument for providence is this, which interposes and moderates the extremes of winter and summer with the alloys of spring and autumn — thus enabling us to pass the year about with security and comfort, between the extremes of parching heat and of cold? Observe the sea and you will find it bounded with a shore, a law which it cannot transgress. Look into the vegetable world, and see how all of the trees draw their life from the bowels of the earth. View the ocean, in constant ebb and flow; and the fountains running in full veins; with the rivers perpetually gliding in their wonted channels. Why should I take time in showing how providentially this spot of earth is cantoned into hills, dales and plains? What need I speak of the various artillery for the defence of every animal — some armed with horns and hedged about with teeth or fortified with hoofs and claws, or speared with stings, while others are swift of foot or of wing? But, above all, the beautiful structure of man most plainly speaks of God. Man, of stature straight, and countenance erect, with eyes placed above like sentinels, watching over the other senses with the tower?

That the most of us are poor, is not to our dishonor but to our glory. The mind, as it is dissipated by luxury, so it is strengthened by frugality. But how can a man be poor, who wants nothing, who covets not what is another's, who is rich towards God? That man is rather poor, who, when he has much, desires more. No man can be so poor as when he was born. The birds live without

SIMPLE TRUSTING FAITH

any patrimony; the beasts find pasture every day, and we feed upon them. Indeed they are created for our use, which, while we do not covet, we enjoy. That man goes happier to heaven, who is not burdened with an unnecessary load of riches. Did we think estates to be useful to us, we would beg them of God, who, being Lord of all, would afford us what is necessary. But we chose rather to condemn riches than to possess them, preferring innocency and patience to them, and desiring rather to be good than prodigal. Our courage is increased by infirmities, and affliction is often the school of virtue.

Adapted From *Simple Trusting Faith* by W. Carl Ketcherside

Sir William Ramsay

The name of this man is unique among the skeptics of the world. He did not believe the Bible was the inspired word of God. He was confident that it was the product of some ambitious monks, that it was shot through with error and was totally unreliable. Yet, he did not content himself to sit upon some bar-stool or in some school of higher education and make his blasphemous assertions — he determined to head an expedition and scientifically prove that the Bible was wrong.

The year was 1881. Ramsay was a young man of sterling integrity and unimpeachable character. His years of education had all been in an atmosphere of doubt. He regarded the weakest part of the New Testament the story of Paul's travels. Because those journeys had never been carefully investigated, Ramsay announced that he was going to use the book of Acts as a guide, retrace those missionary journeys, and thus prove that they could not have occurred as the Bible described them.

Equipped as no other man had been, Ramsay went to the Bible Lands and spent fifteen long years digging out the evidence. Skeptics confidently expected that all of their allegations and assertions would be substantiated. In 1896 Ramsay published a large volume entitled *St. Paul, the Traveler and the Roman Citizen*. Instead of attacking the Bible, however, the book expressed confidence in the accuracy of the Bible account.

The chagrin and confusion of the skeptics increased as Ramsay for the next twenty years wrote book after book with nothing but praise for the accuracy and truthfulness of the Bible. These books contain such statements as:

"The narrative never makes a false step. . . ."

"Every minute fact stated in Acts has its own significance"

". . . the New Testament is unique in the compactness, the luci-

dity, the pregnancy, and the vivid truthfulness of its expression."

"... Luke is a safe guide"

"whenever the present writer followed Luke's authority absolutely, ... he was right down to the last detail."

Thus, we have before us a unique story indeed. The story of a skeptic who was willing to do more than talk. Many unbelievers have never even seriously studied the Bible — Ramsay was willing to investigate every detail. Thus, a man who was determined to destroy the Bible is today recognized as one of its greatest friends. The man whom the skeptics trusted to be their strongest ally has strangely become their most formidable opponent. It is to be regretted that the world has not been blessed with more skeptics as honest as Sir William Ramsay.

A Minimum And A Maximum

(Dr. Garland Bare)

Dr. Garland Bare has observed that the examples of faith recorded in Hebrews 11 reflect a minimum of planning and a maximum of risk. "My training" he continued, "has recommended exactly the reverse." Most of us probably would concur. Human wisdom argues for a maximum of planning and a minimum of risk. Consequently, we would have recommended that Abram make an extensive analysis of where he was going before he started the trip. If Moses had made even a cursory survey of the route where he was to lead a nation of refugees, he probably would never have left Egypt. Joseph did not have a crystal ball to keep him informed about the details of tomorrows activities. He didn't need one. When you know who holds tomorrow it does not matter what tomorrow holds.

This seems to be the genius of a life of faith. When you feel the call of God you take His hand and start on a great adventure. He can part the Red Sea if He wants to. He can bring water from the rock and manna from the skies if He so chooses. Human logic notwithstanding, we serve a God of superhuman power and wisdom. When all the committees have met and made their recommendations it is altogether possible that the God of the universe may elect to reserve the final word of instruction for himself.

Dr. Bare exemplifies in his own life the thrilling concept of an adventure in faith. Take, for example, the decision to become a medical doctor at the age of 33. In ten years on the mission field he had treated some 7,000 medical patients with virtually no formal medical training. After exhausting every other possibility of getting a doctor to come to his area he dared to consider the possibility that he may be called upon to answer his own prayers. There were at least four facts which seemed to make this impossible.

1. Garland was 33 and no one was accepted into medical school who was over 25.
2. Garland was married and no married students are allowed in Thai Universities. If a student gets married he is expelled.
3. Garland was not a Thai citizen and this made him ineligible.
4. He had no pre-medical training.

If you don't want doors to be opened, however, you had better not knock. Once Garland Bare began knocking, God opened so many doors in what seemed to be impossible situations that Dr. Bare now refers to knocking on stone walls and watching God open a way.

Of course, faith without works is dead. Even Abraham from this perspective was not justified by faith only. The book of James reminds us that he was also justified by works. Our venture of faith with God will certainly involve an adequate expenditure of elbow grease and midnight oil.

Perhaps the secret of success involves a matter of emphasis. When the thrust of our dependence is upon ourselves we feel the need for a maximum of planning and a minimum of risk. When the thrust of our dependence is upon God we are audacious and bold. This leads us to have a minimum of planning and a maximum of risk.

Abraham Saw

(John 8:56)

Abraham is mentioned by name 88 times in the New Covenant Scriptures. His amazing life is used by God to illustrate a wide variety of spiritual truths. Abraham is used to illustrate:

Justification by faith — Rom. 4: Heb. 11: etc.

Justification by works — James 2:21

The superiority of Christ's priesthood — Heb. 7:

The relationship of husbands and wives — I Pet. 3:

The covenants — Gal. 4:

The resurrection — Mark 12:26, Heb. 11:19

Christians are designated as Abraham's seed — Gal. 3:7,29

Paradise is pictured as Abraham's bosom — Luke 16:22-23 etc.

Abraham was the recipient of three great promises from God.

1. "I will make of thee a great nation" — Gen. 12:2. His children were to be as numerous as the dust — Gen. 12:2, and as the stars — Gen. 15:5

2. He was to inherit Palestine — "And the Lord said unto Abram . . . Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art . . . for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. . . ." Gen. 13:14-15

3. The family of Abraham was ultimately to bless all the families of the earth — Gen. 12:3

It is significant to note that Abraham died before any of these promises became reality. At the time of his death he had only a handful of direct descendants. He did not receive an inheritance of land — "no, not so much as to set his foot on" (Acts 7:5) and he had been unable to bless even the country where he dwelt, to say nothing of "all the families of the earth." Illustrative of this fact is the journey of Isaac to Padan Aram for a wife — undoubtedly

to avoid the corrupting influence of the Canaanites.

Though Abraham did not receive the promises, however, he saw them afar off (Heb. 11:13). He shared the ability of God to call things that are not as though they were (Rom. 4:17). He was "fully persuaded that what God had promised, he was able also to perform, **AND THEREFORE IT WAS IMPUTED UNTO HIM FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS**" (Rom. 4:21-22). The promises of God were counted as solid evidence for things which were not yet seen (Heb. 11:1). Spiritual perception was considered as valid a proof of reality as physical perception and thus Jesus testified: ". . . Abraham rejoiced to see my day: **AND HE SAW IT**, and was glad" (John 8:56).

History has vindicated this father of the faithful. It was some 500 years before the family of Abraham inherited the land that God had promised . . . but they did receive it. It was many generations before the family of this believing nomad multiplied into a great nation . . . but the promise did come true. Almost two millenia of time transpired before the "seed" appeared to bless all the families of the earth . . . but Jesus was born . . . and Abraham with eyes of faith saw that day almost 2,000 years before it came to pass.

It is therefore highly appropriate that Abraham be delineated to mankind as a proper example for all believers. The faithful remnant need never be discouraged by statistics of gloom and prophets of catastrophe. The Christian views the panorama of history from the mountaintop of faith. Our vision transcends the storm clouds of turmoil and despair, and over the horizon we discern that city whose builder and maker is God. Beyond the veil of suffering and death we see the jubilant throng. Above the roll of the drums and the rumble of war we hear the happy voices of the redeemed of earth.

Abraham saw the day of Jesus and rejoiced . . . and if you belong to Jesus you are thereby Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Dreamers

(Joseph)

No one seems to like a dreamer. "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren: and they hated him yet the more" (Gen. 37:5).

"And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we shall see what will become of his dreams. . . ." (Gen. 37:19-20).

But for all the criticism of Joseph he stands unique in the midst of his nation. As a stripling lad enslaved to Potiphar his crisp imagination and reliability made him ruler of the house (Gen. 39:5-6). Unjustly imprisoned his indomitable will could not be smothered by a dreary dungeon and once again he rose to prominence and was given authority over all the other prisoners (Gen. 39:21-23). In spite of every obstacle and injustice by the time that Joseph was 30 years of age he had risen to the position of the second most powerful man in all the world (Gen. 41:40).

God seems to bless men with wild imaginations. Moses dreamed of liberating Israel forty years before it came to pass (Acts 7:25). Caleb and Joshua dreamed of victory in Canaan when virtually everyone said it could not be done (Num. 14:6ff). David dared to dream of victory with only a sling in his youthful hand. The unlettered Apostles of Jesus stood on Olivet with world wide ambitions.

There is something to be said for the man who bets on a sure thing. There are certain virtues associated with caution and deliberation. There may be times when it is just and proper to turn back to some Egypt rather than hazard the dangers of an unmap-ped wilderness.

But there are also times when men of faith and vision cannot look back without being condemned. Too long we have "played it safe" and buried our dreamers in pits of criticism. When we

grow weary of their wild ideas we barter them away and return to our mediocrity undisturbed. The world that crucified Jesus and allowed Christopher Columbus to die in chains is very much alive.

Napoleon Hill relates in his book on the Law of Success, that a young preacher named Gunsaulus announced in the newspapers of Chicago his sermon topic for the following Sunday, "WHAT I WOULD DO IF I HAD A MILLION DOLLARS."

It is difficult to imagine a subject with less practical significance for the average church. Yet this strange topic caught the eye of Philip D. Armour, the wealthy packing house king. When Gunsaulus delivered his message, Mr. Armour was present, listening attentively to every word. The preacher dreamed of a new concept in education. A school where students would learn to think in practical rather than theoretical terms. When the sermon was over Mr. Armour stepped down the aisle and announced that a million dollars would be made available to the preacher the very next morning . . . and thus the Armour Institute of Technology became a reality.

Few men have ever attained success by accident. Invariably it is the result of dreams that came true. Years of planning and creative meditation shaping and molding lives and destiny. Earl Nightengale said recently on one of his daily broadcasts that Neil Armstrong dreamed of being the first man on the moon since he was five years old. He must have disgusted his playmates and amused his parents . . . but history will forever remember that his dream came true.

Too long the church has been characterized by spiritual zombies. The hour has arrived for men of vision and creativity to dream the impossible . . . and live to make it come to pass. Such men are dangerous to the status quo and sometimes even enemies of the establishment . . . but these heretics of the present hour are often the heroes of the future. They are the men who dare to dream.

What Simeon Saw

(A Christmas Meditation)

Simeon was a just and devout man who was waiting for the consolation of Israel. He is mentioned in connection with the Christmas story in Luke 2:25-35. The Scriptures teach that he came by the Spirit into the temple and began to rejoice because he had seen God's salvation . . . but what did he see? The answer is quite simple, he saw the baby Jesus. The sight of the infant Christ so excited him that he blessed God and declared that he was ready to die in peace. It is a beautiful story, but much more profound when viewed through the eyes of Simeon. Today, we have almost 2,000 years of history which tells us how wonderful Jesus is. It was much different for Simeon.

The Jewish temple was at that time under the course of construction and would not be completed for some sixty years. When Jesus cleansed the temple some thirty years later it had been under construction for 46 years (John 2:20) and was not completed until A.D. 64. It was, of course, completely destroyed in A.D. 70. At the time Simeon went into the temple it must have been quite crude.

Adjacent to the temple was a Roman fortress called the "Tower of Antonia." It was named by Herod the Great for his old army associate and patron, Mark Antony. Since Roman soldiers were garrisoned there it was called in Scripture "the barracks" (Acts 21:34). It was in all probability the place where Jesus would be tried before Pilate some thirty years later.

Now let's try to see this sight through the eyes of Simeon. It had been revealed unto him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ (Luke 2:26). We are not told how long he had to wait but it may have been for many days, or even many years.

Apparently Simeon was not informed where or when he would see Christ, only that it would happen during his lifetime.

Thus he must have developed a totally different way of looking at things than other people did.

Seth Wilson used to talk about the buzzard that would fly over beautiful scenery and fragrant flowers looking for a dead rabbit . . . Simeon was exactly the reverse. He would walk through the garbage of life looking for something that was pure, sweet, and good.

At Christmas time he found it. Just a little child in the arms of his mother. They were peasants who were so poor that they couldn't even afford a lamb for a sacrifice (Luke 2:24). There was no pomp, or ceremony or heralds to sound the trumpet and announce his arrival. Simeon saw him just the same. Like someone probing for a diamond in a field of dust he saw the Christ in a building under construction in the shadow of a Roman fortress and a city filled with shame.

Times haven't really changed a lot. Today you can see almost anything you want to see. If you want to see crime and violence there is plenty of it available. The Christian, however, has promises similar to those of Simeon. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God and are called according to His purpose. We know that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. We know that we will never be tempted beyond that which we are able to bear. These things which we know inevitably influence the way we look at life.

Simeon found what he was looking for . . . and in a sense so do we. If you will look at life with eyes of Christian faith the Scriptures promise that you will find something good. There are diamonds in the dust . . . and the eyes of Simeon will help you to find them. Merry Christmas!

George Mueller

(An Experiment In Faith)

George Mueller was born in Prussia, at Kroppenstaedt, near Halberstadt, on Sept. 27, 1805. His father was a collector of excise taxes and George seemed to inherit his father's preoccupation with figures. This adding machine mind and astute business sense were destined to become an integral part of a great experiment in faith.

When Mueller was converted to Christ he was impressed by the many recurring statements of our Lord for us to "ask." Jesus reasoned that if an earthly father would give and provide for his child who "asked," how much more would our Father in Heaven give to them that asked Him. Yet England was swept up in the industrial revolution. It was "every man for himself" and no one seemed ready or willing to "seek first the Kingdom of God."

At this juncture George Mueller and his wife launched into a daring experiment. First of all they secretly gave away all of their household goods. The next step was even more daring . . . he refused all regular salary from the small mission he had been serving. He then set about to found an Orphan Home to care for the homeless children of England.

The first Home was dedicated in a rented building on April 21, 1836. Within a matter of days 43 orphans were being cared for. Mueller and his co-workers decided that their controlled experiment should be set up along these lines:

1. No fund would ever be solicited. The workers in the orphanage were never to reveal facts and figures concerning their needs to anyone but God.
2. No debts were ever to be incurred. The burden of this experiment was not to be born by the local shopkeepers.
3. No money contributed for a specific purpose could ever be used for any other purpose.

4. All accounts would be audited annually by professional auditors.
5. No ego-pandering by publication of donor's names with the amount of their gifts; each donor would be thanked privately.
6. No "names" of prominent or titled persons would be sought for the board or to advertise the institution.
7. The success of the institution would be measured not by the numbers served or by the amounts of money taken in, but by God's blessings upon the work, which Mueller expected to be in direct proportion to the time spent in prayer.

When the first building was constructed, Mueller and his friends remained true to their convictions. The public was amazed when a second building was opened six months after the first. They kept concentrating on prayer and eventually there were five new buildings, 110 workers, and 2,050 orphans being cared for.

George Mueller not only counted on God to provide, but he believed that God would provide bountifully. He insisted that each child have three pair of shoes. Each boy was to have three suits, and each girl five dresses. The homes were constructed with built in cupboards and sunny play rooms. Behind the scenes were the latest labor saving devices available — like one of the first American washing machines and an early type of centrifugal dryer. The experiment was to be considered a failure if there was ever one day when the children went without food — they never did.

The results of this amazing orphanage experiment have been published in detail in the four volumes of George Mueller's Journals. For over 60 years he recorded every specific prayer request . . . and the results. His mathematical mind kept track of every penny received and all the money expended.

Interest in this experiment was so great that at the age of 70 Mueller lectured in forty-two countries and traveled over 200,000 miles telling the amazing story of the power of faith.

" . . . this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (I John 5:4).

Adapted from *Beyond Ourselves* by Catherine Marshall

Advice From George Mueller

As a sequel to the article last week I thought you might be interested in these words of advice. Of course, it needs to be stressed that Mr. Mueller was not inspired. Yet, his sterling example of faith has earned the appreciation and confidence of millions of people.

Advice to a Businessman Threatened With Bankruptcy

1. Each day you and your wife are to spread your business difficulties before the Lord.
2. You are then to watch for answer to prayer and expect them.
3. Absolute honesty necessary; avoid all business trickeries.
4. Beginning immediately, a certain proportion of your income must be given to God.
5. Keep a record — month by month — how the Lord is dealing with you, what is happening. (Within a year the business was out of the red and up 3,000 pounds above the previous year.)

Advice on Prayer

1. Entire dependence upon the merits and meditation of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only ground of any claim for blessing (John 14:13,14; 15:16 etc.).
2. Separation from all known sin. If we regard iniquity in our hearts the Lord will not hear us, for it would be sanctioning sin (Psa. 66:18).
3. Faith in God's word of promise as confirmed by His oath. Not to believe Him is to make Him both a liar and a perjurer (Heb. 11:6, 6:13-20).
4. Asking in accordance with His will. Our motives must be

godly: we must not seek any gift of God to consume it upon our lusts (I John 5:14, James 4:3).

5. Importunity in supplication. There must be waiting on God, and waiting for God, as the husbandman has long patience to wait for the harvest (James 5:7; Luke 18:1-8 etc.).

Mr. Mueller was responsible for the care of 9,500 orphans during his life. They never went without a meal. Mueller never asked for help from anyone but God. \$7,500,000 came to him over the course of his long life, and he vows it was all in answer to believer prayer.

Advice On The Careful and Consecutive Reading of the Holy Scriptures

Mueller discovered that there is no substitute for the word of God. Religious books and books about the Bible can never substitute for a systematic study of the Bible itself. He therefore advises: (Due to lack of space I have condensed his words)

1. Read the Bible in conjunction with prayer — believing that God will instruct you.

2. Recognize the Holy Spirit as a good and sufficient teacher — realizing that the understanding of many passages will not come immediately.

3. Read each day a portion of the Old Testament and also the New . . . going on where we previously left off. (a) If you don't have consecutive reading you will miss some parts of the Bible; (b) Reading the whole Bible will provide variety; (c) It is not good to say that some scriptures are better than others; (d) Reading the whole Bible will keep us from erroneous views; (e) The scriptures contain the whole revealed will of God.

4. It is of greater importance to meditate upon what we read. Commentaries affect the head, but the Bible affects the heart.

Advice on How to Ascertain The Will of God

1. I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state

that it has no will of its own in regard to a given matter. Nine-tenths of the trouble with people is right here. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord's will whatever it may be.

2. Having done this I do not leave the result to feeling of simple impression. If I do so, I make myself liable to great delusions.

3. I seek the will of the spirit of God through, or in connection with the word of God. . . . If the Holy Ghost guides us at all, He will do it according to the Scriptures and never contrary to them.

4. Next I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His word and Spirit.

5. I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me aright.

6. Through prayer and study of the Word a deliberate judgment is reached according to the best of my ability and knowledge. If my mind is at peace and continues so after two or three more petitions I proceed accordingly.

FAMILY

A Beautiful Tribute **(Edith Dunwoody)**

Edith Dunwoody was born in the Twin Groves community of rural Carl Junction on November 15, 1891. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Freeman who were Swedish immigrants to the U.S. She was a lifetime resident of this area and a member of the Christian Church here in Carl Junction. She was taken by God from this earth on August 18, 1981.

I was privileged to participate in her memorial service and spoke from Hebrews 11:4. This passage reveals that Abel, though he is dead, still speaks. The influence of his righteous life lives on. His memory has never been forgotten, even though our lives are separated by literally thousands of years. Since Abel experienced the world's first physical death it is impossible to find anyone who is more remote from our day or more separated from modern society. Yet, he still speaks.

It is also evident that Edith Dunwoody still speaks to us. Her picture is in our latest church directory acknowledging her many years of service as a teacher in our Bible School. Her influence

lives on in the lives of her students and in the memories of her friends and neighbors.

Our memories of her will be enhanced by a beautiful organ which was donated by her family to our church just this past Sunday. It is a brand new 1981 model that represents the "top of the line" in Hammond organs. It will bring melody to our hearts for many years to come.

I could not help but believe, however, that the greatest tribute to her role as a teacher and Christian worker is reflected not in the organ, but in the life of her son, Francis.

Since Francis and his family have lived out of our area for many years, I have only been casually acquainted with them. The more I discover, however, the more I appreciate the hand that rocked their cradle.

The gift of this beautiful organ is like the proverbial "tip of the iceberg." It only reflects a tiny fraction of the dedication and service which have helped to make this church what it is. Down through the years Francis has been an example of generosity and Christian love. When our church needed land he was there to provide the necessary funds. When interest was lagging in a building he was there to help and encourage. He is so convinced that giving brings blessings that he has challenged others to tithe with the promise that he will reimburse those who will try it for a year and who feel that it was not a wise investment. When he and his wife spoke of a memorial gift they were eager to invest in the best and literally radiated with happiness and joy when the organ was delivered. Such a son does not grow up by accident. With apologies to Edgar A. Guest permit me to change a few words and apply this beautiful poem to Edith Dunwoody and to her son, Francis, who is a living tribute to his mother.

He came in to me with a wide-spreading grin.

He stood as he talked and held up his chin.

His eyes looked into mine and polite was his speech.

His manners were those it takes patience to teach.

A BEAUTIFUL TRIBUTE

And I thought in the moments which together we had
I could envision in him both his mother and dad.
I said when he left and I say it again:
"That sort of a man takes devotion to train.
That man wasn't left to the strangers he'd meet
Or the dangers and problems of life in the street.
You could tell from his actions that man has had
The love of a marvelous Mother and Dad."
He went on his way but his tribute is paid
To his parents because of that visit that he made.
From the shine of his shoes to the part in his hair
It was certain that man had been cherished with care.
Thus to sum it all up; what a marvelous ad
A person can be for his Mother and Dad.

The Disappointment

(Will Rogers)

Every father has certain expectations of his son. The following story details the life of one son who was a tragic disappointment to his father. We recount the painful details of this disappointment with the hope that something good can be learned from the experience.

Because the father had means, he placed a premium upon education and did everything within his power to provide his son with the best.

He enrolled him at the Droomgule School . . . but he quit.

He enrolled him at the Harrell Institute. This was a religiously affiliated Seminary. He soon came home because of illness and never returned.

He enrolled him at the Cherokee Seminary . . . the Halsell College, the Scarrett Collegiate Institute, and the Kemper Military Academy. In each instance the boy either ran away or was expelled from each of these institutions.

He was described as "careless and untidy". . . "spoiled and impetuous". . . "lazy and miserable in academics."

The youngster began to drift around the country, periodically returning home penniless and destitute for help from his father.

Once after squandering an unusually large sum of money he wrote to his father:

All that worries me is people there all say, "Oh, he is no account, he blows all his father's money." And all that kind of stuff, which is not so. I am more than willing to admit that you have done everything in the world for me and tried to make something more than I am out of me (which is not your fault) but as to your financial dealings, I think I paid you all up and everyone else.

I only write these things so we may understand each other. I cannot help it because my nature is not like other people, and I

THE DISAPPOINTMENT

don't want you all to think I am not good because I don't keep my money . . . I have always dealt honestly with everyone and think the world of all of you and all the folks, and will be among you all soon as happy as anyone in the world, as then I can work and show people that I am only spending what I make. . . ."

The boy arrived home on a freight train and was so broke that his friends kidded him about "wearing overalls for underpants." His father felt sorry for him and gave him a job . . . soon, however, he was back into his old habits of having a preoccupation with parties and entertainment.

