

FEBRUARY 1982

# The Good News

**Are You the  
'Salt of the Earth'?**

**The Proverbs 31 Husband!**

**Do You Really Yield?**

**The Deadly Sin of  
Ingratitude**

**A Hidden Enemy  
In Your Home!**  
By Herbert W.  
Armstrong



# The Good News

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**COVER:** If you are a true Christian, you are the "salt of the earth." Do you know why? Read the article beginning on page 10. Photo by Scott Smith.

# Letters

## New member writes

Your magazine is such an inspiration on everyone. Keep up the good work. It is really a blessing to have a fine magazine that is well worth reading.

I have been baptized for about three months now and I really can tell God is working with me. I am 20 now and I am the only one in my family to attend church. I feel so honored to be chosen to become someday one in God's Kingdom. I feel very inspired by the Work and I really hope it continues to grow even stronger.

Jennifer L. Hedrick  
San Leon, Tex.

## Family articles appreciated

Your articles on the family, especially on the father, are excellent. I've been a father now for two years. Our son is a beautiful, healthy gift. However, I never dreamed how much hard work being a father is!

Intellectually, I understood the relationship of a father to his family. But when I held my newborn son in my arms God drove the point home with a sledgehammer!

The responsibility is sometimes frightening. The articles are always helpful and encouraging.

To be the best parent — or even a good one — we need God's help. One of the ways He provides it is through this publication. You all have the prayers of my family.

Gregory A. Green  
Dillsburg, Pa.

## Single parents

I am a single parent in God's Church and can't express my gratitude enough for the article, in the October-November issue, entitled "How to Cope as a Single Parent."

It helped me to know that God has a special place in His heart for the single parent and the fatherless children, and that He will bless the family no matter how small or large it is.

God so unexpectedly eases the hardships and through my minister, family and His Body, He has provided blessing upon blessing for myself and for my 3-year-old son. I thank you for such an inspiring article, and say to all single parents: God is the greatest helper any of us could ever have and will never let us down.

Kim Wilson  
Pittsburg, Pa.



# There's a Hidden Enemy in Your Home!

*Have we been overlooking the very first lesson in true Christian living?*

By Herbert W. Armstrong

**T**HERE'S an enemy in your home, probably. You haven't seen this enemy. He's right in your family — he's made you all suffer — he's broken up many families, caused untold suffering and a world of unhappiness.

But you never saw him. He's kept hidden from your sight.

It's high time you opened your eyes and took a good look at him, so you can recognize him for the villain he is.

The psychologists call him "emotional immaturity."

But that's something many people know nothing about. It's something "educated" people talk and write about, but seldom understand.

What is emotional maturity?

It is not something to be learned about by college graduates. It is something that ought to be taught in the first grade — and taught to 4, 6 and 8 year olds in the home. It is the technical art of putting into practice the Ten Commandments. It is the real secret to human happiness. *But it is just not taught!*

How can parents teach their children, when they themselves are emotionally immature? How can teachers instill emotional maturity in children when they have not grown up emotionally themselves?

Yet here is the real secret of ability to live the Ten Commandments. It's the real secret to Christian living and perfection. It's the real distinguishing mark of the truly educated person. That it is not realized and instilled in

children while they are growing up — that it is not a required basic course of training in all colleges — is a terrible indictment against education, religion, society.

One author defines emotional maturity as development from the state of taking to the state of giving. Taking is the way of Satan. Giving is the way of God, and the principle of His law. LOVE is *giving*.

A little baby learns, generally, only how to *take*. He will take his bottle, his rattle, his toy. It becomes his human nature to *take*. Humans know absolutely NOTHING at birth. But a baby responds to Satan's negative influence, develops a selfish nature and begins to reach out to *take* whatever attracts or tempts him.

Humans must be *taught* to give. Giving is something that *has to be* LEARNED. But how many begin teaching their babies this principle — the very *principle* of God's law and of true love?

## What we overlook

Let us define it further. All human beings are actuated by their emotions. But do we ever stop to ask and analyze what *are* these emotions?

An emotion is a strong *feeling* — a disturbance — a departure from the normal calm state of rational thinking and acting — an *impulse* toward an action that has not been reasoned and approved by the mind. Among the emotions are such feelings or impulses as fear, anger, disgust, grief, joy, surprise, yearning. And first cousin to emotion are our *moods*. An emotionally immature person is usually one who is moody

and has never learned to control his moods.

More and more I am impressed that one of the most important truths we humans overlook is that human beings are not equipped with instinct, like dumb animals, to guide us into the proper course. Animals do not have the mind power, knowledge, ability to reason and mentally direct their actions. God endowed them, instead, with instinct that guides them along in the channel He intended.

God endowed man, in His own image, with MIND. Man must first learn and acquire knowledge. He is endowed, also, with capacity to reason from that knowledge — to think, to plan, to arrive at conclusions, to make decisions. God intended man's mind to direct his actions. But man must *learn* to do this, and he can never achieve God's PURPOSE in placing him on this earth until he does.

The development of right CHARACTER is the purpose of human life. And character is ability to come to right knowledge and wisdom and then to direct the mind and body into this right course.

But we poor humans act as though we believed man to be merely the highest of the dumb brutes — as if man were equipped with instinct, and the purpose of life were merely to ENJOY such feelings, sensations, emotions and moods as impulse attracts us to, *without thinking or mental direction!*

## A tragic case

I once knew a tragic example, a man highly educated, whose life had been devoted to the field of educa-



tion, assuming readily the responsibility of teaching others, when he himself had not learned this central truth of life.

His mind was stored with knowledge of science, history, mathematics, literature. He had knowledge of facts about the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars. He had acquired knowledge about many other *things*, but not about *himself* — his moods, his feelings, his drives, impulses and desires. He had not stopped to study and analyze them, let alone learn to control them.

As a child he had been pampered, petted, spoiled — permitted to have his way, never taught self-restraint, self-control or how to understand his moods, feelings and desires, and to control and guide them according to the sound reasoning of the *mind*, instead of impulsively following them without mental direction.

He was married, had a fine family, an honored position with rare opportunities. But letting *feelings, moods, impulses* dominate his mind, instead of making his mind rationally and wisely direct them, his marriage crashed, his home was broken up and he fled in fear from his high position and brilliant future. He not only wrecked his own life, he forced great sorrow, unhappiness and suffering on many others. His emotions had so dominated his mind that he came to see circumstances through the eyes of his feelings, and his understanding became warped and distorted.

Physically he grew to normal maturity, and was reasonably proficient in athletics. He possessed a number of university degrees. He was mentally mature so far as this world's faulty education instructs. But, emotionally, he was still somewhere between ages 8 and 12! And, sadly, his spiritual age was no older.

The great tragedy of our generation is that nearly all people mature physically, perhaps half to two thirds mature mentally, *but very few ever grow up emotionally or spiritually.*

One is not a fully mature man or woman, as God intended, until *emotional* and *spiritual* maturity has been reached!

### Should start in child training

The time to start this emotional "growing up" is the same time men-

tal training is begun. It should be started in *the home*, within the first months of a child's life.

Parents, **STUDY** your own children. Remember that training of the emotions involves control and right direction of feelings, tempers, impulses. It means control over anger, jealousy, hatred, fear, grief, resentment, selfishness, vanity.

And since the **RIGHT** direction is the way of God's law — and since that is the way of **LOVE**, and love is the principle of giving instead of taking — it means the teaching of your children to use their own minds to understand their moods and guiding them in the direction of **GIVING** — of love toward others, equal with love toward self.

Yelling, loud talking, bursts of temper, rudeness — all these are lack of emotional "growing up." Emotional immaturity is simply letting human nature run sway without any control from a right-thinking, reasoning mind. Teach your children to let their **MINDS** direct their natures properly and wisely.

I remember the first funeral I was called on to officiate. At funerals many people let their emotions of grief run uncontrolled. A great fear seized me. I was afraid I would not be able to keep calm and control my own feelings, and I knew I must do that and, with calm tenderness and sympathy, comfort the bereaved. I was much younger then, and in the emotional struggle that went on inside my mind over ability to carry this responsibility, I began to go to pieces.

I announced to my family I just couldn't do it. We were at the time visiting in my father's home, and he came over to me, put his hands on my shoulders, and calmly shook me, saying in a voice of authority with which he had not spoken to me since I was a child: "Here! Snap out of it! This is your responsibility! This family is broken up in sorrow, and they are relying on you. You can't back out of it! Wake up! Come to yourself! Get a grip on yourself! You *are* going through with this, and you're going to do it with credit and calm dignity and sincerity!"

That, I remember, sobered and calmed me and brought me back to my right senses, and I replied quietly, "Yes, Dad, of course I will."

Then I went to a private room, closed the door and talked to my heavenly Father about it, and received from Him the emotional control I had lacked for this ordeal — and that first funeral *was* an ordeal. But when I literally placed myself in God's hands as His instrument, He used me, and the words He spoke through my mouth resulted in the conversion of the bereaved parents.

I found it difficult, as I was later more and more frequently called upon to officiate at funerals, to so control my own emotions as to achieve right *balance* — that outer calmness, without going to the opposite extreme of hardening my senses so that I would not feel proper sympathy. It was through God's help and much prayer that I was able to achieve emotional control, with dignity and poise, yet with extreme tenderness, gentleness and heartfelt sympathy for those in sorrow, so that I could give them the help they needed in their greatest trial, and still not break down with them.

Surely no one can achieve real Christian growth and perfection until he has acquired emotional stability.

Our tempers, feelings, emotions were given to us for a purpose! They are not to be nullified — merely intelligently *guided* by mind control into the proper channels of God's law!

### Emotion in religion

Of all the phases of life, there is none in which emotional immaturity is more apparent than in religion.

Here, too, people are prone to go to extremes. Either they deliberately work up the emotions to a frenzy or they make their religion a wholly mental expression, restraining the emotions entirely.

Many, usually the more illiterate or at least less educated, follow a religion that is almost wholly emotional. In "meeting," the preachers say nothing that is thought provoking, but only that which is emotion arousing. They do not teach or instruct, they generate unrestrained emotion.

They ask the congregation such questions as "Are you *happy*?" — echoed by thunderous "Amen's" or shouts of "HALLELUJAH!" The main job of the preacher is to generate  
*(Continued on page 29)*





# Learn to Be Grateful— For Everything!

*Are you guilty of being unthankful — unappreciative  
of your many blessings? You need to  
develop the habit of being grateful — for everything!*

By Raymond F. McNair

**N**ever before in the long history of mankind have human beings been blessed so bountifully.

Never before have so many — especially in America, Britain and the Commonwealth — been able to enjoy so many physical blessings.

But, also, never before has this earth witnessed such widespread ingratitude!

Why should unthankfulness be so prevalent in this era of unprecedented wealth and prosperity?

And, most important of all, what can you do to make sure you don't either become or remain a helpless victim of this all-too-prevalent sin of ingratitude? How can you prevent the octopus-like clutches of this worldwide sin from strangling much of your happiness?

More than 1,900 years ago, the apostle Paul foretold today's world conditions: "This know also, that in

the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves . . . unthankful, unholy" (II Tim. 3:1-2).

How many of us are truly grateful to our very Creator for the many blessings He has permitted us to enjoy? And how many of us are

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**Ingratitude** is a deadly but common sin. Are you really thankful for your many blessings? How often, for instance, do you express your appreciation for your husband or wife? Don't take your blessings for granted!



thankful even to our fellow human beings for the many blessings, services and benefits we receive from them?

### **An awful prophecy**

Consider a historical example of ingratitude.

God Almighty delivered the nation Israel from terrible Egyptian bondage. He miraculously saved them from the slaughter of the Egyptian pharaoh's terrifying army. Also, He fed them with manna, and in the dry, barren desert, He sustained them with water out of the rock.

But they still grumbled and complained continually (Num. 14-17). They weren't really thankful for the many blessings He had so lavishly bestowed upon them.

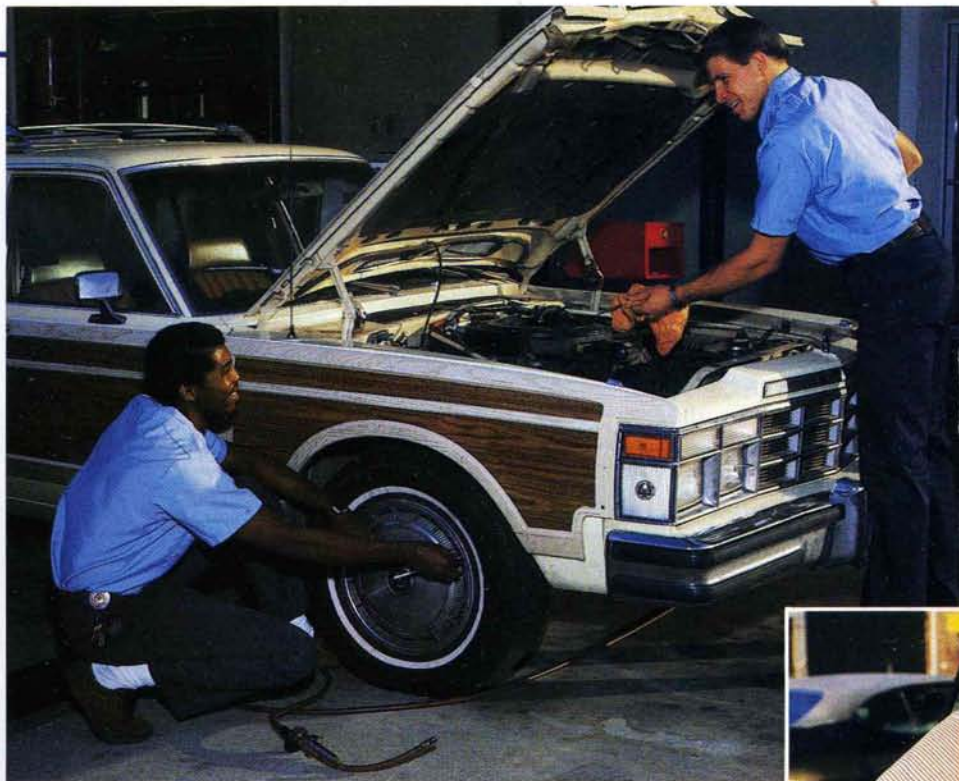
Because of their unbelievable ingratitude, God finally gave them over to destruction. They all, except Joshua and Caleb, perished in the barren wilderness of Sinai — without ever reaching the promised land, the land of milk and honey.

