

APRIL 1983

The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

**ARE YOU
QUALIFYING TO INHERIT
THE UNIVERSE?**

Your Marriage - Shell or Substance?
To Tell the Truth...

The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

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COVER: The vastness of outer space is conveyed in this artist's conception. Scientists estimate that there are 200 billion stars in our own Milky Way galaxy, and that the universe may contain more than one billion galaxies. Incredible as it may seem, humanity's destiny — your potential — is to inherit the universe! Read the article beginning on page 2. Illustration by Saritka Solomon.

Letters

January issue

I am writing this letter to express many thanks for the articles that were put together in the January edition of *The Good News*. This proves once again that Almighty God in heaven is very concerned about us and answers our prayers, especially when we want to be closer to Him and to do His will.

I had been asking Him to help us all to have better relations and to become better Christians that He would be pleased with, and He answered me with Dibar K. Apartian's article, "A Question of Attitude."

There were four main parts given here and . . . there was no reasoning out of it because these faults were plain as trees in the forest.

God answered my prayer and I thank Him and you all very much.

I know that no matter how low or how great we are, whether in good health or bad, very rich or poor, God is very concerned about us in all points, especially spiritually.

Robert Moxin III
Mobile, Ala.

I am writing you to tell you that January's edition of *The Good News* has been a powerhouse of knowledge for my family and me.

The article "Can You Go to Your Brother?" has helped me in doing something I should have done a long time ago. After I'd read the article I knew how to handle the problem I've had with one of the Church brethren, and I'm sure everything will be fine now.

You may use this letter if you wish. Hope others will learn, as I did, that it's better to have a friend than an enemy.

William J. Lindenburg
Sun Prairie, Wis.

General comments

I must confess that I am a glutton when it comes to all the spiritual food I absorb when I read *The Good News*.

When I receive it I just can't put it down until I have read it from cover to cover. Then I will mark it in different areas so when I go over it again and again, I can go right to the part to give me a lift when I need more spiritual food to help me in my daily life.

Just wanted to let you know what a joy it is to me to read the articles, because they bring out so clearly what I need to know to help build my Christian life.

Ernestine Coward
Kingsport, Tenn.

Historic New Laws to Guide Catholics

But do we fully understand the law that governs us in God's Church — how to define sin?

By Herbert W. Armstrong

The Catholics understand. But do we? Twenty years of painstaking revision by human minds have resulted in a new code of universal law to govern all Roman Catholics. The code was officially issued at Rome by Pope John Paul II on Jan. 25, 1983.

Now see how this concerns us in God's Church.

What is sin?

This brings up the question: Just what is SIN? How does GOD define it?

Some have viewed it, in the conduct of their own lives, by reasoning, "If a certain act or custom is not specifically forbidden by a specific 'Thou shalt not' in the Bible, then isn't it OK?"

This new code of universal law to guide all Roman Catholics helps illustrate the TRUTH of how GOD's Church regulates the conduct of its members — of what is GOOD and what is EVIL. FEW SEEM TO UNDERSTAND.

The very first created man faced this question.

Before him were the two trees — two choices to rule his life and that of the world that was founded in him. Adam made his choice.

God had forbidden him to take to himself the knowledge of "good and evil" — that is, to

decide for himself what is the way of righteousness, and what is sin.

His wife, Eve, had wandered a distance away and encountered Satan. He deceived her into believing the forbidden fruit was good and desirable.

Eve thereupon started the ERA movement (Eve Rules Adam), and led her docile husband into deliberate disobedience to God. She took of the forbidden fruit and gave to Adam. They took to *themselves* the knowledge of what is right and what is sin.

Not physically discerned

But good and evil is SPIRITUAL knowledge — not material or physical. Man was created with mind power to acquire material knowledge — how to work with MATTER. But "good and evil" is *spiritual* knowledge — how to have a relationship with GOD, and with the *minds* of other people.

Knowing good from evil has nothing to do with building a house or a machine, but having a relationship with God and other people. Not even the princes, the leaders of this world, *know* how properly to relate with God or other people (I Cor. 2:8).

We gain knowledge through the eye, ear or senses of feel, taste and smell. But eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor has it entered into the mind of man this SPIRITUAL knowledge (verse 9).

Only GOD alone can *reveal* this spiritual knowledge, through His Holy Spirit in us.

The Holy Spirit in us opens the human mind to comprehend — to understand — spiritual knowledge as GOD reveals it.

The tree of LIFE was symbolic of the Holy Spirit. Had Adam chosen that instead of the forbidden fruit, eternal LIFE would have been imparted to him by the very LIFE-imparting Spirit of God. This Spirit would have imparted also the MIND of God — an understanding mind capable of comprehending spiritual knowledge when God revealed it.

Satan injects selfishness

The human MIND baffles modern science. The most highly educated cannot understand it.

God reveals in His Word that human mind is brain PLUS human spirit. But this human spirit with which each human is born is not HOLY Spirit — the Spirit from the mind of GOD. The human spirit imparts the power of physical intellect.

Let me explain. Animals have brains, even as do humans. But animal brain, even equal in quality with human brain, contains no spirit.

A cow, for example, has the senses of sight, hearing, feeling, smelling and tasting. Yet a cow cannot have KNOWLEDGE of chemistry, physics, astronomy. A cow cannot think, reason, make decisions based on knowledge and judgment. A cow does not possess the faculties of ATTITUDE — attitudes of love, hate, cooperation,

(Continued on page 23)



You Can Inherit All Things!

*Could God trust you to rule a galaxy?
Here is a fascinating glimpse of the future!*

By Malcolm R. Tofts

What and where will you be one billion centuries from now? Will you be dust and ashes, long since gone and forgotten? Or — ?

Today, planet Earth is our home. It is a unique place. But it is not the only place. From here, we can view vast numbers of other places.

We have all gazed at the stars — and in so doing, we have glimpsed our destiny!

An enormous universe

Most places in space are clustered into galaxies. Ours, the Milky Way, contains about 200 billion stars.

The Word of God says that these places were not created in vain (Isa. 45:18).

Our galaxy is not alone. Sprin-

kled throughout the universe are countless others. In our one corner of the cosmos, astronomers have already counted about one billion galaxies.

Scientists can only guess at the number of galaxies — each galaxy containing billions of stars and planets — that float beyond the reach of their puny instruments. The number, in all probability, is unimaginably large.

No wonder King David said,

Illustration by Sanka Solomon

"The heavens declare the glory of God" (Ps. 19:1).

Even so, most of space is empty (Job 26:7). This is because there are huge spaces between the stars and planets in each galaxy, and gigantic distances between the galaxies themselves.

The galaxies are like a few specks of dust floating freely in an enormous room.

Who knows what may be created in all the empty spaces? Who knows for sure what awaits us "out there"?

Humanity's incredible destiny

Notice an intriguing passage of Holy Scripture. The apostle Paul was inspired to look into the future. He wrote in Hebrews 2:6-8:

"But one testified in a certain place, saying, 'What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You take care of him? You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands. You have put *all* things in subjection under his feet.' For in that He put *all* in subjection under him, He left *nothing* that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him."

Did you catch the incredible significance of those words of God? Read them again carefully. Eventually — when we have qualified — God intends for us to rule over *everything* He created and will create. On this tiny little speck of a planet, He is training us for our vast future responsibilities. His desire is to give us eternal life and raise us to the level of the God Family itself (Matt. 19:29, Rom. 8:17-21, I John 3:1-2)!

All of this — the vastness of God's purpose for us — fills me with astonishment. Does it you?

In his book *The Incredible Human Potential*, Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong offers, from Scripture, many fascinating details of our awesome destiny. (You may have a free copy of this book by writing to the *Good News* office nearest you. See

inside front cover for addresses.) On page 32 in the softbound version (1978), Mr. Armstrong writes:

"Our potential is to be born into the God Family, receiving total power! We are to be given jurisdiction over the entire universe!

"What are we going to do then? . . . scriptures indicate we shall impart life to billions and billions of dead planets, as life has been imparted to this earth. We shall create, as God directs and instructs. We shall rule through all eternity! Revelation 21 and 22 show there will then be no pain, no suffering, no evil, because we shall have learned to choose God's way of good. It will be an eternal life of accomplishment, constantly looking forward in super-joyous anticipation to new creative projects, and still looking back also on accomplishments with happiness and joy over what shall have been already accomplished.

"We shall never grow tired and weary. Always alive — full of joyous energy, vitality, exuberant life and strength and power!

"What a potential!"

Incredibly, God is inviting us to be His children and to rule space with Him.

But we must first qualify for this honor.

Qualifying to rule

How do we qualify? How do we get from here to there?

Primarily, our Creator evaluates us according to the principle given in Luke 16:10: "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much."