The father's fears for his son intensified when the boy began hanging around professional actors and sought out a career in the entertainment world.

The boy lived to regret his disappointments and once told his wife that there "wasn't a day in his life he didn't regret not taking advantage of his educational opportunities."

This boy, however, never met a man he didn't like, and certainly his father was a man whom he loved very much.

It is to be hoped that this story of Will Rogers, who was such a disappointment to his father, will provide some guidance and hope to the rest of us who have similar disappointments.

Condensed from the *Chronicles of Oklahoma*
Vol. LVIII, No. 3 — Fall, 1980

Honor Thy Father (Eli)

“Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3).

The Ten Commandments are listed in two places: Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. They were of particular interest to the Nation of Israel for they constituted their “covenant” with God. They are also of great interest to us for the things written aforetime were written for our learning (Rom. 15:4). Those who do not study history are doomed to repeat it.

The reason why the covenant was repeated twice is quite simple. It was given the first time to a generation which disobeyed God and perished in the wilderness. Forty years later a new generation had arisen and the commandments had to be repeated. The word “Deuteronomy” literally means “second law.”

The divine requirement to honor parents is distinguished by being the first commandment with promise. If the Hebrews would honor their parents, their days would be prolonged and it would go well with them in the land which the Lord was giving to them (Deut. 5:16). In other words, a failure to honor parents would multiply their internal problems and reduce the longevity of the nation.

A nation which does not honor parents is just one generation from disaster. Someday those rebellious and inconsiderate juveniles will be holding the reins of government. If they have never learned to take orders, it is doubtful that they will be wise enough to give them. If they have been derelict in family responsibilities, what reason do we have to believe that they will be responsible in the affairs of the Nation?

This truth is aptly illustrated in the national disaster that came upon Israel during the days of Eli, the priest. Our limited space

will only permit a brief overview, but perhaps it will be sufficient.

Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord (I Sam. 2:12).

Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord (I Sam. 2:17).

Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation (I Sam. 2:22).

And the Lord said . . . I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, AND HE RESTRAINED THEM NOT. . . . (I Sam. 3:11-13).

Note that Eli was responsible for the outrageous conduct of his sons. "He restrained them not!" As the twig is bent so the tree will grow and little children must be taught early to respect authority. The child who had no respect for his parents will likely not know how to command respect from his own children. The magnitude of the problem will, therefore, increase with each new generation. If the vicious cycle is to be broken, it will be done so by fathers who learn to restrain their children and demand their honor.

In the historical setting mentioned above, this came about through the influence of a father named Jesse. His son David was a man after God's own heart. David was obedient to his father and, therefore, found it natural to respect national authority. Though Saul was demented and irrational, David refused to lift his hand against the Lord's anointed. The success of David as a king was a tribute to his family.

The national prosperity of Israel was directly related to honoring his parents — SO IS OURS!

Letter To Dad

Susan Scott, one of our teenagers, wrote the following letter to her father while on a mission trip in the poorest country in this part of the world:

Dear, Dad

It's coming up on Father's Day pretty quick so I thought I'd write a letter to tell you thanks. Here in Haiti, time is very unstable . . . sometimes slow . . . sometimes fast. You never know what to expect. As one of my peers said, "Haiti is very spontaneous." That is very true. So I thought "what better time than now to write to Dad." I was going to draw you a palm tree, too, but my artistic talents aren't up to such heights.

Right now, our whole group of 32 people are living in a six-room house, not counting the one bathroom and kitchen. We have electricity and running water, which we can't drink unless we want to get the Haitian two-step. Also, we have Rick the rat, Rhonda his girlfriend, a back porch full of Wolfe spiders and enough lizards to fill the state of Missouri full to brimming. Needless to say, I miss home.

Right now, I'm sleeping on the hard Haitian tile floor because I loaned my mat to a friend with a back problem. The water we're allowed to drink tastes like Clorox. The food is simple, stuff like oatmeal, rice, beans, peanut butter sandwiches, tuna salad, etc. . . . there is never enough to satisfy all our hunger. Last night we had something called Soup Goup which tastes a lot like its name. Needless to say, I miss home.

Right now, I need to take a shower. We have two outside running facets but they're occupied by my friends doing their laundry by hand. Yesterday we had no water at all because a dump truck ran over our line while delivering dirt for our driveway. It took all day to fix and all night wait till the Haitians decided to turn the water back on. The bathroom is open right now, which is unusual, but I have no strength to spare, except in pushing this pen. My hand is shaking because my muscles are so overworked. Needless to say, I miss home.

Right now, I'm sitting on a low wall over-looking the patio. It's

LETTER TO DAD

one of the best seats in the house because we have no furniture or tables, unless you consider a sleeping bag furniture. We always are constantly cleaning house and doing laundry because Haiti is dirty and dusty, sweaty and hot. The children outside playing are noisy and distracting. There is a little Haitian black boy talking with my friend. The little boy is using a "beakin," a Haitian word for cane, to stand with. He comes to watch the "blanc," another Haitian word meaning white person, play and work. He has nothing better to do just like thousands of others here. Needless to say, I miss home.

Dad, we've got it good here in Haiti. We've got food, good water, a sturdy roof, and solid floor. We've got a song in our heart and the hope of going home soon. I guess what I'm trying to say, Dad, is thanks for home. You've fought for your country, for your family. You've endured many hardships to become the man you are and to provide for us, your family. Thanks, Dad, once again.

I love you,
Susie

Joash Remembered Not!

(A meditation for Father's Day)

(Joash)

"Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son" (II Chron. 24:22).

Joash, the King of Judah, was the son of Ahaziah. When Ahaziah was killed because of his sin, his mother, Athaliah (the daughter of Jezebel), decided to kill all the children in the royal family so that she could reign as queen.

She was successful in killing all of her grandchildren but one . . . that was Joash. He was rescued from death by his aunt Jehosheba who was the wife of Jehoiada the priest (II Chron. 22:11).

For seven years the priest and his wife risked their lives to hide little Joash from his murderess grandmother. At last Jehoiada, the priest, strengthened himself with the courage to make the seven-year-old Joash the king (see II Chron. 23).

The coup was successful, Joash became the king of Judah, and the wicked Athaliah was slain. All of this was a tribute, not to Joash, but to the courageous Jehoiada and his family.

Because Joash had been orphaned, Jehoiada had become his father. The wise priest directed virtually every aspect of his foster son's life. He saved him from death, installed him as king, broke down the altars of Baal, provided him with wives, directed him in repairing the house of the Lord, and spearheaded religious reform which brought peace and harmony to the kingdom.

Then Jehoiada waxed old and died. Since he was 130 years old at the time of his death he must have been approaching 100 when he dared to take on the rigors and responsibilities of being a foster parent. (The reign of Joash lasted forty years.)

After the death of Jehoiada an incredible thing came to pass.

Joash forgot all of the training which Jehoiada had given him. The people left the house of God and served groves and idols . . . and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this trespass (II Chron. 24:18).

A series of prophets were sent by God to call Joash to repentance. Notable among these prophets was Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, and thus a foster brother to Joash himself.

Zechariah stood above the people and said, “. . . Why transgress you the commandments of the Lord. . . ?” (II Chron. 24:20).

Instead of repenting, the King commanded Zechariah to be stoned. “Thus Joash the king remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but slew his son. . . .”

As Zechariah lay dying he asked for God to observe what was going on and bring Joash to account. God honored this request and Joash was murdered by his own servants (v. 25).

I must, however, return to the shocking reality that Joash “remembered not the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him. . . .” As ridiculous as it may sound he actually thought that he was a “self-made man.” He reflected upon his own accomplishments, his own plans, his own dreams, and must have even come to consider the kingdom as his own.

In reality, the only real wisdom, strength, and stability in his life had come from others . . . and from his father, Jehoiada in particular.

The more I think about it, the more I think there may be a little of Joash in all of us. The human infant is the most helpless creature in all the earth. For the first seven years in all of our lives we are totally incapable of surviving by ourselves. Then in our years of adolescence and maturity we still continue to ride on the wake of those who have gone before. Virtually every aspect of our adult lives rests upon foundations which were provided by the labors of our fathers.

May God help us to put to death whatever amount of Joash

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

we may have in our hearts and to remember our fathers with deep gratitude and appreciation.

Luxurious Livin' **(Zola Mae Mouton)**

Growing up in the post depression days of the late thirties brought a certain measure of austerity into our little family. We canned our own food, made our own soap, butchered our own meat and somehow survived. My mother did our washing on a scrub board and carefully patched our ragged clothing which a future generation would have casually discarded. Just around the corner lay the rigors and hardships of rationing and war with all of its tears and tribulation. But somehow, in retrospect, those days were much better for little children than our own. Juvenile crime was low, teenage suicide was unheard of, and a boy who lost his marbles went to the dime store instead of the psychiatrist.

By contrast with modern infants I was living in the lap of luxury. I was blessed with a mother whose main ambition in life was to raise her family. At that juncture I had no interest in shiny new cars and plush carpet, I wanted my mother. I needed her more than I needed a baby sitter or a nursery school. I profited more from her presence than from a hundred new toys or a thousand suits of expensive clothing. I never knew the loneliness of coming home to an empty house or the sadness of finding her bed vacant in the middle of the night. I didn't know what it was to be embarrassed because my mother was divorced and my new daddy had a different name.

My heart bleeds for the millions of our modern children who have never tasted home made bread or smelled the aroma of a mother's hot rolls on the evening breeze. The real luxuries of life are not to be found in mass produced items which are stamped out by some machine or produced on the assembly line . . . the real luxuries are in the hand made specialty items . . . the unique efforts of the craftsman which produce the "custom" job especially suited to our personality and needs. So, I was raised in luxury. My meals were prepared by my own personal connoisseur of

gourmet delights. I was diapered and handled by my own personal doctor and diagnostician. I was the recipient of perpetual maid service, my own tailor altered and repaired my clothing, and my own tutor read me stories at bed time. When I went someplace I was accompanied by my own personal chauffeur and body guard. When I was lonely or afraid I would cling to the apron strings of my own special companion and counsellor. The fact that all of these important functions were performed by only one mother does not diminish from their significance. It gave to me a measure of confidence and security which I could have known in no other way.

Certainly it is not wise or practical to turn back the clock or to endeavor to live in the auld lang syne. It would be folly to destroy our technology while millions are starving without a crust of bread or a bowl of rice . . . but it is also folly to sacrifice our children upon the pagan altars of progress. It is insane to place more value upon an automobile or a piece of new furniture than upon the eternal welfare of our own offspring. It is a crime against God, our society, our children, and ourselves to abandon our homes to the ravages of materialism.

Socrates said it like this: "Could I climb to the highest place in Athens, I would lift my voice and proclaim: 'Fellow citizens why do ye turn and scrape every stone to gather wealth and take so little care of your children, to whom one day you must relinquish all?'"

The problem faced by Socrates lingers yet to plague our modern world. It has filled our juvenile courts and crowded the waiting rooms of the psychiatrists and psychologists. It is the cancer which eats away at the church of tomorrow and the arthritic pain which has crippled the church of today.

When mothers recognize this need and return to their God given station in the home — then little children will once again know what "LUXURIOUS LIVIN" is all about.

Honor Thy Father

(Henry Boyce Mouton)

In some respects, I must confess, it is indeed a woman's world. For more than thirty years I have been conducting wedding ceremonies and it seems that seldom, if ever, has anyone been interested in what the groom wore. A father may spend most of a million hours training his son to play football, but when the young man's moment finally comes to say his first words on television after scoring the winning touchdown, he will smile into the camera, wave his hand, and say, "Hi Mom!"

I, too, have fallen into this habit pattern of thinking. As a matter of fact this is the first article I have ever written especially intended to give honor to my earthly father.

My father always worked hard, paid the bills, put food on the table, and in every other way provided those necessities which we are prone to take for granted.

When he and my mother were married, a part of their commitment to each other was the understanding that he would care for his widowed mother. This he did until the time of her death.

When I was privileged to make the all-star team in baseball it was a tribute to the patience of my father who practiced with me by the hour.

Once he was assessed a few cents' penalty for a late payment on a utility bill. He promptly gathered up his records and after the confrontation was over he had convinced them that the error was theirs and not his. Not once had he ever been late on a payment or a bill.

Out of my vast treasure chest of memories, however, is the overshadowing realization that my father is now known, and undoubtedly shall always be remembered as a hunter. The priority which he assigned to this borders on fanaticism.

I received my first shotgun when I was eight years old. Under his expert guidance I learned a great deal about safety and even

attained a measure of marksmanship. Together we spent many happy hours hunting and fishing. Each outing, however, possessed a businesslike intensity. My father was not a casual hunter.

I remember one morning when he had taken me out of school to hunt quail out of state. We were up before dawn to scrape the ice off the windshield and jump-start the car. An untimely snow was on the ground. No cold or discomfort, however, was allowed to keep us from bagging our limit . . . which we did.

I remember another occasion when we traveled 800 miles to Western Colorado to fish for trout.

I just spoke with my father by phone. He is 82 years old, but had just come in from hunting deer. His excellent physical health is a tribute to the many miles he has walked in pursuit of game.

The intensity and dedication of purpose which I have observed in my father is now hopefully a part of my own life.

Jesus once called Peter and his partners to become fishers of men. The excitement and satisfaction of the sportsman is similar to the radiant joy of those who are winners of souls. There is, however, no thrill to compare with that search for souls that leads men to make their peace with an Eternal God.

I do not consider myself to be very capable at those things to which I have devoted my life. Every article I write, every message I deliver, every call that I make, every task I begin fills me with the gut-level feeling that there are others who could do the job much better than I.

I do feel, however, that I have an intensity and determination which enables me to carry through to completion in spite of my lack of credentials.

It dawns on me now that this has been a part of my training. In this regard I shall forever be grateful that God permitted me to have Henry Boyce Mouton as my father.

Happy Anniversary

**(A Tribute To Henry Boyce and Zola Mae Mouton
On Their Golden Wedding Anniversary
September 14, 1982)**

After more than 25 years as a minister and marriage counselor I have a perspective about marriage which deepens my appreciation for my parents on this happy occasion. Surely by modern standards there must have been many times in the last half century when either one or both of them could have felt justified in tossing in the towel and calling it quits. I shall forever be grateful that they did not.

The nearly 15 years that my aged grandmother lived with us must have been particularly trying. I presume that there never is an ideal time to have two cooks in the kitchen, but especially so when the family is big and the house is small . . . and when the bills are high and the funds are low. In times like these when other families came unglued or raveled at the seams we somehow survived as one. Whatever hardships and privations may have been associated with those early days seem only to have forged something into our characters which has been beneficial beyond our ability to adequately analyze or appreciate. Somehow a visit to my Grandmother's grave seems only to promote and perpetuate our family's love and unity. It provides us with a treasure of memories that are past . . . and joyful expectations of reunion yet to come.

A love story is never quite the same to those who are backstage. Behind the curtains there is a practical mindset which the dreamy audience may find difficult to understand. No attempt has been to adorn or beautify those things which are only backstage. They are unvarnished and practical and valued only for their ability to function. The young romantics may be totally disillusioned if they were permitted to see the ugly ropes and pulleys which make the beautiful love story possible. But it is im-

possible to have the one without the other. For every hour of romance seen by the admiring public there are many hours "behind the scenes" which make it possible.

From my backstage vantage point I have been privileged to gain an insight into what makes a marriage really work. It is not some veiled mystique or profound mystery, it is rather a great deal of hard work and sacrifice. It is the dogged determination that the show must go on regardless of how you feel and regardless of the unexpected obstacles which have just occurred. This sublimation of selfish ego is not only at the heart and core of a successful marriage but is the very genius of Christianity itself.

Because my parents thought more of their marriage than they did of themselves, they have bequeathed to me a rich heritage indeed. The problems of life are greatly simplified for someone with only a single set of parents. Life is complicated enough without additional controversy about custody and child support. I never had the hassle of having to determine who I would live with or where I would spend the summer. Every Christmas and every holiday was made that much more delightful by the absolute assurance that we would all be together.

Such a life has meant so much to me that I am determined to pass it on to my children. Perhaps I can give to my parents no greater gift on this their Golden Wedding Anniversary than to renew my own wedding vows and to pledge again my utter determination to be faithful to my wife until death do us part.

Surely there will be times when stress and strain will wear away the aura of romance kindled by the moonlight and kissed by the fragrance of Springtime and flowers. There may be moments of frustration when anger and impatience threaten to erode away the foundation of love and trust which was laid at the marriage altar so many years ago. In times like these I will try to emulate the example of my parents and remember that the "show must go on." We are on stage before a great cloud of witnesses. Not only are our lives the major object of interest before the inquiring eyes of angels and redeemed men, but our performance is also

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

scrutinized by a host of our fellow travelers on this brief pilgrimage to eternity.

Someday, if the Lord should tarry, perhaps my wife and I can celebrate our Golden Wedding Anniversary and pass on to our children the same rich heritage which we have received from Henry and Zola Mouton.

CONGRATULATIONS MOM AND DAD!

Your son,
Boyce

A Tribute To Robert William McCaslin

By His Brother

Today is February 9, 1985, the day of my brother's funeral.

It was thirty-four years ago tomorrow that my Grandmother Mouton passed away. She was the first person in my family that I remember dying. Her funeral was the first I had ever attended.

In many respects I am a very forgetful person — yet, throughout the years the memories of my Grandmother continue to stand before me with remarkable clarity. I can even remember the name of the soloist and also both songs which she sang. To this very day I never hear either of those songs without thinking of my Grandmother. I even remember the name of the man who dug her grave.

I mention this to underscore the power and importance of memories. If we should live to be 100 we will never escape from our memories of Bill nor from the influence of his life upon our own.

Bill was born in abject poverty on October 7, 1927 in Covington, Oklahoma. He was even living in a tent at the time his father was killed in an oil field explosion and fire.

Because he was born with a twisted foot he learned to crawl with the heavy burden of a cast upon his leg. No doubt these early years helped to forge in him that rugged constitution which enabled him to face adversity without bitterness and pain without complaint.

It was nine years to the day after he was born that I made my entrance into the family. I suppose it is only natural for a young man to admire his older brother, which I did, but I think these emotional ties were even made stronger by the fact that we shared the same birthday.

I still remember my sadness when Bill enlisted in the Navy and

went away to war. By the time he arrived on Guam the war was over, but I still remember his description of the belated death of one Japanese soldier. This wretched soul, perhaps unaware that the war was over, was shot after attempting to plunder their camp. Bill seemed strangely above the hatred for Japanese people which was then popular and sowed good seeds in my own heart about the insanity of war.

It was also Bill who first taught me to make paper airplanes, and the fact that he became a pilot may help to explain the reason that I have also learned to fly.

Throughout the years though sometimes separated by thousands of miles he has yet been a part of my life. I have seen him strong in areas where I am weak, patient and courageous in times that would bring most of us to utter desperation and despair.

Bill's struggle with cancer has been typical of the way which he faced all of life. From the very first moment his colon ruptured he was, medically speaking, the victim of a terminal illness. Bill, however, was not one to take such a verdict lying down. Even when the National Institute of Health gave up on him . . . he did not give up. He continued to do work, to study, to experiment, and pray.

The hundreds, and perhaps thousands of hours which he spent in prayerful study and meditation about life led him ultimately to publicly confess his faith in Jesus Christ. This decision he related to me by phone just a few short months ago. This confession represented the best judgment of a man who was well educated and widely traveled and is today a Gibraltar of hope for his family and friends. It is, in fact, the only rational hope there is for life beyond the grave.

Early last Thursday morning, February 7, 1985 his faith became reality and I believe that he is now at home with the Lord.

Someday I hope to be there too!

Jesus Had A Mother

(Mary)

Because He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, Joseph was only a foster parent. But Jesus had a mother. His relationship to her was no different from that of any other normal child.

On the day of His conception two microscopic cells combined in His mother's womb. Within two weeks a bubble-like sac had formed around the baby Jesus. Today we call that sac the *amnion* which is a Greek term meaning "little lamb." At only six weeks little Jesus could already experience pain. At two months brain waves began to flow and by the third month he was sleeping and waking and "breathing" amniotic fluid. At four months he was half as tall as he would be at birth and possessed the capacity to move with ease and even suck his thumb. Somewhere between His fifth and sixth month, the unborn baby Jesus could hear his mother's voice and open his eyes to gain His first physical awareness of darkness and light. During the last three months before His birth the baby Jesus could also taste and touch and relate to the moods and emotions of his mother.

When He was born the baby Jesus was cold, and hungry, and unable to even hold up His head. In that moment of utter helplessness He felt the tender and loving hands of His mother who wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and held Him to her breast. He felt the warmth of her body and heard again the comfort of her heart beat as He snuggled up His arms and legs as He had in her womb and nursed Himself to sleep.

Thirty-three years later His beaten and mutilated body would be nailed to a cross. Convulsing in agony He would find it impossible to speak without straining to lift His sagging body on the cruel nails which pierced His hands and feet. Through eyes that were bleared and delirious He looked down from the cross and saw His mother.

The agony of her weeping face brought back a thousand precious memories. She had been His constant companion dur-

ing those early days when He was unable to care for Himself. She had fed Him when He was hungry, clothed Him when He was naked, and she had lovingly washed His body during those times when He was too young to do it by Himself. She had held His hand when He learned to walk and helped Him frame His words when He learned to talk. As He sat at her feet He was exposed again to the wonder of the world which He had created. Through her eyes He gained His first human perspective of God. Through her lips He came to experience the melody and meaning of those Psalms of praise which had originally been inspired by His eternal Spirit.

At that moment Jesus gazed into the future and anticipated the time when Mary would be too old and feeble to fend for herself. The days would come when she too would require a steady hand to help her walk. Someone would have to feed her when she was hungry, and clothe her when she was cold and naked, and bathe her when her withered hands became too old and arthritic to perform the necessary functions of life.

Standing by His mother's side was that disciple whom Jesus loved. Straining on the nails Jesus raised Himself enough to gasp "Woman behold thy son!" Stretching for another breath of air He agonized again and said to His disciple, "Behold thy mother."

The Bible then records that after this Jesus knew that all things were accomplished. Now He could say "I thirst" that the Scripture might be fulfilled and get on with the grisly business of dying. In the mean while, however, He has given us reason to pause and devote some serious reflection upon what it means to have a mother.

His Mother And Mine

(The Mother of Rufus)

“Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine” (Rom. 16:13).

Simon Peter once said to Jesus, “Lo, we have left all and have followed thee.” To this Jesus responded, “Verily, I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house . . . or mother . . . but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses . . . and mothers . . . and in the world to come eternal life (Mark 10:28-30).

Tucked away in a long list of greetings in Romans 16 is an obscure reference to someone who is described as the “mother of Rufus”, but also in some respect Paul’s mother.

First of all let us consider the identity of Rufus. The name “Rufus” means “red” or “reddish” and it occurs but two times in the Bible. The first time it is found in Mark 15:21 and the second time in Romans 16:13. The reference in Mark indicates that those who originally received that gospel were familiar with Rufus. While relating the account of the crucifixion Mark comes to the name of Simon the Cyrenian who carried the cross for Jesus. He then paused to parenthetically explain that this Simon was the father of Alexander and Rufus thus identifying the father who might not be known by the sons who were. It is both interesting and significant to note that Mark is thought to have written his Gospel for the Christians in Rome. There is, therefore, no reason to doubt that the Rufus of Mark 15:21 and the Rufus of Romans 16:13 are one and the same person.

But now the question arises, “how did Paul make contact with this family, and in what respect was the mother of Rufus also the mother of Paul?” There are at least two viable possibilities. First of all they could quite easily have made contact in the city of Jerusalem, and secondly they could have known one another in Antioch of Syria. For no particular reason I prefer the latter.

Though the following comments contain so much speculation that some would classify it as historical fiction, I beg your indulgence. May these thoughts cast some light upon Romans 16:13 and perhaps also inspire some godly woman to magnify the office of motherhood.

Simon was a Jew from far off Cyrene in North Africa. At great personal sacrifice he saves his money for the sacred pilgrimage to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem. During that trip to Jerusalem he is forced by the cruel Romans to carry the cross for a man who was condemned to die. This chance encounter transformed his life forever. His family is with him in Jerusalem and he rushes home to tell his wife about Jesus. His two sons, Alexander and Rufus, are also there and the whole family becomes Christian. A short time later Stephen is stoned and Simon and his family flee to Antioch.

"Now they that were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as Phenice and Cyprus, and Antioch . . . and some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene. . ." (Acts 11:19-20). Barnabas comes from Jerusalem to help them for a great number had believed and turned to the Lord. Saul (who became Paul) is also summoned from Tarsus and for a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people.

During this time Paul has such a close association with Simon and his family that the mother of Rufus becomes like his own mother. Years later when Paul returns from his second evangelistic tour he is possessed of a burning desire to preach the gospel in Rome and to use that as a base to evangelize as far west as Spain (Rom. 1:10-13; 15:24, etc.). Accordingly he encourages Simon and his family to move to Rome with a team of workers to prepare the way. Twenty-four workers in the Roman church are greeted by Paul, and it is highly possible that several of them came from Antioch. Remember that Paul as yet had not been in Rome.