One of the most awful prophecies in the entire Bible reveals why God sometimes lets terrible calamities, even national invasion and captivity, come upon ungrateful nations. This horrifying prophecy, which applies to our Anglo-Saxon peoples, is found in Deuteronomy 28. It was given nearly 4,000 years ago.

God promised countless blessings to those who would obey Him — to those who would really follow His ways (verses 1-14). But He also revealed that terrible curses would overtake the nation that turned its back on Him — that flagrantly broke His holy and righteous commandments (verses 15-68).

Why will these curses come upon our people — upon our own friends and relatives — unless they repent?

"Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; Therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want [lack] of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee" (verses 47-48).



*Besides the wealth of blessings God showers upon every one of us, we also receive many benefits from other people. Do we really appreciate the conscientious gas station attendant, the diligent supermarket helper, the person who opens the door for us, the courteous waiter? Though bountifully blessed, many people are terribly unthankful. We should all be more grateful — even for trials!*

This terrifying prophecy is directed squarely at the peoples of America, Britain and the Anglo-Saxon members of the Commonwealth — unless we repent of our present downward moral and spiritual plunge into total depravity.

(If you don't know where the United States, Britain and the Commonwealth are mentioned in the Bible, be sure to write for our free booklet, *The United States and Britain in Prophecy*.)

### **Moses' solemn warning**

Shortly before his death, the elderly Moses gave a solemn warning to the people of Israel — and to their descendants, to our very people — not to forget their God.

He assured Israel of old (our forefathers) that we (their descendants) would inherit "a good land" — a land possessing lots of water, natural resources and abundant crops (Deut. 8:6-9).

Then Moses was inspired to give this sobering warning:

"When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God" (verses 10-14).

If our people began to forget God and refused to live according to God's laws, then terrible calamity was certain to overtake them.

God Almighty continued His warning through His servant, Moses: "And thou [Israel] say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine



hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day" (verses 17-18).

If Israel did forget her God, doom would be certain, warned Moses: "And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and

are truly thankful for our ability to speak, and for the ability to use our various members — like our feet and legs for walking?

We should not take these many blessings for granted. Some have been struck down by a serious stroke or by some other dreaded affliction and have been made almost totally helpless. Often after such a calamity, they really learn to appreciate the great blessings of sight, hearing, speech, muscular coordination.

In one moment — in a flash — your life could be snuffed out in an accident, or your loved ones could be taken from you. A financial crash or a terrible calamity, such as a nuclear war, could instantly turn a normal, pleasant existence into a nightmare.

In the twinkling of an eye your heart could stop and all that you think is yours could be taken from you and given to someone else. Rigor mortis is no respecter of persons!

"For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content" (I Tim. 6:7-8).

Material things of themselves do not bring us happiness. "But godliness with contentment is great gain" (verse 6).

Christ warned, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).

Do you really treasure your health?

We are living in a degenerate age — in the last generation of man's 6,000 years of misrule.

Granted, few have perfect health. Almost everyone has some infirmities. But do you at least thank God for the measure of health He has mercifully granted you?

A few years ago a well-known multimillionaire in the United States reportedly offered a million dollars to anyone who would help find the answer to his terrible health problem — gnawing ulcers. He would gladly have given one million dollars for a new stomach. Here was a wealthy man who could hardly eat anything. He could not enjoy a normal meal —

a good steak, or other solid foods — like the average person.

Nearly three millennia ago, wise King Solomon wrote of such a man:

"There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men: A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this is vanity, and it is an evil disease" (Eccl. 6:1-2).

Yes, we all need to realize that God is the One who holds in His hand the power of health, of life, of peace — of everything good.

### Thank God — even for trials

People are often tempted to complain of their lot in life. They should never give in to such a temptation.

I once heard of a woman who became paralyzed from her neck down. She could only move her head. This could have made her turn sour. She could have become bitter and cynical, but she didn't.

Rather, she was thankful that she still had her mental faculties, and was also grateful to God that she could still speak.

By using her head, she was able to build up a good real estate business — selling property. She did this by taking a pencil between her teeth and dialing phone numbers.

She became a successful and happy person, because she had learned to count her blessings and make the most of what many would have thought was a hopeless situation.

Why can't we learn to count our blessings and to thank our Creator for everything — yes, even for trials and tests, which many times turn out to be blessings in disguise?

God often permits trials and calamities to befall us to teach us certain lessons — to help us learn some of the true values of life (II Cor. 12:7-10). Knowing this, we should sincerely thank a merciful Creator, even for our sore trials (Jas. 1:2-4).

What a pity that people don't really understand this today. Few, even among professing Christians, seem to really grasp the greatness of the God whom they profess to know and

serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish" (verse 19).

Again, let us ask ourselves: Are we really thankful to almighty God — every day — for the many blessings we have received?

### Don't take blessings for granted

Do we always give our Creator thanks for the food on our table, before we partake of it? How many of those who "say grace" are really thankful? How many merely repeat certain words, parrot fashion, while "saying grace"?

God's Word reveals that we should always pray from the heart — not just repeat words like a phonograph record (Matt. 6:7).

Yes, how many (or how few!) are really grateful for the priceless gift of their very existence? Also, how many of us give God thanks for our eyesight, our hearing, our senses of taste, smell and feeling? How many of us





serve. "For he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole" (Job 5:18).

### One in 10 thankful

The type of ingratitude in the world today is aptly illustrated in the incident where Christ healed 10 lepers (Luke 17:12-14).

"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger" (verses 15-18).

This type of experience is oft repeated even in our time. There is probably not one in 10 who will so much as turn back and give God thanks.

One of the worst possible sins you can commit is the terrible sin of ingratitude. All too many have built up an inveterate habit of continually complaining about everything instead of being thankful.

Whether you realize it or not, you have many, many things to be thankful for. Remember the old saying, "I once complained because I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet!"

### The almighty Blesser

You need to realize that your very Creator is the One from whom all blessings flow!

When God appeared unto Abraham, intending to bless him and his seed, God revealed to Abraham one of His many names — El Shaddai.

"The Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God [Heb., *El Shaddai*]" (Gen. 17:1). *El Shaddai* means "the almighty Blesser."

The apostle James was inspired to write, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17).

David reveals throughout the book of Psalms the mercy, goodness and boundless blessings of God — blessings God bestows upon all mankind.

The entire 103rd Psalm expresses

eloquently David's thanks and praise for the many blessings he received from God.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's" (Ps. 103:1-5).

Our Maker likes to see us overflowing with gratitude — just as we rejoice when someone we help shows appreciation. "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me," declares almighty God (Ps. 50:23).

The prophets, patriarchs, apostles and Jesus Christ were thankful for their blessings. Christ's apostles rejoiced and praised God, thanking Him that they were even accounted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of Jesus Christ (Acts 5:41).

Why can't people realize that it is the Creator God who gives us every blessing? He made the wonderful things to eat and to drink and the many other things for the service and pleasure of man. What a loving God we have!

But God detests ingratitude!

### Be thankful for everything

God does not require us to offer animal sacrifices as of old (Jer. 7:22-23), but He is well pleased when we "offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Heb. 13:15).

We are commanded to offer "the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing" (Ps. 107:22).

One reason why many find prayer so difficult is that they have not learned to mix praise and thanksgiving with their prayers.

"But in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6) — "giving thanks always for all things" (Eph. 5:20).

What should we be thankful for?

For food, clothing, shelter, for the blessings of living in a free land, for

rapid transportation and communication.

We should be thankful also for the beauty we see around us, for the gift of life itself and for continued health and strength with which we can exercise our mental and physical faculties so as to accomplish many things.

We should be thankful for the Bible by which we can know God's plan, for God's love, mercy and protection from harm, for the sacrifice of Christ — making possible the forgiveness of our sins — and for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and for the assurance of eternal life in the endless Kingdom of God.

We should, in fact, be thankful for everything! "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (I Thess. 5:18).

Truly, these are only a few of the many blessings we have received from a loving, all-wise, ever merciful Creator who wants us to have an abundant life (John 10:10).

We should also be very thankful for the *Plain Truth* magazine and the *World Tomorrow* broadcast. If we don't appreciate receiving God's precious word through these media, then the time will come when we will no longer have these blessings.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but [a famine] of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11).

Yes, God's Word solemnly declares that, in the dark days immediately ahead of us, the public preaching of God's Word will be cut off! The true Gospel will not have free course to go out unhindered as it does today. Appreciate this blessing while you have it — before it is too late.

God will take away our blessings if we don't really appreciate them and give Him thanks — if we don't learn to serve Him joyfully for all the great abundance of blessings He has so lavishly bestowed upon us (Deut. 28:47-48).

Don't be guilty of committing the terrible sin of ingratitude (II Tim. 3:2). Learn to be thankful to God and to your fellowman for everything! □



# What Are the Works of Faith?

*Are you developing these Christian qualities that will keep you from ever falling?*

**S**everal months ago a middle-aged woman, well known in the Pasadena, Calif., congregations of God's Church, died of cancer. She died in the faith.

She was a fine person, and wholly converted.

Every time Ambassador College students went to visit her at her bedside, they themselves came back cheered and fortified. This lady was full of encouragement, full of smiles. She hardly ever talked about her terrible illness.

And not only did this woman have faith to be healed, but she was sure she would be healed.

Yet she died! Why?

Did she have the right attitude? Yes, she did. Did she have faith? She certainly did. Then why did she die?

Probably all of us have known people like her, and we have asked ourselves similar questions. We wondered why some people with, apparently, much less faith — and sometimes, seemingly, less converted attitudes — are healed, while others, like this woman, die.

Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong has stated that if healing does not take place in this life, it will occur after the resurrection. That is greatly encouraging.

But isn't it true that when we repent of our sins and call for the elders of God's Church to pray for us and to anoint us that we should

By Dibar Apartian

expect to be healed (Jas. 5:14-15)? Why, then, will some have to wait until the resurrection of the dead to be totally healed?

The apostle James devoted practically his whole epistle to the subject of faith — living faith, faith that always produces fruit. But he also revealed a much neglected truth that holds the key to healing. He wrote, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead" (Jas. 2:17).

But the woman who died had faith *and* works! She did the best she could to lead a Christian life. Why will she have to wait until the resurrection to be healed?

While the epistle of James deals primarily with faith, the two epistles Peter wrote put the accent on hope; as for the apostle John, he, in his three letters, expounded on what love is.

These three virtues combined — faith, hope and love — reveal to us the works of faith.

Interestingly enough, the apostle Peter groups these works in three simple verses, as he writes: "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (II Pet. 1:5-7).

Do you actually understand the full meaning of these words? Peter mentions seven supplements — seven important works — that are to be

added to faith. These seven works make our faith a living faith, not a dead one.

In any language, words are used to express ideas, but they often have different connotations in people's minds. God expresses His ideas through the Bible. We must therefore grasp the spiritual intent of His words to fully understand the Bible's meaning.

## Virtue

Peter wrote, under God's inspiration, that the first supplement to faith — the first of the required works — is *virtue*.

In the original Greek, this word appears four times in the New Testament, but it is not always translated "virtue" in the various English versions. Some translate it as "excellence," "strength," "right conduct" or even "wonderful deeds."

In essence you must conduct yourself according to God's way in order to have living faith. You must show courage and strength, and you must excel in your task.

Peter also wrote, "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness



into his marvellous light" (I Pet. 2:9). Here the same Greek word that is elsewhere translated as "virtue" is rendered "praises."

Interesting, isn't it? The words "praise" and "wonderful deeds" (Revised Standard Version) are used as equivalents of the Greek word elsewhere translated "virtue."

Therefore, to have living faith (remember, "Faith without works is dead" — James 2:26), you must produce "wonderful deeds" or have a "praiseworthy conduct" in God's sight. That's what God wants you to do.

## Knowledge

Let us now examine the second work that must be added to your faith to make it live. Peter states, "And beside this, giving all diligence, add . . . to virtue knowledge" (II Pet. 1:5).

Why should knowledge come right after virtue? The answer is obvious: to enable us to rightly determine just what are good and praiseworthy deeds. That knowledge only comes from God.

Consequently, you need to study the Bible and learn what God wants you to do. Your deeds must be evaluated by His standards and not your human standards. Without divine revelation, you cannot have this essential knowledge.

Today humanity as a whole has much knowledge of material things, but is lamentably ignorant of spiritual truths. Men can send highly sophisticated spacecraft into space and take remarkable pictures of the planets. Astronauts can set foot on the moon and return to earth safely.

Nevertheless, that kind of knowledge, however awe-inspiring, does not produce living faith. It cannot save a person. Your faith must be supplemented with the knowledge of God's will and His ways.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge," says your Creator. "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou

shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hos. 4:6).

The prophet Micah clearly shows what is the true knowledge that needs to be added to your faith: "He [God] hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God" (Mic. 6:8).

Simple and beautiful words, provided you grasp their spiritual intent. To do justly is to live by every word that proceeds out of God's mouth; to love mercy is to be good to your neighbor — to love him as you love yourself; to walk humbly with God is to do His will, and to have no other gods before Him.

Unfortunately, ever since the beginning, the world has rejected this knowledge.

## Temperance

After supplementing your faith with virtue and knowledge, you must exercise temperance or self-control. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add . . . to knowledge temperance" (II Pet. 1:5-6).

Of what value can knowledge be if you don't put it to use — or if you lack self-control? More often than not, people know what they are supposed to do, but they lack the character to do it.

Misuse of anything leads to sin. For instance, there's nothing wrong with eating and drinking. But too much eating and drinking can be sin.

Do you now see why God wants you to add to your faith — as a working part of it — self-control? You must learn to resist temptation, to stop before you come anywhere near breaking God's law.