Note that. It is very important. It is the crux of everything. A person who can perform his responsibilities here and now on earth can be trusted to rule a galaxy later. Time is short. God now expects every person to do his duty, no matter how small that duty may seem.

God instructs us not to despise "the day of small things" in the example in Zechariah 4:10. We must not shirk our responsibility. And what is our responsibility?

To support God's Work in every way we can.

We must all develop eyes to see. Are you doing your part to look for ways to help? Are you striving to live the way of life Jesus Christ taught, to love God with all your being and to love your neighbor as yourself (Matt. 22:37-39)? Are you fulfilling the responsibilities of "pure religion" by showing concern for less fortunate people such as widows and orphans (Jas. 1:27)?

Do you have a smile for everybody? They may seem to be only little things, but cheerfulness and neatness make very positive impressions on others. Always be neatly groomed and wear a smile.

Of course, we must all be faithful with our tithes and offerings (Mal. 3:8-10) and, above all, be praying fervently for this Work. Don't think that the prayers of one person are unimportant. We must never forget that "the effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (Jas. 5:16).

Your responsibilities may seem twig-size to you, but they are important. Twigs, tightly bound together, make a strong broom to sweep with.

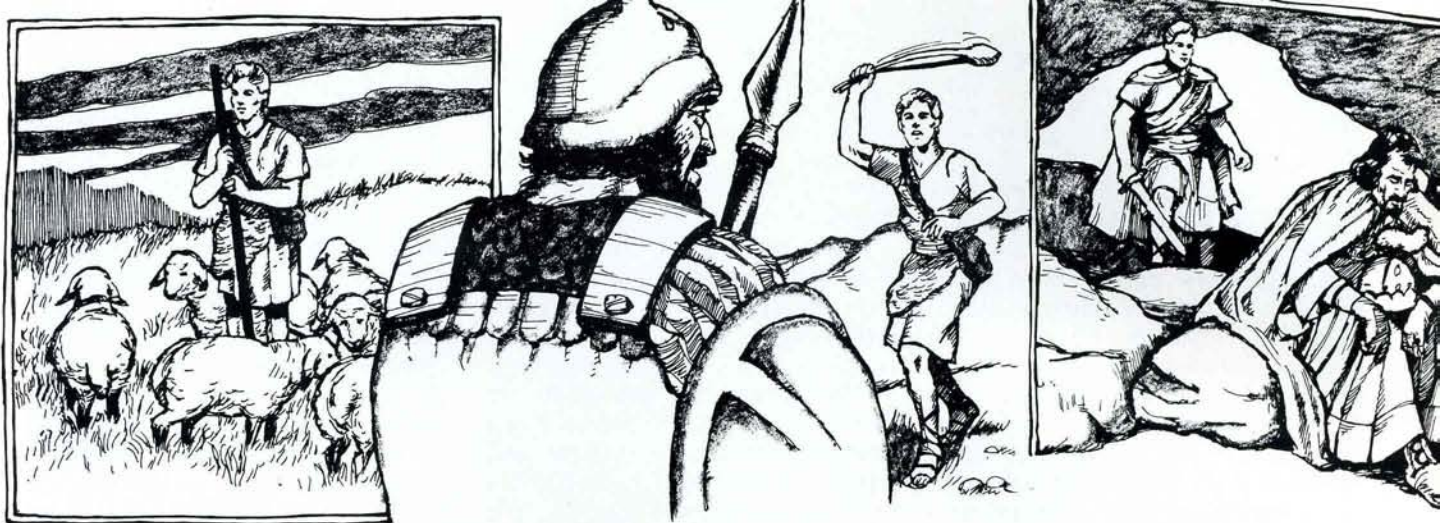
The Maker has a plan. God intends to set this entire world back on the track. But what about you? Are you on the train? Or are you snoozing on the railway platform while the whistle blows?

Be quick! Use your train ticket — the opportunity God has given you. Get on the express before it pulls away. You need to be on board, praying, studying, helping the Work in whatever ways you can and developing God's character in yourself.

When God sets this world aright, He intends to use us to help end the misery and suffering of this present evil age (Rev. 5:10).

How much would you be willing to sacrifice to heal only one crippled person or help one person learn the way to true happiness? If we are faithful now with

(Continued on page 24)



Why Was David a Man

“I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who will do all My will” (Acts 13:22).

So said God of King David of ancient Israel! What a positive evaluation!

Of all the people who have lived, God has given David a special place in His heart. We know from Scripture that King David, when resurrected, will rule over all Israel in the Kingdom of God (Jer. 30:9, Ezek. 37:24).

Have you stopped to consider why God felt this way about him? As one of God’s people today, being judged now for your response to God (I Pet. 4:17), how do you measure up to David’s example? Would God be able to say that you are a man or woman after His own heart?

The biblical books of I and II Samuel cover David’s life history. Saul had preceded David as king, and utterly failed by disobeying God (I Sam. 13:13-14). God decided to replace Saul with someone else as king, and God used a different method of selecting the next king than humans would have used.

God looks on the inside, at the inner motives of the heart, at a person’s attitude (I Sam. 16:7). He wanted Saul’s replacement to measure up to high standards in inner character.

What special attributes did David develop that gained him such high favor with God?

By Stanley M. McNiel

Here are several specific areas of David’s character that made him especially pleasing to God — that made him a man after God’s own heart.

Active faith

Even though he was but a young man when initially anointed to be king, David had already exhibited tremendous strength, wisdom and talent. He was known as a shrewd fighter. He was physically fit and poised, and an accomplished musician (I Sam. 16:18). Soon afterward, David showed one key reason for his success in God’s eyes: active, living faith.

Perhaps no Bible story is more popular than the example of David and Goliath. Here was the teenaged David — perhaps short, freckle-faced and lanky — who decided to go against the champion of the enemy army — a man-crushing warrior who stood more than 9 feet tall and whose armor alone weighed nearly 200 pounds!

Goliath had taunted the Israelites for some time, challenging them to provide an opponent for him. All Israel’s warriors refused. But not David! David walked by faith, not sight, and he knew God could use him to defeat this enemy of His chosen people (I Sam. 17:26, 36-37).

Without a trace of fear, and with no armor or battle garb, David stepped forward with his slingshot and — whap! — down crashed the mass of muscle, bone and armor who dared to defy the Eternal!

David was close to God. He listened to God and believed that nothing could stand against the power of God. He had complete faith to overcome any seemingly insurmountable obstacle.

But it wasn’t faith without effort. David was prepared. He didn’t neglect the physical part he could do. He had become strong and able by protecting his father’s sheep from wild animals, and he was an expert marksman after years of practice.

Still, David maintained regular contact with God and rightly gave God full credit for the victory.

We today should have this same attribute of character. If we believe God, diligently study His Word, remain in prayerful contact with Him and follow as God leads through His Church, we can have the same kind of faith David exhibited.

Another major aspect of



After God's Own Heart?

David's character was that he was sincerely and consistently humble. This trait was especially apparent in David's relationship with Saul.

Godly humility

After his incredible defeat of Goliath and the resulting adulation of all Israel, David became a member of Saul's royal court. Still, he considered himself totally unworthy to marry the king's daughter (I Sam. 18:18, 23-24). He knew God had blessed him, and he felt undeserving.

Later, after Saul had become "David's enemy continually" because of jealousy (verse 29), David still esteemed himself as nothing more than a dead dog or a flea (I Sam. 24:14). He honestly felt that he was too insignificant to threaten Saul's position.

Eventually, when David did become king, God made far-reaching promises to him, including the establishment of a perpetual throne, which Saul failed to qualify for. Yet David continued to reflect godly humility: "Who am I, O Lord God? And what is my house, that You have brought me this far?" (II Sam. 7:18).

David felt he was not important; to him, only God's plan and purpose mattered. He served God in humility, with the mind of Christ, with the attitude described in Philippians 2:3: "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowli-

ness of mind let each esteem others better than himself." Do you have this kind of humility?

Loyalty to God's government

David displayed another quality that anyone being trained for rulership must possess: He had complete loyalty and respect for God's government, and for the human instruments God places in the offices of that government.

God had begun to work through King Saul as His ruler over the people. Saul, caught up in a rebellious attitude, began to reject God's directions.

Immediately after anointing future King David, God sent an evil spirit to trouble Saul, but left Saul in office as king (I Sam. 16:13-14). Demon-influenced Saul, crazed with envy, tried to kill David at every opportunity. Even though David served him totally and refused to fight back, Saul persisted.

David had a deep, abiding respect for whomever God had established over him, even if that person in authority were a murderous maniac. Striving only to keep his life, David never talked against Saul or failed to acknowledge Saul's authority as God's anointed.

Once, having given in to temptation to move against the king, David "cut off a corner of Saul's robe" (I Sam. 24:4-5), an act that would have shamed the ruler. David felt guilty, and repented

bitterly (verse 6).