He begins his third tour and comes to Ephesus. He finds

Aquila and Priscilla there (I Cor. 16:19), but sends them on to Rome with the team. He also sends Epaenetus, his first convert in Asia (Rom. 16:3-5). He travels around to Corinth and discovers that Phebe from Cenchrea is making a trip to Rome. He takes advantage of the opportunity and dictates the Roman letter so that Phebe can take it with her in her journey. As he concludes the letter his mind is flooded with depths of gratitude for those whose selfless efforts have enriched his life. His mind drifts back to Antioch and to the delightful aroma of fresh bread baking in the oven, and he turned to Tertius and said, "Salute Rufus, chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine."

The Mother of Sisera

Sisera was the captain of the Canaanite army under King Jabin. For twenty years the Canaanites paralyzed Israelite commerce and subjected them to intolerable oppression.

The military superiority of the Canaanites is indicated by the fact that they had 900 chariots of iron (Jdgs. 4:13) and apparently the Israelites had none.

Under the guidance of the prophetess Deborah the people of God gathered at Mt. Tabor to challenge the Canaanites. God promised to lure Sisera and his chariots to the River Kishon and then deliver them to the hand of the Hebrews.

A sudden rainstorm played a key part in the victory (Jdgs. 5:4). It turned the dry river valley into a death trap for iron chariots and forced Sisera to leap down into the mud and flee for his life on foot.

The death of Sisera came at the hands of a woman named Jael who drove a nail through his temples while he slept in her tent.

The song of victory over the Canaanites contained these words about the mother of Sisera:

The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, "why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?" (Jdgs. 5:28)

Her wise ladies attempted to console her with possible explanations. They assumed that he was busy dividing the spoils of war. They were wrong. This mother's vigil was in vain. Sisera would never come home again.

Yet, gentle reader, is it not touching to see her gazing thoughtfully through the lattice of her window. Can you not see in her face a love and a concern which transcends the barriers of race and religion? Is not motherhood an experience so universal

and so emotional that it touches the human race in totality?

She looked out the window. Undoubtedly she had done it hundreds and perhaps thousands of times before. A look of deep concern was etched upon her face. That too was nothing new, for now her brow was wrinkled by the withering hand of time, and the lines upon her face gave added evidence to that special kind of love which is uniquely that of mothers to give.

In more than twenty-five years of preaching I have seen that look of Sisera's mother many times. I have seen it in the hospital where pain and death have threatened the fruit of her womb. I have seen it in the courtroom where justice waited on a wayward child. I have seen it across my desk grappling with the delusions of alcohol and drugs.

Not only have I seen the agony in their faces but I have also heard the anguished cry of mothers who echo the plaintive question, "Why?" Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why must she date that kind of a boy? Why isn't he home by midnight? Why don't they want to go to church?

Sometimes the look of deep concern gives way to a relaxing smile. The sound of his chariot comes lightly on the evening breeze. His familiar form shows up again on the far horizon. Soon he will be at supper and the dangers of the day will be the subject of an evening's conversation.

Sometimes . . . there is no smile . . . forever!

Such is the penetrating insight we can gain from the mother of Sisera.

A Mother's Treasures

(Leona Pratt Townsend)

A few days ago I received a bundle of old letters. They may not mean much to most people, but to one mother they are treasures which no amount of money can replace. They are letters from her son who was killed in a tragic plane crash on December 24, 1974.

The letter is from Mike Pratt to his mother, Leona. The reference to "two years and nine months" needs to be explained. It was on that day that Leona's husband and daughter were killed in a plane crash . . . and she sustained 52 fractures but somehow survived.

As I examine my motives for reproducing this letter, I think it is more for the benefit of children than for mothers. As we think of giving our mothers something for Mother's Day, I think they would treasure something like this most of all.

April 7, 1969

Dearest Mom,

Got into Kansas City on time. I grabbed a hot-beef sandwich from 5:15 — 5:30. We're now up in the air, between K.C. and Joplin, as I write this.

I wish to thank you for being a really wonderful mother to me. I have learned some important lessons from you, & I hope they will stick. Thank you especially for your unselfish attitude which you always show forth to me. I'm thankful that you have disciplined yourself with that kind of "inner tranquility" that will permit you to simply stay at home and enjoy the kittens & Fritz & farm with a genuine contentment. My heart was really warmed when I got back from Omaha that nite of your wedding anniversary, & found you in good spirits and even in a state of gratitude. You have come far, and I'm truly grateful that you do not take time to indulge in the luxury of self-pity, for I am sure that many people would if they were in your position. I'm thrilled that you can seek out the good that has come these past 2 yrs. & 9 months, & that you do not dwell on the hardships & heart-aches. I truly believe

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with all my heart that we as Christians should “live up to our privileges”, and keep looking up regardless of the darkness of the surrounding circumstances.

Thank you for loving me and for wanting the best for me, and for overlooking my many faults.

I'll be praying that you can continue in your Christian influence & witness, and that somehow you can provide the light that can penetrate the darkness that many are lost in.

Always let us remember II Cor. 4:8,9, and I Cor. 15:58!

Love, in our Savior,
Mike

A Mother's Comfort

(Verna Lois Butler

Nov. 12, 1907 – Mar. 23, 1984)

Human language probably does not have a more emotional word than "mother." The physical and emotional ties which we have with our mothers are so profound and deep that many cultures actually worship goddesses which are but personifications of motherhood.

Most of us who are Christians received our first information about Jesus from the lips and the life of our mothers.

Paul Butler's mother passed away on March 23, 1984. Here is a written legacy which she left behind for her family to bring them comfort. May this mother's comfort to her family also bring comfort to you.

After attending a memorial service and noting the heartbreaking grief of the loved ones of the deceased, I determined to put into words a message for my family, telling them that Death is not the END, but the BEGINNING, and now the door has been opened wide for those in CHRIST to enjoy things that one can never experience while in the flesh.

A Message To My Loved Ones

What meaneth that lump in your throat, that tear in your eye?
Is it for me or for you that you sigh?

My darlings, I've told you many times never to be sad;
I've gained all the good and left all the bad.

And if you are grieving because I've gone from your view,
Remember, I'll always be close to you!

Moments we've shared will always be there locked in your hearts,

And these can be "letters" while we're apart.

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There's now no more worries, no pain, no struggling for peace;
I'm free at last — what a blessed release!

So when you're missing me sometimes and feel very blue,
Look up, and know that I'm waiting for you.

Heaven is just one step away from earth and its care,
And it won't be long 'til you will be here.

Our family circle can't ever be broken again;
We'll live in the Light, and out of the rain!

So live with a song in your heart and Jesus as guide,
Know that tomorrow we'll be side by side!

We'll catch up on our visiting, and all the little things,
And walk up together to praise the King!

Verna Lois Butler (November 12, 1907 — March 23, 1984)

GOD

**“For God So Loved . . .
That He Gave. . . ”**

(God)

These words are so simple that they are inevitably among the first words of Scripture which little children commit to memory. They are also at the same time so utterly profound that the wisest of men cannot completely comprehend them. “For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . .” In these few words we have not only the world’s greatest giver, but also the world’s greatest gift, and paradoxically, both giver and gift are identically the same. The gift which God gave, you see, was Himself.

“For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . .” The intrinsic nature of God combined with the inherent nature of love provided no other alternative. If God were to be God and love were to be love, it had to work out that way. The very nature of God is to love and the very nature of love is to give. God could not be God without love and love could not be love without giving.

“For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . .” He turned his back upon the regal splendor of heaven for a life of abject poverty

in a world of trouble. He said "no" to omnipotence and came struggling from a virgin's womb so utterly helpless that he could not have survived a single day without benevolent care from the very people which He had created. His fragile little body was wrapped in swaddling clothes and his tiny little lungs were filled with the noxious odor of animal waste and manger dust. But God was God and love was love and Christ was on a collision course with destiny.

"For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . ." He put away his carpenter's tools a final time and turned his back upon the peace and tranquility of Nazareth for a life of constant confrontation with sin and evil, sickness and disease. He did not stay on the sidelines but became involved in the game of life to the hilt. He brought the beauty of the sunset to blinded eyes and songs of laughter to deafened ears. He dared to touch the leper and extend a helping hand to social outcasts and sinners. He made the children laugh and He enabled the lame to leap for joy.

"For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . ." and the ultimate expression of that love was seen at Calvary. The night before He entered into Gethsemane and fell upon his face. "Father," he said, "if it is possible, let this cup pass from me." His sweat turned crimson in the light of the Passover moon and an angel came to minister to Him in the hour of His agony and need. "Not my will" He cried, "But thine be done." And there in these poignant words is the very essence of love, for love does not insist upon having its own way. It is so utterly selfless that it inevitably and ultimately finds expression in a benevolent outreach to others. The Scriptures teach "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down his life for us" and then it adds, "and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

"For God so loved . . . that He gave. . . ." This is the message of Christmas but it is a message which goes far beyond the story of a babe in Bethlehem's manger. It is a message of self-denial that involved a life of service and the agony of a cross.

May we so love that also we would give.

The Study of God

These remarks were delivered by C.H. Spurgeon on January 7th, 1855. At the time he was but twenty-five years of age.

"It has been said by someone that the proper study of man is man. I will not oppose the idea, but I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God's elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father. There is something exceedingly improving to the mind in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can compass and grapple with; in them we feel a kind of self-content, and go our way with the thought, 'Behold I am wise.' But when we come to this master-science, finding that our plumb-line cannot sound its depth, and that our eagle eye cannot see its height, we turn away with the thought that vain man would be wise, but he is like a wild ass's colt; and with solemn exclamation, 'I am but of yesterday, and know nothing.' No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God. . . .

But while the subject humbles the mind, it also expands it. He who often thinks of God, will have a larger mind than the man who simply plods around this narrow globe . . . The most excellent study for expanding the soul, is the science of Christ, and Him crucified, and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity.

And, whilst humbling and expanding, this subject is eminently consolatory. Oh, there is, in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father, there is a quietness for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Ghost, there is a balsam for every sore. Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead's deepest sea; be lost in His immensity; and you shall come forth as

from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know of nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as the devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead. It is to that subject that I invite you. . . .”

These profound remarks have been taken from the book *Knowing God*, by J.I. Packer (pp. 13-14). May they provide inspiration and encouragement for you today to “plunge yourself in the Godhead’s deepest sea” and “be lost in His immensity.” Surely you will find it a “couch of rest” which will refresh and invigorate your soul. Modern man spawns great thoughts of man and small thoughts of God. Reason argues that it ought to be the other way around.

HOW BIG IS YOUR GOD?

JESUS

Please Consider

The following has been copied from *The Bible Expositor And Illuminator*.

The knowledge of Christ is a purse full of gold; it will pay your way in all the strange places of life, and fetch you comforts more choice than any found in kings' houses; it will open gates closed to the wise of this world, and unlike earthly treasures, the more you spend the more you have.

The knowledge of Christ is a flower that never fades; carry it in your bosom and it will fill your life with fragrance. It is a light that cheers the darkest night; the longer it burns the brighter it grows, and fierce winds only make it shine more clearly; it turns a hovel into a palace, makes a rough road smooth, is easily carried, and costs nothing.

It is a well, whose crystal stream makes all around beautiful and pure, refreshes the weary passerby, never knows the drought of summer, and from life's morning to its latest eve flows steadily, carrying joy and song throughout its course.

It is a sunbeam from paradise, a smile from the face of God, the song book of saints, the harp of angels, the Bible of the New Jerusalem, the key to Heaven's treasury, and the passport into

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the presence of the King. It makes rainbows on storm clouds, transforms tears into pearls, and thorns into apple trees, and causes the desert to blossom as a rose.

It makes the heart larger than a kingdom, richer than a bank, brighter than a palace, and happier than a grove in which a thousand birds are singing. Get this knowledge above all things, increase it, teach it, live it and prize it above rubies, for it is your happiness, your glory, and your life.

They Didn't Know That It Was Jesus. . . .

He seemed so much like everyone else — so ordinary — so human — but it was Jesus.

They met Him on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13ff). One of them was named Cleopas. Some have tried to associate him with the "Cleophas" of John 19:25 but this association is doubtful. Cleopas was merely some obscure disciple who is never mentioned again by name on the pages of the Holy Bible. His companion is not even named at all. If Jesus was going to appear to anyone surely it would not be to people like Cleopas and his friend, it would be to important people. Therefore, they walked with Him those miles to Emmaus and never knew that it was Jesus.

How could they know? He seemed so much like everybody else. His voice sounded like almost any voice that you would hear in the public square. His face did not bear some unusual expression which an observer might associate with Deity. His dress did not in any way distinguish Him from a million others who might have walked some dusty road on the same Spring afternoon. But nonetheless, it was Jesus.

This beautiful thought reminded me of a quotation from *The Nun's Story* by Kathryn Hulme. The old Mother Superior was admonishing the younger women in her charge regarding their conduct toward those whom they would encounter in their hospital ministry. Kathryn Hulme wrote it like this:

All for Jesus, Sister William had said in the ward, pulling on the rubber gloves. Say it my dear students, every time you are called upon for what seems an impossible task. Then you can do anything with serenity. It is a talisman phrase that takes away the disagreeable inherent in many nursing duties. Say it for the bed pans you carry, for the old incontinents you bathe, for those

sputum cups of the tubercular. 'tout pour Jesus', she said briskly as she bent to change a dressing full with corruption. Gabrielle, Jeannine, Charlotte . . . come closer and watch how I do this. You see how easy? All for Jesus . . . this is no beggar's body picked up on the Rue des Radis. This is the Body of Christ and this suppurating sore is one of His wounds. . . .", page 14.

Then, also my mind raced back to Matthew 25:31ff which describes the great Judgment Day. "I was hungered," said Jesus "and ye gave me no meat, I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. . . ."

Why would anybody not help Jesus? The answer is quite obvious. They probably didn't recognize Him. Perhaps He looked too human or too ordinary. Perhaps He was disguised in the crippled body of a little child or shut away in the back room of some forgotten home for the aged. Maybe He chose to encounter us in the form of a troubled teen or an incorrigible inmate in some corrective institution. They would certainly have treated Him differently if only they had known that it was Jesus . . . but somehow they didn't know.

It is significant beyond words that those two on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until they sat down to eat with Him. Throughout the long afternoon they had profound discussions of current events and theology. Beginning at Moses and all the prophets Jesus had expounded unto them what the Scriptures disclosed about the ministry of the Messiah, but it was not until the intimacy of the evening meal that their eyes were opened so that they knew that He was Jesus.

Perhaps this is the key to recognizing Jesus in our own day and age. Statistics on a page or casual traveling companions seldom touch our hearts or probe our souls. It is only when we become involved with people on a level much deeper than the cursory contacts which are normal in society that our eyes are really opened to see Jesus.

Here Is Truth

(Abraham Lincoln and Jesus)

At twenty-two minutes past seven on the morning of Saturday, April 15th, 1865, in the city of Washington, President Abraham Lincoln breathed his last. This simple statement of historic fact marks the close of a red epoch in the history of the United States — of the world. How vividly the incidents of that heroic life and tragic death come thronging to the mind. From the frontier wilderness to the lawyer's office, from the law office to state house, thence to the presiding seat over that nation, which by God-given wisdom he preserved from the hand of the spoiler for four years — for all coming time. Then from the valley of martyrdom, while village bells are tolling and great cities wear the trappings and the suits of woe, and a nation is dumb with grief beyond expression, he is born through the avenues of weeping millions from the Potomac to his prairie tomb.

One of the finest biographies of the great Emancipator was written by two of his personal friends; John Nicolay and John Hay. These men served Lincoln as his official Private Secretary and Assistant Secretary. Day by day they sustained to him relations of the closest confidence; they heard from his own lips his motives and designs; they shared his perplexity and care; and when the end came one of them was present at the death-bed and saw his lamp of life go out. These authors were the friends of Lincoln's friends. They had unceasing contact with all the sources of information. They belong to the nationality and had a part in the historical events which led up to the tragic facts of which they write. Their style denotes calmness of temper, discrimination of judgment and candor of statement.

In the courts of the land three crucial tests are applied to all the evidence before it is deemed credible. *1st* — Did the witness have opportunity to know the facts? *2nd* — Had he sufficient intelligence to judge the facts? *3rd* — Is he honest in his delivery of

the facts? Nicolay and Hay satisfy these tests. Their history is true.

Another great Emancipator died by assassination — probably in the month of April. There are many similarities in their lives. Both accomplished their lifework in three or four years time; both acted in full view of a multitude of witnesses; both were engaged upon errands of great importance to the world and its future; both were possessed of high moral purposes, both sought to emancipate mankind, the one from spiritual the other from physical bondage; both possessed ardent friends and bitter foes; both suffered tragic deaths because of the mission in which they were engaged. To paraphrase a national verse: Christ died to make men holy, Lincoln died to make men free.

The biography of Lincoln is eagerly accepted by thousands of readers. The veracity and truth in Lincoln's life will stand in any court of law. The biography of Jesus is eagerly accepted for the same reason.

Consider, for example, the biography of Jesus written by John the Apostle. John was a Galilean fisherman with a respectable family. He was favorably known to the family of the High Priest, by which acquaintance he and his friend Peter gained entrance to the preliminary trial of Jesus. John was a constant companion of Christ throughout the years of his ministry and was even present on such special occasions as the transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, and Christ's prayer in Gethsemane. He was present at the cross and witnessed all of the horrible details of the crucifixion. He outran Peter and came first to the tomb on the morning of the resurrection. He personally witnessed the resurrected Saviour on various occasions and at Christ's own request he received Mary, the mother of Jesus, into his home and cared for her until her death. His Christian ministry began in Jerusalem and eventually carried him to Ephesus where he suffered for the cause of Christ. The facts of his testimony were constantly affirmed without variation throughout the entirety of his life — neither banishment nor threats of death altered his testimony regarding Jesus, His ministry, and His glorious resur-

HERE IS TRUTH

rection. Here is a history that stands like a Gibraltar in any court of law and affirms every cardinal fact of the Christian Religion.

We are writing to you about something which has always existed yet which we ourselves actually saw and heard; something which we had opportunity to observe closely and even to hold in our hands, and yet, as we know now, was something of the very Word of life himself! For it was *life* which appeared before us: we saw it, we are eyewitnesses of it. It was the very life of all ages, the life that has always existed with the Father, which actually became visible in person to us mortal men. We repeat, we really saw and heard what we are now writing to you about (I John 1:1-3 Phillips).

Condensed from *A Lawyer's Examination of the Bible*
by Howard Russel

JUSTIFICATION

The Inheritance of Mephibosheth

Saul was the son of Kish and the first King of the United Kingdom. His family dwelt in obscurity until his coronation as the monarch of Israel. When Samuel indicated that he was God's choice, Saul was astonished and replied —

Am I not a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel: and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou to me? (I Sam. 9:21).

Under the leadership of Saul, however, the Israelites came to enjoy both wealth and power. Successful military campaigns were waged against Ammon, Philistia, Edom, Zobah, Moab and Amalek. The spoils of war and the tribute money of subject nations produced a measure of wealth hitherto unknown among the people of the Lord.

Then the scriptures record the sad spectacle of Saul's desertion of God. Through the window of inspiration we behold his tragic transformation into a debauched and degenerate monster

slaughtered upon the slopes of Mt. Gilboa. His headless torso suspended in shame upon the wall of Bethshan and his confiscated armor was contemptuously displayed in the house of Ashtaroth.

When news of this disaster was dispatched from Jezreel a nurse fled with Mephibosheth the royal grandson of the house of Jonathan. Her haste to escape resulted in an accident that rendered the five year old boy a permanent cripple in both feet (II Sam. 4:4).

The victory of the Philistines over Saul was only a temporary setback to the progress of God's people. Soon David reigned in Jerusalem and the borders of Israel were extended to Edom and the Euphrates (II Sam. 8). At this point of unparalleled prosperity David sought to show kindness to the house of Jonathan. Generosity was to be extended, not upon any condition of merit or worth, but only by relationship to the royal name. Mephibosheth was summoned into the presence of the King. His disability had rendered him incapable of valor in battle or service of distinction. He fell on his face before the King fearing perhaps the sword of punishment and vengeance.

To his utter amazement he was granted a place of distinction at the royal table and all of the lands of King Saul (II Sam. 9:7). In his own eyes this young man was but a "dead dog" but in the eyes of David he was a joint heir to the prosperity of Israel.

Please note, dear reader, how similar this is to the fate of every Christian. We are joint heirs with Jesus by virtue of the fact that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16-17). Our inheritance is not bequeathed by means of our merit but by our relationship to the royal blood.

The name "Mephibosheth" means "destroyer of shame." Suddenly his crippled feet were forgotten and his personal inadequacy seemed insignificant. All that pertained to Saul became his own in an instant of time and he took a place of honor at the table of the King.

Was Abel Righteous?

Virtually all of my Christian life I have carried about a certain mental image of "Righteous Abel." I saw him as a flawless and diligent young man who always had an attentive ear for God and who obeyed the voice of God without question or equivocation. Now, I am not so sure. As a matter of fact I have a growing conviction that that might not have been the case at all.

The turning point in my own thinking came while considering Hebrews 11:4 in the New International Version. "By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. . . ." From the human point of view there is a vast difference between being "commended" as righteous, and actually being righteous.

Let me illustrate this difference with the familiar parable of the prodigal son. The prodigal was not righteous at all. He had, as a matter of fact, just returned from a far country where he had wasted his substance in riotous living. His father, however, looked into his heart and saw such a beautiful and repentant attitude that he was willing to forgive his sins. He put a gold ring on his hand and shoes on his feet and clothed him in the finest robes and prepared for him a feast. In a fashion, his father considered him as righteous in spite of his unrighteousness.

This whole concept seemed so utterly void of justice that the elder brother remained out in the field smouldering with anger.

Is it not possible that Abel may have been like the prodigal? We have very little information about his life but the Scriptures do unequivocally affirm that there is "none righteous, no not one." All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Our only chance to be accepted by God is to somehow get God to overlook our sins and to impute righteousness unto us that we do not deserve. The vehicle which enables this to occur is "faith." Apparently Abel grasped this fact and Cain did not.

As a matter of fact, the whole system was so utterly unacceptable to Cain that like the elder brother of the prodigal he was "wroth" and his "countenance fell." The Scriptures teach that he then "talked" with his brother. The Hebrew word translated as "talk" is *amar*. This is a general word which is used with great latitude. It could mean anything from answering to challenging and therefore does not supply us with any accurate means for determining the nature of their discussion. The fact, however, that Cain murdered his brother subsequent to this conversation has led to the speculation that it was a heated religious debate.

Be that as it may, there is certainly a direct association between God's acceptance of Abel and his murder by Cain. The human mind rebels at the concept of grace, especially if we consider the recipient of grace as inferior to ourselves. Older brothers naturally tend to look at younger brothers in this way. Older brothers are usually bigger, stronger, smarter, and more capable. Sometimes they are even more responsible and obedient. That's why when Joseph gets a coat of many colors without having earned it they feel like doing away with him.

These and other considerations lead me to believe that though God considered Abel righteous on the basis of his faith, he may have not been righteous from the human point of view at all. Especially from the perspective of his brother Cain.

Nevertheless, Abel still speaks. Down through the long corridors of time he reminds us that righteousness in the eyes of God is not earned as a result of merit, but it is imputed on the basis of faith.

LOVE

Mariah Watkins

It was a large family Bible. One of the most beautiful I have ever seen. Though that Bible is over 100 years old the name "Mariah Watkins" is still quite legible. It is written in small gold print right in the middle of the large and ornate front cover.

I had heard about this Bible before. It was the one which George Washington Carver read virtually every day of his life. He even read from it on the day of his death.

It was given to him by Mariah Watkins in 1876. He died in 1943.

I knew that George was an orphan boy who had been befriended by Andrew and Mariah Watkins of Neosho, Mo. I knew that they were poor. Andrew did odd jobs and Mariah was a washer woman and mid-wife. I have seen a picture of the shanty in which they lived.

When I read that Mariah had given a Bible to that little black orphan boy I mistakenly assumed that it was the kind of a Bible that I would give to a little black orphan boy. I probably would have given something cheap and inexpensive, or something that I

was done with and had no further use for, or something which the kids had cast out or abandoned. That's probably the kind of a Bible which I would have given to a little sickly black orphaned slave boy who could not speak without a stammer. But that is not the kind of a Bible which Mariah Watkins gave.

When George came to live with the Watkins he didn't even have a real name. His master's name was Carver. Therefore, he was known as "Carver's George." Mariah Watkins would have none of this. She insisted that henceforth that orphan boy be known as George Carver.

For three years Uncle Andrew and Aunt Mariah treated George Carver like their own son. During this time he received the first formal schooling of his life. He paid his way by scrubbing clothes, washing dishes, and ironing.