The best and surest way to resist temptation is to get closer to God, but you can only get closer to Him by doing His will. That's having self-control or temperance.

God's Spirit in you will give you all the help you need, because "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22-23).

## Patience

To virtue, which is good conduct or praiseworthy deeds, you must add godly knowledge; to knowledge, self-control or temperance in order to resist evil; and to self-control, steadfastness or patience (II Pet. 1:6).

Patience is one of the most important — and one of the hardest — things to practice. Without it you cannot grow in grace and knowledge, practice virtue, acquire knowledge or exercise self-control.

That's why the apostle James wrote: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas. 1:2).

To one degree or another we all lack patience. We often get upset and irritated when others don't do what they are supposed to do, but we are very tolerant with ourselves.

How grateful we should all be to God that He does not lose patience as we do!

To have patience is to set your ideas, your goals, your mind on positive things — with faith — all the time. Patience never gives up, no matter what. It enables you to remember that God loves you and that He always knows what's best for you.

Throughout history, all the people of God and every disciple of Christ had to learn to be patient. Today, in this era of corruption, as we eagerly wait for God's Kingdom to come, some of us have not patience enough to wait. Some of God's people quit! They must have forgotten that God's timing is always best, and that our faith is strengthened when we patiently wait on Him.



# Godliness

Just what is godliness (II Pet. 1:6)? How does the Bible define it?

To be godly is to have a godlike attitude. You must learn to gradually think like God and behave like Him. God commands you to "lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim. 2:2).

Indeed, you have to endeavor to be godly and respectful in every way — to think and act as God does — to be patient and kind as He is. Unfortunately, the much misunderstood words *pious* or *piousness* have been substituted for *godliness* in some English versions of the Bible, and people are confused.

Godliness is synonymous with true Christianity or true religion. In fact, in the Revised Standard Version, this is how the same Greek word has been translated in I Timothy 2:10: "But by good deeds, as befits women who profess religion [godliness]."

As you can see, to practice godliness is to have godlike religion — the true religion. Faith without godliness is dead.

# Kindness

So far we have briefly examined five of the seven supplements or works Peter tells us to add to our faith. The last two concern love toward our neighbor: first, love or "brotherly kindness" (II Pet. 1:7) toward God's people; second, love toward all mankind.

The "brotherly kindness" mentioned in this verse is translated from the Greek word *philadelphia*, which literally means "brotherly love." This love is one of the works of your living faith.

God's Church has members all

over the world. Some are poor — much poorer than you; some are sick and very old; many are of a different race than you. Nevertheless, they all are your brethren. You must have brotherly love for every one of them.

How often do you pray for God's people around the world? Do you love them as you do your closest friends in your local congregation? Are you concerned about their particular problems, their difficulties and hardships? You lack living faith if you don't.

God commands you to have brotherly love — *philadelphia* — for all members of His Church. Whatever their age, their education, their nationality and their race, they are your brethren — members of God's spiritual family — who share with you God's most precious gift: His Holy Spirit.

This is the type of concern you should have for all of your brethren in Christ. You must pray for them, suffer when they suffer, rejoice when they rejoice. That, indeed, is brotherly love — a dynamic supplement to your faith.

The woman I described at the beginning of this article did have brotherly love. She truly expressed it. When people went to see her, it was she who encouraged them. They returned home fortified rather than depressed, because they saw God's Spirit working in and through her.

She died in a beautiful attitude. She will be resurrected — totally healed — to live forever expressing brotherly love. Can she have wished anything more rewarding?

In nearly all of his letters, Mr. Armstrong asks you to pray for him as well as for all the ministers and for the Church as a whole. Do you do it? Or is your faith without works?

# Love

The final supplement — the seventh work — to living faith that Peter lists is charity, love for all mankind

(II Pet. 1:7). The brotherly love alone — or *philadelphia* — is not sufficient; you must love (*agape*) every human regardless of his character.

Do you really love everyone, including your enemies? Don't you sometimes criticize others, see the evil in them, overlook their good deeds? Don't you judge them instead of being a light to them?

Without question, there is much wrong in the world, and you, as a Christian, should not be a part of it, nor should you judge it. The whole world today desperately needs God's Kingdom to come. Christ didn't only die for His true followers. He died for every single human being.

In fact, when a man came to ask Christ what were the two great commandments, Christ answered: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt. 22:37-39).

Christ is not only talking here about brotherly love, but of the love (*agape*) for all mankind, which is the highest form of love. He expressed *agape* for every single human being when He died for our sins.

Consequently you, too, through His Spirit, must have *agape* for everything — including those who hate you and who persecute you.

Examine your heart. Is your faith truly supplemented with the seven works the apostle Peter mentions in this section of his second epistle?

In concluding this section, Peter wrote, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things [if you practice these works of faith], ye shall never fall" (II Pet. 1:10).

What a tremendous promise! If you have living faith — faith supplemented with these seven works — you will never, never fall. You will never give up. "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (verse 11).

That's your precious, ultimate reward. Let your faith be truly supplemented with the works of the Holy Spirit! □



# WHY Are Christians the 'Salt of the Earth' ?

*Can you explain why Christ referred to His disciples as "salt"?*

By Norman Shoaf

**J**ust who are you, really?

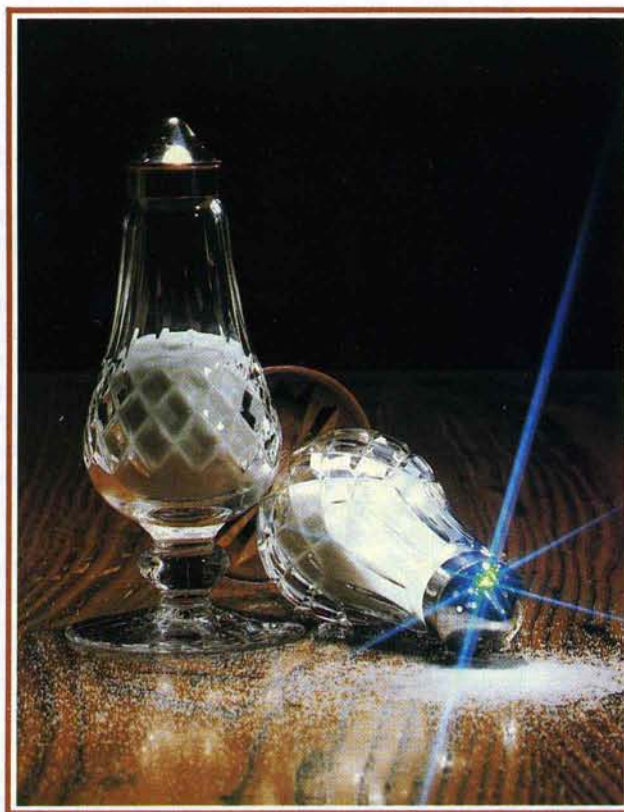
Do you ever wonder what your specific purpose in life is? Do you sometimes have trouble figuring out exactly where you fit in the great scheme of things? Are there times when you simply don't feel useful or important to anyone, including yourself?

If you are a Christian, you should have no such identity crisis. Jesus Christ bought and paid for us with His own blood. He even now owns and uses us, as we allow Him to. Christ tells us in His Word exactly who we are and what we are to be doing right now.

In what is referred to as the Sermon on the Mount, Christ took His closest disciples to a secluded place on a mountainside and there personally taught them about their commission and the way of life that leads to true happiness.

In the course of this teaching, Christ told the disciples (and us today): "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

What did Christ mean, "Ye are the salt of the earth"? Why use, symbol-



ically, this common seasoning? What can salt teach us about our Christian calling?

Salt has several specific qualities that shed light on how we are to function as Christians.

## **Used sparingly**

Salt occurs commonly in nature. About 14,000 uses are catalogued for salt, mostly in various industries.

But only 3 percent of the world's salt is used in the home. Think of the small amount of salt you use to season a meal. Just a dash — a few grains —

makes a big difference.

In Christ's day salt was not as available as it is now. Salt was once so valuable that it was used to pay the wages of Roman soldiers. We get the English word *salary* from this ancient practice of paying with salt.

Salt was also used as payment in buying and selling Greek slaves; today people sometimes ask whether a person is "worth his salt" in evaluating him. The disciples would have understood the value and rarity of salt. So what did Christ mean when He called His disciples "salt"?

Just this: God is not calling the whole world now, as Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong has explained. "No man can come to me," Christ said, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

God is only working with a small group of people at this time. And God is only working with this "little flock" (Luke 12:32) to get a specific job done — preaching the Gospel of the coming Kingdom of God in all the world for a witness to all nations (Matt. 24:14).

In other words, true Christians are rare. God's true people, in whom the Spirit of God resides (Rom. 8:9), are far fewer in number than this world's "Christianity" recognizes. True

Photos by Scott Smith



Christians are basically sprinkled across the earth like you would sprinkle salt across food — sparingly. But what a difference they make in the world!

So one thing we can learn from Christ's metaphor of salt is that our calling and commission are unique, important and highly valuable. It is a rare opportunity indeed to be called of God in this age.

### **Purity**

Salt, besides being used sparingly, is pure. Germs cannot live in it. The spiritual analogy should be clear: God's people are to be pure.

According to Leviticus 2:13, salt was to be a part of all meat offerings. The salt, at least in part, was needed to symbolize that the sacrifice was pure.

Today, Christians are to present themselves to God as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1). We, as the "salt of the earth," are to be just as pure.

If we are pure, the work we do is right (Prov. 21:8). Our very hearts should be pure (I Tim. 1:5), as should our consciences (I Tim. 3:9), our thoughts (Phil. 4:8) and our religion (Jas. 1:27).

To be spiritually pure means to be unadulterated with the ways of this world, its philosophies, its ways of doing business, its wrong pursuits and desires.

"There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness" (Prov. 30:12). If we are constantly repentant and striving to live God's way, we *are* washed from our impurities — our sins — by the blood of Christ (I John 1:7-9). We are to come out of this world (Rev. 18:4) and live our lives in total devotion to God.

If we do, and endure to the end, we will be clothed with fine, clean, white linen — symbolic of righteousness or spiritual purity — at Christ's return. We will actually become members of the Family of God and the Bride of Christ (Rev. 19:8-9).

After all, one of the first statements Christ made in this discussion with the disciples was, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matt. 5:8).

### **Spices or flavors**

Probably the majority of us most commonly come in contact with salt

as a condiment for our food. Think how salt, used properly, can add taste — and thereby pleasure — to a meal. The patriarch Job said: "Can that which is unsavoury be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?" (Job 6:6).

Salt, then, is symbolic as a spice or flavoring.

Is your life as a Christian dull, tedious, a heavy burden, something bland and uneventful? It shouldn't be! Just as salt adds a wonderful dimension to the taste of food, the Christian life should be filled with interest, zip, hope and excitement.

King David urged: "Let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee" (Ps. 5:11). It is difficult to be joyful in God, as this verse says, if you are always depressed, worried about your physical circumstances, living in the past or dwelling on the negative aspects of your life.

David was constantly joyful and singing praises to God (Ps. 63:5, 81:1, 95:1-2). The apostle Paul was "exceeding joyful" even in the face of tremendous tribulations (II Cor. 7:4). Joy is, after all, one of the fruits of God's Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22).

If you are just enduring and not enjoying your life as a Christian, ask God for more of His Holy Spirit. Ask Him to let more of His joy flow through you and out to others. Develop your talents. Be as active as possible in fellowship with your brethren in God's Church and in service to everyone around you.

It should be a pleasure to be around us as God's people. We, as the "salt of the earth," should be the most talented, positive, high-quality, "turned-on" people in the world. Just as salt gives a zest to food, we should have a powerful zest for life because we know our purpose and all we can accomplish.

### **Creates thirst**

As Christians we are to set a good example for the world around us and announce the good news of God's government coming to earth. As we do, just as salt produces physical thirst, we produce in those around us a spiritual thirst.

People are to "see your good

works, and [therefore] glorify your Father which is in heaven," as Christ continued in Matthew 5:16. By our example and by the message we preach, we will leave this world without excuse before God. And after the terrible tribulation just ahead now, people will be willing — will actually be clamoring — to learn God's truth when it is offered to all mankind:

"And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem" (Isa. 2:3).

The world will be thirsting for God's truth with a thirst that we, in part, like salt, will have helped create. Then Christ can quench that thirst with the "rivers of living water" of the Holy Spirit, when the Holy Spirit is offered to the world at large for the first time (John 7:38).

What about right now? Is your example making people around you view God's way positively? Are you creating in them a thirst for more of God's knowledge? Or do they look at you and say, "If that's Christianity, I want no part of it!"?

### **Preserves**

A major use of salt is as a preservative. For example, where refrigeration is not available, meat can be salted to retard spoilage. Salt can also be used in tanning hides or in pickling foods.

Salt in the Old Testament offerings (Lev. 2:13), besides picturing purity, symbolized that Israel's agreements with God were to be enduring.

Salt also preserves life. Animals will travel long distances and risk danger to lick salt from natural deposits. Salt is necessary for the health of human beings, too. If our blood and body cells didn't contain a small amount of salt, we would die.

Can you see the analogy? As Christians we have a vital role in preserving life on this earth. How?

Notice Matthew 24:21-22. Describing the horrible time just ahead now, this passage says: "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world



to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

If not for a group of truly converted, faithful servants of God on this earth, God would have no reason to save mankind alive from the coming holocaust!

True Christians are that group. Our job as the "salt of the earth" in this age is far more awesome than you may have realized.

### Study God's Word

Salt has other uses, and we could draw other spiritual analogies from

Christ's statement in Matthew 5:13.

As an essential article of diet, salt historically symbolized hospitality. Christians should be the world's most hospitable people.

The Old Testament uses the phrase "covenant of salt" (Num. 18:19, II Chron. 13:5). This phrase described an unbreakable alliance between friends. The covenant we made with God at baptism should be "of salt" — unbreakable. And we have the privilege of considering God our friend.

Don't just read over the information in your Bible. God went to great lengths to produce and preserve this book for us today, and it is rich with

spiritual truth. Look at all the meaning in just this one verse, Matthew 5:13.