All this, while Saul was on a mission to murder David!

On another occasion, David rejected an easy opportunity to take Saul's life, knowing that to do so would make him guilty of rebellion against God (I Sam. 26:9, 11). David understood the lesson Saul missed: "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, He also has rejected you from being king" (I Sam. 15:23).

God allowed this test to continue for David for many years after he was anointed to replace Saul. David could have rebelled and tried to take over, but he didn't. He didn't resist, and always honored God's chosen servant.

How would you have reacted if you had been in David's shoes? Would you have passed his test? How do you react today to God's chosen apostle, ministers and servants? Are you willing to be ruled now, so you can be trained to rule in God's Kingdom (Heb. 13:7, 17)?

Serene patience

Another facet of David's character, which developed along with loyalty, was patience.

David had to wait years after his anointing before he became king! And the waiting wasn't easy. He had countless physical and spiritual trials. Only after

much strife did God give him the kingdom of Israel. In waiting on God, David endured in spite of circumstances. He left his life and future in God's hands and had the patience necessary to develop godly character. Paul explains this attitude as it applies in the lives of true Christians: "We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope" (Rom. 5:3-4, Authorized Version).

Faith and patience are often mentioned together in the Bible. You cannot have patience without faith. Faith is belief in God backed up with active obedience (Jas. 2:18). Patience is the serene attitude that allows you to wait on God in adverse circumstances. Patience is developed through trials like those David experienced: "The testing of your faith produces patience" (Jas. 1:3).

David knew that God would fulfill His plan for him if he patiently endured (Heb. 10:36).

How about you? Are you patiently enduring? Do you have the calm resolve that results from leaving your life in God's hands?

Zeal

Another major area of David's character involved his whole approach to God's way. He didn't do anything halfway. David always exhibited an unfeigned, wholehearted, enthusiastic devotion to God. When David served, he served all the way, in whatever was needed. He was a continual inspiration to others.

After retrieving the ark of the covenant from enemy armies, King David was more excited than anyone else. He dropped any courtly reserve and danced for joy in the streets of Jerusalem (II Sam. 6:14).

Everyone knew David's enthusiasm about serving God, and it affected the whole nation. David gave himself completely to the way of God. He didn't hold back. What about us today? God tells us to develop this same kind of wholeheartedness

through drawing near to him and exhorting one another (Heb. 10:22-24, 38).

Do you have an enthusiasm for God's Work today, a zeal that is contagious? We must not draw back or allow others to hold us back. We must give God our total involvement, as David did. God was pleased with him. How about you?

Wisdom

Not to be overlooked, another vital aspect of David's life was the wisdom he developed. From his youth, David behaved "wisely in all his ways" (I Sam. 18:14).

David's son Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, learned about wisdom from his father, and Solomon was the source of most of the instruction now incorporated into the book of Proverbs (Prov. 4:3-5).

Wisdom, the proper application of the spirit of God's law in every area of life, began for David with a deep reverence for God. He feared God and set his heart and attitude to obey Him.

What about you? Do you lack spiritual wisdom?

God tells us to ask, in total faith, for wisdom, and He will give it in abundance (Jas. 1:5).

Real repentance

This last spiritual characteristic David had is the most important. Without it, he would not have continued as a man after God's own heart. David practiced real repentance.

David was not perfect. Like all of us, he occasionally stumbled. But when he saw his mistakes, he always admitted he was wrong and sought God with all his heart, to go the right way.

After his adultery with Bathsheba and murder of her husband Uriah, for example, David totally repented before God. He knew he had not just committed sin. He, as a person, was wrong through and through. He repented not only of what he did, but of what he was.

In private before God, David cried out and asked that God would forgive him and restore

His Spirit: "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Hide Your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit" (Ps. 51:6-7, 9-12).

Notice David's intent and motive. He wanted with all his heart to continue to be used by God, to be on the right track spiritually (verses 13-15).

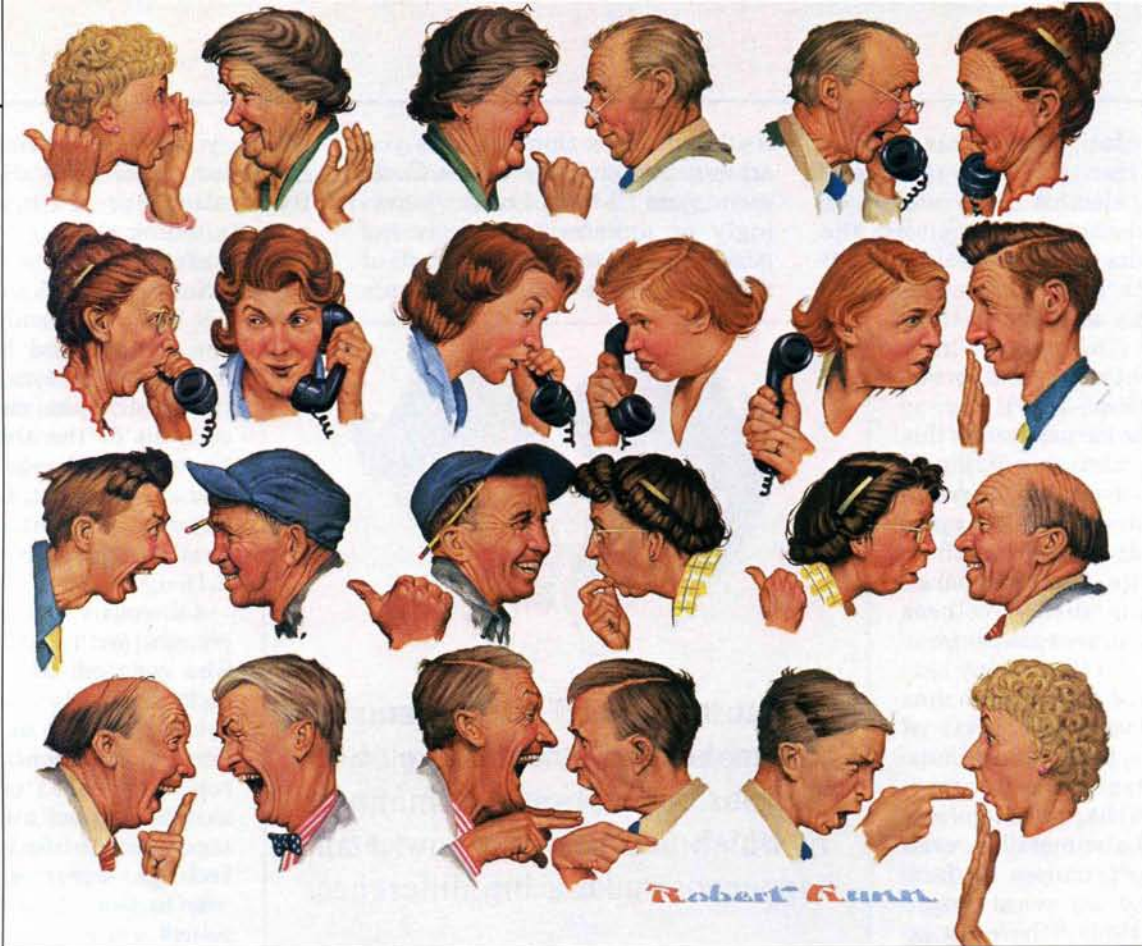
David knew God had to clean him up in order to use him. David's motive was to give. He wanted with all his heart to help others know and obey God.

"For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart — these, O God, You will not despise" (verses 16-17). David was completely broken in this attitude of deep repentance. His self was shattered. And he knew that God required this contrition for his own good.

God, who looks on the heart, forgave and forgot David's sins (II Sam. 12:13). He only remembers the character David developed. That is why He describes David as a man after His own heart. If David had not admitted his sins and changed, God could not have said that about him.

The analysis of David in Acts 13:22, quoted at the beginning of this article, was recorded long after David died. Through faith, humility, loyalty to God's government, patience, zeal, wisdom and real repentance, David overcame his human nature, developed godly character and qualified for a high position in God's coming Kingdom. He was a man after God's own heart.

What will God say about you? □



To Tell the TRUTH...

Do you always tell the truth? Should you? Here's how God's Ninth Commandment applies in your life today.

By Dibar K. Apartian

Could a lie, even a "small" lie, ever be necessary or even justifiable?

In this modern day of situation ethics, high-powered advertising hype, complicated interpersonal relationships and government cover-ups, a person might well be led to wonder!

Leading authorities condone, even encourage, at least "white lies" between husbands and wives, parents and children and other family members. Public officials hide wrongdoing in high places "to protect national security."

Many of the fictional stories portrayed on television and in motion pictures are based on lies, all in the name of entertainment

(much of it "comedy") — and the more lies, the more interesting the plot, it seems.