Since a slave child was given no birth certificate we can only estimate his age. He was therefore thought to be only 13 years old when he said goodbye to Aunt Mariah to continue his pilgrimage in search of knowledge. He wanted to know what made snow and hail, and whether the color of a flower could be changed by changing the seed.

Aunt Mariah doubted that George could find this knowledge in Neosho, or even in Joplin, or Kansas City. But she believed that it could be found, and she believed that George would find it. Thus, she commissioned him to continue the quest for knowledge, and when he had found it to share that knowledge with his people.

But she did not send him forth empty handed. She gave him a Bible. It was not just any Bible, it was her Bible. It has not only the inspired text of Holy Scriptures, but also a dictionary, concordance, references, and other study helps. Though it is frayed from more than a hundred years of use it is still beautiful. It was "state of the art" quality and must have been one of the most expensive Bibles that money could buy.

When that stammering little slave boy started off to see the world he carried with him a pearl of great price. His clothes may

have been ragged, he may have had no money in his pocket, but he carried under his arm a treasure too valuable for words. That Bible was a precious gift by even modern standards, but at that time and under those circumstances, it was so great a sacrifice that young George Carver must have been breathless with wonder each time he touched its pages.

Years later when as a famous scientist he testified before a Congressional Committee he was asked where he gained such wisdom. "From a book" was his reply. "What book?" Dr. Carver answered, "The Bible."

Dr. George Washington Carver could have added incredible wealth to his worldwide fame, but he chose instead to give away the valuable lessons which he had learned in life. Such generosity was a beautiful tribute to the lessons he had learned from the sacrificial gift, and example of Mariah Watkins.

A Christian Epitaph **(George Washington Carver)**

He could have added fortune to fame, but caring for neither, he found happiness and honor in being helpful to the world.

From the grave of George Washington Carver

If the essence of a godly life is to be like Jesus, then George Washington Carver achieved that goal to an extent that few men have ever equalled.

As a sickly son of slave parents he grew up with more adversity than most will ever be called upon to endure. Without bitterness or rancor he triumphed over them all.

He spent his last days reading a frayed leather Bible that had been given to him many years before by a colored washerwoman and midwife named Mariah Watkins. Since she and her husband Andrew had no children they felt that God had sent George into their lives. He was 13 at the time and spent his first days in school while living in their home in Neosho, Mo. When he left their home Mariah sent him forth with this commission, "You must learn all you can, and then go out into the world and give your learning back to your people.

George died January 5, 1943, true to his commission. He had not only given himself freely to black people, but to all people.

On April 1, 1896, Booker T. Washington wrote to him: "I cannot offer you money, position, or fame. The first two you have. The last, from the place you now occupy, you will no doubt achieve. These things I now ask you to give up. I offer you in their place work — hard work — the task of bringing a people from degradation, poverty and waste to full manhood."

With that George W. Carver accepted a teaching position at Tuskegee Institute for \$125 per month. Forty years later he was still receiving the same meager amount. He declined every raise

he was offered and even gave away to those in need what little money he had. "What would I do with more money?" he once said, "I already have all the earth.

Thomas Edison tried to hire him at a minimum salary of \$100,000 per year. Carver declined, as he did also many other lucrative offers.

A group of peanut farmers in Florida sent him some diseased specimen with a check for \$100. He sent back his diagnosis, and also the check. "As the good Lord charged nothing to grow your peanuts," he wrote, "I do not think it fitting of me to charge anything for curing them."

When a dyestuffs firm heard that he had perfected an array of substitute vegetable dyes, they mailed him a blank check and offered to build him a laboratory. He mailed back their check together with the 536 formulas he had found to that date.

He once held a congressional committee spellbound for two hours while demonstrating a dazzling array of products from the peanut. The list would ultimately include some 300 products, including vanishing cream, rubbing oils, milk flakes, buttermilk, Worcestershire sauce, pickles, quinine, etc. Representative Barkley asked, "Where did you learn all this?" Carver answered, "from a book." "What book?" Carver answered, "The Bible."

Carver believes that his insight into the peanut came as a result of a direct communication from God. According to the story Dr. Carver asked God to explain to him the universe. God responded, "The universe is too complicated, you will never understand it." Then he prayed for God to explain man. The Lord responded, "Man is too complicated, you will never understand." He asked God, "Mr. Creator, why did you make the peanut?" "That's better" the Lord seemed to say, and he gave Carver a handful of peanuts and together they went back to the laboratory and got down to work.

Inside the laboratory Carver put on his apron and tore the nuts apart, isolating their gums, resins, fats, sugars and starches. Spread before him were pentoses, pentosans, legumins lysin,

amido and amino acids, etc. Gradually his list of synthetics began to grow. Milk, ink, dyes, shoe polish, creosote, salve, shaving cream, insulating board, fuel briquettes, marble, etc.

For two days and nights he worked, dismissing worried students who tapped upon his door. He felt himself to be in God's hands, the mortal instrument of a divine revelation. Later he would say, "The Great Creator gave us three kingdoms — the animal, the vegetable, and the mineral. Now He has added a fourth — the kingdom of synthetics."

Carver once said, "I love to think of nature as an unlimited broadcasting system through which God speaks to us every hour, if we will only tune Him in."

With reference to discrimination he said, "You must never let the haters of the world divert you from the path of your own duty."

George Washington Carver was one of the most remarkable human beings who ever lived. He was born in slavery, became a scientist of undisputed genius, an artist whose paintings were prized by museums all over the world. He felt the wounds of discrimination but would not allow himself the luxury of hate. To him the world was the Garden of God.

His greatest epitaph, however, is not best written upon his grave, but upon the hearts of those millions who have been influenced by the power of his Christlike life.

How Strange?

(W. Carl Ketcherside)

W. Carl Ketcherside is an eighty-year-old preacher living in St. Louis, Missouri. He has preached all over the world, authored thirty-four books, and baptized thousands of people into Christ.

Instead of retiring, however, he is involved in starting a new congregation in the inner city of St. Louis. How strange?

Strange letter — he wrote to me on March 21, 1983:

We will soon be in the satellite congregation. It will necessitate our going into a thousand homes, where often there will be the dull stare from drug or drink-sodden eyes, to encounter the hundreds of despair-ridden who are depressed and forsaken. I am anxiously awaiting the time. . . .

What a strange thing to anxiously await! As a matter of fact the facility they planned to rent was formerly a tavern and house of prostitution which had been fire bombed, killing one of the women. How strange indeed?

Within a month or so the work was under way. Carl wrote again on April 28, 1983:

Day before yesterday I made 200 homes in the vicinity of the new place. Today I am starting out again. I met a bearded man who was just out of prison and talked with him a long time: I sat down on the sidewalk beside an old man who had slept in a garage the night before and rose at 5:30 a.m. and was drinking a cup of coffee and eating a doughnut; I conversed with two foul-mouthed prostitutes and talked to them of Jesus; I saw a number of old people who had lost hope. Pray for us. . . .

This seems to me an unusual type of retirement! How strange! How utterly strange!

On June 11, 1983, Carl wrote again:

The inner city work is going strong as ever. There has been no slackening of resolution upon the part of those who are a part of the spiritual project. The sign is going up at the place this evening. It reads "The Cornerstone — An Adventure in Christian Fellowship — By Oak Hill Chapel — Telephone 522-6680." It is a hard pull. But those who come seem interested and we place the work in the hands of the Lord. We are starting this evening a training course to enable us to liberate the captives. We will be trying to develop commandoes for Christ. These will involve both black and white, as well as a few Mexican folk.

There are some dedicated people working with me on the venture, people who will sell their lives dearly for Jesus on the street. With a few like this it will help to know that our absent King is working with us and is interested in the result. It is a costly project from the standpoint of life, finance, and frazzled nerves as people lie to you without realizing they are doing it. It is a strategy of survival which they have developed. Pray for us. . . .

I think this is a strange way to spend one's declining years. How about you?

As winter approached Carl, wrote again on November 18, 1983:

We are as tired and weary tonight as a wet collie that was beaten with a two-by-four. . . . Monday we were at the Cornerstone all day folding and sizing clothing to give away. Yesterday we began the distribution. The doors were to be open at 9:30. Nell and I got there just after 9:00. There was a line waiting. More than a hundred went through yesterday. Some of them were ill-dressed and ragged. Some stank. Some had the smell of wine or other strong drink as they gave their names. Some of the women were pregnant. Others had two or three little children clinging to their dresses. Some of them were suffering from malnutrition.

All of them found coats and things they could wear. Today the more than sixty who went through did the same. We gave away one of the biggest stacks of clothing I have ever seen. We will duplicate the two days with another two, December 7 and 8. We

HOW STRANGE?

paid the rent for a woman who was to be evicted from her home. We gave away fifteen blankets and our blanket distribution has not started yet. We have given away food to the hungry, comfort to the weary, and sown the seed of good deeds in the hearts of many. Please pray for us. Pray very earnestly. . . .

Strange choices — I can't decide whether I would like to spend the winter in Florida or South Texas. How strange that anyone by choice would spend the winter in the ghettos of St. Louis?

June 21, 1984:

I write this as I prepare to go to the Cornerstone for the fourth day. Yesterday I went house to house in the vicinity and only made slightly in excess of a hundred homes. I got stymied in the backyard of a Laotian home with an elderly man who left his immediate family behind because they chose to remain in the jungle rather than be rescued and come to the United States. He was wrapping copper wire and flattening beer cans for the aluminum. I sat down with him on an old rug and taught him three words — screen, pliers, and hatchet.

I intend to continue going until we can start a class in his backyard this summer and learn to speak English. I say that because I am sure that I will learn as much as they do. I wish I had jobs for all these. Their little half-naked children worry me. There are about forty-five or more Laotians in this "compound." It is three blocks from the Cornerstone. Pray for us. . . .

I really think that someone's backyard is a strange place to hold a class. How about you?

If you think all of this is strange, wait until you read this letter postmarked August 2, 1984:

Nell and I are in the process of selling our home. We are moving down into the area where the work is. I have talked about the suburbia complex until at last it has made me uncomfortable. I spend a lot of time down in the area. I meet scores of people the likes of whom I have never seen before. One would never meet

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

them inside a church building but they come to us in their pitiable state.

One of our best people, one of the most dependable, was a tavern owner across the street from the time he was eighteen until he was twenty-nine. He is now forty-five and blind. He has been a real blessing to me and I deeply love and respect him. We have no trouble with those who have not been reared in the church. Nell works by my side and is a powerful witness for Jesus . . . pray for us. . . .

Isn't that strange? When a person sells his home where will he find any security?

August 28, 1984:

The upstairs over the Cornerstone was raided and women pushing drugs were hailed into court. We are where we are needed. . . .

September 6, 1984:

We are literally swamped with responsibility at present. We will probably have to move in two weeks. There is a woman from North Ireland in our home for a month. The Cornerstone is exacting a great deal in time and emotional involvement. This week I was there four days. One morning I talked in succession to two girls, the oldest of whom was twenty-three. Both of them had two children by different men. Neither of them is married. one brought clothes, the other came hoping to find them. I prayed with both of them and made arrangements to perform a marriage for one of them.

As soon as they left, a Pentecostal Holiness woman came in. Her husband had been without work for three months. They were literally starving. She was pregnant. I gave her a sack of food and she asked if she could pray for me. We are beginning to make headway. This woman had called the St. Louis Social Services and they had sent her to us first.

They called me last week and congratulated me on what we were doing for the community. But they told me they were preparing to raid the upstairs where drugs were being pushed.

They did so and got rid of the pusher. The month previous they raided upstairs and removed a hooker who was taking men whom she had solicited on the street to her upstairs apartment which the government was providing. So life goes on and there are really no dull moments. I am not satisfied with what I am doing. I awaken tired every morning. . . .

Stranger still — you know, the more I think about it the stranger it gets. Now I have come to the place where I think it is strange that I should think it strange.

I think it was Watchman Nee who said that by the time the average Christian gets his temperature up to normal everybody thinks that he has got a fever.

As strange as it seems, now I wonder if Carl and Nell Ketcherside aren't normal and the rest of us are strange!

“Little Annie”

(Anne Sullivan)

When Queen Victoria pinned England's highest award on the late Helen Keller, she asked, “How do you explain the fact that even though you were both blind and deaf, you were able to accomplish so much?” Without a moment's hesitation she responded that without her teacher, Anne Sullivan, the name of Helen Keller would have remained unknown.

Who was this miracle teacher? What ingredients were incorporated into her life that she might have the patience, love, and determination to transform an incorrigible human animal into a refined and educated lady.

The story begins many years before when Anne Sullivan was herself a “human animal” confined to a cage. She was in the dungeon of a mental hospital just outside Boston, Massachusetts. Though the institution was one of the more enlightened ones for the treatment of the mentally disturbed, “Little Annie” was considered as hopelessly insane. She was therefore placed in a cage and consigned to an area where she would be out of sight. On occasions she would violently attack anyone who came near her cage, at other times she would become so completely withdrawn that she seemed oblivious to their presence.

At about that time an elderly nurse in that institution began to show a special interest in “Little Annie.” She felt that there was hope for all of God's creatures. Each day she would go to the dungeon and eat her lunch just outside of Annie's cage. Little Annie gave no indication that she was even aware of her presence. One day the nurse brought some brownies to Annie and left them outside of her cage. Though Annie gave no hint they were there, when the nurse returned the next day they were gone.

From that time on the nurse brought brownies each week on her Thursday visit. Soon the doctors began to notice a remarkable difference in Little Annie. After some time she was

"LITTLE ANNIE"

moved upstairs and eventually was considered as completely cured.

This is the story behind the story. It is another remarkable tribute to the awesome power of human love. It reminds us of the compassionate Christ who gave Himself for hopeless wretches like us who were trapped in dungeons of deep despair. It encourages us to eat with sinners and to leave a few brownies in reach of the hopeless.

There are "Little Annies" all around us, and Helen Kellers yet to be born. Our love and understanding may be the key that will open their dungeons and fill their lives with radiance and sunshine.

Adapted from *See You at the Top*
by Zig Ziglar

Teacher

(Anne Sullivan)

Everything which God commands us to accomplish, He can do better. Instead of doing it for us, however, He lovingly and patiently teaches us to do it for ourselves. This is a principle ingredient of discipleship.

How beautifully this principle is illustrated in the life of the late Helen Keller. As a small child Helen Keller was afflicted with a terrible illness which left her blind, deaf and dumb. Her miserable little world was black and silent and her untrained hands sought to destroy virtually everything they came in contact with.

Her teacher was Anne Sullivan from the Perkins Institution for the Blind. The job of the teacher is not to do things for students, but to train students to do things for themselves. Sometimes progress can be painfully slow.

For half a century Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller were inseparable companions. When Miss Sullivan died in 1936 her student had become one of the most famous women in the world. Helen was able to graduate from college with honors, to correspond with famous men all over the world in both French and English, and her ability to speak has been described as the greatest individual achievement in the history of education.

With reference to her ability to speak Helen modestly wrote, "I have only partially conquered the hostile silence. My voice is not a pleasant one, I am afraid, but I have clothed its broken wings in the unfailing hues of my dreams and my struggle for it has strengthened every fiber of my being and deepened my understanding of all human strivings and disappointed ambitions."

There is little doubt that her teacher could speak with clearer and more articulate tones than Helen was ever able to achieve. The job of a teacher, however, is selfless instead of selfish. What the teacher is able to do is not the point. The success of a teacher

is reflected in what the student is able to accomplish.

Every parent has experienced the frustration that comes from trying to teach. It is in some respects easier to feed and clothe children than it is to teach them to do it for themselves. We can tie those shoe laces in only a few seconds . . . they may struggle for minutes to do the same thing . . . and then not even have it done right. To always do things for our children which they are capable of learning to do by themselves, would be a terrible injustice to them and their future.

Remember that everything which God commands us to do He can do better. He patiently gives us the privilege, however, of learning to do these things by ourselves.

Those of us who want to be like God must also patiently give ourselves to the work of training others. There will be many times when we will be tempted to throw up our hands in frustration and do it ourselves. There will be moments of impatience when we grow tired of perennial mistakes and sweep aside our concern for the progress of others.

In times like this may we pause to reflect upon the life of Jesus, who is our ultimate Teacher and Guide. Everything which He has commanded us to do He can do better, and faster, and more efficiently. He gives to us the blessed privilege, however, of laboring together with Him in the work of His Kingdom.

Let us strive to be as patient and concerned with others . . . as we want Jesus to be patient and concerned with us!

MISSIONS

John Williams

John Williams was born in Tottenham, England, on June 29, 1776. He was a cheerful, active, and affectionate boy with a limited education. He never got to go to college.

As a youth he scoffed at Christ until one Sunday night he heard a sermon on "The Worth of the Soul." It was a turning point in his life. He broke away from his evil companions and became a teacher of the Bible and a visitor of the sick.

His church had quarterly missionary reports and on one of these occasions John Williams was convicted to become a missionary. Pomare, the King of Tahiti, had just become a Christian and there was a desperate need for workers. Williams responded to that call.

At his ordination one of the speakers said: "Go my dear young brother, and if thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, let it be in teaching poor sinners the love of Jesus Christ; if thine arm drop from thy shoulder, let it be by knocking at men's hearts to gain admission for Him there."

Williams set sail for the South Seas on November 17, 1816,

and a year later they sighted Tahiti. As I have said, Williams was a simple man with little formal education. Like Robinson Crusoe he fashioned a dwelling from what materials were native to the area. He rubbed shoulders with the people and learned their language. Converts came to Christ, literally by the thousands.

On the Island of Raratonga, for example, within one year the natives had built a huge chapel and filled it with 4,000 savages who came to worship Jesus.

When Williams longed to reach out and evangelize on new horizons he saw the need of a ship and simply built one. It was fashioned of native woods and other material indigenous to that part of the world, and caulked with banana peeling and coconut hulls. It was 60 feet long and 18 feet wide and would carry a burden of 70-80 tons. It was very sea worthy and sailed thousands of miles to advance the cause of Christ. John called it "The Messenger of Peace."

He set sail on May 24, 1832, for Samos where savages abounded whose cruelty is difficult to imagine or describe. A chief might have from 20-100 wives and when he died they were all strangled and buried with him. A pig had more rights than a woman and men behaved more like animals than human beings.

Williams has been described "The prince of missionaries since the days of the Apostles to the gentiles."

It has been said that there was not a group or an island within 2,000 miles of Tahiti in any direction to which the glad tidings of salvation had not yet been conveyed.

In 1839, John Williams was killed and eaten by cannibals on the Island of Erromanga in the New Hebrides. He considered it a critical place to evangelize and perhaps the key to the evangelism of New Caledonia, New Britain, and New Guinea.

Williams was only one of five missionaries to be martyred on this island. He once wrote to his parents these poignant words:

Grieve not at my absence, for I am engaged in the best of service, for the best of masters, and upon the best terms, but rather rejoice in having a child upon whom the Lord has conferred this honor.

Williams looked forward to the day when not only the poor, but also the rich and the noble will consecrate their influence, their wealth, and even their sons and daughters to regenerate and bless the world.

“ . . . but whether such forward it or not, the work will go on, enlargement and deliverance will come, until the earth, instead of being a theatre on which men prepare themselves by crime for eternal condemnation, shall become one universal temple of the living God, in which the children of men shall learn the anthems and of the blessed above, and be made meet to unite with the spirits of the redeemed from every nation and people, and tongue, in celebrating the jubilee of a ransomed world.”

Adapted from *Epoch Makers of Modern Missions*
by McLean

350 Missionaries Supported By One Church

(Oswald Smith)

Read the following article to see how it all started.

“When I moved to The Peoples Church on Gerrard Street, many years ago now, I was told everything except one thing, and on the Sunday morning that I was to preach my first sermon, the treasurer approached me with a very grim expression on his countenance. ‘Dr. Smith,’ he said, ‘we have told you everything there is to tell you about this church except one thing.’ Then he paused. I waited for him to continue with what he was going to say. In a moment he went on. ‘The church,’ he said, ‘is in debt. We have some unpaid bills and we have nothing in the treasury,’ and then he looked at me as though he expected me to put my hand in my pocket, take out the money and give it to him, telling him to run away and pay the bills.

Instead, I turned and went into the pulpit and as I went I prayed. ‘Lord,’ I said, ‘I have been wanting to find out for a long time whether or not a certain passage in Thy Word is true.’ True, I meant, from a practical standpoint. I referred to that verse, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God (the extension of God’s kingdom worldwide) and all these things shall be added unto you.’ That morning I preached a missionary sermon.

Sunday evening came. It was my first Sunday. I should have brought an evangelistic message, but again I felt led to speak on missions, and I did so. Then I asked the people to come back every night that week. They came, and on Monday night I gave them missions again. On Tuesday they got another dose of missions. Wednesday night they had to listen to still another missionary address. On Thursday night it was missions again. By Friday they were coming in increasing numbers, perhaps more out of curiosity than for any other reason, and once again they got a dose of missions.

Then, I suppose they folded their arms, saying one to another, 'This new pastor of ours, we cannot understand him. He doesn't seem to have any sermons except on missions. But the second Sunday is coming. Perhaps then he will really start to preach.'

The second Sunday came. I can remember it as though it were yesterday. At the morning service I made an announcement. 'We are going to hold three services today,' I said, 'and take up three missionary offerings: one this morning, another this afternoon and the last one tonight.' Some of them seemed to look at me in amazement, but I had started my work, assisted by one missionary, with an attempt at a missionary convention, and I was determined to see it through. That morning I spoke on missions and took up a missionary offering. I did the same in the afternoon and again at night. Here I was, hardly saying a word about home needs and yet taking all the money I could get from them for missions. But now for the sequel.

They became so interested, so aroused, so awakened, that they came in ever-increasing numbers. Souls were saved and in a very short time every seat was taken. Before long they had caught the vision and they began to give, to give as they had never given before, and in a few weeks, without having to say hardly anything about the local obligations, every debt was paid, every bill met, and from that day to this we have not known the meaning of the word "debt" in connection with our work. We discovered that when we put first things first, God works.

The trouble with the average church is that the cart is put before the horse and then the pastor is told to get up on the seat and drive, and of course he finds the going hard. If only we would reverse the order and accept God's plan, we would get somewhere and the going would be easy. Seek first the extension of God's kingdom worldwide, and all things will be added. God's program never fails."

Taken from *Cry of the World*
by Oswald Smith, Toronto, Canada

MONEY

A Planned Life (Millard Fuller)

Millard Fuller was a millionaire who had everything that money could buy, but he was not happy. His wife had just left him, and in his misery he remembered an old Chinese proverb: "A planned life can only be endured."

Millard realized that he was living a planned life. His plan involved more and more money, a bigger and bigger business, more and more things, and finally a prominent place in the cemetery. His life now, however, was more than he could endure.

While the words of this haunting philosophy were still ringing in his ears he phoned his estranged wife in New York and persuaded her to let him come and visit. The agony of their souls was transformed into the ecstasy of Christian commitment. They determined to abandon their plans for worldly goals and seek first the kingdom of God. Joyously they stayed up all night long, praying, and talking, and singing: "We're Marching to Zion." That tune absolutely filled their hearts and souls. Three days later,

Millard said, they were cheerfully ignoring the stares of their fellow passengers on a flight back to Montgomery, still singing: "We're Marching to Zion."

Now, in a very real sense, they were attempting to let God plan their lives. They were off on a great adventure with God.

They hailed a cab, and the first cab stopped. Millard said jokingly, that was a miracle in and of itself. The driver turned around and said: "Congratulations! This is a brand new cab and you are my first passengers." They drove around in Central Park and shared with him their new direction in life. The driver was a Christian, and they felt encouraged after their conversation, that they had made the right decision.

On the way back home Millard spoke to a young African named Daniel Offiong. He had just arrived from Nigeria. When they discovered how little money he had they wrote him a check for \$50. He began to weep. He was a Christian man and related that just the day before in Africa, his pastor had predicted that he would meet a Good Samaritan in America who would help him. The great adventure had just begun, but it was exciting.

Daniel had a brilliant college career here in the States, eventually receiving his doctoral degree. A "Daniel Offiong Scholarship Fund" still exists in his name at the Tougaloo College in Jackson, Mississippi.

I suppose there is nothing wrong with making plans for our lives, provided we always remain flexible and open to the leading of God. Life abundant is not endured, it is enjoyed, and Millard and his family were discovering this joy on a daily basis. God's leading was keeping them on the cutting edge.

Ultimately they went to Africa as missionaries for three years. When Millard phoned Dr. Robert Nelson to inquire about this possibility he said: "Millard, your call is providential. If you had called two days ago I would have said No, but only yesterday a representative of the Zaire church was in my office asking for someone to help. . . ." Touche! God had done it again.

Today Millard is at the head of Habitat for Humanity which

A PLANNED LIFE

will complete a thousand new homes this year for the poor throughout the world. He still has a planned life, but God does the planning!