Examine the words in the Bible and make sure you know their definitions. Put all the scriptures on any one subject together to get the full implications. Meditate on what you read and ask God to give you more understanding of His Word.

The Bible is "able to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 3:15). Really study God's Word! It tells you who you are and what you are to be doing.

Grow in grace and knowledge of God's truth, and truly become the "salt of the earth"! □

# How Does Salt Lose Its Savor?

In the same sentence in which He instructed His disciples that they were to be the "salt of the earth," Christ warned that His followers should not "lose their savor":

"Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men" (Matt. 5:13).

Salt without any flavor is, indeed, good for little. But how does salt lose its savor? And what does this warning mean to Christians?

Salt is an enduring mineral. It can last a long time and undergo a lot of pressure before its quality diminishes.

The deposits in salt mines, from which man obtains most of the salt used in the world, are thousands of years old. Yet the savor or taste is still there.

Even refined salt can be stored for extended periods and retain its flavor.

Though the salt may grow hard or lumpy, its "salty" quality remains. Salt cannot spoil.

Dissolved in water, salt disappears, but its

quality remains. Taste the water and you'll find that the salt is still there.

Salt can also be subjected to extreme temperature. Even at 800 degrees Centigrade, the temperature at which it melts, salt still retains its particular chemical composition.

So how can the savor of salt be compromised or destroyed? Only if it reacts chemically with some other substance — if it is, so to speak, contaminated by some outside influence.

The salt used in Christ's day was often natural rock salt. This salt, when exposed to the rain, sun and air, could lose its saltiness. But the salt that was close to the rock remained protected and retained its savor.

Can you see the implication for Christ's followers?

Jesus said that though we must be *in* the world, we are not to be *of* the world (John 17:15-16).

Consider this strong warning in Revelation 18:4: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

Choked by "the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in," Christians can become unfruitful (Mark 4:19). As the "salt of the earth," we can lose our savor, and are thereafter "neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill" (Luke 14:35).

Have you known members of God's Church who "lost their savor" and left the Body of Christ because they allowed themselves to be contaminated by this world?

Perhaps they became obsessed with making money. Maybe they let the trials in their Christian lives overwhelm them. Or maybe they listened to the arguments and attacks of dissidents and detractors, and decided this was not God's Church.

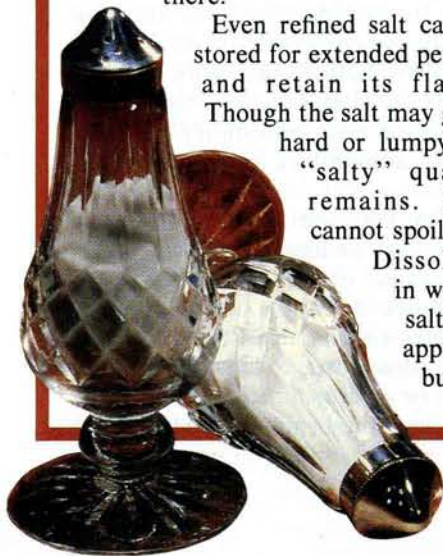
What about you? What concerns you the most?

Is it your job, family troubles, the broken-down home you live in, the desire to be married, your loneliness or an endless list of *things* you would like to acquire for yourself?

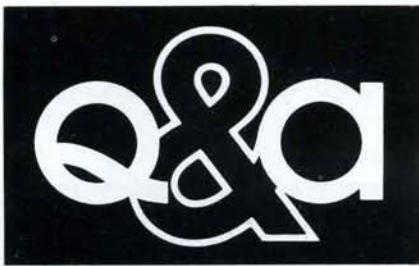
Or is it the high calling of Jesus Christ, His end-time Work and your part in it and developing the perfect, holy, righteous character that pleases God?

If you are concerned most with anything other than the items in this latter list, stop and examine yourself. Get back on the track quickly. You are the "salt of the earth," but salt can lose its savor through contamination from outside influences.

God wants you to obey Him and be in His Kingdom. That's why you were created. Nothing else matters. Nothing else will make you happy. Be the "salt of the earth" — and don't lose your savor! □







### **What is a new moon? How does God want us to regard new moons today?**

At creation week God made the day to consist of evening and morning (Gen. 1:5). He also created the Sabbath day to make the week complete (Gen. 2:2-3).

The month, according to God's method of reckoning time, begins at the new moon (Gen. 1:14). We visually recognize the beginning of a new month by the first, thin crescent in the western sky just after sunset.

God commanded observance of the weekly Sabbath, but not the new moon, as a day of worship.

Later, when the Church was in the wilderness (Acts 7:38), God commanded observance of annual Holy Days according to His plan for adding members to His Family (Ex. 23:14-17). But He gave no instruction to worship on each new moon.

When Israel sinned by grievously disobeying God's commands, the Eternal instituted the sacrificial system to remind Jacob's people of the consequences for sin and point to the human need of redemption (Jer. 7:21-28, Heb. 10:4-12).

The sacrificial offerings were made evenings and mornings (daily), every Sabbath (weekly), on new moons (monthly) and on Holy Days (annually). This act of worship on new moons has no more bearing on God's Church today than Mosaic sacrifices do on any other day.

The only biblical reason for special activity on new moons in Old Testament times was the Eternal's command to assemble when two trumpets were blown on a new moon during the wilderness wandering (Num. 10:1-10). These trumpets are not blown now.

The Bible commands only one assembly for the Church on a new moon. That is on the Festival of Trumpets, the first day of the seventh month.

Amos 8:5 refers to the House of Israel, who changed God's laws. Apparently these people had made it their practice to cease buying or selling on a new moon.

Certainly some sacrificing and new moon activities will occur in the Millennium (Ezek. 46:1-2). So will circumcision and the Levitical priesthood among Israelites (Ezek. 44:9-11). After Christ's return everyone will daily, weekly, monthly and annually worship God (Isa. 66:23).

The Worldwide Church of God takes note of the new moon just as God intends (Col. 2:16) — as the beginning of the month in His solar-lunar calendar, so we can know when to keep His Holy Days.

### **Did Christ ever eat the meat of animals? Was He a vegetarian?**

We read in Luke 2:41-42 that it was the custom of Jesus' parents to go up to Jerusalem every year to eat the Passover. When Jesus was 12 — the age a young Jew was considered a man — He went with them.

Each family killed and ate a lamb at the Passover, so Jesus ate meat. Undoubtedly He continued to eat the Passover every year. We have specific mention that He ate the Passover at the end of his life (see Luke 22:1, 7-8, 15 and parallel passages in Matthew, Mark and John).

Had Jesus been a vegetarian, people — especially those faultfinders who were always standing around to catch Him — would have noticed and wondered. The subject would have come up in the Gospel accounts. Therefore it is obvious Jesus ate the same things other Jews ate, including animal flesh.

If Jesus had been a vegetarian, He would have been known as an ascetic like John the Baptist (Luke 7:33). Instead, Jesus was called a glutton and a drunkard (verse 34) because He attended banquets and ate with Pharisees, tax collectors and other affluent people who certainly ate meat (verse 36).

As Lord, Christ also visited Abraham, and we read that He ate flesh (Gen. 18:1-8).

As a man Christ associated with fishermen and helped them catch fish, and He ate fish Himself (John 21:9, 13).

Peter, like Jesus, understood that some animals were created to be

caught and killed to be used for man's benefit (II Pet. 2:12).

### **In Isaiah 11:12, the Bible uses the expression "the four corners of the earth." Didn't the Old Testament prophets understand that the earth was not flat?**

The men of God in ancient times possessed basic knowledge of God's vast creation. The expression "the four corners of the earth" is merely a figure of speech. Isaiah used the phrase to paint a word picture of how God will rescue His people from captivity and bring them back from the extremities of the earth to establish the Kingdom of God on this planet.

The word translated "corners" can mean wings or skirts. On many occasions God pictures the earth as an extended garment over which He has an all-embracing power (e.g., Job 38:13).

It is clear that men of God understood that this earth is an orb, not flat and four-cornered. Notice Isaiah 40:22: "It is he that sitteth upon the *circle of the earth*, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; that stretcheth out the heavens as a curtain, and spreadeth them out as a tent to dwell in."

While the Bible is not a textbook on science, it is the foundation of all truth and knowledge.

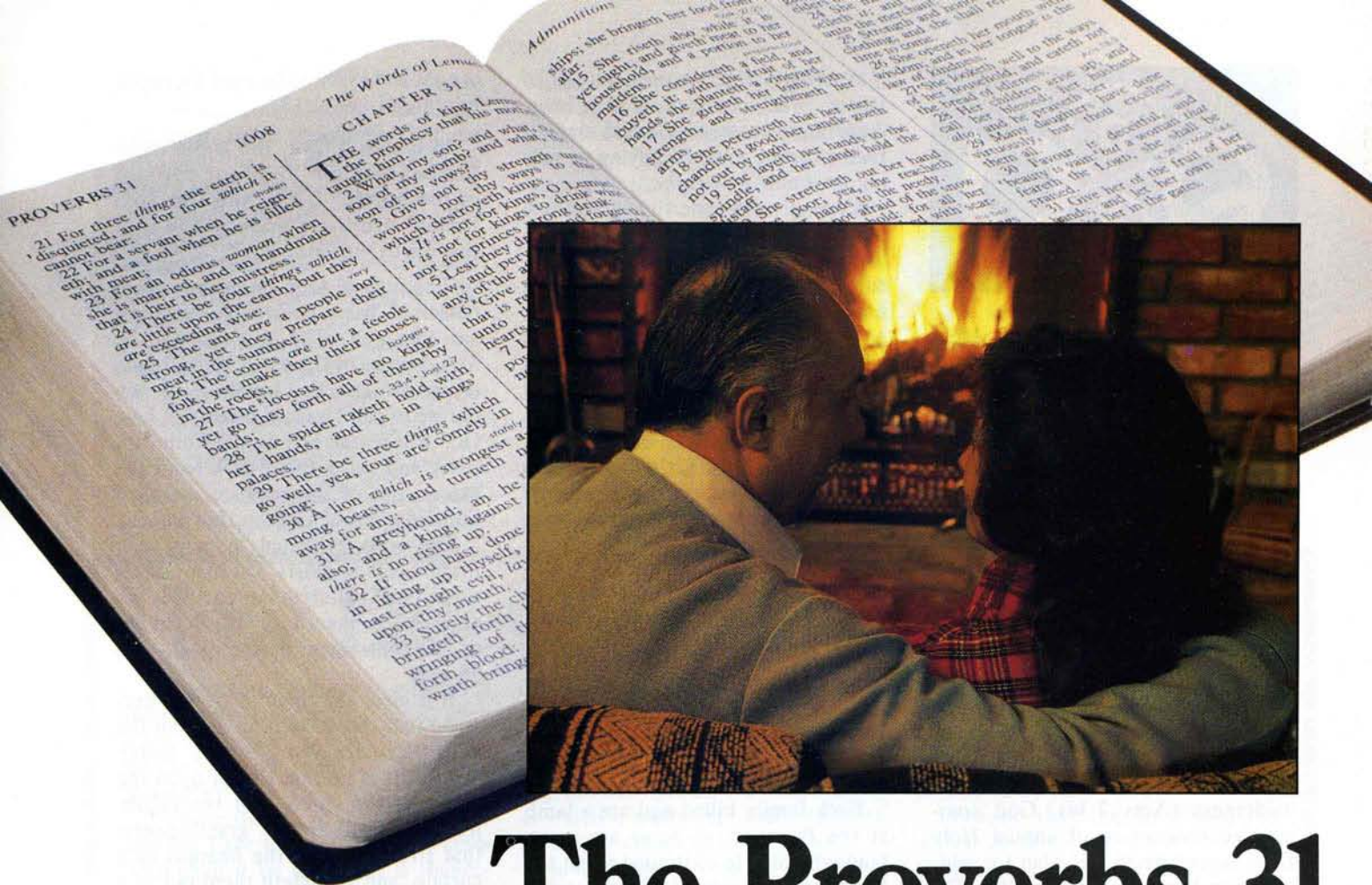
### **Can we look to Jesus too much, and make Him to be in our minds above God the Father? Or should we think of Jesus as being less than God the Father?**

If you worship Jesus, you almost automatically acknowledge the Father at the same time, and vice versa. When Jesus' disciples didn't quite understand Christ's relationship to His Father, He explained it this way: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Christ and the Father are one (John 10:30). And Christ Himself commands us to give God the Father the preeminence by praying to the Father (Matt. 6:9), even though we pray in Jesus' name (John 16:23).

So we should worship both God the Father and Jesus Christ as members of the God Family — one as our Father and the other as our Savior and High Priest. □





# The Proverbs 31 Husband!

**A**lmost every man has dreamed of being married to the Proverbs 31 woman — that near-super heroine who seems to be able to do it all.

She is totally capable, yet submissive to her husband. She is highly intelligent, yet clothed with humility.

Many men have read this chapter of the Bible and longingly wondered if such a woman has ever lived.

But few men have ever stopped to ponder what kind of man deserves such a woman.

They may fantasize about how wonderful it would be to be married to this vision of true womanhood, but they have probably never analyzed whether they would be worthy of her.

Do you think the proverbial "macho," domineering, male-chauvinist

*What man wouldn't want a fantastic wife like the Proverbs 31 woman? But what kind of man deserves such a woman?*

By Ronald Kelly

type really deserves the woman depicted in Proverbs 31?

Or how about the lily-livered, weak-kneed mouse? Could such an introvert ever achieve happiness and properly lead the capable woman of Proverbs 31?

Men, it's high time to stop worrying about where this wonderful wife is and become far more concerned about becoming a Proverbs 31 husband.


In fact, if there were more Proverbs 31 husbands, there would be more Proverbs 31 wives.

What kind of husband would it take to lead, love, provide for and protect this outstanding woman we read about in Proverbs? At first you might think of a dominant, prominent, self-confident man whose wife trails five paces behind him — meek, quiet, seen but seldom heard. But that's not how this woman is depicted.