Advertisers have gone so far in their outrageous, and often downright untruthful, claims about goods and services that no wise consumer implicitly trusts any advertisement nowadays.

Gone are the days when having "the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth" was con-

Illustration by Robert Gunn

sidered ideal. But *is* it always best to tell the truth? Is there any time at all that a lie would be better? Is honesty not always the best policy?

Here's God's strong answer: "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 21:8)!

To the carnal mind, this kind of reasoning is illogical. But from that perfect spiritual viewpoint upon which He bases His whole way of life, God commands us, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex. 20:16).

The Ninth Commandment covers all aspects of lying — false accusations, pretensions, hypocrisy, half-truths, white lies, spreading rumors — even breaking promises. In fact, contrary to what some people think, there is no such thing as a white lie or a half-truth. A lie is a lie — and God hates it!

Half-truths

People often try to justify themselves by pretending that a half-truth is not a lie. They don't realize that having only half the truth is still a full sin.

The patriarch Abraham paid the consequences of such an experience. When he and his beautiful wife Sarai came to Egypt, he was afraid that the Egyptians would kill him in order to take Sarai for themselves.

Abraham told Sarai, "Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you" (Gen. 12:13).

Did Abraham lie? Yes. But wasn't Sarai his half sister? Indeed she was — but she was also his wife. Abraham had not told the entire truth. "But the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife" (verse 17).

Do you sometimes utter half-

truths, perhaps thinking that you are not breaking the Ninth Commandment? Most of us do, knowingly or unknowingly. It is not necessary to tell every detail of something you know — some-



That "innocent" little remark you make, the innuendo you add to your description, the manner in which you describe how it all happened, make a big difference.

times it's best just to say nothing — but what you say must be the truth — the plain truth!

Shaded truths

One of the most important things to remember when you converse is that people don't always hear what you want them to hear — not entirely. Your words don't mean to them what they mean to you. Their ears only grasp what their minds are ready and willing to accept.

And when they repeat what was said, they shade the truth in a manner that paints them in a good light, just as you do. You only hear what you want to hear, and you repeat things in such a way that you appear innocent of any wrongdoing. We all have this tendency.

For instance, have you ever honestly examined how you describe an accident in which you were involved? Whose fault does it turn out to be?

That "innocent" little remark you make, the innuendo you add to your description, the manner in

which you describe how it all happened, make a big difference. By shading the truth, you are actually telling a lie.

Consider the way Eve answered Satan when Satan asked her what God had told her and Adam. God had commanded: "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:16-17).

Obviously, Eve was not pleased with God's order. She wanted to have the right to freely take whatever fruits were in the Garden. Consequently, when repeating God's order, she shaded it to her own advantage: She justified her own feelings, eager to find a way to show that God was selfish.

Eve told the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die'" (Gen. 3:2-3).

Check your Bible! Is that really what God told Adam? Read it for yourself. Did God forbid them to even *touch* the fruit? Did He say "lest you die" or "You shall surely die"?

People's eagerness to defend themselves, to show the harshness of an order or an apparent injustice done to them, is what makes them shade the truth. And this happens more often than you might think.

A shaded truth is sometimes as far away from the truth as a blatant lie. The truth can be shaded by omission, addition or alteration, all of which deform the facts and change the truth into a lie. And remember, God hates lies!

Talebearing

Do you repeat whatever you hear, whether good or bad, true

or false? God said: "You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. . . . You shall not go about as a talebearer among your people; nor shall you take a stand against the life of your neighbor" (Lev. 19:11, 16).

When you spread rumors or act as a talebearer, you are breaking the Ninth Commandment. You cannot, as God commands, love your neighbor when you speak evil of him or make people turn against him. A true Christian is a peacemaker, not a war-monger. Christ warned, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come!" (Luke 17:1).

A true Christian speaks evil of no one. He does not judge or repeat things that can hurt his neighbor. Rumors, you surely know, spread rapidly. That is because Satan is eager to stir people up and cause strife. It is actually Satan who is the "accuser of our brethren" (Rev. 12:10).

Notice this description of the kind of person God would want in His tabernacle or Kingdom: "He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; he who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend" (Ps. 15:1-3).

Do not break God's Ninth Commandment by being a talebearer. God hates lips that spread rumors.

Bearing false witness

When you are called upon to be a witness, you are shouldering a most important responsibility. By your own words, an innocent party may be condemned, or a criminal may go free.

Are you a true witness or a false witness? Do you report facts accurately, or do you distort them and take sides? A true Christian

is not a respecter of persons. However, the tendency is to twist a story, especially if one's own interest is involved.

God says, "A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who



Do you report facts accurately, or do you distort them and take sides? . . . the tendency is to twist a story, especially if one's own interest is involved.

speaks lies will not escape" (Prov. 19:5).

None of those who persecuted Christ could find anything wrong with Him. Nevertheless, they constantly accused Him of wrongdoing. They criticized His words and actions. They even bribed people to utter lies about Him, in order to condemn Him. And their ugly conspiracy did not even end at His death — they employed false witnesses to lie about the miracle of Christ's resurrection, too (Matt. 27:62-66, 28:1-15).

Ask God daily to help you tell the truth no matter what the price or the circumstances. If you are given the task of being a witness, always tell the truth, even if it hurts you or works out to your detriment. Be a true Christian, a faithful witness — seek to please God, not men!

Hypocrisy

Hypocrisy is another facet of lying — of breaking the Ninth Commandment. A hypocrite says one thing and does another.

For example, the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day considered themselves to be righteous and holy, but the truth was that their righteousness was in appearance only. They cleansed "the outside of the cup and dish," but inside were "full of extortion and self-indulgence" (Matt. 23:25).

That's why Christ said: "Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do" (verse 3).

Another example of hypocrisy is that of Ananias and Sapphira. They pretended to share their goods with God's people, but their apparent generosity was merely a public show. After selling their land for a given price, they pretended to lay the total purchase price at the apostles' feet, but they actually kept

back a portion of it for themselves. The result? They paid with their lives for their lie (Acts 5:1-10)!

Hypocrites pretend to be something they aren't, or to do something they don't.

Abhor lying

Lies, hypocrisies and false pretensions have no place in the mind or actions of a true Christian. Do they in yours?

And what about the promises you make? Do you keep them? Do you perhaps think that breaking a promise is not a sin? Believe it or not, it does violate the Ninth Commandment!

David said, "I hate and abhor lying, but I love Your law" (Ps. 119:163). What a beautiful statement — what a beautiful attitude! It is no wonder that David was a man after God's own heart.

Do you want to be a Christian after God's own heart? If so, hate and abhor lying, and love God's commandments — including the Ninth! □

How to Survive Your Trial

Survival!

This one word, more than any other, describes the incredible obsession of this generation — that of merely staying alive through the atomic age of heretofore unsurpassed potential terrors!

Bookstores now stock volumes describing how to survive an atomic blast if and when it should occur. Whole businesses thrive by selling dried foods, camping supplies and other goods and wares that their buyers hope will help them outlast the screaming terror of atomic war if a mushroom cloud should build its plume near their homes.

Yes, even government has finally awakened to the terror of possible world suicide, by launching meager and sometimes naive civil defense plans aimed at helping people survive.

But to true Christians, mere physical survival is not enough. In fact, our physical survival is virtually assured by promises from God that His elect will be spared from the coming Great Tribulation if they remain zealous and spiritually alert (Rev. 3:10).

Our main concern, therefore, becomes spiritual survival — the ability to bear our trials and remain firm and strong in faith. To us, surviving the spiritual ups and downs — trials — of every-

Are you facing a severe difficulty in your life? Here's biblical advice on how to cope with and benefit from trials.

By Bernard W. Schnippert



day life is more important than merely keeping our physical bodies alive a little longer.

But where can we go for help? Friends, relatives, business associates and the government are not concerned about our spiritual survival. There are not many spiritual survival manuals in the bookstores that can tell us how to survive our spiritual trials.

But there is hope. Our God has not left us without a spiritual survival manual. For in His Word, the Bible, we can find all the keys we need to face our trials with determination, endurance and ultimate success.

And make no mistake: We

surely do need help to survive our trials. Many of us have had, in the past, trials, severe ones, that threatened, it seemed, our very spiritual sanity. Some of you will have this type of trial in the future. Perhaps you are in such a trial now. It is as sure as God's love for you that you will go through trials (Heb. 12:6).

And it's also sure that you need the help God's Word can give if you are to survive these severe ones. So listen to the basic principles for surviving trials from the best survival manual around, the Bible.

Know the purpose for trials

The first step in learning to survive your trial is one too often ignored. That step is to

realize that the problem or difficulty you are going through *is indeed a trial* of your faith and character, and not merely an unexplained tragedy.