Billion Dollar Blessings?

(J. Paul Getty)

J. Paul Getty was a billionaire who was regarded as America's richest man. The blessings of his billions provide us with a keen insight into the Scriptures which warn, "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts."

One blessing which one might expect from a billion dollars would be a strong sense of security. Not so! Getty's mansion was surrounded by vicious Alsatian dogs, all 500 windows were barred, and his bedside table was equipped with five policeman's truncheons. This, however, did not make him feel secure. Later he would have his bedroom door embedded with a steel sheet and hire a guard to stand watch beside it all night long with an attack dog.

Well, a billion dollars would surely make your wife happy. Wrong again! Getty was married five times and reportedly was visited by an assortment of female friends whom he would write into and out of his will as the whims would strike him. None of his marriages seemed to be happy ones.

Well, all that money would at least enable you to take care of your children in a proper way. Getty had five sons by four of his wives, but did not seem close to any of them. When his son Timmy died of a brain tumor in 1958 he did not even attend the funeral. Once his son George arrived for a regular business consultation with his father and was kept waiting eight days for an audience. A week before George committed suicide he wrote to his mother saying he "would see her in the hereafter and happier life." His son Paul Jr. was disinherited for his use of drugs and his father never saw him again. When Getty died in 1976 various factions in the family struggling for control of the fortune forced the sale of Getty Oil to Texaco. Unfortunately, his money did not buy him a happy family.

Certainly a man with all that money would have time to spend with his parents. Getty, however, did not seem close to his parents. He never introduced his girlfriends to them and neither of his parents was invited to any of his five weddings. When his father died he battled his mother over control of the estate.

What about grandchildren? No . . . he didn't seem close to them either. His grandson, J. Paul III, once wrote: "I am a refugee from a Rolls-Royce . . . I am an escapee from the credit card." When the boy was kidnapped his grandfather suspected him of framing the whole thing himself to extort money and, therefore, refused to pay the ransom until the kidnappers cut off the victim's ear and mailed it to the police. That boy later became blind, paralyzed, and unable to speak clearly as a result of drugs and alcohol abuse.

You would assume that a man with all that money would surely be generous with somebody. In this regard biographer Robert Lenzner wrote: "His parsimoniousness was pathological. He would rarely buy anything — from a company to a work of art for his Malibu museum — unless he felt he was getting a bargain. His public image was symbolized by the pay telephone in his house. Although he loved making money, he never felt rich, and he was afraid everyone was after him for his money (he was right) . . . America's richest man was even stingier with love than he was with money. . . ."

Many of J. Paul Getty's "blessing of billions" seem to be things which most of us would rather do without.

If today, however, we had the chance to be a billionaire we would jump at the opportunity fully confident that things would be different with us than they were with J. Paul Getty. In this regard the poet has well said: "It's not what you'd do with billions, if riches should ere be your lot, it's what you're doing right now with the dollar and a half that you've got."

Condensed from *The Getty Legacy*
by Robert Lenzner
Life Magazine — December, 1985

Casting Away His Garments

(Bartimaeus – Mark 10:50)

The city of Jericho is located in the Jordan Valley approximately 1,300 feet below sea level. It is called the "city of palm trees" (Jdgs. 3:13), and its very name means "fragrant." The strategic location of this city made it a primary military target in the days of Joshua and also a city of great commercial significance in the days of Jesus. As the port of entry for southern Palestine it became a focal point for travelers from many parts of the world.

Along this busy highway sat a blind beggar whose name was Bartimaeus. I see him in my mind's eye with disheveled clothing and an outstretched hand . . . his face a symbol of despair. In the chamber of my imagination I hear his mournful mutter amidst the shuffle of passing feet. This lonely beggar is now the object of international attention and eternal fame. He speaks to us from the pedestal of Holy Scripture with the eloquence of an insuppressable faith.

The story of his encounter with Christ is all but too beautiful for words. The few brief sentences about him in the Bible excite our imagination and fill our hearts with wonder. At the very thought of Jesus within the sound of his voice he erupted with a volley of unrestrainable cries for compassion. He refused to be intimidated and when others charged him to hold his peace he cried the more a great deal . . . "JESUS, THOU SON OF DAVID, HAVE MERCY ON ME."

When Jesus stopped and called for him the scripture chronicle this penetrating statement of fact, "And he, casting away his garment, rose and came to Jesus.

While none of us may ever grasp the full significance of this event, let me remind you that beggars in many parts of the world are doomed to live in the streets. The only property they own is carried on their person and anything which they abandon is

usually gone forever. Especially would this be true of the blind.

The word translated here as "garment" is the Greek word *himation* — the corresponding Hebrew word is *simlah*. It refers to the outer garment which comprised a poor man's protection from the elements. For this reason a man who received this raiment as a pledge could not keep it beyond sundown. With reference to the poor man's garment the Bible states ". . . it is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin; wherein shall he sleep?" (Exod. 22:27).

The recognition of this important detail adds a new dimension to the behaviour of Bartimaeus. It deepens our conviction that he had thrown caution to the wind and more accurately delineates his "all or nothing plunge" into the presence of Jesus. He threw aside his garment . . . how beautiful. His most treasured possession made insignificant by the presence of Deity. The one thing he had clutched at more tightly than any other now thrown down like so much trash that he might gain Christ. His garment must have been as important to his emotional security as prestige was to Paul, or as a fishing business was to the apostles, or as Isaac was to Abraham — but in an instant of time he cast it aside stumbling in the darkness toward the voice of Jesus. No turning back . . . no whining . . . no regrets . . . no groveling in the dust to recover his cloak before someone snatched it away.

I like to think that Bartimaeus didn't even need that cloak again. With eyes to see he would be liberated from the gutters of life. He no longer needed the scraps and rags thrown away by society — he now could work and buy things new.

It is worthy of our remembrance that Jesus never passed that way again. If Bartimaeus had waited for a more convenient season he would have waited in vain. If he had foolishly thought more of his rags than of Christ's riches he would have finished his life in poverty . . . but he gave up things he could not keep to gain the things that he could not lose . . . He cast away his garments.

The Story of a Slave **(Hetty Green)**

Ragged clothes . . . never enough to eat . . . virtually no medical attention . . . poor sleeping quarters . . . little or no time for recreation or rest . . . no time for family . . . driven relentlessly by a cruel master . . . enslaved.

To whom do I refer? As strange as it might seem I speak of Hetty Green, who died in 1916, the richest and most detested female in America.

Arthur H. Lewis tells the strange story of her life and fortune in the fascinating book *The Day They Shook the Plum Tree*, (Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., N.Y.). Many of you have read with anger the tragic story of Uncle Tom . . . flogged to death by the wicked Simon Legree. A similar emotion is experienced when you read of a woman with a \$100,000,000 in the bank eating crackers and cold oatmeal because she was too cheap to buy good food. You stare with disbelief at the page which reveals that she lived the last 20 years of her life with a painful hernia because she would not spend the \$150 for an operation. She attempted to relieve the pain by placing a stick over the hernia and binding it to her body with rags. Your face may flush with anger when you discover that her own son's leg had to be amputated because she was too cheap to take him to a doctor. She tried for several days to get free medical attention but each doctor she went to for help recognized her as a millionaire and refused to treat the boy for nothing. When she was at last reconciled to paying a doctor she went to her neighborhood physician and was told the boy's leg would have to be amputated above the knee.

What forces created this woman who with millions of dollars in the bank, would search half of the night for a lost 2-cent postage stamp? What incredible quirk of nature brought into existence this creature who would forge the signature of her deceased Aunt Sylvia in a vain attempt to accumulate a million

dollars more? She was caught in the attempt and had to flee to England to avoid prosecution. What inspired her to cheat her employees and even to withhold payment from her attorneys until they had to take her to court to receive their fees? Whatever it was that made a Hetty Green was as damnable and Satanic as any crime ever committed.

The fabulous fortune of the Green family began with one black cow bought in Plymouth, Mass., in 1624. The fortune grew slowly through the prolific and frugal family of Hetty Green to a six million dollar estate which she inherited upon the death of her father. Her father, Edward "Black Hawk" Robinson, sat her upon his knee and read to her the business news and stock market reports when she was only five years old . . . she claimed to have read them by herself when she was six. Brainwashed as a baby with the mercenary philosophy of her father she grew into a ruthless financial tyrant who found it easier to make a million dollars than to take a bath. When she died the fortune that enslaved her continued as a ball and chain plague to her playboy son and screwball daughter.

The one legged son "Col. Ned" (6'4" and 300 lbs.), spent \$3,000,000 a year on "yachts, coins, stamps, diamond-studded chastity belts, female teenage 'wards,' pornography, orchid culture, and Texas politics."

Her daughter, Sylvia, kept \$31,000,000 in a bank that paid no interest. Dan Chicko, a hard working Italian laborer, served as her gardener for thirty-four years. During this time Sylvia spoke to him but twice. Once to tell him that he would be docked an hour's pay (40 cents) because he was late for work . . . the other time to tell him to keep his daughter off the premises . . . she didn't like children. She had but one bookkeeper to keep track of her millions. He was hired in 1915 and reached his peak pay in 1945 when his wages were increased to \$75 a week. He sat like Scrooge's Bob Cratchet on a high stool in a dismal room overlooking a cemetery. He labored long into the night keeping track of the millions that hung like the proverbial millstone about

the Green family, drowning them in destruction and perdition.

They're all dead now. The plum tree has been shaken . . . the harvest lies rotting on the ground. Almost without exception these millions were distributed where they were least needed and where they accomplished a minimum of good. Such is the sad story of a slave and her descendants.

Him That Needeth

(Dr. Tony Campolo)

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth (Eph. 5:28).

This Scripture literally came alive to me the other day as I was conducting a radio interview with Dr. Tony Campolo. Dr. Campolo is the Head of the Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology at Eastern College, and an out-spoken critic of the American life style as it relates to the problems of world hunger.

When I heard Dr. Campolo speak for the first time several years ago, I was impressed by his challenge to have compassion on those with bloated bellies and bare feet in those nations of the third world. I responded, however, not by giving, but by asking the question, "I wonder what kind of a life style Tony Campolo has . . . ?"

Such thinking, of course, is more psychological than it is logical. In reality Campolo's life style has absolutely nothing to do with the plight of people in the Third World, or with my responsibility to God to do something about it. Nevertheless, the nagging curiosity was ever present in my mind.

Nor was I alone in such thinking. At virtually every session where questions were permitted, others would verbalize my own suspicions. "We may not be doing anything to help the poor," but "What are you doing, Dr. Campolo?" As though by some mental magic we could be absolved from our guilt by picking at a flaw in his character.

Each answer which he would give to these pointed questions always left some doubt in my mind, however, regarding his consistency. For example, somebody might ask, "What are you doing to help the poor?" To which he might respond something like this, "Well, I have a few things going but the point is that I, too, have been seduced by the whore of affluence. I, too, am addicted

to the American life style."

I longed for the opportunity to get him eyeball to eyeball to know more of this man whose abrasive reminders about world poverty had put a burr under my blanket.

At last my opportunity came. It was Thursday, January 21, 1982. He had promised me an interview but before the interview I was privileged to be in a small group that had lunch with him.

The man across the table commented, "You know, I made \$47,000 last year and it really doesn't mean much of anything to me." "Yea," Tony responded, "I guess I made over \$80,000 and I feel the same way."

This guy had talked about an income of 80 grand as nonchalantly as I would talk about a piece of used furniture that I was about to burn or donate to the Salvation Army.

He then continued that he and a small group of friends had committed themselves to living on only a fraction of their incomes and giving the rest away. They computed that a family of four should be able to survive adequately on an income of \$14,000-\$15,000 each year.

"Would you be willing to talk about this on the radio?" I asked. With some reservations he agreed.

The Campolo family makes something like \$80,000 to \$90,000 each year and yet lives on only about \$14,000. Tony drives a 1965 automobile, has a black and white TV which he paid \$98 for a number of years ago, and clothes his family to a large degree at thrift shops with second-hand apparel. He even shares a lawn mower with four other families.

Yet, he did not seem proud of this at all. As a matter of fact, he seemed a bit embarrassed to talk about it, for he still considers that he has far too much to accurately model to the world the life style of Jesus.

He and his four companions contribute something like a quarter of a million dollars each year to help alleviate the problems of world poverty and starvation. Their efforts are directed principally to Haiti and the Dominican Republic, though they

have helped some also in Africa.

He gives a great deal of credit to his children for their willingness to sacrifice. A few months ago they were with him in Haiti to witness the dedication of an orphanage which they had helped to finance. The Campolo children didn't have all the clothing and toys which others in their neighborhood may have enjoyed, but it seems that they had something far better. They had the joy of seeing literally hundreds of little children glow with appreciation and love for what may have literally been the gift of life.

Then Tony said, "You know my son is now a college student, and he said to me the other day, 'Dad, I want to get a job so that I can make a whole lot of money and then give it away to people like this.' "

That's when the passage in Ephesians popped into my mind. How utterly beautiful! We are to labor and be diligent, not to purchase bigger homes and newer cars, but to give to those in need. The Biblical ineptus to labor does not revolve around our bourgeois tendencies toward personal luxury and ease, but rather it should personify the selflessness of Christ in reaching out to help others. The Scriptures teach that we are to labor . . . so that we may give to those in need!

Tony Campolo is a sinner. He is not 100 percent consistent. He will never be saved on the basis of his works. Yet I found in him a measure of consistency which is both challenging and humbling. He is absolutely sincere in his efforts to be a good Samaritan and his voice will choke with emotion when he talks of those who will go to bed this night without a crust of bread or a bowl of rice.

What About Paul?

It is altogether possible that someone will want to pursue the matter a bit further and probe into the life style of Paul. He presented a great challenge to his brethren at Ephesus . . . but was he willing to make the same type of sacrifice which he

demanded of them? Would he bind upon them a burden which he would not touch with one of his fingers?

We have every reason to believe that Paul too was much in need of grace. He described himself as the chief of sinners and declared his intentions to throw every vestige of self righteousness upon the garbage heap where it belongs. Yet, there are a number of indications that Paul did manifest a generous spirit and a measure of consistency toward those who were in physical need.

Interestingly, enough, at least one reference to his generosity comes in direct association with the church at Ephesus. Paul was on his way to Jerusalem when he stopped by at Miletus and sent for the elders of the Ephesian church. When they arrived he reminisced about his years in Ephesus and reminded them:

I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:33-35).

It seems obvious that Paul was an entrepreneur of some magnitude. Not only did his business enterprise provide for personal support but he specifically claimed to also support those that were with him.

We should not be surprised, of course, to discover that Paul would make tents in a big way. He did everything in a big way. He even persecuted Christians in a big way. He secured letters of authority from the High Priest and searched strange cities for any who would confess the Christ. He was even on his way to Damascus at the time of his dramatic conversion.

His evangelistic efforts in behalf of Christ were even more spectacular than his efforts to oppose Him. In ten short years he and his team of co-laborers fully preached the gospel from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum (Rom. 15:19).

A few sentences later in the Roman letter he was sending greetings to some twenty-six co-laborers whom he knew by name in Rome. This, in spite of the fact that he had never been to Rome. It is altogether possible that these individuals represented part of an evangelistic team whom Paul had sent ahead to prepare for a great harvest of souls (see Rom. 16).

As I have said, it is logical to assume that the Pharisee who advanced beyond those of his own age in the Jews religion (Gal. 1:14), and who labored more abundantly than the other apostles in Christianity (I Cor. 15:10) would plunge into tent making with the same reckless abandon that he did everything else. This enabled him, not only to support himself, but also them that were with him (Acts. 20:34).

It is my personal conviction that Paul was a man who continually had access to considerable wealth. As a young man this would help to account for his education. As an Apostle of Christ it would help to explain why a wealthy Governor like Felix would hope to get money from him (Acts 24:26). As a prisoner who had been unable to work for several years it would help to explain how he was able to spend two years in Rome in "his own hired house" (Acts 28:30).

Now prepare yourself for a great paradox. The period of time when Paul was in Ephesus "supporting the weak" was precisely the same time when he wrote the first Corinthian letter.

In this letter written from Ephesus, he referred to his humble circumstances and wrote:

Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and labour working with our hands . . ." (I Cor. 4:11-12).

At the very time he was supporting others, he was being treated like the filth of the world and the offscouring of all things.

His reference to supporting the weak as Jesus taught is particularly significant. The word translated as "weak" is *astheneo*

which literally means to be without strength. It is variously translated in the Authorized Version as "be diseased, be made weak, be sick, be weak, impotent man, impotent, sick, and weak."

Now let us review this information for the sake of emphasis. Paul writes a letter to the Ephesians telling them not to steal, but rather to labor with their hands doing something good, in order that they might have something to give to those in need. A few years earlier he had told the elders of the Ephesian Church the same thing when he met them face to face at Miletus. He reminded them that Jesus was interested in the "weak" and that he had followed the example of Christ while he labored there. From his remarks in I Corinthians 4 we know that Paul was experiencing personal hardship, at the very time he was laboring to help the "weak" and also to support those who labored with him.

So we see a measure of consistency in Campolo . . . and a measure of consistency in Paul . . . but we see perfect consistency in Christ. He who owned every beast of the forest and the cattle upon a thousand hills was content to travel through this world without lusting for any physical things. The birds had nests and the foxes had holes but Jesus had no place to lay his head. At the time of His death, His corpse was even placed in a borrowed tomb.

As I make my pilgrimage from the selfishness of sin to the selflessness of Christ, a milestone of progress will be achieved when I learn to labor for the right reason, i.e., for the purpose of giving to those in need.

MUSIC

The Battle Hymn

(Julia Ward Howe)

John Brown was an abolitionist whom some believe inherited traits of insanity from his mother. After years of peacefully opposing slavery he turned to force. On May 25, 1856 he murdered five pro-slavery opponents in what came to be known as the "Pottawatomie Massacre." Before the massacre he said, "I have no choice. It has been decreed by Almighty God, ordained from eternity, that I should make an example of these men."

In 1858 he was involved in another raid to free all slaves. It resulted in another death and he fled to Canada.

His most famous raid, however, occurred on October 16, 1859. With 21 men he captured the U.S. Arsenal at Harper's Ferry and took several hostages. He was captured on October 18 and hanged for treason and murder on December 2.

When the Civil War broke out the federal Troops sang a popular war song:

"John Brown's body lies a mouldering in the grave, but his soul goes marching on. . . ."

Julia Ward Howe heard the troops sing this song around a campfire during those dark and dismal days of civil conflict. Her pastor, the Rev. James Freeman Clarke, said to her that night, "Mrs. Howe, why do you not write some good words for that stirring tune?"

Mrs. Howe wrote:

I went to bed that night as usual and slept, according to my wont, quite soundly. I awoke in the grey of the morning twilight, and as I lay waiting for the dawn, the long lines of the desired poem began to twine themselves in my mind. Having thought out all the stanzas, I said to myself, "I must get up and write these verses down, lest I fall asleep again and forget them." So with a sudden effort I sprang out of bed, and found in the dimness an old stump of a pen which I remembered to have used the day before. I scrawled the verses almost without looking at the paper. Having completed my writing, I returned to bed and fell asleep, saying to myself: "I like this better than most things I have written."

Mrs. Howe's poem was put to the music of John Brown's Body . . . and became the most popular war song of the 1860's. It was "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

It was sung with the belief that God's wrath was being poured out by "loosing the fateful lightning of his terrible swift sword." It was a "fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel." The Union troops believed that God was operating through them "trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored." As they marched they sang "His truth is marching on. . . ."

Abraham Lincoln heard the song for the first time on the evening of February 2, 1864. Those who were there said that tears came rolling down his cheeks as the booming voice of Chaplain McCabe rang out in the hall of the House of Representatives.

It is a beautiful hymn . . . still not popular in the hearts of many Southerners . . . and seldom sung as it was originally written . . . as a "Battle Hymn!"

Adapted from *The Life of Chaplain McCabe*
Fleming Revell, 1908

“ . . . Bring Me a Minstrel. . . ”

(Elisha — II Kings 3:15)

Elisha was a prophet of God with a double portion of Elijah's spirit (II Kgs. 1:9ff). Some of his miracles include:

- Miracle water from barren land (II Kgs. 2:19-22)
- Death to those who would dare to mock him (II Kgs. 2:23-25)
- Miracle oil to pay a widow's debts (II Kgs. 4:1-7)
- A dead boy restored to life (II Kgs. 4:8-37)
- The miraculous feeding of a hundred men (II Kgs. 4:42-44)
- Healing the leprosy of Naaman the Syrian (II Kgs. 5:1-19)
- Blinding the Syrian army (II Kgs. 6:17-23)
- Predicting the death of Ben-hadad (II Kgs. 8:7-15)

The miracle working power of Elisha was so great that even after his death a dead man was brought back to life by merely touching his bones (II Kgs. 13:20-21).

The story before us today, however, involves the miracle of music. Three kings amassed an army to fight the Moabites. Their invading army made a large circuit of seven days journey without finding any water. In desperation they sought out Elisha to give them guidance.

It was at this juncture that Elisha said, “. . . bring me a minstrel, and it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him” (II Kgs. 3:15).

God determined to give them a valley full of water without wind or rain . . . and he also determined to give them victory over the Moabites.

Isn't it interesting, however, that the “hand of the Lord” and the revelation of this miracle came in conjunction with the music of a minstrel.

The deeply spiritual Elisha stood in the presence of sinful men. One of the kings who stood before him was Johoram, the

son of the infamous Baal worshiping Ahab of Israel. Another of the kings was from Edom and he also did not worship Jehovah. Had it not been for the presence of Jehoshaphat, Elisha would not have even given these other kings the honor of looking at them (II Kgs. 3:14).

Elisha had been a student and an apprentice to Elijah. His track record of revelations and miracles indicates that he had learned his lessons well. It is therefore profoundly significant that in this difficult circumstance he would call for the ministry of a minstrel. He knew that the right kind of music would create a spiritual atmosphere. He knew that the right kind of music would open his spirit to God's Spirit. He knew that the right kind of music would make him sensitive to the hand of God . . . and sure enough . . . when the minstrel played, the "hand of the Lord came upon him."

Just yesterday I was privileged to make a hospital call with Ron Noel. Not too many years ago Ron was near death with a heart condition. As Ron hovered near death and fought his way back through many weeks of convalescence he came to appreciate the ministry of Christian music. His vast library of Christian records and his willingness to listen to Christian music for hours every day should not be forgotten when you remember that Ron Noel and his faithful wife are deeply spiritual people.

I have been told that the largest group of people ever to assemble in Joplin, Mo. came to hear music. The right kind of melody has the power to minister to us in ways that approach the miraculous. The wrong kind of music can drive away the irenic Spirit of God and prepare a group of savages for war.

The next time you face a crisis and have a desperate need to feel the hand of God . . . why not call for a minstrel?

PERSECUTION

Farewell

(A tribute to V.I. Chernyshov)

In less than three quarters of a century the world has witnessed the rape and destruction of many nations by the terror and mass murder of communism.

The list of doomed nations includes: Azerbaijan, Armenia, the Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, East Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, China, North Korea, North Vietnam, South Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, Cuba, Mozambique, Angola, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan.

Each country which is conquered is cleansed of capitalism by means of mass murder. Recently in Cambodia between three and five million people were brutally murdered because it was easier to kill them than to attempt to re-educate them as Marxists.

Russian Communists have killed far more of their own people than Adolf Hitler did Jews. More Russians have been killed by their "comrades" than by enemies without. Even today there are some seventeen million Soviet citizens in slave labor camps where an estimated 500,000 die every year from torture and abuse.

It was the Chinese communists, however, who made their way into the Guinness Book of World Records by murdering between 34,300,000 and 63,784,000 victims.

There is a punishment in Communist countries, however, which some feel is worse than death. In the vernacular of Soviet science, faith in God is considered to be a form of mental illness. Those who are afflicted with this "insanity" sometimes receive psychiatric "treatment" which destroys their humanity and reduces them to zombies which are incapable of posing a threat to the totalitarian state.

Consider this dramatic appeal which was smuggled out of a Soviet psychiatric "treatment" center by mathematician and poet V.I. Chernyshov. Those who can read this without a broken heart have missed the meaning of Christlike compassion:

In America, Angela Davis was arrested. The whole world knew . . . she has lawyers, people protest in her favor.

But I . . . not once did I meet a lawyer, I wasn't present at the trial, I have no right to complain. . . .

. . . they tie protesting political prisoners who refuse to take food or "medicine," give them a shot, after which they cannot move, and forcibly feed and "treat" them . . . with aminazin, which results in a loss of individuality, the intellect gets blunt, the emotions are destroyed, the memory disappears.

Even though I am afraid of death, let them rather shoot me. How vile, how repulsive is the thought that they will defile, crush my soul!

I appeal to believers. N.I. Broslavsky, a Christian, has languished here for over 25 years. And Timonin . . . they jeer at (his) religious feelings, they demand that he repudiate this faith, otherwise they won't let him out.