The Proverbs 31 woman is capable. Confident. Heard as well as seen. Respected. Known.

Any man married to a woman this





intelligent, proficient and loving does not hide her in a tent. He shouts her praises for all to hear — he wants the world to know that the epitome of femininity, grace and talent is personified in his wonderful wife.

Let's take a fresh look at Proverbs 31, this time to see what kind of man leads and provides for the Proverbs 31 woman.

### **A successful man**

Certainly, whoever the Proverbs 31 woman was, she has provided the finest example for every woman to emulate.

But Solomon, the author of most of the Proverbs, probably did not have a wife like this. Among his 300 wives and 700 concubines, it is doubtful that there was a woman of this kind of love and wisdom. Solomon probably didn't even know any one of his wives well enough to write such a complimentary chapter.

The Proverbs 31 woman — and the Proverbs 31 husband — remain buried in anonymity. We just don't know who they were.

But this woman does seem practically perfect. And the man? Well, we may not have given much attention to him. But he himself must have been a person of great ability, outgoing concern and wisdom.

Hidden between the lines of the verses in Proverbs 31 we see a man who must have provided a far-better-than-average living for his family. Read verse 23:

"Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land." The husband of Proverbs 31 was respected in the community. He sat with the wise of the city and possessed wisdom and ability. He earned the respect of his peers as well as that of his wife and family.

In addition, he achieved a measure of financial success. Notice verse 15: "She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens." The woman described in this verse is full of diligence and zeal, rising before the rest of her family to help prepare them for the day.

But have you ever noticed that this household has, to put it in modern paraphrase, full-time hired help?

Read it again: "... and a portion to her maidens."

This family's success has made it possible for help to be provided, which, in turn, makes it possible for the wife to achieve her maximum potential. The Proverbs 31 wife is not constantly "barefoot and pregnant" — she is not a poverty-laden scrub-woman eking out a bare existence in a ramshackled hut on the wrong side of town.

The Proverbs 31 husband has provided an environment in which his wife can reach her full capabilities.

### **A person of service**

I have known of more than one man who has browbeat his wife with Proverbs 31:15. "Get up woman," he slurs sleepily. "Why can't you rise up like that Proverbs 31 woman?"

Certainly, Proverbs 31 shows a diligent wife responding to the needs of her household. She does rise early and she does have everything ready to make the beginning of the day enjoyable for everyone, including the live-in help her husband has provided. It seems many men feel the woman should be up early in the morning getting all the chores done in addition to providing the nourishing breakfast the family needs for a proper start.

Monetary wealth did not go to this woman's head. She had not become lazy merely because maidens had been provided. In fact, she felt a responsibility to everyone in the household, including the hired help.

But part of her responsibilities must have included outlining duties and projects for her maidens throughout the day. She was responsible for the household organization and operations.

There is yet another hint of the family's financial stability in verse 21: "She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet." Garments of substantial quality are here depicted. The children were not in torn and tattered rags. This family had no fear of the bitter colds of winter. The Proverbs 31 woman purchased quality garments or made them with her own hands.

Throughout this inspiring chapter we find that this superwoman is constantly a person of service. Notice verse 20: "She stretcheth out her

hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy."

She is a woman of accomplishment. Her family is provided with the finest quality clothing and food. She has maidservants.

She also has time available, and she uses her time to the best possible advantage — not lying by the pool on a sunny afternoon, whiling away countless hours, or sitting glued to a television screen keeping up with the latest intrigue and drama of soap operas. And she spends much of her time in service.

You see, she and her husband have both developed their potentials to help and serve in addition to taking care of their own family's needs.

### **Mutual trust and respect**

One of the most vital elements in a successful marriage is trust and respect. The Proverbs 31 husband — please note it — totally trusts his wife.

How many women today have received the respect and trust they deserve? Greed, jealousy, mistrust and a host of wrong emotions dominate many marriages.

How does the Proverbs 31 husband regard his wife in this area? Read it in verses 11 and 12: "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."

Trust and respect are a two-way street. The wife's conduct certainly must be worthy of respect. But it is the husband who must give the trust.

And how about a word of praise now and then?

One of the Proverbs states, "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11).

How is this for a word fitly spoken? "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." How about it, husbands? When was the last time you said, "Honey, that was a super job"? When was the last time you complimented your wife on a well-cooked meal? Or a clean and neat house? Or the extra time she spent helping a sick neighbor?

Unfortunately, most of the time, the good deeds and hard work go



unnoticed — certainly uncomplimented.

You men would like a Proverbs 31 wife? Then, first, you be a Proverbs 31 husband!

Trust, respect and praise for your wife — these are important qualities of the Proverbs 31 husband.

### **She has ability**

Until late in this century, many societies have presumed that men were superior to women in every way. In *The Good News* we have been publishing a series of articles, largely directed to women (but, it is hoped, read by all members of God's Church), in which we have emphasized that God did not make superior and inferior when He made male and female.

He did make woman "bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2:23). And He made male and female "heirs together of the grace of life" (1 Pet. 3:7).

God did make male and female different. Man was not complete as male alone (Gen. 2:18). Different, yes. But one better than the other? By no means.

However, God created man male and female, each with separate responsibilities to perform. Each was to achieve the fullest potential possible. There is not superior and inferior. This has never been understood in the history of mankind.

Don't get the idea we have leaped over to the side of the "liberated woman." The Bible offers a great deal of instruction relevant to husbands and wives. There is male and female. There is breadwinner and homemaker.

In past articles in *The Good News*, we showed how God designed a way in which each of us, male or female, can develop our ultimate potential. We showed that the calling of the "average, everyday housewife" is just as great as that of a corporate president.

By emphasizing the capabilities of a Proverbs 31 woman, we do not want to swing like the proverbial pendulum far to the left of the God-inspired and created purpose for male and female — husband and wife.

But you just cannot relegate the Proverbs 31 woman to the backseat. She is not an ignorant, uneducated,

unmotivated, unsophisticated wench.

Rather, she is an intelligent, capable, cultured, industrious woman who compliments her husband's successes.

She cares for her children personally. She works hard. She has developed a sense of personal confidence that has made her individually successful as a person, a wife, a mother and a home manager, and in appropriate personal business affairs.

If there are any male chauvinists reading this article, I imagine they have not read this far. If they have, these statements might be the final straw that breaks the camel's back.

"Do you mean to say," the male chauvinist may ask, "a woman can have personal business dealings? A woman?" Yes, a woman can be successful in appropriate personal business dealings — that's what it says in the Bible.

Look at the principle in Proverbs 31.

First, verse 24, "She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant."

In addition, notice verse 16: "She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard."

Many, many women have good business heads. They have the ability to turn their time into profits and to be of service to their families and others.

That does not mean this Proverbs 31 woman went off to become a major corporate executive. She did not leave her children in a day-care center from the time they were 6 weeks old forward. She did not travel far and abroad leaving her family behind in some sort of role reversal, with her as breadwinner and her husband a "househusband." The Proverbs 31 woman, obviously, first and foremost has an allegiance and sense of responsibility to her husband and family and maidens.

But can you see what kind of family this is? The husband's education, prestige and success have afforded many opportunities for the family. The wife has been able to fulfill her duties as a wife and mother and at the same time develop her personal skills.

How many men today have achieved a sense of personal strength

and worth such that they do not feel intimidated when their wives develop skills? How many husbands have confidence in their wives' ability to "consider a field and buy it"?

The Proverbs 31 husband has encouraged his wife's personal development and has demonstrated confidence in her abilities. He is proud of her accomplishments.

### **A negative example**

Sometime back a lady in God's Church came to me for counsel and advice. Her marriage to a member of the Church had ended tragically in despair, heartache and, ultimately, divorce.

She wanted me to help her husband and other men in God's Church see that there is more to the woman's function in marriage than mop handles and dirty diapers.

In this sad case, the lady involved had tremendous talent in art. She had the ability to paint and the personality and skill to market her paintings and profit from her talent.

But her husband forbade her to paint and ordered her to do nothing more than cook the meals, clean the house, have babies and work in the yard.

This was his mistaken impression of what God wanted a woman to be. He not only refused to let his wife sell her paintings, but he even commanded her not to paint at all.

In the course of time, the husband's inability to see his wife's need to use her talents brought only heartache and misery. The marriage ended in divorce.

This lady did not want to become a big art tycoon — she did want to express herself in her paintings and to be able to sell a few now and then. But her husband just wouldn't let her. He was not a Proverbs 31 husband. He didn't praise her abilities and skills. He did not permit development of those talents as he provided the proper direction and framework for the family.

### **See both sides**

Perhaps while you have been reading this article you have opened your Bible to Proverbs 31 and read verses in it.

I would like to ask you to stop reading the article right now and read



through the entire section of Proverbs 31:10-31. If you have a modern translation of the Bible, such as the Revised Standard Version or the New International Version, use it.

You now might see this chapter in a totally new light. Not only will you find a truly phenomenal wife, but you also find a rare and wonderful husband.

You ladies reading this article: Read Proverbs 31:10-31 and see how you measure up against this wife. Would your husband describe you as a jewel worth far more than rubies?

And you men reading the article: See if you can honestly say, "I am man enough to deserve, lead and love this kind of woman."

Set yourself to capture the spirit and intent of what it means to be a Proverbs 31 wife or a Proverbs 31 husband, whichever you happen to be.

Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong declared 1981 the "year of the family." 1981 is now history and we are into 1982.

But that does not mean that we in God's Church should no longer emphasize improving family life. During 1982 we should even go beyond what we accomplished in 1981 in focusing attention on the importance of the family.

### Physical marriage a type

The Bible instructs husbands and wives to typify, as much as is possible in the flesh, the coming marriage of Christ to His Church. The husband is to be a type of Christ, the wife a type of the Church.

That marriage is to take place very soon now. When Christ returns, one of the first joyful events of His Kingdom will be the wedding of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-9).

What kind of bride will Christ take? Do you think this bride (the Church) is depicted by some dumb, "blonde bombshell" type — an empty-headed, scatterbrained sex symbol?

Hardly!

Here's what the Bible says: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (Rev. 19:7). Paul explained in Ephesians 5:21-33 the great mystery that the physical marital state between a husband and a

wife is a type of the marriage between Christ and His Church.

This mystery is revealed as each partner in the marriage fulfills important responsibilities.

A Christian wife must develop to her full capacity, must be properly submissive to her husband — he is the head of the family, just as Christ is the Head of the Church. There has to be authority in the home. God designed the family to depict this spiritual type. Christ is the Head of the Church. He will always be the Head of the Church (the bride) and the eternal marriage that will take place at His return.

Husbands, likewise, are to learn to love their wives as Christ loved the Church — He even gave Himself for it. He died for her. Through that supreme act of sacrifice, forgiveness of sin became possible.

The bride of Christ is to be clean and pure and holy. And, we might add, intelligent, diligent and industrious in addition to being loving, kind and submissive. You see, Christ has been allowing the Church to develop the skills and abilities that will help her faithfully serve Him for all eternity.

Christ is not going to marry some ignorant, wishy-washy, spineless introvert.

On the other hand, Christ is not going to marry some brazen, smart-mouthed, self-centered hussy decked out like Jezebel. In ancient times, Christ was married to Israel — He has already had one wife who played the harlot and had to be put away. Through His death, however, forgiveness of all sins can take place, and New Testament Israel, the Church, is in the process of being made holy and pure — preparing herself for the marriage.

### Develop your potential

In God's Kingdom, Christ is going to give a lot of responsibility to His wife. But she will always be under His authority and care.

Then how about today?

Shouldn't you men be developing every possible attribute you can to rule and serve in God's Kingdom?

And shouldn't you wives be developing all the possible skills you can to be part of that bride, too?

And the next logical question —

shouldn't husbands be permitting their wives to develop those full capabilities?

In fact, shouldn't they be *encouraging* their wives to develop those skills and abilities that help them reach their ultimate potential in this life as homemakers, wives, mothers and future parts of the bride of Jesus Christ?

The Bible reveals some shocking truths. Preconceived and false ideas have dominated whole societies for most of the 6,000 years of human history. Time-honored beliefs sometimes have to be thrown away. The Bible just doesn't say what many people seem to think.

In our articles on the family, we have been trying to show how important it is to achieve your maximum potential.

Those born male have a responsibility to develop their ultimate potential and, in marriage, become loving, caring, providing husbands who are heads of households and inspirational leaders to their families.

Those born female have an equal responsibility to develop, within the framework of the functions God has created for them, the ultimate potentials as a wife, mother, homemaker and future eternal spirit being in the Kingdom of God.

It is entirely possible for a wife to be submissive to her husband and at the same time be a tremendous homemaker and mother to her children, and to develop her skills in the home and family and outside of the family as time and abilities permit.

It is possible for a husband to be the wise, respected, successful and loving leader of his family. It is possible for a man to be married to a woman who is intelligent and respected for her own accomplishments and abilities and wisdom.

With God's help, each of you wives and mothers reading this article can become more and more like the ultimate wife depicted in Proverbs 31. Make it your goal to do just that.

And all you husbands, who may have never thought of it before, have a responsibility to become the ultimate Proverbs 31 husband. It takes a whole lot of man to do so — not many have. But armed with true knowledge, with God's Spirit and God's help, you can! □



# Do You Really YIELD?

*Your Bible tells you to "yield yourself unto God." But do you know exactly what the Bible means when it says "yield"? Don't be too sure!*

By John Halford

**Y**ou've seen the traffic sign that says "Yield," haven't you?

It means, basically: "You don't have the right of way. Give the other traffic priority."

So when you see a yield sign, you know what to do.

When you see the word *yield* in the Bible, you also know what to do, right? Not necessarily. There is more to yielding than meets the eye.

*Yield* is not one of the more common words in the English Bible. But in Romans 6, Paul uses it several times to explain our responsibility to God and His law, once we are baptized.

"Neither *yield* ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but *yield* yourselves unto God . . . to whom ye *yield* yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are . . . for as ye have *yielded* your members servants to uncleanness . . . even so now *yield* your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (verses 13, 16, 19).