Remember that those in this world do not have trials in the same spiritual sense we mean here. Yes, they have worries, problems or difficulties, but they do not think of them as trials.

Since people in the world do not consider their problems as trials, they also do not understand the meaning or purpose that their trials should have in their lives. Hence their suffering is strange and meaningless to them, and very depressing. But we who

Photos by Nathan Faulkner

know God's Word understand what trials are, and we know their meaning and purpose! This great knowledge comforts us in our suffering and gives us hope in dealing with our trials.

We know, for example, that God tries us through various difficulties because He loves us (verse 6) and because He desires to do us "good in the end" (Deut. 8:11-16).

And knowing that our problem or worry is a trial tends to define it in our minds as a tool God is using to build righteous character in us and to help us reach our spiritual goal of His Kingdom.

It puts limits on the trial in our minds, and changes it from being an insurmountable block in our path to a surmountable obstacle that we truly know we can overcome "through Christ who strengthens" us (Phil. 4:13). It gives our worries a purpose — that of becoming perfect, as Christ did, through suffering (Heb. 2:10). And it gives our worries a certain goal — that of making it to the other side and developing character along the way (Heb. 11:13-15).

It also makes trials an expected part of life instead of some sort of strange emergency we thought could never happen to us. The apostle Peter tells us not to "think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you" (1 Pet. 4:12).

Don't pass over this first point too quickly. Many Christians suffer for months under heavy burdens and woes that would seem much lighter if they would realize that this or that burden or problem is merely a trial to try their faith.

Get the trial into perspective

The next key to surviving your trial is to get it into perspective. That is, don't overreact.

It is easy when we are in the middle of a trial to believe that

the particular trial we suffer is the world's worst disaster. Probably it is not.

Remember the words of the apostle Paul in Hebrews 12:1-4, where he described Christ's suffering and compared it to our small trials. He reminds us of Christ "who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross" (verse 2), and reminds us to "consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged" (verse 3). For, he continues, our suffering has not been as great as Christ's, for we "have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin" (verse 4).

Don't misunderstand. No one



is saying that your trial is petty or slight when it is not. It may be severe indeed, even excruciating. But no matter what your trial, it pays to get it into perspective. Doing this means seeing it alongside our great possible reward of eternal life in happiness, which the apostle Paul says is "not worthy to be compared with" even our most severe suffering (Rom. 8:18).

Therefore, even if your suffering is severe, no matter what it is, it is not the ultimate disaster or tragedy. Yes, even physical death, however terrifying the thought might be to you, is not the ultimate tragedy. The ultimate trage-

dy is to lose one's spiritual life, not one's physical life (Matt. 10:28). So be thankful that your trial is not worse than it is, and get it into perspective.

Accept the trial

Closely attuned with getting your particular trial into perspective is the step of accepting the trial in a good attitude. Refusing to accept your trial — to acknowledge that you are indeed in a trial that you must perhaps bear a while — means that you will not be able to deal with it maturely.

Again, in Hebrews 12, Paul reminds us that "no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous" (verse 11). But he

goes on to admonish us that we "strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed" (verses 12-13).

In other words, accept your trial with a good attitude so you can deal with it and not be overcome by it.

Learn the lesson

Next, determine now to learn the lesson of your trial. Since our trials are to teach us lessons, we should face our trials in the eye and ask

God to show us what lessons we are to learn.

Ask yourself whether this trial was caused by your faults, or just by time and chance, which sometimes brings woes upon us (Eccl. 9:11). Realize that most trials are caused by our faults, but that even if we were perfect, the universe is so designed that from time to time things beyond our control will happen to us to test our faith. This is in accordance with God's plan, since God designed this earth as a testing and proving ground.

And don't think that learning the lesson of your trial merely means finding out why it is upon

you. It goes beyond that. Learning the lesson from your trial means also learning or building the character that comes from enduring the trial for a while.

Yes, suffering is uncomfortable, but if you try to learn what the trial is teaching you, you will be working with the trial and not against it. If you work with it, you will accomplish the "perfect work" the trial should bring (Jas. 1:4), and you may even shorten its duration, to your great relief.

Seek God's way

Seek God's way, and not man's, of solving your problem.

Since people do have problems, people have learned various ways to cope or deal with their problems. Most times, mankind's way of dealing with a problem is to deal simply with the effects. They try to escape these effects at all costs through devices such as drugs, alcohol, sex. And instead of learning any lessons, they try to find someone on whom to place the blame — be it God or others.

But God's way of dealing with a problem is to deal with the causes. To deal with the causes of spiritual problems, one must use spiritual tools to research and admit the causes. Those spiritual tools are well known to Christians and include prayer, Bible study and fasting.

This last tool, fasting, is one we all know we should use in a crisis but, because of the difficulty of fasting, tend to put off to the last minute. But don't wait "until things get bad enough." A severe trial may call for severe measures, and these measures probably include fasting in moderation. Why put off the inevitable? Fast now and your problem will be easier to survive.

Be reminded

The next step in surviving your trial is a step we must all be

reminded of from time to time: Don't be overwhelmed by your insight into your weaknesses, failures or human nature.

Human beings are merely clay models that must learn strength of character over a period of time. God Himself says that He "knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust" (Ps. 103:14). That's right. God remembers that we are dust, but sometimes we forget and hence become discouraged when we see how weak we are.

Don't be discouraged by seeing your faults or weaknesses, but, on the other hand, do grow from your trials into more perfect strength. We will not enter God's Kingdom unless we repent and



grow (I Cor. 6:9).

One final thought on the point of not being overwhelmed by our insight into our human nature during our trials is this: Occasionally, everyone even fails a trial. It is to be hoped that these failures will be rarer and rarer as we proceed. But remember: All have failed some trials, including such men as Abraham and David, and still gone on to obtain more perfect character. So can you.

Take pleasure in building character

Finally, take pleasure in the building of character, which comes through your trials.

Paul admitted, in Hebrews 12:11, that "no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but grievous," but he went on to show how we could still take pleasure in our trials if we realize that their end result is to build righteous character. "Nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."

Never forget, even in the darkest hour of your seemingly insurmountable and unsurvivable trial, that one who is suffering spiritually, and building righteous character as a result, is doing the most important thing with his life that he can. He might not be having much fun — he may not even be able to get out of his bed —

but he is nonetheless doing the most important thing in life — growing in character toward God's Kingdom.

Let's let our values be those of God who, through Peter, described the dignity that one who suffers much has in God's eyes, and should have in himself. For, "the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:7, Authorized Version).

Surviving trials, be they mild or excruciating, with strength and determination and dignity may not be the highest priority of those in the world around us, but it is the high priority of our God and King for us. For by going through this suffering, we are building the righteous character that shall help us to survive.

And with this character, we shall survive not only our spiritual trials now, and not merely prolong our physical life past the atomic woes that threaten this globe, but also survive into that blessed Kingdom where there shall be no tears or sorrow again. □



What does the Bible say about how women should dress?

Let's understand one thing first: God looks on the heart (I Sam. 16:7). He is more concerned with the inward attitude than with the outward appearance. The Kingdom of God is not clothing any more than it is food and drink (Rom. 14:17). Some zealous but unknowledgeable Christians have placed undue emphasis on wearing certain colors or styles of clothing.

Actually, God's guidelines on this matter of clothing and dress are very general. God expects Christian women to dress in "modest apparel" (I Tim. 2:9) — that is, clothing that is not overly flamboyant or garish. A Christian woman should not be an exhibitionist, attracting undue attention to herself by wearing provocative or loud clothing.

By the same token, this does not mean that Christian women should be drab, colorless or tasteless dressers. One's personal appearance is a reflection of one's inner attitude. The Christian is to be a light to the world — an example of balance and good taste. We should not be so out of step with the fashions of society that we stand out like the proverbial "sore thumb." Clothes may be fashionable but not immodest or garish.

Also, apparel should be appropriate for the occasion — swimsuits should be worn at the beach, not at the market.

In the Old Testament God gave a law that stated: "A woman shall not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor shall a man put on a woman's garment, for all who do so are an abomination to the Lord your God" (Deut. 22:5). This is a reference to transves-

tism. It does not refer to a woman wearing slacks that are designed for women.

Women may wear slacks when the occasion warrants it — for example, for vigorous sports activities, outdoor functions, picnics, gardening, hiking or even ordinary housework. This violates no Bible principle.

It is natural for those who are zealous but lacking in knowledge to become pharisaically self-righteous about various aspects of women's clothing. Sometimes humans are far more concerned about such things than the Creator Himself.

At the same time, there is a tendency to plunge headlong into the opposite ditch and feel that there are no guidelines for Christian dress and grooming. There are. But they are not meant to become an obsession or a fetish.