Christians! Your brothers in Christ are suffering. Stand up for their souls! Christians!

I'm terribly afraid of torture. But there is a worse torture . . . the introduction of chemicals into my mind. The vivisectors of the 20th Century will not hesitate to seize my soul; maybe I will remain alive, but after this, I won't be able to write even one poem. I won't be able to think.

FAREWELL

I have already been informed of the decision for my "treatment."

Farewell!"

Adapted from *Peace, Prosperity, & The Coming Holocaust*
by Dave Hunt

Richard Wurmbrand

There is in the world today a man of prophetic voice and message whose name is Richard Wurmbrand. From an early life and youth of religious indifference and, by his own admission, no little amount of serious sin, Rumanian-born Richard Wurmbrand became a disciple of Jesus Christ and later a flaming evangelist. For his zeal in preaching the gospel not only to his fellow citizens in Rumania but to Russian soldiers sent there to conquer and subdue his land, Wurmbrand eventually wound up in a communist prison.

He spent fourteen years totally isolated from his family, the outside world, his Bible, books, and even the sight and sound of a bird, a dog, a kitten. He was beaten; he was humiliated through the grossest of indignities just because he was a Christian preacher. Wurmbrand saw literally hundreds of priests, rabbis, and Protestant ministers beaten and starved to death in the same prison where he, somehow, survived.

On August 10, 1967, Richard Wurmbrand testified before the House of Representatives Committee on Un-American Activities, now called the House Internal Security Committee, with Congressman Edwin E. Willis of Louisiana, Chairman, presiding.

Pastor Wurmbrand first produced credentials identifying himself and certifying to the truth of his background. Then he began to tell of his efforts to speak and preach in the United States. He explained that he had been invited to many local churches across the country and he used these words:

"I have preached with the Catholics and with the Lutherans and with the Jews and with everybody. The rank and file believers weep when they hear what is happening there, only they have no influence at all. When you arrive at the top leaders of churches, some either disbelieve you or ask you, beg you, not to speak."

Committee member Richard Roudebush then asked, "You

mean the heads of churches where you appear ask you not to be candid about your experiences?" Wurmbrand answered, "Yes." Congressman Roudebush exclaimed, "This is an amazing thing."

Again in his words, Wurmbrand said:

"I came as a naive to America. I believed if I was told that this is the head of the World Council or the National Council or the Presbyterian Church or of the Lutheran Church that he is a representative of Christ on earth. I went to him as to a brother. But I did not find them with the sympathy of Christ for the martyred church."

He then related an incident in Philadelphia. The newspapers had announced a rally protesting the war in Viet Nam. Wurmbrand had never seen a protest rally in communist Rumania because, he said, "such a thing does not exist in the communist camp."

He told of a Presbyterian pastor who was leading the rally. That preacher spoke against President Johnson, against the war, and against American forces in Viet Nam. Wurmbrand said he did not mix in the internal affairs of this country because he was a foreigner. But then the American preacher began to praise communism.

Wurmbrand, by his own testimony, went to the platform, pushed the man away from the lectern, and said to him, "How do you dare to praise the communists? The communists are torturing Christians." The American preacher then inquired, "What do you know about communism?" Wurmbrand replied to the man, "I am a doctor of communism and I will show you my diploma as a doctor."

Without realizing that there are laws in the United States against disrobing in public, Wurmbrand removed his jacket and shirt and showed the crowd eighteen angry scars across his back and told them, "This the communists have done to me."

Chairman Willis, at this point, said, "I can't conceive of responsible, religious people not wanting you to speak out against

communism and cautioning you to keep your mouth shut. To me that is incredible.”

Pastor Wurmbrand then presented original newspapers, magazines, and official documents from Russia, Rumania, and other communist countries reporting the arrest and imprisonment of native citizens accused of such things as:

Teaching their children about Christ in the home. . .
Reading the Bible from handwritten pages to the family. . .
Praying to God in the privacy of their own homes. . .
Serving as leaders in the underground church that smuggles in Bibles and hymnbooks . . .
Preaching the gospel to such a gathering.

There were a host of other similar charges. Children as young as three and four years of age have been taken from Russian and Rumanian homes, Wurmbrand said, because their mother or father was teaching them about God and Jesus Christ.

Pastor Wurmbrand is still in the United States but his heart is heavy.

So is mine.

Condensed from *Life Line*

Man Without God

(Nero)

Like a motor with a missing part, man without God is destined to be an abnormal and unnatural span of years. Solomon affirmed in Eccl. 12:13 that the whole of man could be realized by “fearing God” and “keeping His commandments.” Man without God is something less than man was intended to be.

History provides many striking examples of the heinous lives of men without God. For instance, take a long look at Nero.

Newman’s Church History, Vol. I., Page 112 describes the youthful Nero with these words:

. . . Gifted in poetry and in music, genial, humane, the beginning of his reign awakened high expectations. Augustus had esteemed it a personal affliction to be obliged to punish, and he had inflicted the death penalty only in extreme cases. The youthful Nero, some time after his assumption of the purple, rejoiced that in his entire empire not a drop of blood had been shed. When it appeared necessary for him to sign death warrants he lamented that he could write. Under the tuition of such philosophers and statesmen as Seneca and Burrhus it was expected that the ingenuous youth would become a paragon of wisdom and of justice. Seneca thought him “incapable of learning cruelty” and expected that the emperor’s gentleness of disposition would permeate the entire empire and so transform the world as to restore the innocent, golden age of mankind.

With God’s help this talented man could have commanded the summit with history’s mighty men — but we remember him as one of the most degraded monsters who ever lived. Within a few years after becoming emperor, Nero had degenerated to a sadistic fiend. He ordered the murder of his brother, the assassination of his mother, and the murder of his first wife. His second wife died from personal abuse. Nero greedily sought praise for his poetic and musical ability and even stooped to play

the part of a public buffoon. Unbridled indulgence in vice of every description became characteristic of his life. His insane approach to matters of state led him to set fire to the city of Rome and then to blame the Christians for the crime.

Tacitus describes the persecution with these words:

First were arraigned those who confessed, then on their information a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of arson as for their hatred of the human race. Their deaths were made more cruel by the mockery that accompanied them. Some were covered with the skins of wild beasts and torn to pieces by dogs; others perished on the cross or in the flames; and others again were burnt after sunset as torches to light up the darkness. Nero himself granted his gardens for the show, and gave an exhibition in the circus, and dressed as a charioteer, mixed with the people or drove his chariot himself. Thus guilty and deserving the punishment as they were, they were yet pitied, as they seemed to be put to death, not for the benefit of the state, but to gratify the cruelty of an individual.

A tragic commentary on "Man without God."

In Memorial

(Sadegh Ghotbzadeh)

Just a few short days ago Sadegh Ghotbzadeh, age 46, answered a late night summons and walked down the bleak corridors of his prison to a place of execution.

There he joined the ranks of some 20,000 people who have been murdered by the regime of the Ayatullah Robollah Khomeini since he came to power in July, 1981.

Mr. Ghotbzadeh's name became somewhat of a household word during the days of the Iranian crisis. He had been educated in the United States and France and spoke perfect English. He had known the Ayatullah Khomeini since 1963 and served as his interpreter and political advisor during Khomeini's long exile in Paris. He had taken the post as Foreign Minister of Iran in November, 1979 but stepped down following the country's post revolutionary elections. In January, 1980 he made an unsuccessful bid to be elected President of Iran.

Ghotbzadeh strenuously denied that he had ever plotted to kill the Ayatullah, but he made no secret of his disillusionment with the bloody regime he had helped to launch.

Shortly before his death he smuggled out of prison a note which declared:

"I want the record to be clear that I saw the light and tried as best I could to undo the damage I had done in terms of supporting the satanic regime of the mullahs."

The 26-day trial is now over and Sadegh Ghotbzadeh is dead. I have personally been touched, however, by his belated change of heart and wish to pen this personal tribute to his memory.

Our adversary is clever beyond our ability to understand or explain. The fact that the Ayatullah's regime was "satanic" must give us all pause as we reflect upon the deception, disillusion-

ment, and death of a fellow human being.

The people of God some twenty centuries ago were faced with a decision between Jesus and Barabbas. Barabbas was a violent man who had committed murder in insurrection. The word "Bar" means son of, and the word "abba" means father. The word "Barabbas" literally means "Son of the Father." It is therefore quite possible that Barabbas was more than a political leader.

Be that as it may the people in ancient Jerusalem were faced with a choice. They could choose the lowly Christ who had recently come into their city tottering on the back of a little colt on whom a man had never yet ridden. Or, they could choose the man who had proven his grit by shedding blood in robbery and revolution.

They made essentially the same choice that Mr. Ghotbzadeh made . . . and they were wrong just as he was wrong.

I do not know whether Sadegh Ghotbzadeh received Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior . . . but I pray that he did.

At any rate I feel a compunction to thank him posthumously for his courageous denial of the Ayatullah Khomeini and pray that his untimely death may serve as deterrent to others who endeavor to transform the world with a sword instead of a cross.

Information about Mr. Ghotbzadeh was
Condensed from *TIME* Magazine, Sept. 27, 1982

Jolly Joe **(Joe Kiwanuka)**

Jolly Joe Kiwanuka was one of Uganda's wealthiest and most influential citizens. He was stubborn and strong-willed, and his utter disregard for public opinion had made him a legend even to his closest friends.

Among his many investments he was also owner of Uganda's champion soccer team. On more than one occasion, while watching his team compete, he had rushed out on the field — stopped the game — and forced the referee to reverse his decision. Once while competing with a Catholic team he had slapped a priest across the face. When questioned about the incident by reporters he simply replied, "There is no God" and walked away.

Jolly Joe was an atheist and humanist who had no time for religion. He was a powerful man both politically and financially and seemed impervious to the Gospel.

Jolly Joe was the founder of the Ugandan National Congress and also a member of Parliament. His outspoken opposition to President Milton Obote caused him to be arrested and imprisoned without a trial.

On January 25, 1971 General Idi Amin led the Ugandan army in a successful "coup d'etat." Political prisoners were set free and everyone expected a golden age of liberty and progress to ensue.

Unfortunately, they were wrong. As bad and oppressive as Milton Obote may have been, he was an angel of mercy by comparison with Idi Amin.

In the last three months of 1972, while the western world dismissed stories of genocide as wild exaggerations by frightened refugees, Idi Amin and his henchmen had killed over 90,000 Ugandans. Like other communist dictators his victims were primarily among the prominent citizens in the community.

Initially the victims were buried in mass graves. But as the kill-

ings continued bloated bodies were to be found everywhere. Many of the executions were on public television, others were private occasions in the presence of family members.

The assassins seemed determined not to merely kill, but also to torture and humiliate. The head of the family, for example, might be dismembered and disemboweled in the presence of his wife and children. Before the mother was raped and killed she might be made to eat her husbands intestines.

But always as in communist terror, the primary victims are the prominent.

It was in this context that Jolly Joe Kiwanuka gave his life to Jesus Christ. After more than 20 years of suffering and hardship he had dreams of happiness on earth in his country which had once been described by Winston Churchill as the "Pearl of Africa." Idi Amin had dashed those dreams. In utter desperation and despair Jolly Joe dared to turn his eyes from the storm clouds of earth to a land where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal. He said, "From the beginning I have been looking for a kingdom. I have been looking for a kingdom of freedom. . . ."

In Christ he found that freedom.

Joseph Kiwanuka had the dubious distinction of being killed by Idi Amin himself. First, however, he was kept in Makindyd Prison for several days of torture. On the day of his execution Amin and a top official named Malire determined to beat him to death with hammers. They intended to drag out the ordeal and prolong his suffering, but as Joseph began to pray out loud for the forgiveness of their sins, Amin went into an uncontrollable rage, grabbed a nearby sledge hammer, and dashed out his brains.

Amin then cut off his head and practiced blood rituals over his remains. Recognizing Jolly Joe as the smartest man in Uganda he stored his head in a deep freeze, superstitiously believing that he could thus appropriate his ability to think.

Jolly Joe Kiwanuka has found the Kingdom!

Adapted from *A Distant Grief* by F. Kefa Sempangi

Escape From Russia

(Sergei Kourdakov)

In the July '72 issue of Guideposts is the thrilling story of Lieutenant Sergei Kourdakov of the Soviet Union, who escaped to freedom Sept. 3, 1971. Here are the highlights of that article.

Sergei was orphaned at the age of four. His father was shot when Kruschev took over and his mother died a few months later. He was raised in an orphanage in Western Siberia . . . communism was his religion and Lenin was his saviour. Three times he lined up in Red Square to do homage to the mummified remains of a man who could not even save himself . . . let alone the whole wide world.

Sergie "gives the lie" to the myth of religious freedom in Russia. He and his friends at the Naval Academy were hired by the local police to break up religious meetings. These "plain clothed" ruffians gave the appearance that such opposition to Christianity was not "official" but of the people. The Christians were beaten and their literature was taken to the police station and burned.

Your heart will melt with emotion when you read of Christians coming to worship time after time . . . even though they were beaten with truncheons. You cannot help but be moved by the testimony of this young lieutenant who spoke of one old woman who prayed for his salvation as he raised his club to beat her.

You will see again the power of the word when you discover that the conversion of this hardened athiest came as a result of reading a hand-written copy of the Gospel of Luke.

You will be disgusted with the policies of our own Government when you find out that Sergei was afraid to come to America for fear that we would send him back. The tragic story of the Lithuanian sailor who jumped from a Soviet ship and was returned to his slavemasters by the American Coast Guard had been effectively drummed into the Soviet public.

You will share the desperation of millions behind the Iron Curtain when you read of an all night swim in the icy waters off British Columbia as Sergei Kourdakov risked everything to escape Soviet slavery. He was found unconscious on the beach near the town of Tasu . . . just as the tide was coming in. He was found by a young girl who usually didn't walk that way, "except" she said, "something told me to take this path that morning."

After hospitalization and a month's internment by the Canadian Government, Sergei moved into Toronto's Russian community and was baptized into Christ. He is now involved in Christian work there . . . including participation in a radio ministry to his former homeland.

Words fail me as I think of our brethren in Russia who are faithful to God in spite of their persecution . . . who gather to break bread in His memory at the risk of their own lives . . . who will cheerfully abandon everything for even a chance to worship God in freedom.

Dear God . . . forgive us of our lethargy . . . indifference . . . and unconcern. Hasten the day when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Farewell

(Sergei Kourdakov)

At about 10:00 p.m. on Sept. 3, 1971, Sergei Kourdakov plunged into the icy waters off the coast of British Columbia and escaped from the pitiless tyranny of communism. Once in a land of freedom he surrendered to Jesus and spent the last days of his life witnessing about the faith he had once sought to destroy. He spoke in churches, on television, before government officials, and in various other interviews telling the incredible story of Communist persecution of Christianity.

The defection of Sergei Kourdakov was a bitter loss to Soviet prestige. Because of his outstanding ability he was selected the communist youth leader of every school he attended. He had been honored on Russian television as the number one communist youth of his province. As an appointee to a Russian naval academy he was given the responsibility of supervising 1,200 elite, hand-picked cadets who would become the future military officers of the Soviet Union.

While at the Naval Academy, Sergei was selected to conduct terror operations against the Russian Christians. With a handful of sadistic bullies he led over 150 such raids before the power of God conquered his heart. In the fascinating book *The Persecutor* published by Guideposts Associates, Inc. he describes in gruesome detail the way that he and his comrades were brain-washed into brutality. He tells of the murder of an innocent pastor at a baptismal, of knocking out women's teeth and filling praying mouths with sand . . . his first-hand testimony will fill your heart with compassion for the thousands of believers who at this very moment worship God at the risk of their own lives.

The last words in his excellent book contain a touching note of gratitude to a beautiful young Christian named Natasha. Her face was scarred and disfigured by two consecutive beatings for the crime of Christian worship. On the third occasion, the disillu-

sioned young communist could beat her no more. He wrote:

Natasha, largely because of you, my life is now changed and I am a fellow believer in Christ with you. I have a new life before me. God has forgiven me; I hope you can also. Thank you, Natasha, wherever you are. I will never, never forget you!

Sergei was familiar with the communist reward for defection and warned that if any thing happened to him it "would have all the appearances of an accident."

In the early days of communism "accidents" were less accidental. Some of you will remember, for example, how comrade Trotsky died in Mexico with a hatchet in his brain. But these are days of detente. These are times of political finesse when it is advantageous for world governments to project a friendly image. So on January 1, 1973, Sergei Kourdakov died instantly from a single gunshot wound. The cause of his death was first reported internationally as a suicide . . . but this possibility was soon ruled out.

An inquest was held on March 1, 1973, and his death was officially ruled as an "accident."

On that very day he would have been twenty-two.
Farewell!

RENEWAL

Sleeping Through the Revolution (Rip Van Winkle)

Washington Irving was born on the banks of the Hudson River in 1783. As a noted writer, historian, and public official he created a certain mythology for the area of his birth. Typical of his writing is *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon* which included *Rip Van Winkle* and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*, which he began in 1819.

Much of what he wrote, no doubt, was a reflection of life in the Catskill Mountains as he observed it. While his writings are quaint and entertaining some seem to reflect a certain cynicism, or at least somewhat of a commentary on people who are out of touch with the times.

Take Rip Van Winkle, for example. God forbid that he should ever be representative of Mr. Average American . . . yet, he unfortunately does portray a certain pitiful segment of society.

Poor old Rip was a Dutch Colonist in the Catskill Mountains near to the Hudson River. He had an aversion to all kinds of work and spent much time with his hunting dog "Wolf." One reason

for the many hours spent away from home was his vicious and dominant wife who screamed at him incessantly. Thus, he spent much time on the hunt and dreaded to go home.

As the story goes he was returning from a hunt one day, with his customary dread, when he was approached by a strange looking man carrying what seemed to be a cask of liquor. He helped the stranger carry the load through the mountains to an amphitheater where some odd looking people were playing nine pins. They emptied the keg into some large flagons and Rip drank himself into a stupor.

When he awakened he couldn't believe that he had slept all night long . . . when, in reality, he had been asleep for twenty years. His gun was rusted, his body was stiff, his dog was gone, and his beard had grown to be a foot long.

It was a strange home coming indeed. His clothing was out-of-date . . . his weapon was out-of-date . . . his ideas were twenty years behind the time . . . but still he recognized his son who had grown up to be the "spitt'n image" of his father.

His good friend Nicholas Vedder had been dead for 18 years and the wooden "tombstone" upon his grave had already crumbled into dust. Brom Dutcher had gone off to the army and been killed in the storming of Stony Point. Van Bummel, the schoolmaster, had also been in the war but advanced to the rank of General and was now serving in Congress.

Rip kept trying to tell everyone about his unswerving loyalty to His Majesty King George III of England . . . totally unaware that he had slept through the revolution and was now a free citizen of the United States of America.

Unfortunately Rip Van Winkle has too many counterparts in the Christian world. We are sometimes living B.C. lives in an A.D. world. We profess our loyalty to the Law out of ignorance about our freedom. We speak much of Christian leaders whom we know by name but who have been dead for many years. The current leaders of religious thought are men whom we've never heard of and to whom we find it difficult, if not impossible, to

relate to or understand.

Perhaps never before in the history of Christianity have so many exciting things been happening around the world. The July 11, 1986 issue of *Christianity Today* details incredible growth all over the world. From 1980 to 1983 as many as 27,000 people per day may have become Christians in Red China bringing the Christian population of that country from about 1,000,000 in 1949 to perhaps as many as 55,000,000 today.

This is happening all over the world . . . but some are sleeping through the revolution.

Dostoyevsky

Fyodor Dostoyevsky was a nineteenth-century Russian novelist who gives his readers a profound insight into the dire consequences of communism. Though he came before Marx and the Communist revolution he anticipated both and his writings now serve as a model for such contemporaries as Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

In his book *The Brothers Karamazov* he tells the "Myth of the Grand Inquisitor." In the myth the Second Coming occurs in A.D. 1000 in the city of Madrid. Jesus heals the sick and raises the dead only to be arrested and imprisoned by the Cardinal of Madrid. The Cardinal, however, is distinguished from those who arrested Jesus in the First Century by the fact that he knew Jesus was the Son of God. He just disagreed with the basic philosophy of Christ.

For example, the Grand Inquisitor felt that Jesus made three fundamental mistakes in the wilderness temptation. He felt that Jesus should have turned the stones to bread and alleviated the problem of world hunger. He felt that Jesus should have leaped from the temple and brought humanity to God by means of miracles. He felt that Jesus should have worshipped the Devil . . . received all the kingdoms of this world and brought peace to mankind.

On the surface it seems that the Grand Inquisitor had more compassion for mankind than did Jesus. Exactly the reverse was true. The Grand Inquisitor had no respect for humanity. He saw them as inferior to himself and considered them incapable of self-determination. He had pity, but not compassion. Pity is what superiors feel for the inferior. Compassion is an emotion among equals.

How aptly this personifies the skeptical intelligentsia who not only do not believe in God . . . they do not even believe in their fellow men. Their arrogance leads them to form a society which

feeds, cares for, and entertains the public but denies them the priceless gift of freedom. Such leaders, Dostoyevsky taught, would not represent the Christ, but the Antichrist. He predicted that the social revolution would come to Russia and that "messiahs" would come to power as despicable as the Grand Inquisitor. It is no wonder that many have considered him a prophet.

Freedom, he thought, was God's ultimate gift to humanity. Animals do not act, they react. Certain stimuli elicit certain associated responses. Pavlov's dogs did not enjoy the decision making freedom which God has bestowed upon man whom He created in His own image.

So, also, he found fault with the philosophies of the ancient Greeks, the Moslem mindset of the Middle East, and even the basic structure of Roman Catholicism. Each of these he feared dealt with man on a lower lever than God intended. Freedom, he felt, should not be bartered away for the fatalism of the Greeks, the tyranny of the Moslems, or the benevolent totalitarianism of the church.

Dostoyevsky not only believed in God, he believed in people. Debased by the aristocracy and ridiculed by the bourgeois intelligentsia, he still believed that the simple peasants of Russia offered more hope for mankind than the sophisticated dilettantes who ruled them. The common people discover God in their relationships of love and joy. They find Him in their tears and agony. They sharpen their focus as they wrest out a living from a reluctant economy. He felt that faith was formed in the crucible of guilt and despair more than the comfortable discussion of ideas and concepts.

He, like Jesus, knew that when we know the truth, the truth will make us free.

Condensed from *Partly Right*
By Anthony Campolo

A Christian Manifesto

(Francis Schaeffer)

Almost everyone has heard of the "Communist Manifesto" and the "Humanist Manifesto." You may not be aware, however, that Francis Schaeffer has recently come out with "A Christian Manifesto." The January issue of *Moody Monthly* contains excerpts from the Manifesto together with a penetrating article about Dr. Schaeffer.

I first heard of Dr. Schaeffer in association with the Christian community which he founded in the Alpine village of Huemoz. It is called L'Abri. He is now world famous for his encyclopedic knowledge of history and for his probing questions regarding the destiny of Western Civilization.

Heretofore Schaeffer has been in the headlines of the Christian Community but now he feels he may break through the "hidden censorship" of the secular media. This book, he says is so "timely and so controversial that I can't see how the secular establishment is going to sweep it under the rug."

The fact that Francis Schaeffer carries the hard sentence of cancer in his body perhaps provides him with additional motivation. With the fervor of a prophet he calls us to action that we might avoid impending judgment. He is disturbed and perplexed by our refusal to use the many liberties at our disposal to reverse the course of history and to stem the tide of communism and humanism.

One of the most disturbing aspects of the Christian Manifesto to me, was the dire prediction that Christians may have to become actively involved in organized resistance to our own government here in the U.S.A. "If there is no final place for civil disobedience" he said, "then the government has been made autonomous, and as such, it has been put in the place of the Living God. . . ."

A specific example of what he means by "civil disobedience"

involves abortion. After all normal constitutional means of protest are exhausted, he suggests the possibility that at some point Christians may refuse to pay a portion of their tax money. He is aware that such a suggestion should not be made binding upon all Christians and he warns that we should be willing to accept the reality of trials and the possibility of jail sentences.

Dr. Schaeffer saw Germany begin with abortion on demand and end up with the holocaust. He sees in our present disregard for human life the seeds of genocide. The landmark decision of the Supreme Court not only made abortion legal, but it also made it ethical. Dr. Schaeffer sees this as but one unfortunate event in a series of changes which have debased America.

He is astounded that such dramatic changes could occur in so brief a span of time. "It hasn't been 400 years" he says, "but 40 years."

In the meanwhile the Christian community has been held captive by two influences. One, a false pietism which has compartmentalized religion so as to drain major segments of society of Christian influence. And the other is a platonic view of spirituality which has made passive spectators out of church members.

"It is not too strong to say" he states, "that we are at war, and there are no neutral parties in the struggle. One either confesses that God is the final authority, or one confesses that Caesar is Lord."