The meaning is fairly obvious. Anyone who is used to pausing at a yield sign would get the point. Once you are a baptized member of God's Church, you can't just go hurtling through life doing what you have always done. You will collide with God's law.

You must get into the habit of pausing, to make sure you give God

and His way priority. In other words, you no longer have the "right of way." That's yielding, in plain English.

## Epistles in Greek

But Paul, as you know, did not write in English. He wrote his epistles in the Greek language. What we have is a translation — sometimes good, often not so good.

But even at best, translation is not an exact science. It is practically impossible to convey the exact meaning of a word in another language; this is especially true with words that describe behavior.

For example, "How are you?", "*Comment-allez-vous?*", "*Wie gehts?*" and "*¿Cómo está usted?*"

don't all mean exactly the same thing.

And the Greek word used by Paul in Romans 6 doesn't exactly mean "yield." The word is derived from the verb *paristemi*, and "yield" is part of what it means. But only part.

*Paristemi* is rich in meaning. If an ancient Greek chariot driver had come to an intersection and seen a sign using *paristemi*, he would have done more than just given priority to the oncoming traffic. He would have thought of all the other things that it meant. He would have been at that intersection for quite a long time.

We can see what Paul meant by *paristemi* by looking at the other places where the word is used in the Bible. It is a fascinating study that can help you to truly "yield yourself to God."

## Assisting in God's Work

Paul uses *paristemi* again in Romans 16:1-2, where he informs the church that Phebe, a trusted woman — a deaconess, perhaps — would shortly be visiting Rome.

Paul wrote in advance to introduce her, and told the members in Rome to "assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you."

The word *assist* is, in the Greek, *paristemi*. The church was told to help Phebe in the areas where she needed help, not just where they wanted to help or in areas where they



thought she needed help. There is a difference.

Today, we have been called into God's Work, in one capacity or another, to back up Christ's apostle, Herbert W. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong lets us know through sermons, articles, co-worker and member letters and the *Pastor General's Report* where he needs help. For instance, he asks us to help with prayers, tithes, offerings and loyal support.

One way we can "yield" to God is to assist Mr. Armstrong in "whatsoever business he has need of us," just as the church at Rome had to be willing to assist Phebe.

It sounds simple, but many members and ministers have gotten hurt feelings and left the Church because they weren't willing to do this. They were willing to assist in things that they thought Mr. Armstrong should need, or in things that they wanted to do.

Yet Christ's example was, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me" (John 5:30). Christ was willing to assist in whatsoever His Father had need. Are you?

Another place where Paul uses the word *paristemi* is I Corinthians 8:8: "But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse." The word *commendeth* is, in Greek, *paristemi*.

To serve God vigorously you need good health, and that means a good, balanced diet. But many people take this to extremes.

They begin to equate "righteousness" with organic vegetables, natural cereals, various herbs and brown sugar. But "righteous" (self-righteous?) food doesn't of itself make you more or less yielded to God.

I once met a group of members in Asia who were, in ignorance, eating dog meat! But it was obvious that God was with them, and was working in their lives. Their attitude was right (and, of course, they immediately quit eating dog when they found it was wrong).

God looks on the heart, not on the stomach or thyroid gland. We should do the best we can to eat a good, balanced diet. But remember

that food of and by itself does not commend, yield or *paristemi* you to God.

### Standing as a witness

One of the most spectacular healings recorded in the Bible took place in the Temple shortly after the day of Pentecost.

The pathetic cripple who lay huddled at the gate was a familiar landmark in Jerusalem. You just couldn't miss him as you walked in to pray.

So when Peter healed him in the name of Jesus Christ, it caused no small stir. It also upset the bigoted religious authorities, and in due course, Peter and John were hauled before the court to give account of themselves.

"Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them . . . that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth . . . doth this man stand here before you whole" (Acts 4:8-10). The word *stand* here is translated from *paristemi*.

The ex-cripple was "yielded" to the authorities as a witness of the power of the risen Christ. He hadn't asked to be healed — he had asked for money — but he got more than he bargained for.

Likewise today some of God's people are healed — miraculously, in defiance of medical science — as a witness. But others are not healed. God delays their healing. Some even die in pain — but in faith.

Most church areas have one or two members who are ill or handicapped in some way. But their example of patience, courage and faith serves to inspire and motivate those who are whole.

We all look forward to the time when these people will also "stand before us whole." But, in the meantime, if God has left you with an affliction, be willing to serve as an example of faith under stress. It is part of yielding.

There is another use of the word *paristemi* involving Peter in the book of Acts, chapter 9.

Tabitha, the beloved deaconess of the church at Joppa, had died. The church was distraught. The members had come to rely on her sewing. She seemed indispensable.

Tabitha had yielded her talent to God, and God had used her to help many others. And then she died.

Urgently, the church sent for the leading apostle. Could he, perhaps, do something? And so Peter, once he had peace and quiet, kneeled down, and by the power of God raised the woman from the dead. "And he gave her his hand, and lifted her up, and . . . presented [*paristemi*] her alive" (verse 41).

Tabitha, the yielded servant of God and her brethren, was given back to the brethren. Her acts of service were used as a powerful witness. Think about it — would your congregation miss you?

### Waiting to carry out God's will

Now let's look at the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1. Gabriel, God's powerful archangel, appeared to Zacharias, and told him that he was soon to become the father of John the Baptist.

"I am Gabriel," said the archangel, "that stand in the presence of God" (verse 19). When Gabriel said "stand," he used the word *paristemi*. How did he mean it?

If you could take someone from Zacharias' time to your airport and show him the taxis standing in line waiting for fares, he would probably describe what they were doing with the verb *paristemi*. He would see that the drivers are lined up, willing (well, in theory, anyway) to go anywhere they are asked.

Gabriel is like that, as are all the loyal angels. Down through the millennia, God's loyal angels stand before Him to carry out His directives. They serve well, and usually anonymously, doing what must be done to bring about the fulfillment of God's plan. Unlike Satan, they are yielded as they stand in the presence of God.

And because God trusts them, He can use them. Gabriel was used to carry some of the most important messages that have ever come from heaven.

Just six months after his mission to Zacharias, God sent Gabriel to tell Mary that she was to become the mother of the Messiah (Luke 1:26).

Mary herself is a remarkable



example of yielding. What God was asking was going to change her life. It seemed at first God's request would bring a quick end to her engagement. Joseph, suspecting her of fornication, was minded to refuse to marry her, until an angel reassured him. Nothing in Mary's life would ever be quite normal again.

But her reply to the angel showed that she was totally yielded to God: "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). And later, when Christ was born, Mary and Joseph took their little Son and presented (*paristemi*) Him to God (Luke 2:22).

But, of course, isn't it only reasonable for a person who has given himself to Christ to make himself available for whatever God wants?

In Romans 12:1 Paul writes: "I beseech you . . . that ye *present* [*paristemi*] your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

*Paristemi* makes sense to a converted person. But it is not the way of the world.

Mr. Armstrong has often explained that this world's way is the way of competition and vanity, of lying about one's abilities in an effort to get ahead of others in the race for "success." Make yourself look good — make the other fellow look bad. Get what you want, be it power, position or wealth, at any cost.

But a yielded Christian does not think of himself "more highly than he ought to think" (verse 3). He will think soberly about the talents and abilities God has given him. No inflated boasting, nor false humility. If you can do the job, make yourself available. But if God wants to use someone else, that's fine. That's yieldedness.

#### Showing yourself approved

A skilled workman knows the rules, and knows how to use the tools of his trade.

If, for instance, you want to be a builder, you should learn the building code and be able to handle the equipment. A budding translator cannot expect to be used, however willing he might be, if he can't be bothered to learn a foreign language.

And so it is with wanting to be used by God. "Study," said Paul, "to *shew* [*paristemi*] thyself approved unto God, a workman that needed not to be ashamed" (II Tim. 2:15).

If we really want to be useful to God, now and in the future, we have to know the rules. Never have God's people had so much training material available. We have Sabbath services, Bible studies, Spokesman clubs, ladies' clubs, magazines, booklets, the Correspondence Course and now full-length books. But none of these are of any use unless we take advantage of them.

So part of yielding to God is to

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continue to learn, to become more skilled as a spiritual workman. Christ told us there would always be a shortage of really qualified laborers (Matt. 9:37-38). This world needs what we have to give, even if it doesn't realize it yet. There are many big jobs — and little jobs — still to be done.

The deacon Stephen had no idea what God would need him to do (Acts 6:8-7:60). But he proved himself to be a "workman that needeth not to be ashamed."

So part of yielding is to study and prepare yourself, so that you are available for God to use however He will. *Paristemi* means just that.

In Acts 23:24, a Roman officer provided beasts of burden to trans-

port Paul to the governor Felix. The word *provide* is another translation from *paristemi*. The beasts had no say in how they were used — they were provided. That should be the attitude of a bondsman of Jesus Christ — a willing attitude of wanting to do what is needed.

Sometimes, though, there doesn't seem there is much to do. But a yielded person will always have the attitude of standing by, or being ready, just in case.

The close relatives and friends of Jesus must have felt pretty useless and helpless while He was being crucified. But they didn't desert Him. They stood by (John 19:25-27): "When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple [John] standing by [*paristemi*] . . . he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother!"

So John, by standing by to the end, was able to perform a final act of service. Christ could now leave the physical care of His beloved mother to a man He knew He could trust.

#### Oriented to service

That is what *paristemi* is all about — trust, humility, serving, growing, helping. There is so much more to yielding than just waiting (rather impatiently, perhaps) at an intersection while someone else goes his way. It is a relationship with God that begins when you yield at baptism.

When you give yourself to Christ, He puts you to work, in one capacity or another, behind His apostle. You are now assisting in the Work, standing by to do what is needed. And all the time you are studying and growing, not only for a short-term reward, but for eternity.

In Ephesians 5:27, we read that Christ's goal is to "present" (*paristemi*) His Church perfect, without spot or wrinkle or any spiritual blemish. He will know then that He has a team of loyal, trustworthy, humble, service-oriented people who have shown they can indeed work together in harmony.

Armed with that attitude, we can assist Him in "whatsoever He hath need of us" — forever. □



# King David Sinced— Yet He Will Receive Eternal Life! WHY?

By John Ross Schroeder

**K**ing David, at one point in his life, committed two capital sins — adultery and murder.

God's reaction is recorded in II Samuel 11:27: "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."

At various times in our lives similar words could be written about us. The important question is, was God permanently displeased with David?

Is He permanently displeased with any of us when we slip and fall on the road to eternal life? How does God judge us? How did He judge David?

## How did God judge David?

King David sinned. But when the knowledge of that sin fully penetrated his mind, David deeply repented. And at the end of

his life, the slate was wiped clean.

David himself said of God: "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:3-4).

How did God view David's sins after David died? Did He continually repeat them in the books of the Bible written after David's lifetime?

Notice the account, written two generations later, recorded in I Kings 14:7-9: "Go, tell Jeroboam [Jeroboam was the first king over the 10 tribes after Israel was divided], Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the people, and made thee prince over my people Israel . . . and yet thou

hast not been as my servant David, who kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; But [you, speaking to Jeroboam] hast done evil above all that were before thee."

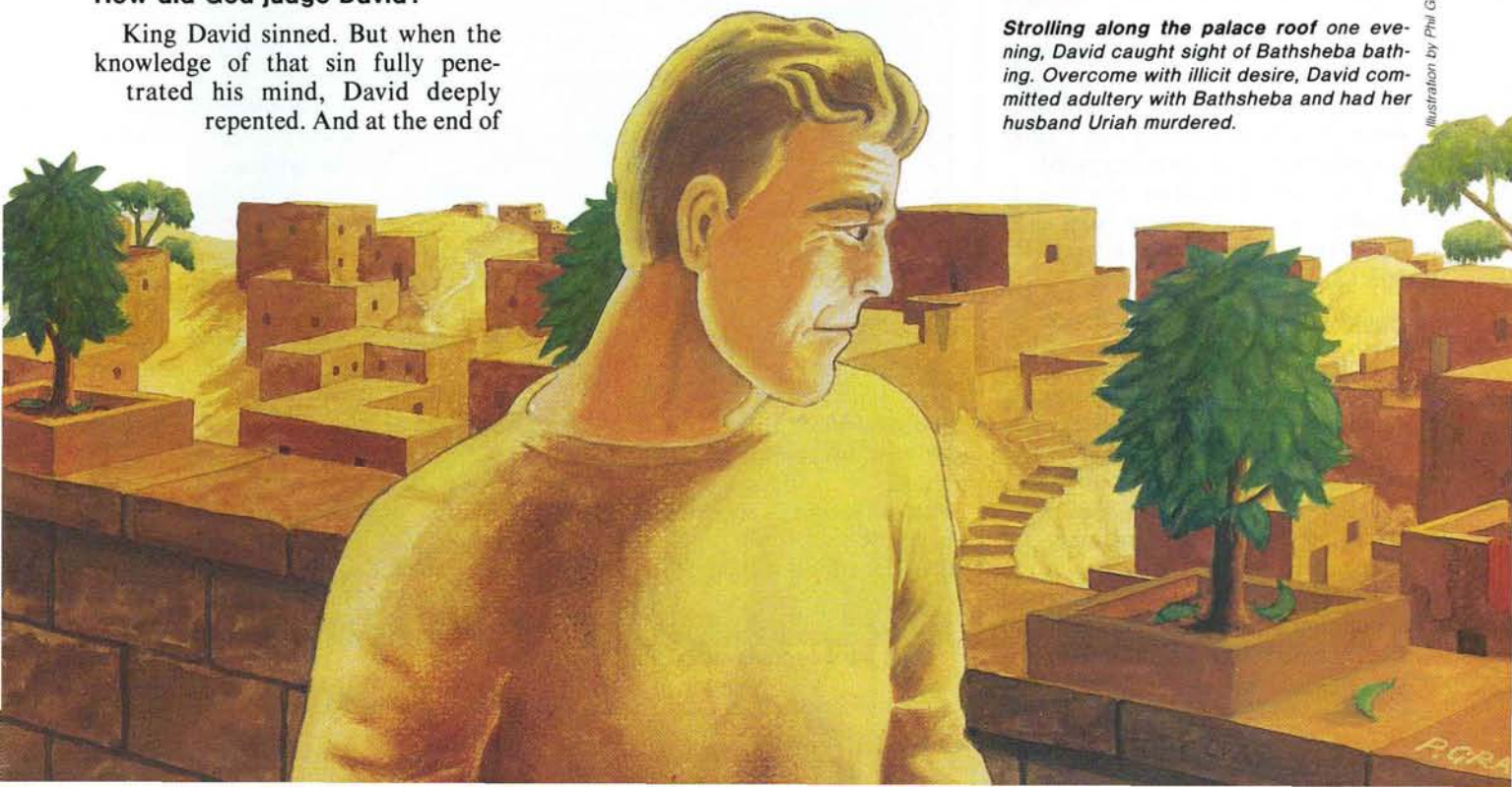
God made this declaration many years after David's death. Nothing about any capital crimes is mentioned. Instead, David has become the standard — the right example — by which other kings are judged.