The "gentle and quiet spirit" of a truly converted Christian woman (I Pet. 3:1-6) will be reflected in clothing she selects for herself. She will understand the balance. She will wear clothing that is appropriate and stylish for any given occasion and of the highest quality available to her, but with proper modesty and decorum. And God will look with approval on the heart of such a woman.

What did Christ mean when He said, "And if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out . . ." (Matt. 5:29-30)?

First, it is obvious that Christ did not intend this instruction to be taken literally. The eye and hand cannot, of themselves, sin. Sin originates in the mind. Therefore, a person who is totally blind or lame can still sin.

Jesus was simply using vital parts of the body to illustrate a principle. He was explaining that a Christian should not tolerate sin as a part of his life.

If an individual has a sinful habit, he ought to totally eradicate that habit, even though the process may be as painful as losing an eye or a hand. If, for example, looking at something tempts someone to sin, he shouldn't look

at it — he should turn his eyes elsewhere. What Christ is saying is that it would be better to give up a sinful pleasure than to lose out on salvation (Col. 3:5-17).

If you would like information on overcoming sins and faults, write for our free article reprint, "How to Be an Overcomer."

How can we be certain that the days mentioned in Genesis 1 are 24 hours long? Some authorities claim these days are actually 1,000 years or more in length.

Theistic evolutionists and even some theologians make the claim to which you refer. Yet a look at the account and a simple knowledge of nature clearly shows that each day was 24 hours in length and not longer.

Consider the plants that were created on the third day of this week of re-creation. The sun did not appear until the next day. If these "days" were 1,000 years long, then the plants could not have survived, for they were without sunshine.

Also, notice that the plants were made on the third day, while insects were made on the sixth. How did certain specialized plants continue to exist for ages without their insect partners? Certain insects, including bees, wasps, butterflies and moths could not have existed without the honey- or nectar-bearing plants. Nor could these plants have existed without the insects.

The scripture plainly states, "In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth" (Ex. 20:11). And the seven-day week, each day 24 hours long, pictures the 7,000-year plan of God. Each day is symbolic of a thousand years, according to the principle in Numbers 14:34.

Each day of creation was not some long epoch, but exactly what the Scripture says, a day and night of 24 hours. Each day is an evening and a morning — that is, nighttime and daytime.

A study of this subject is available in our free article reprint, "How Long Were the Days of Creation?" Write for it. □

You've seen it happen — a marriage that, from all outward appearances, has every reason for success crumbles from within.

Sad to say, it may have happened — or be happening — in your own marriage!

A couple may be what you would consider well-off. They own a house, car and nice furniture. They have plenty of food and clothing. They are well educated and have a good job and money in the bank. They have several beautiful children.

The husband can tell his wife 10 times a day that he loves her, take her out often, help her with household chores and with the children. The wife can cook delicious meals, keep the house spotless and be a model mother. They can have an excellent sex life.

All the external, tangible quantities that one might consider necessary for a successful marriage may be present. But still the marriage fails.

Why?

Because the marriage has no substance. All these "externals" do not constitute the substance or core of marriage. They make up only the shell around it.

Have you collected shells at the seashore? If you have, you know how beautiful they can be. Yet shells are brittle. And once broken, they are almost impossible to put together again.

So is marriage without substance — without a solid core — just a brittle shell.

The shell — the externals — is what you are doing or what you possess. These things can add to physical happiness. But material things come and go. Business opportunities and jobs can suddenly be swept away. Eventually the children are going to leave home and the nest will be empty. The shell will change.

But real substance will remain. Substance is what you are and what you are becoming. Substance is the progress that husband and wife are making toward

Your Marriage-SHELL or SUBSTANCE?

What makes the difference between a solid, substantial marriage and one that is on shaky ground? Here's vital information on how you can strengthen your marriage.

By Donald L. Ward

becoming one in every aspect of their being. Substance is that quantity that, beyond everything else, they live for — where they are headed.

For true Christians, substance is the goal of always serving God, of becoming part of God's Kingdom.

Jesus Christ said that a wise man builds his house upon a rock, whereas a foolish man builds his house on the sand. The rains descend and the floods sweep along and the winds beat upon both houses, but only the house that is built on the rock stands (Matt. 7:24-27).

We who are married know that the storms of life are going to beat against our marriages. If you are not married but hope to be someday, know this: The storms of life are going to beat against yours, too.

How can we build substance in our marriages, so that even if the externals are removed — even if the shell is broken — the marriage will continue to stand, and beautifully?

Here are several steps we can take to build real substance — a

solid, lasting foundation — into our marriages.

Respect marital roles

There are concerted efforts on the part of some individuals and groups to do away with any distinctions related to gender. Yet God made a clear demarcation when He "created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:27).

God could have created a sexless human society. He made the angels sexless, after all. But God had a great purpose in creating humans both male and female.

Notice Hebrews 1:5: "For to which of the angels did He ever say: 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'?"

God's transcendent goal is to reproduce Himself! He gave humans a physical image like His spiritual image. Humans are to ultimately be born into God's Family and become spirit as God is spirit. If you have not been aware of this startling truth, request our free book, *The Incredible Human Potential*. It explains in detail man's destiny,



with biblical proof. God created mankind male and female for marriage. God is the author of marriage: "God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him'" (Gen. 2:18, Revised Standard Version).

Men and women, with their biological and psychological differences, were created in such a way that when they are joined in marriage they complement and complete each other. They both have the same marvelous human potential of becoming literal, spirit-born members of the Fami-

For true Christians, substance is the goal of always serving God, of becoming part of God's Kingdom.

ly of God. Together they form a beautiful union.

After God created woman as a help to complete the man, He ordained marriage:

"And Adam said: 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh" (verses 23-24).

Matthew 19:6 quotes Christ as saying, "Therefore what God has joined together let not man separate." So the marriage contract is not bound by man, but by God.

One step, then, to building real substance into our marriages is for both husband and wife to respect their masculine and feminine roles.

Realize the purpose for marriage

Another way to build substance in marriage is to realize and understand the purpose for which God ordained marriage and the family.

God is a family. Notice Gene-

Photo by Hal Finch

sis 1:26: "Then God said, 'Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.'" The Hebrew word for *God* in this verse is *Elohim*, a plural noun that signifies containing more than one member.

God's use of the pronouns *us* and *our* was no mistake. At that time there were two persons in the God Family, God the Father and the Word, who became Jesus Christ (John 1:1-3, 14). God ordained a family plan that will eventually allow all mankind to have an opportunity to become children in His Family.

family, we have a spiritual husband, Jesus Christ, and a spiritual mother, the Church of God. Christ is going to marry His Body, the Church, just as a husband is married to his body, his flesh, his wife (Eph. 1:22-23, Rev. 19:7).

Obey God's government

Making sure that God's government operates in our marriages and families is a major step toward building substance into them.

The structure for God's government in the family is given in

ually strive to become one in mind and spirit.

Wives, on the other hand, should understand submission; Ephesians 5:22 instructs wives to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord.

The key to submission, wives, is understanding that you are serving God, not man (Col. 3:18, 23-24). If you keep your focus on the big picture and realize that you are not just serving men, you will be able to submit with understanding.

Submission is not just blind obedience. It is a state of being — a reflection of what a woman is in her heart. A submissive woman radiates this attitude to the family: "Do not let your beauty be that outward adorning [which is, at best, a fragile shell!] . . . but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible ornament of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands" (I Pet. 3:3-5).

The key words are "trusted in God." If a woman submits as Christ has given commandment, then she is trusting in God for protection and deliverance, just as Christ submitted to death on the stake, even though He had not sinned (I Pet. 2:21-23). If her husband takes advantage of her submission, he will be judged by God — and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31)!

This does not mean that a wife should never say anything when she is being mistreated. Matthew 18:15-17 applies equally to the wife as to the husband. If she cannot be reconciled to her husband, then she should seek the aid of a second party; in most cases this should be her minister.

Nonetheless, if she will submit as Christ has commanded, she may win her husband by her conduct (I Pet. 3:1).

Practice the way of giving

Oneness in a marriage is not

Just about all marital problems stem from one partner or the other or both trying to get from the other . . . such an explosive situation certainly does not reflect the type of selfless, outgoing love . . . that should be present . . .

We must develop God's character in order to become members of God's Family. Hebrews 1:2-3 reveals that Jesus, the Son, is heir of all things and that He is the express image or character of God's person. When we are born into the Family of God, we will also be the express image of God's person.

God created, ordained and sanctified marriage and the family to reflect His spiritual Family. God's ongoing spiritual creation can be understood through the family — the physical family pictures God's spiritual Family. Family life is a God-plane relationship.

If it were not for the creation of male and female and the necessity for male and female to come together in marriage to reproduce, there would be no need for family. There would be no bond to hold society together.