Dr. Schaeffer is now deceased

Soren Kierkegaard

A century and a half ago Soren Kierkegaard was a caustic critic of the institutional church in Europe. Though berated, belittled, and undoubtedly often misunderstood, he has still been called the "greatest Protestant Christian of the 19th century" as well as the "profoundest interpreter of the psychology of the religious life . . . since St. Augustine." A short time before his death he wrote a series of pamphlets which have been translated into English and titled "The Attack upon Christendom." S.K. insisted over and over that all he wanted from the Church was an admission of its mediocrity so that it might "take refuge in Grace." This admission, however, the church steadily refused to make.

A deathbed conversation with Pastor Boisen has been recorded in which S.K. was criticized because his "attack" was so severe that it did not correspond with reality. Soren replied "So it must be; otherwise it does not help." He obviously felt that a one-sided corrective was necessary to restore a proper balance.

Here are a few samples of his incisive wit to stimulate your thinking. Under the heading, "The Sort of Person They Call a Christian" he describes a man with no religion. He does not read the Bible, he does not go to church, he expresses no opinion of religious matters, he is totally unaffected by religion until he marries and father's a child. It then becomes his traditional responsibility to subject the infant to "Christian Baptism."

So they notify the priest, the midwife arrives with the baby, a young lady holds the infant's bonnet coquettishly, several young men who also have no religion render the presumptive father the service of having, as godfathers, the Evangelical Christian religion, and assume obligation for the Christian upbringing of the child, while a silken priest with a graceful gesture sprinkles water three times on the dear little baby and dries his hands gracefully with a towel —

And this they dare to present to God under the name of Christian

baptism. Baptism — it was this sacred ceremony the Saviour of the world was consecrated for His life's work and after Him the disciples, men who had well reached the age of discretion and who then, dead to this life (therefore immersed three times, signifying that they were baptized into communion with Christ's death), promised to be willing to live as sacrificed men in this world of falsehood and evil.

He continues the harrassment of tradition by charging that the priests must act quickly (while the mother is weak in the delivery room and the father is in hot water) for should they wait until the child matured enough to make his own judgment they would be virtually out of business. Thus, he felt that his countrymen had no religion at all, "except by reason of family circumstances" and that the whole experience was but a "pitiful comedy" where the priest would do well to express a genuine concern over the father than sentiment over his child.

In another place under the heading "ludicrous" he describes again the man whose whole life is worldliness . . . his thoughts, his efforts, his waking and his dreaming. But he is considered a Christian for he happened to be born in "Christendom." "This", he reasoned "is just as ludicrous as when the savages adorn themselves with a single piece of European clothing — for example, the savage who comes on board stark naked except for the epaulets of a general upon his shoulders."

Small wonder that Soren Kierkegaard was a man in the midst of controversy. He died without the sacraments because he would not receive it from a priest — only a layman. His pamphlets had created such a furor that a riot almost took place at his funeral. A group of University students formed an honor guard and at the last minute one demanded the right of reading from the Apocalypse that passage about the church of the Laodiceans. This was a shocking event to occur at a graveside, but said Lowrie, "S.K. was at peace, and I cannot think that his peace would be disturbed by knowing that the fire he had kindled con-

PERSONAL VIGNETTES

tinued to burn."

Information taken from *A Kierkegaard Anthology*
Edited by Robert Bretall, Princeton Univ. Press, 1951

No King Like Josiah

Josiah was the son of Amon, King of Judah. He succeeded his father as King in about 639 B.C. when he was only eight years of age. The scriptures say of Josiah

And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him (II Kgs. 23:25).

The name Josiah means "Jehovah heals."

Following the death of King Solomon the nation of Israel was divided into two kingdoms. The Southern Kingdom was called "Judah" and was presided over by twenty different individuals prior to the Babylonian captivity. Josiah was the sixteenth king to reign over Judah.

During the days of Solomon the nation began to suffer from internal decay. This corruption continued to grow for many generations. The two kings immediately before Josiah were his father Amon, and his grandfather, Manasseh. The scriptures teach that Manasseh seduced the people to commit more sin than even the nations which God drove out of the promised land (II Kgs. 21:9). He performed abominations and did more wickedness than the Amorites did (II Kgs. 21:11). He filled Jerusalem with innocent blood from one end to the other (II Kgs. 21:16). The scriptures teach that Amon did evil in the sight of the Lord just like his father Manasseh did (II Kgs. 21:20).

At this juncture Josiah begins his reign. Being very young he was obliged to continue the set policies and traditions of the nation, but in the 18th year of his reign an amazing discovery was made which transformed the nation. In the process of repairing the house of the Lord the book of the Law had been discovered. The people had been drifting for many generations while the

words of Jehovah gathered dust on a forgotten shelf in the temple.

Young king Josiah in his innocence had no idea what God wanted, he was simply "doing what they had always done." When he heard for the first time the word of the Lord he rent his clothes in shocked amazement. The nauseating and overwhelming premonition of doom settled upon him. God would surely bring judgment and wrath upon a people who were so disobedient.

At this time Josiah enquired of the Lord and inaugurated a sweeping reform. First of all he summoned all the elders of the people to inform them of God's word (II Kgs. 23:1). Everyone both small and great was also there to hear the message of Jehovah. It was evident that the nation was corrupt both morally and spiritually. It is significant to note that the reform began in the house of God. The pagan vessels and images were removed and burned and the crooked and idolatrous priests were put down. The Kings of Judah had dedicated horses and chariots to the sun and erected altars to pagan deities, these were burned and destroyed in righteous indignation. The houses of the sodomites were broken down and the wizards and workers with familiar spirits were all put away. There was no easy way to reform a nation so steeped in apostasy. There was no gradual way to phase out the false teaching and replace it with truth. It was necessary to be decisive and deliberate. The lines were drawn and judgment came that error might be abandoned.

I wonder what Josiah would do if suddenly he became the ruler of America. I am aware that the Jewish Theocracy was a unique government but I cannot help but feel that we need a little of Josiah in both the nation and the church. Perhaps the time has come for us to be a bit more decisive in separation from the world and the renunciation of error. Divorce, perversion and illicit sex are at the point of social acceptability. What the scriptures teach has given way to ethics demanded by the situation. We have been set adrift upon a shoreless sea and ruin and loss stalk us with

NO KING LIKE JOSIAH

every approaching wave.

Too bad . . . no king like Josiah . . . before . . . or since.

SUFFERING

“When I Am Weak, Then I Am Strong”

(Elmer James)

At 4:57 p.m. on Friday, March 22, 1963, a devastating explosion occurred in the basement of the J.C. Penny store in San Jose, California. Those involved in that explosion were initiated into a new world of suffering, pain, and tears. Elmer James was one who was critically injured in that explosion. As a star shines brightest on the darkest night, this tragedy revealed the radiant faith of this most uncommon man. Bro. James carried a conscientious concern that his “left hand not know what his right hand was doing.” His primary desire in life was to bring glory to Christ. Sometimes, however, it is proper to rehearse what God has done through us in order to bring glory to Christ. It is in this vein that this story now is told. May someone, somewhere, be helped by the example of a Christ-like life.

Elmer was attending the Curtner Avenue Church of Christ in the Willow Glen district of San Jose, but his heart was set upon a new work in his own neighborhood. The city was rushing south

like water over a spill-way. A new subdivision had blossomed in his own back door and there was virtually no congregation there of any denomination. Elmer wanted to start a new church.

This man had wanted to be a preacher. He had attended Bible College and invested in Christian literature. He was both likeable and unforgettable. I consider him a giant, not so much because of his size, but because of his strength. At one time he had the world weight lifting record in the prone press. His incredible strength was a legend in those communities where he had lived and in those businesses where he had worked. But Elmer's career as a preacher was short-lived. He began to suffer from migraine headaches, a problem so serious and persistent that medical science could give him no permanent relief. When it was no longer possible for Elmer to study, he gave away the major works of his library and sought for other fields of Christian service.

Great men are invariably possessed with a singleness of heart. Elmer was a great man. Matters concerning the Kingdom of God received priority in his thinking. The consuming passion of his life at this time was to build a church in the community where he lived. He refused to be discouraged by months of fruitless effort. His labor was patient, unswerving, and tireless. It seemed as if he would start a church . . . or die trying.

Perseverance had already placed a few small dividends at his feet. The Curtner Ave. congregation now shared his dream. They encouraged families in that area to join in the work and contributed a few thousand dollars toward the purchasing of land. Property was purchased and services were already being conducted in facilities rented from a labor union. The future, however, did not appear very promising. When it was necessary for a few families to go \$40,000 to \$50,000 in debt just for a building site, the construction of a chapel seemed years away. They had trudged to the shores of a pathless sea — but where was the Moses who would stretch out his rod and provide for them a way?

Then came that fateful day, March 22, 1963. Apparently

Elmer was standing right over the boiler when it exploded. The floor blasting skyward shattered both his legs. He struck the ceiling with such impact that his face was smashed like a piece of china. A split instant later his broken body sprawled in the basement some twenty feet below.

If Elmer was a giant because of his strength, he was also one because of his faith. His spiritual development had kept pace with the remarkable growth of his body. His life was a paragon of trust and humility. Now in the hour of this crisis, he waited calmly for help, praying, "Lord, I'm ready to go if you want me." Several people were killed outright in the explosion and Elmer was near death. He had suffered compound fractures of both legs, his arm and his ribs were broken. The bones of his face were crushed. Blood ran profusely from his nose, eyes, and mouth. Though he was tottering on the brink of eternity he refused to lose either his faith, or his composure.

An ordinary man would have been crushed both physically and spiritually by the impact of the explosion, but Elmer was not an ordinary man. He was torn between two worlds, and yet he seemed indifferent about everything but the church of his dreams. He uttered his first words at the hospital by placing his finger over the tracheotomy in his throat — and his first concern was who would take his place as song leader for the little band of Christians.

Elmer had always been able to rely upon his own strength; now he was helpless. He had been a record holding weight lifter; now he was rigidly imprisoned upon a bed of suffering, unable to roll over on his side or even chew a bite of food. But God can transform tragedy into triumph. God can change the personification of weakness into transcending power. The ingredient of faith can produce a silver lining upon the blackest cloud of human suffering. There was a giant in the faith upon that bed . . . and there God enabled him to accomplish the very thing which he had been praying for. When Elmer James realized that an insurance company would give him money for his suffering, a look of joy

crossed him countenance. God had worked in a mysterious way, but now at long last the church of his dreams could become a reality. He knew that a meeting place would have its part in the saving the lost.

Insurance money cannot really compensate for excruciating agony and pain. A bookkeeper finds it difficult to translate surgery and suffering into dollars and cents for his ledger. No price tag does justice to weeks of eating food through jaws wired shut, or sores and aches accrued from months of lying in one position, or heavy weights tearing at silver pins imbedded in human flesh and bone. But Elmer did not want justice for his suffering, but a church for his community. God had answered his prayers and honored his faith.

Two long years passed before the new church building actually became a reality. Elmer by now had almost completely recovered. Everyone looked forward to Sunday, December 12, 1965, when services would be held in the new facilities for the first time.

Elmer would never have told you this story. He always preferred to stay in the background. He was concerned that no one sound a trumpet when he did his alms. He knew that for heaven to be effective it has to lose its identity and disappear. But he was the man who initiated the dream. He was the man whose faith inspired others to join in the work. It was his suffering that provided finance so critically needed. He was the Moses who braved the sea and the wilderness for the people of God.

But Moses was not permitted to enjoy the fruit of his labors here upon earth . . . and neither was Elmer. Elmer James died of a stroke at 5:25 p.m. on Friday, December 10, 1965 — just two days before the new chapel at 3167 Senter Road in San Jose, California, was used for the very first time.

It was said of righteous Abel, “. . . he being dead yet speaketh” (Heb. 11:4). The same could be said of Elmer James, who in this age of nuclear power, gives us a fresh insight into the way true strength can be made perfect in weakness.

Alone

(A Friend At An Airport)

The four-day convention was over. Even though I had only been there for three days, I had met literally hundreds of new people. We began early and stayed late and spent the entire day on the grounds.

When a friend took me to the airport he had other responsibilities to attend to and therefore left me "alone."

I didn't mind this at all for it provided me with an opportunity to reflect upon the convention and even to do some writing. As a matter of fact these very words were written in a crowded airport terminal while I was "alone."

The airport is one of the largest in the world and there are thousands of people here . . . yet I am alone. Each of us is preoccupied with his own personal problems. Some are hurrying to catch a plane or a taxi . . . others are absorbed in a magazine or a briefcase full of business . . . still others stare blankly at the mass of humanity passing by as though it was not there.

It had been a long day for me. My journey began some eleven hours before I began to write these words and home was still more than five hours away.

Suddenly, however, I became painfully aware of my own selfishness. I had spoken briefly with a lady from Guyana and practiced my limited Spanish with a man from Ecuador. Regrettably, however, up to this point I had given no real witness for my Lord.

Since I wanted to be a "fisher of men," I wrote down a prayer that I might be more sensitive and alert to the needs of those around me. Not everyone in a crowd is longing and lonely . . . but some people are. Once Jesus called Zacchaeus out of a crowd. Zacchaeus was rich, and powerful . . . but very much in need of someone to really care.

Having written the prayer I noted the time and wrote down

6:47 p.m. C.S.T.

Since I still had a couple of hours to wait for my plane I took a short walk and then casually read the daily news. Feeling a bit thirsty, I stepped across the hall for a drink and had to walk around a man who was sitting there in a wheel chair.

Our conversation began as naturally as though it had been planned. Presently his wife came to his side. I told them of my long wait and asked if I might have the privilege of pushing the wheelchair and getting some exercise. They seemed pleased.

On the way to their plane I discovered that they were just returning from a cancer hospital. During the course of his illness he had received fifteen different kinds of chemotherapy. The last five had been experimental drugs. Now his doctors had discontinued all treatment and sent him home with no hope. He said that he may only have a week yet to live.

When we sat down at Gate 24 I took some crumpled paper out of my pocket and read them the first part of this article and my prayer. She said, "You'll never know how lonely we were at this time." We wept together. God had arranged our meeting.

I gave to them a copy of *Michael's Meditations* with my address. I asked that she write down their address beneath the last words of my written prayer. (They were from the Peoria, Illinois area.)

I asked for the privilege of praying with them and then went on my way rejoicing. I looked at my watch . . . it was 7:45 p.m.

I am happy to report that Malcolm is a Christian and that he reflected no bitterness about his illness. Still, however, I humbly solicit your prayers in his behalf.

Ella said, "You know that God sent you to us." I felt that it was the other way around. God had answered my prayer and transformed a dismal delay into a dramatic and meaningful experience.

We left each other with the happy realization that we were not alone.

Sufficient Grace

A Tribute to Richard L. "Dick" Youkey
(August 24, 1934 – November 28, 1981)

The Scriptures teach that Paul had a "thorn" in the flesh. The word translated as "thorn" is the Greek word *skolops* which occurs nowhere else in the N.T. Scriptures. It originally denoted anything which was pointed and in secular Greek was used to describe a pointed stake upon which the head of an enemy could be stuck. It was used in a similar sense to the word *stauros* which means cross.

The normal word for "thorn" is *akantha* which refers to briars or brambles like the ones which were woven into a crown for our blessed Saviour. Paul's "thorn" seems to have been more serious.

He said it was a messenger of Satan to "buffet" him. The Greek word used here is *kolaphizo* which means to strike with a clenched fist.

Over and over Paul prayed to God for deliverance from this painful stake which caused him such weakness and infirmity.

The Lord responded, "My grace is sufficient for thee. . . ." (II Cor. 12:9). The word translated as "sufficient" is *arkeo* and is used 11 times in the N.T. Scriptures. It simply means "enough" and is used of the five wise virgins who refused to share their oil lest there be not "enough" for them and the foolish virgins also.

Thus, when Paul cried out for deliverance from the sharp stake that threatened him the Lord responded that His grace would be enough. It would suffice in every circumstance. It would enable Paul to take pleasure in infirmities and find spiritual strength in midst of physical weakness.

How beautifully this parallels the experience of Dick Youkey. He, too, had a "thorn" in his flesh. It was a fast moving and extremely painful type of cancer. His doctors at the Mayo Clinic thought that he might live only six months. Somehow he managed to survive more than twice that long.

I am sure that Dick joined with me and literally thousands of others in beseeching God to take away this infirmity. God did not do so. Thus, at 11:35 a.m. on Saturday, November 28, 1981 Dick Youkey breathed a final time. He has now crossed over the frontier into a better world where there is no pain and suffering and where the former things have passed away.

Though his final months were filled with pain and problems, God's grace was always adequate for every occasion. Those who were closest to him marveled that he was able to accept his illness with such peace and serenity. He even referred to his last year as the greatest year of his entire life. He had learned the priceless lesson of contentment.

"Who knows?" he would say, "perhaps God can use me more in six months with the benefit of this illness than he could in many years without it."

Dick never lost his appreciation for physical things. Up to the very end he could savor a bite of good food or enjoy the thrill of a hunting trip with family and friends. These temporal treasures, however, were never confused with the eternal values to which he had committed his life and ministry.

The poet one time said, "I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day." For those of us who were privileged to know Dick Youkey we can say with confidence that we have undoubtedly seen an eloquent sermon, and indeed His grace is sufficient. . . .

The Day Breaketh

(Jacob)

I spoke to a friend the other night by phone. The problems which he faced defy description. Every area of his life had been invaded by incredible adversity. I tried to sympathize.

"I'm not giving up!" he responded. "Jacob wrestled all night long and he didn't get a blessing until the breaking of the day." "Too many" he continued, "give up just before they get a blessing."

How utterly beautiful. At a time when most of us would have been in total despair, he was hanging on until he got a blessing . . . I believe that it will come.

The story of Jacob's struggle has profound implications. In particular, it relates to the promises of God regarding Palestine and ultimately to the coming of the Messiah.

When Jacob left Palestine he was a fugitive from the wrath of his brother Esau. He had bargained him out of his birthright and cheated him out of his blessing and Esau therefore, purposed to kill him (Gen. 27:42). Upon the advice of Rebekah, his mother, Jacob decided to flee into Haran for a "few days" until Esau's fury was turned away.

As he journeyed he came to a certain place to spend the night. It was here that he received his famous vision of the ladder that reached to heaven with angels ascending and descending upon it. In conjunction with this vision God spoke from above the ladder:

I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac:
THE LAND WHEREON THOU LIEST, TO THEE WILL I GIVE
IT, AND TO THY SEED; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the
earth, . . . AND IN THEE AND IN THY SEED SHALL THE
FAMILIES OF THE EARTH BE BLESSED. And behold, I am
with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest,
AND WILL BRING THEE AGAIN INTO THIS LAND; for I will

not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of (Gen. 28:13-15).

Please note that as Jacob was leaving Palestine God renewed the promise which He had previously given to Abraham and to Isaac. He reminded Jacob that the fulfillment of that promise involved returning from Haran to the very land where Esau lived. The story of Jacob's dream was so significant that the name of that place was changed from "Luz" which means "nut tree", to "Bethel" which means, "House of God."

The "few days" to which Rebekah made reference turned into many years. Jacob's deceptive nature was tempered in the furnace of affliction. His father-in-law had changed his wages ten times and life became unbearable. Deep in his troubled soul was the nagging conviction that he had to go back. The closer he got to Palestine, however, the greater was his fear. When word came that Esau approached with four hundred men it was almost more than he could stand. He divided his household so that if half of them were destroyed the other half might flee to safety. Then in prayer he recalled the instructions of God,

O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, RETURN UNTO THY COUNTRY, AND TO THY KINDRED, and I will deal well with thee . . . Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother . . . for I fear him . . . and thou saidst, "I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude" (Gen. 32:9ff).

Like Jesus in Gethsemane Jacob was torn between two conflicting philosophies of life. Was he going to surrender to do God's will, or was he going to do it in his own way?

In desperation he dispatched his servants to appease the wrath of Esau with many gifts. As the night descended he sent his family sloshing across the brook Jabbok . . . and he was left alone. Throughout that long night he struggled with a man until

the breaking of day.

The confrontation was so great that Jacob thereafter "halted upon his thigh." The limp with which he walked was a reminder of his utter determination to do the will of God. Lesser men would have drifted away and followed the path of least resistance. Jacob's fear of Esau was genuine, but his loyalty to God prevailed. Esau had always been a man of the field who was cunning and capable with weapons. With him were four hundred men and Jacob had every reason to believe that murder was on their mind. Deep in his heart, however, was the commandment of God and there was no way around it.

"Let me go. . ." said the man, "for the day breaketh." "I will not let thee go," said Jacob, "except thou bless me."

"What is thy name?" said the man. The answer was "Jacob," which means "supplanter," or "deceiver."

And he said, "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and has prevailed."

The name "Israel" means "prince of God." Up to this point in his life Jacob had been characterized by his ability to manipulate men. Now he had attained to power with God. No longer would he be known as the clever operator who could conceive a plan to avoid every difficult obstacle and situation. That night he became a man of principle. He determined to obey God regardless of the consequences. A new day had dawned in his life.

The actual confrontation with that which Jacob feared was not nearly as dramatic as his personal struggle about it on the night before. It seldom is. There is a genuine sense in which Gethsemane was more demanding than Calvary. Jesus needed the ministry of angels in Gethsemane when his sweat turned crimson and He despaired of life. At Calvary the major battle had already been won.

So also with Israel. After his victory on the night before he was ready to expose everything to that danger which he feared the most. He arranged his family in an orderly fashion and then

passed on ahead of them and bowed himself to the ground before Esau.

Such a posture reveals an absolute surrender. No provision was made for escape or self-defense. He bowed his knee and bared his neck. Should Esau draw out some weapon to do him harm no hand would be raised to restrain him. Jacob had become the "prince of God." That which he would have previously attempted to handle by himself he now surrendered to the will of God.

When that day breaks in any man's life it is the dawning of a new tomorrow.

Suffering And Hope

**(In Memory of Ivan A. Lea, Sr.
September 5, 1907 – March 13, 1985)**

Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, character, and character, hope. . . ." (Rom. 5:3-4, NIV).

This beautiful passage of Scripture connects sufferings and hope through connecting links of perseverance and character.

A brief overview is:

SUFFERINGS — Greek word *Thlipsis* comes from the verb which means to press, crush, or squeeze. It is translated as "narrow" in Matthew 7:14. The "narrow" way involves the pressures of the Christian life. Our hearts are touched and burdened by circumstances which others scarcely notice.

PERSEVERANCE — Greek word *Hupomone* comes from "hupo" which means "under" and "meno" which means to "abide." The pressures of the Christian life lead us to seek refuge in God.

CHARACTER — Greek word *Dokime* refers to the process of testing and trials by which we become "approved" unto God. It was once used of metals which were tested for strength and purity.

HOPE — Greek word *Elpis* which means a favorable and confident expectation for the future. Hope is especially associated with what we cannot see with our human eyes — for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? (Rom. 8:24)

This hope which we have does not disappoint us because God has poured out His love into our hearts by means of the Holy Spirit.

The Christian life is a metamorphosis, or transformation. It takes us from the way we used to be to the way we ought to be.

Sometimes the steps on this journey are objectionable to us at

the time. We would prefer to avoid and evade them. Yet in retrospect, they may be the very things which have been most valuable in our development.

Ivan Lea went through a great many problems, especially during the last years of his life. He had been a Parkinson's patient for many years; his beloved wife became an invalid and died after an extended period of time; Ivan developed cancer and knew for the last months of his life that he had a terminal illness.

In each of these trials, however, Ivan refused to run or be intimidated. His bout with Parkinson's Disease resulted in literally hundreds of stocking caps which he generously gave to any who had a need. Ivan would work some five hours on each cap but the discipline of doing so kept his trembling hands from becoming totally unusable.

His faithfulness to his beloved wife Elizabeth during her long illness was an inspiration and example to everyone. It provides us with precious memories and encourages us to be faithful in "sickness and in health."

Ivan faced his own illness with the same courage, faith, and resolve. Even when he was informed that he had but a short time to live he continued to function independently as long as possible. He would even drive himself to the hospital for his cancer treatments.

His sufferings produced a patience and perseverance which caused him to depend more and more upon God. His dependence upon God produced a quality of character in him which was tested and true. His character fortified and intensified his hope in life eternal. And now this hope is shed abroad through the means of memory by all those who knew him.

One ship sails East, and the other West
With the selfsame winds that blow.
'Tis the set of the sail, and not the gale
That determines the way they go.

Uriah Was A Hittite

It is remarkable how many hundreds, or perhaps how many thousands of times I had come across those words without ever pausing to actually ponder the significance of what it meant to be a Hittite in the days of King David.

The first time that Hittites are mentioned in the Bible is in Genesis 15:20. In this context God made a covenant with Abram to give him the land of the Hittites as well as the land of the surrounding tribes.

Next we find Abram purchasing a burying plot from Ephron the Hittite (Gen. 23:10) and in Genesis 26:34 we are informed that Esau married a Hittite girl named Basemath.