What we have here is a brief summary statement of David's life. This is how God judged David, and the incident reveals an important aspect of God's method of judgment.

In I Kings 15:5 David is compared

*Strolling along the palace roof one evening, David caught sight of Bathsheba bathing. Overcome with illicit desire, David committed adultery with Bathsheba and had her husband Uriah murdered.*

Illustration by Phil Gray





to another king, Abijam of Judah. Notice again how God judged David: "David did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite."

Aside from the account itself in II Samuel (and, in one sense, Psalm 51), this is the only other place in the Bible where David's capital crimes are even hinted at. And even then, great diplomacy is exercised in the wording.

Verse 5 is another overall judgment of David's conduct. God boldly states, "David . . . turned not aside from any thing that he [God] commanded him all the days of his life." Then, almost as an afterthought, the matter of Uriah is mentioned as the one exception.

But wait a minute! Did not David number the people for purposes of military advantage? And wasn't God highly displeased with that course of action? And didn't God say to David, "Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build an house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight" (I Chron. 22:8)?

True, there are other instances where David fell short of God's will. But in a summing up or an overall judgment, whether it be from God or man, common practice is to omit specifics.

Whenever one is able to make a positive judgment, bygones are generally bygones and specific indiscretions are simply omitted and forgotten as if they had never occurred.

After all, God does promise to remove our transgressions from us as far as the east is from the west (Ps. 103:12).

### David's kingship judged

Notice now God's judgment of the overall tenor of David's kingship: "And David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people" (II Sam. 8:15).

Does this, then, mean that King David never made a mistake. Of course not!

Remember David later regretted appointing Joab as his chief general. David based this appointment pri-

marily on Joab's military prowess, overlooking other aspects of Joab's character.

Twice during his reign, David tried to appoint other men to that vital post. And twice Joab managed to murder David's appointees. David, during his lifetime, was not able to discharge Joab from his responsibilities (sometimes we have to live with our mistakes).

Another example of a hasty judgment David made is found in II Samuel 16.

Mephibosheth's servant Ziba slandered his master to David and, under great pressure because of his hurried flight from Absalom, David believed him without getting the other side of the story. Immediately David awarded all of Mephibosheth's property to Ziba (verse 4).

Later the king at least partially corrected himself when he finally saw Mephibosheth face to face (II Sam. 19:24-30). Since David did not know whom to believe, he finally divided the property between the two.

King David was not perfect. He did not always do the right thing on the spot. But he did try to correct his errors when they were brought to his attention. And many other biblical accounts show David making astute and fair judgments, especially when aides and staff were bent on incorrect action. David's wise decisions far outweighed his unwise ones.

### New Testament evidence

Did you know that none of David's sins are ever mentioned in the New Testament? Do you realize that Jesus Christ never referred to them in the Gospel accounts? Nor did any of the apostles. If we only had the New Testament, we would know nothing of David's mistakes. On the contrary, we do have some positive judgments of David's life in the New Testament.

Notice what the apostle Paul was inspired to say in one of his sermons: "He [God] raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will. Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus" (Acts 13:22-23).

It is hard to imagine how a human

being could receive much higher praise from God.

And do you know that David received this testimony from God even before he became king?

Samuel said to Saul: "But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the Lord hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people" (I Sam. 13:14). God knew His man! He had great plans for David from the very beginning.

In the same sermon Paul had another occasion to mention David. He said, "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep" (Acts 13:36). That statement amounts to a one-sentence summary of David's life. That is how God remembers him.

### How will God judge you?

We can take great courage in God's mercy and method of judgment. If our hearts are right, if the overall tenor of our life is in the right direction, if we are overcoming, then we are going to be in God's Family. We can be much encouraged by reading how God looks at the life of David.

But we must say this much in the way of qualification: We should never point to David's mistakes as an excuse for our own sins. We should instead follow the principle laid down in I Corinthians 10:11 and learn from David's errors by avoiding them ourselves.

If David were alive today and could communicate with us, he would say, "Look at all the suffering that those sins brought upon me, and don't follow my example in them."

But the good does outweigh the bad in David's case. You'll be able to see that clearly if you read through the books of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles. The good that David did and the lessons he learned are the reasons he will be king of Israel in the world tomorrow.

If you really repent, God will remember the good things you've done and forget the bad. That — the element of repentance — is why the majority of mankind, even though all have sinned, will eventually be able to join God in His Kingdom.

That's the kind of God we have! □



# 'Love Thy Neighbor'— Just What Does That Mean?

By Ellis LaRavia



**T**he lawyer had talked himself into a corner, and he knew it.

He had intended to trick Christ, to somehow embarrass this upstart Nazarene carpenter.

But his plan had backfired. He wasn't tempting Christ; rather, Christ was convicting him.

The lawyer had asked Christ, "Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" (Luke 10:25).

Christ turned the question around: "What is written in the law? how readest thou?" (verse 26).

Better be careful here, the lawyer thought to himself. Then, in reply to Christ's question, he named the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" (verse 27).

Now, the lawyer thought, what can Christ answer to that?

But Christ agreed with him! "Thou hast answered right," Jesus said. "This do, and thou shalt live" (verse 28).

The conversation was certainly not going the way the lawyer expected it to. The lawyer knew, inside, that though he was familiar with what the Scriptures said, he was not in the habit of acting according to that knowledge — not obeying God completely.

And even now, his carnal mind rebelled. He couldn't let Jesus show him up — he certainly couldn't admit that Christ was right and begin to change his way of life.

"But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?" (verse 29).

That's it, the lawyer thought. I'll act as if I don't know what this "prophet" is talking about. Perhaps the lawyer felt that the only way out of the corner into which he had talked himself was to argue with Christ over terminology. After all, what did Jesus mean by "neighbor"?

Do we do the same today? Do we attempt to justify ourselves by pretending we don't know who our neighbors are? Who is your neigh-

Photos by Roland Rees



bor? The man next door? The person who works alongside you? Is it anyone who is in trouble and needs help? Does the term *neighbor* refer only to members of your family, or does it even refer to those outside your immediate family?

### **Spiritually discerned**

The problem is not determining who our neighbor is. The real problem is loving our neighbor as we ought to.

It was the same with the lawyer in this example. Very likely, he assumed he had fulfilled the first great commandment to love God. He did not want to be condemned for breaking the second great commandment by being unresponsive to his neighbor.

Neither do any of us want to be condemned — but we all stand condemned until we learn to fulfill the commandment to love our neighbors as ourselves!

The lawyer's real question was not, "Who is my neighbor?" He knew who his neighbor was, just as each of us knows who our neighbor is: Our neighbor is every human being with whom we come in contact.

The lawyer's real problem was that, carnally, he 1) didn't want to love his neighbor and 2) did not know how to love his neighbor even if he had wanted to. This is our problem as well. Man, under Satan's sway, is just naturally competitive and resentful of neighbor, not caring and concerned.

The problem of wanting to or knowing how to love our neighbor is spiritual, not physical. God declares in Romans 8:6-7 that "to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."

God's law is spiritual. Man does not naturally perceive spiritual truth — God must reveal it. Therefore we see, throughout human history, conflict between man and his neighbor.

### **Your brother's keeper?**

We can see the results of this carnal approach to neighbor in earliest human history, in the example of Cain and Abel.

Adam, the father of Cain and Abel and our first parent, had partaken of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. Adam chose to decide for himself what his relationship would be with both God and man. Notice the impact of Adam's decision upon his children.

In time, both Cain and Abel brought offerings to God. Abel's sacrifice was acceptable. Cain's was not. The reasons why one offering was acceptable and the other was not are irrelevant here. The fact remains that Cain's sacrifice was unacceptable to God. Cain had been derelict or greedy and his performance was inadequate.

God asked Cain the reason for his fallen countenance and his bad attitude. God reminded Cain that if he obeyed Him and did that which was proper, his offering would also be acceptable, as was Abel's (Gen. 4:7). If Cain decided to cheat on the offering, sin was present.

But Cain's reaction was not one of regret or sorrow. He didn't apologize to God, repent of his improper sacrifice and agree to rectify the error. Rather, the more Cain thought about it, the more upset he became.

Cain's self-image was tarnished. When he compared himself with his brother Abel, he was lacking. This hurt Cain deeply. But rather than correct his approach and attitude, Cain allowed his rage and frustration to build to such a level that he killed his brother Abel. What did this resolve? Nothing.

Cain didn't realize that his real frustration was with himself, God and God's law. His human reaction was to lash out at his brother, who had no part in his sin. All Abel did was obey God.

Cain's competitive spirit caused violence within the human family at a time when there was only a handful of people on earth. But Cain didn't understand what the problem was.

Likewise, none of us sees clearly our true feelings toward our neighbor until God reveals them to us. Then and only then can we correct our attitude.

After Cain murdered Abel, God asked him, "Where is Abel thy brother?" (verse 9). God already

knew, of course, but the question was convicting and corrective.

Cain replied, "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain responded to God in a resentful and hostile attitude.

Cain's reaction makes no sense to a converted mind. But the way of the carnal mind is resentment toward God and competition, envy, strife and greed toward neighbor.

One industrial executive, well-known in his field, commented publicly about the competition in his particular business. This man, chairman of the board of his company, stated: "This is a tough business. People aren't happy just to succeed — they want you to fail."

A startling statement indeed about man's natural, carnal proclivity toward his neighbor!

### **God's law magnified**

The first step toward fulfilling God's commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves is to recognize that we do not, nor can we, truly love our neighbor, humanly speaking. We are prone to be selfish, wanting the best for ourselves, competing with our neighbor, wanting him to fail while we succeed.

God established the purpose for human existence, and man, cut off from God, doesn't know that purpose. God must reveal it.

God created man to become a part of God's very Family. We have to choose life and walk with God if we are to achieve God's purpose.

The godly perspective is that we must want the best for our neighbor as well as for ourselves. The best for our neighbor is that he or she also become a member of the Family of God. With this perspective, we are going to be determined not to hurt or harm our neighbor. We will not be in competition with him or her.

Jesus Christ, who gave God's commandments to physical Israel, magnified these spiritual laws in the New Testament.

Take, for example, the Sixth Commandment, "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13), and think of how it applies to loving your neighbor.

As magnified by Christ, the commandment to not kill means that we



must not hate, detest or compete with our neighbor (Matt. 5:21-24). It means that we should express love toward our neighbor in every way in everything we do. We must always keep in mind our neighbor's potential in God's plan.

The Ten Commandments continue, "Thou shall not commit adultery" (Ex. 20:14). Spiritually neither are we to even lust after our neighbor (Matt. 5:27-28). Consider: Can we break God's commandment concerning adultery with our neighbor, when God is preparing that neighbor, just like us, for His Family?

The other commandments follow (Ex. 20:15-17). All of these commandments, magnified by Christ Himself, reveal how we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Keeping the commandments hinges on remembering that membership in the God Family is intended for every human being. And every human being is our neighbor.

#### **Our neighbor's needs**

Our neighbor has the same desires and needs that we have.

Do we get hungry? So does our neighbor. How many people do you know who cannot provide essential food for their families? The distress may be caused by unemployment,

sickness or some other problem. If we have food, we must learn to share with those in need. This is loving our neighbor.

The same applies to other basic needs such as shelter and clothing. We must learn to share the blessings God gives us.

What are other ways in which we can manifest true Christian love toward our neighbor?

Are you ever aware of someone in pain or agony? Do you know someone who is suffering from a sickness or disease? Do you know anyone who has suffered an injury in an accident?

Their physical needs may already be taken care of. But what about their spiritual needs? God expects us to care, to give comfort and solace. When we comfort others we express God's love. We all need the love of others expressed to us, and we must express that same love toward others.

When our neighbor is honored by being appointed to some office or rewarded for some accomplishment, we are to be honored as well (I Cor. 12:26). What a contrast to the comment by the executive referred to earlier, who stated that his neighbors are competitors who want him to fail.

Trials and tests are common in all

our lives. We have trials, and so does our neighbor.

While Christ was undergoing the trial of His life, He was praying for Peter, a key disciple whom Satan wanted to destroy. And yet Christ Himself was about to be sacrificed. What a selfless love! Christ instructed Peter, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke 22:31-32).

This is the type of love we must manifest toward our neighbor.

#### **The same as loving God**

God actually puts Himself in the place of our neighbor. Whatever we do to our neighbor, we are actually doing to God (Matt. 25:31-46). Do we always consider, as we deal with another human being, that we are doing to God whatever we do to that person?

This knowledge should have powerful impact when we consider our relationship with our neighbor!

In addition, God says: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:20-21). Our neighbors — each and every one of them — are made in God's likeness and are to become God (Ps. 82:6).

Do we begin to see the importance God places on relationships between human beings made in His likeness? Every human being is a potential member of the God Family, and we must not do anything to deter our neighbor from fulfilling God's purpose in his life. This must be the underlying premise upon which we base our every thought and deed toward our neighbor.

Christ taught, "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise" (Luke 6:31). The apostle John wrote, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren" (I John 3:14).