God is the Father of the whole family in heaven and earth (Eph. 3:14-15). Just as there is the father role in the physical family, God is our Father in the spiritual Family. And just as there is a husband and wife in the physical

I Corinthians 11:2-3. God is the head of Christ, Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman.

Christ taught His disciples how to administer authority (Matt. 20:25-28). They were not to exercise dominion over their neighbors as the gentiles did; they were to serve their neighbors, just as Christ came to serve them. The literal meaning of the word *neighbor* is "the one nearest you." Our wives or husbands are the ones nearest us.

Ephesians 5:25 gives specific instructions to husbands: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it." The husband, then, who wants to exercise authority as Christ did will give himself in service to his wife. He should, symbolically, lay down his life for her. How?

The husband, as the spiritual leader, should always strive to make peace and to create an environment in which God's way of life can flourish. When things go wrong it is his responsibility to initiate the reconciliation process. Husband and wife should contin-

produced simply by a man and a woman repeating the marriage vows. Unity is produced by husband and wife obeying God's instructions on loving their neighbor as themselves.

As Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong has said, just about all marital problems stem from one partner or the other or both trying to *get* from the other — expressing a selfish attitude. Some couples are able to maintain a precarious balance as long as each mate feels that he or she is getting as much as he or she is giving, but such an explosive situation certainly does not reflect the type of selfless, outgoing love and concern that should be present in a marriage.

Matthew 5:9 says, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Nothing pleases God more than His children being at one with Him and their neighbors.

Psalms 133:1 expresses God's pleasure in unity: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Husbands and wives must never forget that they are neighbors.

Nothing will give husbands and wives any more satisfaction and pleasure than dwelling together in peace. Peace and unity should be the goal.

When you go to bed at night and reflect on the events of the day and you know you are at peace with your wife, your children and your neighbors, you experience a deep joy. You may be sick or your family may be in great physical distress, but if you are at one with God and neighbor, God will supply the courage and resolve to gain the victory over trial and tribulation.

Husbands are instructed in Ephesians 5:28-29 to "nourish and cherish" their wives. The most important nourishment that a husband can provide for his family is spiritual. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). Husbands should take the lead in encouraging family Bible study

and prayer and activities that please God.

Another kind of nourishment is physical. Men should be the physical providers for their families (1 Tim. 5:8).

Men derive much of their sense of worth from their jobs. And, though many today want to deprecate true femininity, women feel most fulfilled in being what God created them to be — helpers of man. The man is supposed to cherish his wife and praise her for her help and for being a virtuous woman (Prov. 31:10-31). Of course, the wife must strive to be a virtuous woman.

In 1 Corinthians 7:4, Paul writes: "The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does." Husbands and wives belong to each other. They are to become one literally in physical intercourse and one spiritually by obeying Christ's instructions on loving each other.

Master the art of communication

Another key to building substance in marriage is mastering the art of communication.

Husbands and wives should be best friends. Marriage is not a master-slave relationship. In John 15:15, Christ said: "No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you." Husbands and wives should be constantly communicating with each other and building their friendship.

Hebrews 13:16 refers to communication as a sacrifice that pleases God, and God wants us to become living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1). It requires time and effort to communicate with our mates. It is often much easier to simply withdraw into the recesses of our own minds — turn off and ignore everything around us. But this is a selfish approach. Couples should talk.

Notice how important commu-

nication between God's children really is:

"Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" (Mal. 3:16-17, Authorized Version).

Are you and your husband or wife in this special book of God's — are you going to become His jewels? How much do you really communicate with each other?

Stay close to God

The most important step overall to building substance in marriage is staying close to God. This means maintaining oneness of purpose — and that purpose is serving God with all your being and preparing for positions of leadership and service in the coming Kingdom of God.

Staying close to God also requires constant repentance. Nearly all marital problems spring from breaking spiritual laws. We must repent, become more deeply converted and humble ourselves as little children so God can live in our marriages. We need to pray as David prayed for a clean heart and a right spirit (Ps. 51:10).

Is your marriage all that it could be — that it should be? If not, start right now to put your marriage aright. Humble yourselves before God and repent of your mistakes. God will help you: "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up" (Jas. 4:10).

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6).

The storms of today's world that beat so heavily on marriage can be weathered. Our homes and our marriages can be filled with the fruits of God's Spirit if we will build on the rock. □

Where Your Treasure Is

By John A. Halford

Every year at this time — by April 15, to be exact — people living in the United States have to file their income tax with the Internal Revenue Service.

It is becoming quite a complicated business. There are so many forms to fill in and so many regulations to consider!

I, for one, have given up trying to figure my taxes out for myself. I seek the help of a professional tax consultant.

The man I go to is genuinely concerned for the financial health of his clients. Part of his service is to offer advice and to point out mistakes

that he feels are being made. And so, as he leafs through the bundle of forms and receipts that I have collected through the year, the interview usually goes something like this:

"You gave a lot to your church this year, didn't you?" he asks.

"I suppose it does look like that," I agree.

(Perhaps I should explain to readers outside the United States that, unlike most countries, the United States does permit contributions to churches and charities to be deducted from taxable income. Consequently, most members and co-workers find it advantageous to report their

tithes and offerings on their tax returns.)

"Now, I see that you don't have a lot of interest from savings and investments," my tax consultant will continue.

"No, I don't."

"Well," he will say, "this is none of my business, really, but have you considered that perhaps you could still give regular contributions to your church, and also start building a portfolio of sound investments for yourself?"

I always thank him for his advice. But how can I explain that my family simply can't afford to meet our responsibility to God's Work and still have large amounts left over to put into real estate, precious metals, diamonds, art treasures or any one of the dazzling array of money market funds, retirement accounts and tax shelters that are available?

And how do I explain that we do have an investment — and that we do not feel we are being financially irresponsible when we continue to give what must seem to him like vast amounts to the Work of God? The problem with my investment is that I've got nothing on paper and it is hard to calculate the interest.

The safest investment

But I *do* have a sound investment portfolio, and if you are a member or co-worker of the Work of God, so do you. It is actually the safest investment of all. It may not be

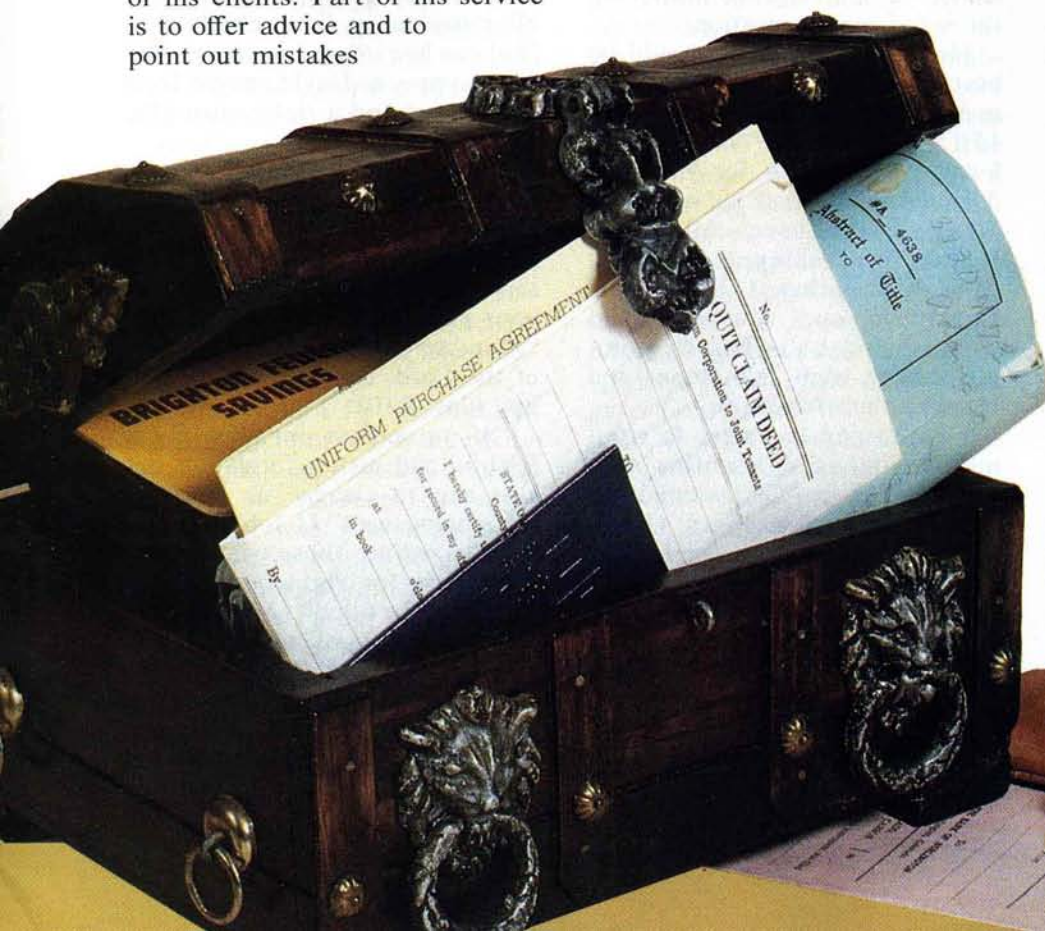


Photo by G.A. Belluche, Jr.

backed up by the resources of a successful company or government securities. But better still, it is guaranteed by the Kingdom of God.