By the time that Israel was delivered from Egyptian bondage the Hittites no longer represented a respectful segment of society. They had seethed in pagan rebellion against God for so long that they were ripe for divine judgment.

In the light of their sin, God commanded through Moses that they be utterly destroyed (Deut. 7:2).

Recognizing that Israel would not accomplish this grisly task, God chronicled a list of severe restrictions regarding the Hittites. The Israelites were not to make a covenant with them, or show them mercy. They were not to consummate a marriage with Hittites and were to destroy every vestige of their idolatrous worship (See Deut. 7:2ff.).

Though the Hittites were not annihilated they were never able to escape or to overcome the stigma of their condemnation by God. In the days of King Solomon, for example, the Hittites became slaves. This is recorded in I Kings 9:20-21. The very next verse informs us "But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen. . . ." Thus, we are faced with a classic and inescapable case of discrimination. The Hittites were treated as inferior to the Hebrews.

During the days of the Babylonian captivity Ezekiel thought it

an appropriate insult to accuse Israel of having a Hittite mother (See Ezek. 16:3,45). This was apparently a term of derision, or racial slur, which was synonymous with accusing Israel of being shameless and immoral.

Now the stage is set for us to take another look at King David stumbling across his roof at eventide. The beautiful Bathsheba was bathing and he was overwhelmed by his lust for her. Inquiry revealed that her father was Eliam and her husband was Uriah. Both names occur in David's list of mighty men yet each came from a totally different milieu or social setting. If Bathsheba's father was the Eliam of II Samuel 23:34 which seems quite possible, he would have been the son of David's counselor, Ahithophel the Gilonite. The fact that Giloh was a town in the mountains of Judah and that Ahithophel was his trusted counselor provided a double set of happy associations with the family. This fact may also help to explain the rebellion of Ahithophel against David at a later time in history.

On the other hand, Uriah was a Hittite. The fact that he was a valiant and decorated warrior in King David's army was not sufficient reason to erase the racial stigma which would constantly be associated with his name. In the brief account of this tragic crime in II Samuel 11: and 12: we are reminded no less than seven times that Uriah was a Hittite. In spite of his honesty, his morality, his courage, his valor, and his loyalty to King David we must not forget that his racial stock would forever make him inferior in the eyes of the Hebrew people.

The obvious, but often neglected fact that Uriah was a Hittite, may be of pivotal importance in the commission of the crime. David had profound regard for the life and family of King Saul. He steadfastly refused to lay his hand upon the Lord's anointed and even executed the Amalekite who humanely dispatched the fatally wounded king (See II Sam. 1:10-16). But David was not afraid to take the wife, or the life of a Hittite. The dastardly deed may have even been performed with a measure of paternalistic concern. He may have asked himself why a girl from such a nice

family as Bathsheba had, would get mixed up with a Hittite. As Solomon would later record "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes" (Prov. 21:2).

But it is also true that there is a way which seemeth right unto a man but the end thereof are the ways of death (Prov. 14:12). In the eyes of God there was no rationale for the sin of David. The long finger of accusation was pointed inexorably in his direction. The booming voice of the prophet reverberated down the corridors of his mind with the unforgettable indictment "Thou are the man." No man can hide behind a cloak of prejudice to commit a crime. The God of heaven will not be dethroned so that sinful man can satiate his lust at the expense of some ethnic minority.

We have no reason to believe that God held a grudge against Uriah because of sins which were committed six centuries before by his ancestors. Man, however, is not always like God. Thus, in every generation we have witnessed the sad spectacle of human hearts which were raped by prejudice and robbed of virtue by the monster of discrimination.

Next time you reflect upon the story of David and Bathsheba, remember with me that Uriah was a Hittite.

Esau Wept

“And Esau lifted up his voice, and wept. . . .” (Gen. 27:38)

Surely Esau must have cried many times as a small boy. His little heart must have been tender like his little hands and feet. It is a common thing for children to cry.

But Esau grew up and became a man of the field. He learned to grit his teeth in the presence of pain. His hands became calloused and hard and his feet were toughened by the stones and hot sands of the wilderness. He learned to press on in times of inclement weather and to bury his emotions beneath years of discomfort and adversity.

The Scriptures describe him as “profane” or “irreligious” because he sold his birthright for a mess of pottage (Heb. 12:16).

In the age of the Patriarchs, the oldest male member of the family was privileged to mediate at the family altar. Upon the death of the father this honor would therefore be conferred upon his firstborn son. Esau, however, though he was the firstborn, was irreligious. He despised his birthright and sold it for a mess of pottage.

His irreligious nature was also manifest in his choice of wives. Forgetting the Covenant which God had made with Abraham and Isaac he chose to marry women from the pagan community of Hittites and this became a source of grief to Isaac and Rebekah (Gen. 26:35).

Though Esau despised his birthright, he did place some value upon the Patriarchal blessing which his father would confer. The aged Isaac sent him into the fields to hunt venison that he might prepare savoury meat like the old man loved. After this meal Isaac was then to confer upon Esau the blessing.

In the meantime, however, Jacob came with subtlety and deceived his father Isaac. Pretending to be Esau he received Esau’s blessing.

It is interesting to me that even the most hardened individual has some area of sensitivity which is capable of bringing forth tears. Esau wept! Hebrews 12:17 teaches that he sought to change his father's mind "carefully with tears." Beneath the hardened and calloused veneer of his life was a spot so tender that once it was probed it convulsed his very being.

Undoubtedly this is true of everyone. Some of us can sit stoically through the saddest movies and remain unmoved. We can remain dry-eyed through sermons about Calvary and Scripture lessons about the punishment of hell.

Conversion, however, cannot be experienced without opening our hearts and becoming vulnerable to all the tears and tribulation which inevitably will follow.

C.S. Lewis spoke to this when he wrote,

To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung, and possibly broken. If you want to make sure to keep it complete and perfectly intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even an animal. Wrap it carefully 'round about with hobbies and little luxuries, avoid all entanglements, lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket, safe, dark, motionless, airless, it will change. It will not be broken, but something far worse, it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, unredeemable. . . .

The irony, however, of even the hardest of unconverted hearts is this, that even they have that point of tenderness and emotion which will bring forth weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Just like Esau who wept at the realization of his tremendous loss, they too will weep at the ultimate realization of their fate. Every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall someday confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

The saved will then be ushered into their eternal reward . . . and those who have refused to weep will spend an eternity where there is weeping. . . .

Why Elisabeth?

Gary Reed just gave me a penetrating insight. Once suggested, it is so utterly obvious that I was embarrassed that I had not seen it before.

"Why did Mary go to visit Elisabeth?" was the question. The question was legitimate, but I didn't know the answer.

Gary then reminded me of the unusual circumstances around her pregnancy. She had been visited by an angel and had been overshadowed by the Holy Spirit.

This is quite matter-of-fact to those of us who have almost twenty centuries of Christian history behind us, but it was not so easy for Mary to explain the first time around.

Put yourself in the position of her parents. Apparently there were no witnesses to verify the angelic visit. It was merely the word of one young woman whose personal testimony would fly into the face of all scientific knowledge and medical history.

Who would dare to believe her?

Her parents would certainly want to . . . but would find it difficult. Certainly the neighbors would not understand. Even Joseph was at this point "minded to put her away privately."

Where else could she go to find solace and comfort than to someone else who had also had a similar experience?

And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:36-37).

The angel simply made this announcement. He did not commission or command that Mary make the long journey . . . but putting yourself in her position — where would you go?

I can see in my mind's eye the blank stare of the local rabbi, her mother's tears and her father's anger. I can relate to the disap-

pointment of Joseph and the glaring disapproval of the local housewives. I can understand why she "arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste."

As a matter of fact I have seen much the same thing happen in my own generation.

I have seen preachers on the verge of total poverty drive five hundred miles for an evening of fellowship with someone who would understand. I have seen lonely and desperate individuals who were victims of some unusual experience or unpopular conviction. They didn't ask for their circumstances any more than Mary asked for hers.

What do they do next? Do they abort their ideas and live the rest of their lives with the guilt that they had not been true to their convictions? Do they deny their personal experience and conform to the cult of those who worship a God made in their own likeness and image?

Usually they will gravitate to someone . . . or perhaps even anyone who would be able to relate to and understand where they are coming from.

Actually, this is the basis genius behind the church.

Every living creature needs an appropriate environment to survive. The fish must have the right kind of water, with the right kind of temperature, and the right kind of food. Fresh water fish cannot survive in salt water, and cold water fish cannot survive in the tropics. Every living creature needs the right kind of an environment in order to survive.

If this is true in the realm of physical life . . . and it is, it is also true in the realm of spiritual life.

Those who are born from above are recipients of eternal life. We are citizens of heaven. We are strangers and pilgrims in a strange land and are fortunate indeed that God has graciously provided a fellowship of those who like Elisabeth have had an experience so similar that they will understand.

Rickenbacker's Theological School

Eddie Rickenbacker had always been conscious of the existence of a Great Power above. He had learned to pray at his mother's knee and never went to bed without first of all kneeling to give thanks. Yet his belief in God had always been a personal thing . . . he had never learned to share his faith with others.

The event that changed his life and transformed Eddie Rickenbacker into an evangelist began a few months after Pearl Harbor. In those dark and dismal days of World War II Eddie was dispatched to the Pacific with a supersecret unwritten message from Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson to Gen. Douglas MacArthur. Enroute to New Guinea they became disoriented and were forced to make a crash landing at sea. At 2:36 p.m. Honolulu time, Oct. 21, 1942 eight men were set adrift without food or water on the wide Pacific . . . twenty-four days later seven of them had lived to be rescued. Dehydrated and emaciated and some of them unconscious . . . they had all come to a faith in God.

Eddie wrote . . .

There were some cynics and unbelievers among us. Not after the eighth day, however. For on that day a small miracle occurred.

Eight days without food or water may not seem much to a man in the land of faucets and refrigerators but in a world filled only with salt water and scorching sun the situation had become desperate. One man had a Testament and twice each day they tied their rafts together for the purpose of Bible study and prayer. Their words were often halting, their grammar frequently imperfect . . . but each took his turn and uttered a prayer to God. They sang what hymns they knew and trusted in God for a miracle of deliverance. On the eighth day . . . that miracle came.

They were still 16 long days from rescue, but without this day of providential blessing not one man could have survived.

They finished with their hymn of praise and prayer for deliverance . . . small talk tapered off in the oppressive heat . . . and Rickenbacker drifted off to sleep. Suddenly he awakened . . . a sea gull had landed on his head. Slowly, slowly, a trembling hand inched upward. Eight men held their breath and prayed. A few moments later they feasted on fresh raw meat. The bird's intestines were used for bait and soon they feasted on fresh fish. After eight long days this two course meal was a surfeit . . . and every man was aware that hundreds of miles from any land the little gull had landed within their grasp . . . just after they prayed. Some might call it a coincidence . . . they called it a gift from heaven.

Eddie Rickenbacker was America's top flying ace in W.W. I. He won the Medal of Honor, designed and manufactured automobiles, managed the Indianapolis Speedway, built an airline, and his amazing life became a legend. But no experience in his many faceted life was more memorable or meaningful to him than the 24 day course in Theology which began on Oct. 21, 1942.

He wrote of this event:

But of all the changes brought about by those 24 days on the Pacific, one of the greatest was in me. I had always been quietly religious, although some of my cronies did not realize it. After our deliverance, which I attributed directly to the providence of the Lord above, I no longer had any hesitancy about expressing my true feelings.

Ray Tucker, the columnist, wrote: "Rickenbacker has become an evangelist without knowing it. . . ."

"Ray was wrong in only one respect," Rickenbacker said, "I knew from the time of the Pacific ordeal my faith in God has been an active, open part of my life."

Condensed from *Reader's Digest*, May, 1968

THANKSGIVING

I'm So Thankful For My Shell **(Marie Napier)**

In 1954 a young missionary recruit to Alaska was stricken with a paralytic disease which left her bedfast for the last ten years of her life. Her name . . . Marie Napier. The first time I met Marie was in her home in Sunnyvale, California. As I stepped into the front room I immediately discerned the sickening pulsation of her breathing machine. It was a rocking bed . . . the first one I had ever seen. The bed, patient and all, was rocking back and forth in large gyrations . . . movements carefully designed to force air into paralyzed lungs. Marie was emaciated and pale. She had not moved in over five years. I awkwardly tried not to stare at her shriveled body. I clumsily looked at my feet to conceal the expression of shock which must inevitably have registered upon my countenance. I raised my eyes to concentrate upon her face and there I discerned a broad and understanding smile. Her flashing eyes darted back and forth, and I observed a small lateral movement of her head which consisted only of slightly rocking it from side to side.

Gradually I grew more comfortable in her presence and we began to talk. It was evident that even a simple conversation was a difficult task for Marie. She timed her words to coincide with the proper movement of the bed and spoke in short staccato sentences. When I left there that day I walked with an invigorated step. I had been exposed to a contagious mixture of warmth and courage which had blessed my life in a way too wonderful for words. I visited Marie on other occasions . . . each time I inevitably found the same or similar emotion when I left. I had come to give . . . but I had left receiving. Each time there was the same smile . . . the same selfless concern over my problems . . . the same valuable counsel to combat the stress and fatigue of our busy world. Marie Napier was a perennial fountain of praise to God and service to mankind.

The last time I saw Marie before her death was in the Santa Clara County Hospital in San Jose, Calif. A power failure had stopped the rhythm of her bed and by the time she arrived at the hospital the flame of her life was burning very low. I came the next day for scripture and prayers. The pulsing collar of the iron lung had left her neck chaffed and raw. The Dr. therefore had granted a brief respite from the painful lung to a less efficient device that did not hurt the neck. It was a "breathing shell" which was placed across her torso. As I stepped to her side she looked up with tired eyes . . . a faint smile broke upon her face and she gasped . . . "I'm so thankful for my shell."

Somehow I managed to hold back the tears of shame and regret that welled up within my eyes. I had looked upon this woman before with admiration and respect . . . but now in the finale of her life she had granted a majestic and magnificent memory which all but defied description. With life ebbing from her frail body she had risen above the maze of pain and confusion to cast another jewel into the treasure chest of memories which she bequeathed to mankind. Too weak and low for the sham of hypocrisy she bared her heart and exposed her secret thoughts. "I'm so thankful. . . ." Thankful for her shell . . . at a time when

I'M SO THANKFUL FOR MY SHELL

many would have cursed God for the paralysis, the power failure, the pain, the thousands of heartaches associated with a decade of suffering. . . . Marie Napier speaks from the grave a sermon in one sentence . . . "I'M SO THANKFUL FOR MY SHELL!"

What a wonderful commentary on the verse:

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you (1 Thess. 5:18).

If Marie Napier could be thankful for her shell . . . God forgive us for complaining about anything.

I Am A Debtor

(Seth Wilson)

As I look around me at this moment I am overwhelmed by the way that my life has been enriched by others.

My Bible is open on the desk. It was a gift to me from a friend in California more than twenty years ago. It has an "instant index," a concordance, and center column references which took someone many years to develop. The fact that it is printed leaves me a measure of debt to the selfless and sacrificial service of Gutenberg. The fact that it is in English leaves me in debt to Tyn-dale and Wycliffe and a host of others who gave their fortunes and even their very lives that the Bible might become a reality in the English language. The fact that I am interested in the Bible is a credit to my parents, my wife, my teachers and a host of others who have constituted a vital part of my religious heritage. I am a debtor.

I live in a land which I did not discover or develop. I use hundreds of items and articles which were invented and manufactured by someone else. The books and technology at my fingertips are a credit to others. The house I live in, the car I drive, the office where I work, the school which I have attended, the clothes which I wear and the food which I eat are available to me through the ministry of someone else. I am a debtor.

On this day I am scheduled to attend a luncheon in honor of Seth Wilson. This day has been proclaimed Seth Wilson Day in the city of Joplin. I am in debt to Seth.

Seth was one of my teachers when I was in college and has continued to give me guidance and direction down through the years. I dedicated a book to him several years ago and even now I have imposed upon him to review and assess another manuscript before I seek to have it published.

One incident stands out in particular to me in our relationship down through the years. I was privileged to travel with Bro.

Wilson to Eldon, MO where he was a featured speaker in a weekend meeting. After two or three days at the meeting we left after evening services for Joplin. It was a four or five hour drive and we arrived on campus about 3:00 a.m. Seth had spoken several times that day and then driven all the way home. I was totally exhausted and even dreaded the drive from the campus to my home. I was deeply humbled to discover that Seth went immediately to his office to catch up on some work before retiring for the night.

It is this kind of dedication which has earned the respect of all who know him. He was labeled by the late A.B. McReynolds as "The greatest Bible teacher on God's green earth. . . ." Then, with tongue in cheek, A.B. would say, ". . . on every subject except the book of Revelation."

Seth is a biblical pioneer who is willing to lead the way into unfamiliar passages of Scripture and to map out positions which have never been held before. This he does with a quietness and resolve which is "first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. . . ." Who can deny that this kind of wisdom is from above?

There are many to whom I owe a debt of real gratitude, but standing tall in my memories is my teacher . . . Seth Wilson. May God multiply his seed sown and increase the fruits of his righteousness.

UNITY

Hats Off To Franklin

Benjamin Franklin was the oldest delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1788. He came as a short, fat, trunched old man in plain Quaker dress, bald pate . . . short white socks . . . an 82-year-old body and brilliant mental energies of a 25-year-old youth.

During these dark days following the war, the threat of anarchy was a constant reality and the formation of a constitution had therefore become a national imperative. During 17 days of heated debate Mr. Franklin maintained a virtual silence, but on June 28 he arose to suggest that each session be initiated with prayer. He deemed their lack of progress to that point as "proof of the imperfection of human understanding." He then reviewed their fruitless search through history and their frustration with the constitutions of contemporary Europe . . . then turning to Washington he said,

"How has it happened, Sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate

our understanding? . . . I have lived, Sir, a long time and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth: that God governs in the affairs of men, and if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probably that an empire can rise without His aid? . . . I believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel. We shall be divided by our little partial local interests; our projects will be confounded; and we ourselves shall become a reproach and by-word down to future ages. And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance despair of establishing governments by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war, and conquest."

Three political theories were particularly dear to Franklin. The first involved the danger of paying high salaries to government officials. The second advocated a plural executive body with little power — his philosophy was, "the least government possible is the greatest possible good." The third dealt with the justice of state representation which Franklin felt needed improvement. He was beaten on all three points.

Monday, September 17, was the final day of the convention. Here are a few of Franklin's words which stand as a classic example of conciliatory love.

"I confess that there are several parts of this Constitution which I do not at present approve, but I am not sure I shall never approve them; for, having lived long, I have experienced many instances of being obliged by better information or fuller consideration to change opinions, even on important subjects, which I once thought right but found to be otherwise. It is therefore that the older I grow the more apt I am to doubt my own judgment and to pay attention to the judgment of others. Most men, indeed, as well as most sects in religion think themselves in possession of all truth . . . but though many private persons think almost as highly as their infallibility as that of their sect, few express it so naturally as a certain French lady who in a dispute with her sister said, 'I don't know how it happens, sister, but I meet with nobody but myself that's always in the right.'

In these sentiments, Sir, I agree to this Constitution with all its

faults if they are such; because I think a general government necessary for us, and there is no form of government but what may be a blessing to the people if well administered; and believe farther that this is likely to be well administered for a course of years and can only end in despotism, as other forms have done before it, when the people shall become so corrupt as to need despotic government, being incapable of any other. I doubt too whether any other convention we can obtain may be able to make a better Constitution. For when you assemble a number of men to have the advantage of their prejudices, their passions, their errors of opinion, their local interests, and their selfish views . . . from such an assembly can a perfect production be expected? It, therefore, astonishes me, Sir, to find this system approaching so near to perfection as it does. . . . Thus I consent, Sir, to this Constitution because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best. The opinions I have had of its errors I sacrifice to the public good. I have never whispered a syllable of them abroad. Within these walls they were born, and here they shall die. . . . On the whole, Sir, I cannot help expressing a wish that every member of the Convention who may still have objections to it would, with me, on this occasion doubt a little of his infallibility and, to make manifest our unanimity, put his name to this instrument."

Adapted from *Benjamin Franklin*
by Carl Van Doren
N.Y., The Viking Press, 1938

Pontifex Maximus

The name "Pontifex Maximus" means "supreme bridge builder." It was assumed by Octavian, who ruled in Rome. Since the Roman Republic had become an empire, he was also called "Emperor." He further assumed the name "Augustus" which signifies that which is magnificent and inspires awe. Since he had been the driving force in the establishment of the Empire he also called himself "princeps" or "first citizen."

Octavian was the adopted son of Julius Caesar. Perhaps you will recall that Caesar was assassinated on March 15, 44 B.C. His death has been described as one of the most senseless political murders in history.

Little did Caesar's political enemies dream that his adopted son, Octavian, would come to power. Though only recently adopted, he was, in fact, the legal heir. Thus at the tender age of only 19, he returned from his studies in Greece, and with cool audacity claimed his father's inheritance.

The Roman world was seething with bitterness and civil war broke out. In 42 B.C. Octavian and Antony defeated the remnant of Caesar's senatorial opponents at Philippi, only to discover that in the meanwhile Parthia had rebelled.

It was at this juncture that Cleopatra intervened and formed her infamous alliance with Antony. The forces of Antony and Cleopatra were defeated in 31 B.C. at the battle of Actium and peace was temporarily restored to a troubled world. Since Octavian won the battle this reinforced his self-image of "Pontifex Maximus."

Actually the title, Pontifex Maximus, was nothing new. As a matter of fact it had even been used prior to the founding of the Republic in 509 B.C. At this time the "Pontifex Maximus" was the head of the college of pontiffs, whose business it was to supervise all the religious affairs of the State, and to give judgment in every religious cause. These "pontiffs" were attorneys and counselors in

religious law, and they were also officials of the State with great power. Thus when Octavian assumed the title of "Pontifex Maximus", he was claiming to be the "Supreme bridge builder" in matters both civil and religious.

This man, who also assumed the title of "Caesar Augustus" sent out a decree that all the world should be taxed (Luke 2:1). In order that they might more accurately keep track of the population, each family was required to pay these taxes in their ancestral city.

Thus the Scriptures teach that Joseph and Mary left Nazareth and journeyed to Bethlehem to pay their taxes, because they were of the house and lineage of David.

And it came to pass that while they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

In conjunction with the birth of this baby the Scriptures teach that the heavens were opened and a multitude of the heavenly host praised God and announced that now there could be peace on earth.

Thus we have Augustus Caesar and Jesus converging on the pages of human history, each claiming to be a "peacemaker". One was a human king in royal splendor and the other was a humble carpenter. One exalted himself with grandiose titles, and the other humbled himself as the lowest slave. One surrounded himself with servants that he might live, and the other exposed himself to his enemies that He might die. The message of Caesar is buried in the dusty archives of the past, and the message of Jesus is alive and fresh.

Caesar Augustus died in A.D. 14 and the legacy of peace which he left for mankind is dubious to say the least. He was succeeded by his adopted son Tiberius who was noted for cruelty and injustice. He not only murdered the famous General Germanicus in a fit of jealousy, but also became suspicious of his good friend Sejamus. In an attempt to protect his power he

ordered that Sejanus and his family . . . and his friends be put to death. On March 16, A.D. 37 Tiberius lapsed into a coma and was believed to be dead. Caligula eagerly seized the throne. When Tiberius came out of his coma and recovered he was later suffocated on his bed.

Caligula had a short and troubled reign over the Roman world. Eight months after becoming Emperor he was seized by a disorder and became demented and deranged. His cruel and despotic tyranny was cut short by a band of assassins in A.D. 41.

After the murder of Caligula his uncle Claudius was proclaimed the Emperor . . . but he was poisoned in A.D. 54 by his second wife, Agrippina. As a point of interest it was Claudius who commanded that all Jews be expelled from Rome (Acts 18:2).

The next Emperor was the infamous Nero who ordered the murder of his brother, the assassination of his mother, the murder of his first wife, and also the deaths of thousands of innocent Christians. He also has the dubious distinction of ordering the destruction of Jerusalem and the deaths of Peter and Paul. He died a suicide on June 9, A.D. 68.

I think it not necessary to weary you with further repetitions of bloodshed and betrayal. Caesar Augustus tried to be a Pontifex Maximus with force. He tried to conform the world with outward pressure and threats of physical violence. He failed! Those who take the sword perish with the sword. The cycle of physical violence experienced by the Caesars has not diminished . . . it is worse now than it has ever been.

Jesus, by contrast, offers a different kind of peace than the world experiences or expects. His Kingdom is not of this world . . . that is why His servants do not behave like worldly people. He said:

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14:27).

The words "Pontifex Maximus" means "Supreme Bridge

PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

Builder.” That is what Jesus is. He builds bridges between the rich and the poor, the master and the slave, the Jew and the Gentile. Real peace can never be obtained by conformation, only by transformation.

This is the message of the real “Pontifex Maximus!”

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