If we can do this, we are perceiving our neighbor from God's point of view. This, then, is loving our neighbor as ourself. □





# 'Nevertheless...'

*Why the children of Israel doubted God's promise!*

By Clayton Steep

**W**hat large grapes! People in the crowd jostled each other to get a better look at the immense cluster of fruit. They had not seen the like in all the years of slavery in Egypt.

But now these Israelites were freed from bondage and poised at the border of the promised land.

The 12 spies who, 40 days earlier, had been sent to search out the land had just come back with their report. It had taken two of them to carry the mammoth bunch of grapes now being gazed at by scores of incredulous eyes. Also on display were luscious pomegranates and plump figs brought back from the unfamiliar territory.

Indeed, the spies reported to Moses and to all Israel, the land was fertile and productive. "And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it" (Num. 13:27).

Yes, it was a good land, a land of plenty. All they had to do was go in and inherit it. What was the problem? The problem was the next word they used: "Nevertheless..."

The spies agreed that the land was everything God promised it would be. "Nevertheless," some of the spies quickly added, reflecting fear and lack of faith, "the people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great" (verse 28).

They pointed out how various tribes of people — awesome people — were already living there.

"We be not able to go up against the people; for they are stronger than we," they moaned. "And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land,



Illustration by Basil Wolverton

through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight" (verses 31-33).

The spies finished their dismal,

discouraging report, and "all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron" (Num. 14:1-2).

## **Lack of faith**

Poor Israelites! God had brought them, with signs and wonders, out of



bondage in Egypt. He delivered them with spectacular miracles, pouring plagues upon their captors, wreaking havoc upon an exalted and powerful nation, parting the Red Sea, then closing it again upon Pharaoh's armies. He led Israel with a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day, bringing them to their own land.

And now God, the Israelites concluded, would not be able to keep His promise to give them the land that lay before them.

Upon what was this conclusion based? On faith in God's power? No, on what the spies saw with their eyes — the physical evidence: "all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers," they complained.

Do you understand what their mistake was? We are to walk by faith, not by sight (II Cor. 5:7). They had it backwards. They walked by sight, rather than faith. They did not have God's Spirit and the faith it imparts.

Faith is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

What the spies should have said, is: "The people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled, and very great . . . All the people that we saw in it are men of great stature. And there we saw the giants . . . and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers. Nevertheless, it is an exceedingly good land and God is able to give it to us as He has promised."

Joshua and Caleb, two of the 12 spies, did reject the physical evidence and believed in God's power instead. They confidently declared: "If the Lord delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land, which floweth with milk and honey. Only rebel not ye against the Lord, neither fear ye the people of the land . . . the Lord is with us" (Num. 14:6-9).

But because Joshua and Caleb dared express their faith to a doubting mob of faithless Israelites, they were nearly stoned to death (verse 10).

### Simon Peter's reaction

Israel balked at God's word. A different reaction to God's instructions,

however, came from Simon (later named Peter), as recorded in the book of Luke.

Once, when Jesus was on Simon's boat, Jesus directed that the nets be let down for a catch of fish. Simon, however, knew the physical facts: There were no fish to be caught at that time and location. He and other fishermen had just spent hours in a fruitless attempt to catch something.

"And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake" (Luke 5:5-6).

Simon stated the physical facts. He acknowledged them. But then he added, "nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net."

This was the right reaction. It is the opposite of how the Israelites and their spies reacted. Had they been on the boat with Jesus, they would probably have said: "Master, we hear what you are saying. We know that you have done miracles in the past. Nevertheless, we know there are no fish here, so it is useless to lower the net." And they would have sat down and wept.

What would your reaction have been to Jesus' instruction?

### Be spiritually minded

One of the greatest hindrances to faith is the fact that the world around us is so real. We, made from the dust of the ground, are naturally in tune with the physical.

We detect material reality with our physical senses. We feel the pain when we are sick. We hear the harassment from neighbors, relatives, persecutors, petty officials. When we lose a job, we see the cold reality of a termination notice and the accumulation of bills. Family problems are real. So are the temptations of the flesh — the tastes and smells and feelings of those things that are wrong.

Whatever the situation is — as in the case of Peter walking on the water (Matt. 14:22-33), for instance — we can look around and see, hear, taste, smell and feel the physical, material realities. Knowledge of them

comes to us through the channels of our five physical senses.

But there is one other channel — the spiritual channel. It is through this channel that faith comes. Faith is a gift freely given by God through His Spirit.

Christians with God's Spirit "look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Cor. 4:18).

If our minds are mostly on the world and on physical things, exercising the spiritual element of faith is extremely difficult. We begin to sink in the waters of doubt as Peter did.

On the other hand, if we fill our minds with spiritual things, if we are studying God's Word, if we allow God's Spirit to work in us, if we are praying as we ought, faith will be available when we need it.

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but . . . to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace" (Rom. 8:5-6, Revised Standard Version).

Getting the mind off of the physical and onto the spiritual is one of the greatest keys to receiving more faith. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

Accounts in God's written Word of how God delivered those who trusted in Him ought to become very familiar to us. We should review them often so that we get used to thinking of God as the living God who acts on behalf of His people and who is faithful to what He has promised.

The whole of Hebrews 11 is about individuals who successfully kept their minds on the spiritual level — the promises of God — that which they could not sense physically. They had their minds on the world to come (verses 10, 16). They believed in blessings yet to be granted (verse 20). They "endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (verse 27).

They all said, in effect: "I acknowledge what the physical circumstances are. I acknowledge the hardship. I acknowledge the trial, the pain, the danger. Nevertheless, I believe God and His promises."

Can each of us say the same? □



# Why Remember Mary of Bethany?

*Jesus said, "Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her." The question is, Why?*

By Jim Lichtenstein

**J**ust days before His crucifixion Jesus returned for the final time to Bethany, a village less than two miles from Jerusalem, on the east slope of the Mount of Olives.

There He shared an intimate dinner with His disciples at the home of Simon, a leper.

It was just after this evening's events that Judas agreed to betray Jesus into the hands of the chief priests who sought to kill Him.

Judas became offended that night. This offense, added to what may have been a long list of other imagined offenses Judas harbored against Jesus, may have been the catalyst that finally turned Judas against his Savior. What happened that night to further alienate Judas from Jesus?

## Offended at Christ

Jesus warns us to be on guard against becoming offended and turning away from Him and His way of life. He tells us that in the end time "shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another" (Matt. 24:10). This happened to Judas and began to affect at least some of the other disciples that night.

At that dinner, just two days before the Passover, a woman anointed Jesus with a special, expensive ointment

(Matt. 26:6-13). John 12:1-8 tells of the same dinner and identifies the woman anointing Jesus as a close personal friend, Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. Lazarus is the one Jesus raised from the dead just a few days before (John 11:1-2, 39-44).

The dinner that night in Bethany was special to all. It was a celebration for Lazarus' restoration to life (John 12:1-2), and no doubt for Jesus a time of heaviness as the reality of His imminent crucifixion weighed on His mind.

Mary and Martha were privileged to serve the dinner, while Lazarus was one of the guests. During the course of the evening Mary no doubt surprised everyone by taking an entire pound of costly ointment and anointing Jesus with it (John 12:3, Matt. 26:7, Mark 14:3).

When the disciples observed what Mary was doing, instead of respecting this act of service and generosity, they began to find fault with her. Judas expressed the thought that what she did was a great waste (John 12:4-5).

Judas estimated the spikenard's value at 300 pence or one Roman denarius, a silver coin about the weight and size of an American silver quarter. Scripture indicates that one pence was actually the amount of money paid to a laboring man for a day's work (Matt. 20:2).

The value, then, of this ointment

was great indeed — nearly a year's wages for a working man!

Judas' motive in complaining about what Mary did was not out of concern for the poor, as he said, but because he lost an opportunity for great personal gain through theft (John 12:6). Judas, however, was not alone in finding fault with Mary's actions. Some of the other disciples also joined in to find fault with her. We are told they "had indignation" and complained at the waste (Matt. 26:8, Mark 14:5).

The clamor of the group of disciples against Mary became so vehement that Jesus had to come to her rescue and rebuke them by saying, "Let her alone; why trouble ye her?" (Mark 14:6).

When Jesus explained to the disciples the meaning of this special service, the attitudes of all but one — Judas — were apparently calmed. Even though Jesus had for months before been explaining to His disciples that when He returned to Jerusalem it would be to die, the disciples had not understood what He meant (Matt. 16:21-22).

Jesus told the group, "She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying" (Mark 14:8). And again on this occasion Jesus patiently explained to the disciples what He would have to go through during the next few days.



All but one of the disciples had his mind open to receive this rebuke from Jesus.

Only Judas, motivated by greed, refused to change his attitude and learn from Mary's example. Instead he rejected Jesus and entered into negotiations with the priesthood to betray Him. Judas was promised 30 pieces of silver, an amount far less than the value of the spikenard Mary used to anoint Jesus (Matt. 26:14-16).

### The lesson of Mary's act

Both Matthew's and Mark's accounts tell us there is a lesson in Mary's anointing Jesus. Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (Matt. 26:13, Mark 14:9).

Mary apparently believed Jesus when He said He had come to Jerusalem to die. She may not have understood the full meaning of His death for the sins of all mankind, but she did believe what He said. She did what she could to assist her Friend and Savior in whatever way she knew how.

On the other hand, the disciples — who were with Jesus daily and constantly heard His preaching, who saw His miracles and were eyewitnesses only days before to the raising of Lazarus from the tomb — did not understand the Gospel message Jesus had been teaching them. And when they were witnesses to Mary's act of service to her Lord, the disciples found fault and one turned completely away.

For each of us, Mary stands as an example of faith, trust and commitment to God. Though she was chided for her service by those closest to Jesus and though she probably did not fully understand what Jesus' death was to mean, she believed what He said and she served.

Mary's total commitment of herself and all her resources to Jesus stands as a memorial and testimony to all in God's Church of what true Christianity is — to follow Jesus in faith, all the way, with all we have. □

## Hidden Enemy

(Continued from page 2)

wild, shouting, uncontrolled emotion, until the whole congregation is out of control in a frenzy of fanatical exuberance.

Then there are the more quiet emotional sects — but who also accept the counterfeit of sentimentality and emotion for deep spirituality. Indeed it seems that *most* fundamentalist groups accept one form or another of EMOTION in the place of true spirituality.

But emotion is not spirituality. Emotion is *physical* reaction. While a certain emotional reaction *should* naturally follow true and deep spiritual experience, nevertheless it is a physical reaction *from* that experience and is not, in itself, spiritual experience. Emotion is produced by the nervous system of the fleshly body. It is, therefore, of the FLESH, not of the SPIRIT!

The Holy Spirit of God is given only to those who OBEY God (Acts 5:32). Most religious bodies who mistake the emotional counterfeit for genuine spirituality preach that "God's law is done away" — preach a doctrine of "salvation without works," by which they mean without obedience to God or to God's law.

No one is a real Christian unless he has received and is being *led* (in obedience to God's law) by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9, 14), and the Holy Spirit *in us* is the LOVE OF GOD (Rom. 5:5), which is the *only* love that fulfills God's law. And also the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of a SOUND MIND (II Tim. 1:7). True spirituality, therefore, is SOUND MINDEDNESS, for true spirituality can come *only* from the SPIRIT OF GOD within us. True spirituality is RATIONAL.

On the other hand, true spirituality is not a mere mental religion divorced from all feeling and emotion. There are the purely mental religions that do not even believe in the Holy Spirit of God.

And there are some of us, perhaps, who have come to know God's truth — who have surrendered to God, truly repented of our own way, turned from the ways of the world and who are devoted to studying the Bible to learn God's way so that we may live

by every word of God — and who also pray a great deal, but who yet LACK the very second FRUIT of the Spirit of God — JOY!

### NOT emotionless maturity

Emotional *maturity* does not mean emotionless maturity any more than it means uncontrolled emotion.

The truly emotionally mature are Spirit-guided by sound Spirit-mindedness — by God's Word — and the emotions are CONTROLLED, but not anesthetized. The emotionally grown-up DO express enthusiasm, JOY, happiness. They DO *feel* and express gratitude, reverence, adoration in their worship of God. They do feel and express compassion, mercy, sympathy.

God is a Spirit, and they that *worship* Him must worship IN SPIRIT and IN TRUTH. One cannot worship IN SPIRIT unless he has received and is led by God's Spirit. One cannot worship IN TRUTH without UNDERSTANDING of God's Word with a sound mind. But this kind of worship is not devoid of *feeling* and resultant emotional expression. Even though the emotion is *physical* reaction, it does truly *accompany* or *react from* true spiritual experience. But it is not a substitute for it.

The emotionally mature will properly express sympathy in a most sincere manner, from the heart. They will express, on occasion, when called for, sorrow, anguish, compassion. And they will also express good cheer, happiness, enthusiasm, zeal and that happiness that is brimful and running over, called JOY!

It sort of sums up, then, that the emotionally mature *combine* the controlled expression of emotion *with* physical health and an educated mind that is Spirit-begotten and Spirit-led, doesn't it? In other words, emotional maturity develops hand in hand with physical, mental and spiritual growth, the four blending into, finally, the perfect spiritual CHARACTER we were put here to become.

You probably have a long way yet to go. YOU have a grave responsibility, if you have children, in their EMOTIONAL training as well as their physical health, mental education and spiritual guidance. We shall all be called to account some day. How will YOU answer? □



# How Much Do You Know About *THE TRUE GOSPEL?*

- When Jesus said "Repent ye, and believe the gospel," what Gospel was He specifically talking about?
- What does the word *gospel* mean?
- Where did Jesus get the Gospel He preached?
- When and where did Jesus begin to preach it?
- Which Gospel did Paul preach to the gentiles?
- What did Paul say about those who preach "any other gospel" than the one true Gospel?
- What will happen after the true Gospel is preached in all the world?
- What is the connection between the true Gospel and today's world news?



**W**ere you able to answer all the questions? If so, good! But if not, why not get out your copy of *What Is the True Gospel?* and reread it? Or if you haven't read it, why not send today for a *free* copy of this important booklet? Use the reply card inside or write to the *Good News* office nearest you.