Now, this is not an article about tithing. Most readers who have read this far are probably already deeply committed to paying God His tithes and offerings.

But, did you ever stop to think that the money you contribute is not simply given away? God invests it for you. Not in some ethereal, intangible way, either. And best of all, in these uncertain times, it is an investment that is absolutely without risk.

Many people with money to invest are looking for safety. But what is safe? Jesus warned about putting too much faith in physical investments, where "moth and rust destroy" (Matt. 6:19). "Valuable shares" became worthless overnight when the Great Depression started in 1929.

Ezekiel prophesied of a time when those with precious metals will be ready to throw them away, for their gold will not be able to save or feed them (Ezek. 7:19-20). Governments have been known to confiscate property in times of national emergency. And you can't eat a painting, however much it is worth.

Of course, it is not wrong to have investments like these. The Bible nowhere condemns wealth, providing it is honestly come by and properly used. Christ showed that investment was a sound principle for those who have the means. The unprofitable servant was criticized for not investing his resources in order to show some profit (Matt. 25:24-27).

But let's face it: Most of you reading this magazine are not millionaires. God calls His people from the "poor of this world rich in faith" (Jas. 2:5, Authorized Version). And when those "rich in faith" have faithfully met their financial responsibilities to the Kingdom of God, there is not usually much left over for other investments.

But do you think of your

investment in the Kingdom of God as a major asset — one that even the wealthiest of men, if they really understood, would truly covet?

A major asset

One of Christ's disciples once went to Christ with a financial problem — his brother was refusing to share a family inheritance with him (Luke 12:13).

Christ refused to become involved in a family dispute (verse 14), but instead explained how a Christian should look at true financial security.

First, Jesus showed the folly of trusting too much in material prosperity (verses 16-20). To concentrate on laying up physical treasures for yourself is not sound financial planning, explained Jesus (verse 21).

He went on to show how the things that God created in the animal and plant kingdoms never show anxiety about the future, but God always provides for them (verses 24-28). And yet these things are only parts of a temporary, physical creation. Of how much more value are human beings, made in God's image?

Then Christ told His people not to become preoccupied with physical needs while they were qualifying for their places in His Kingdom. Christ's followers were not even to let themselves become of "anxious mind" about them (verse 29). These things, said Jesus, are the things that the nations of the world are constantly worried about, but not His people (verse 30).

The nations of the world are not rich toward God. And so, today, they are getting themselves further into economic quicksand. Major countries totter on the brink of bankruptcy. Their citizens have to constantly seek "what they shall eat and drink." Efforts to get out of the mess only lead to worse chaos.

But the Kingdom of God is not in a financial mess. Jesus Christ has adequate resources to meet His commitments, for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness"

(Ps. 24:1). Certainly, the budget for God's Work on earth gets a bit tight from time to time. But, Christ does not need tithes and offerings in order for His projects to survive and flourish. He simply allows the financial health of His Work on earth to reflect the commitment and generosity of His people, for our own good. He knows that our hearts will be where our treasure is (Luke 12:34).

If our treasure is in the Kingdom of God and its Work, our hearts will be there as well.

An investment in God's Kingdom

How does an investment in God's Kingdom work? Like any other investment.

When you buy shares in a company, the management uses your money to purchase machinery and raw materials, hire labor or whatever they need to make their product. If the company is successful, your shares are worth more, and if you were to sell the shares, you would make a profit. Of course, if the company fails or someone embezzles the money, your shares become worthless, and you lose your money.

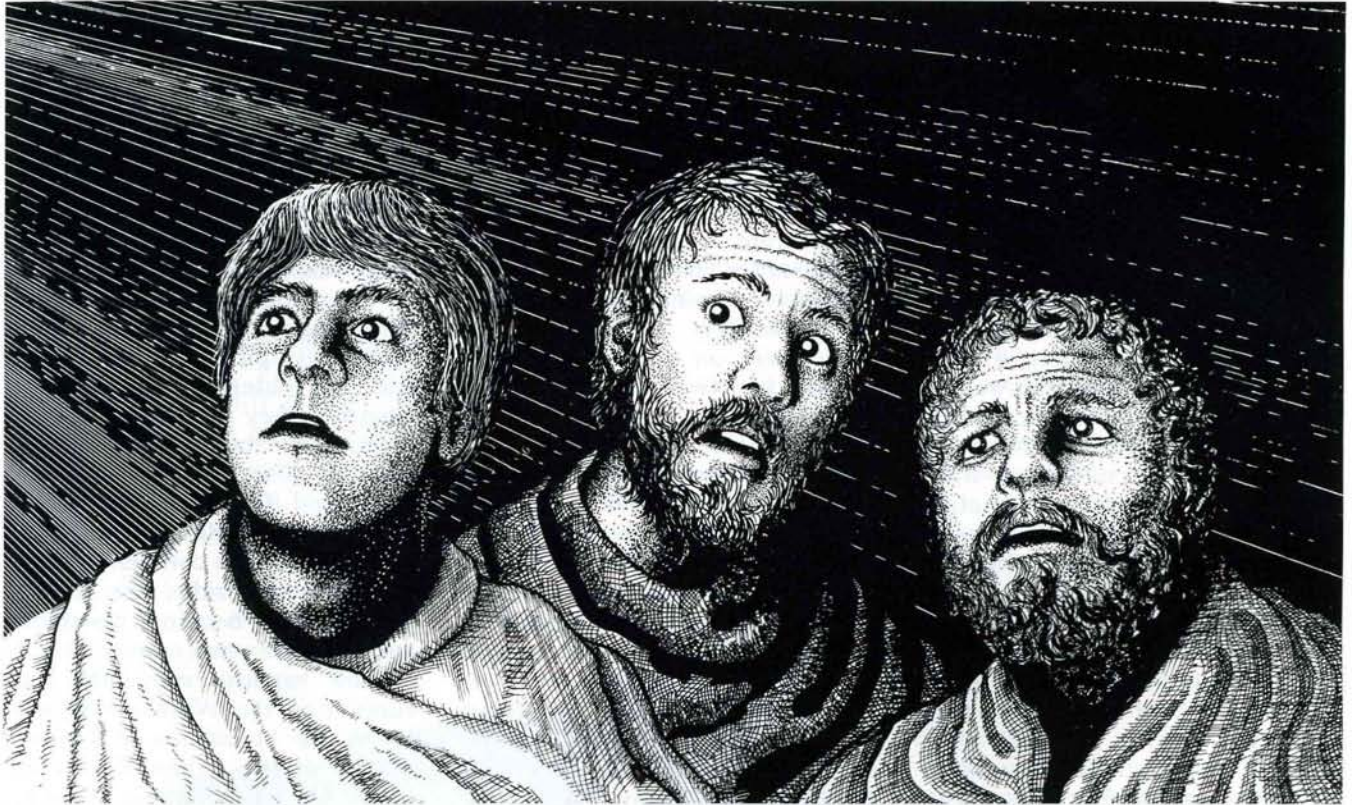
Now suppose you have been supporting the Work — literally laying up "treasures in heaven" (Matt. 6:20). When Christ returns, He has promised to richly reward those who have helped lay the groundwork of His world-ruling Kingdom through their tithes, offerings and prayers and by overcoming their human nature so that they are fit to rule.

Those rewards will be very tangible — ruling in a position of authority and service over several cities. That reward is certain. It is, at this moment, reserved in heaven for you (1 Pet. 1:4).

No one can steal it. Like a diamond that you keep in a safe-deposit box in a bank, you don't actually have your hands on it. But it's there, a real asset, in the safest of all safe deposits. It will be yours when you are qualified to receive it, along with the free

(Continued on page 25)

STORIES FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT



Chapter 16

An Amazing Vision

By Shirley King Johnson

Jesus moved on to Caesarea Philippi. As Jesus walked with the 12 disciples one morning, He asked them a question. "Who do people say that I am?" (Matt. 16:13, Mark 8:27, Luke 9:18).

"Some say you're John the Baptist," ventured one of the disciples.

"Some think you're Elijah or Jeremiah," added another, his eyebrows going up in a questioning expression.

Jesus smiled. "What about you? Who do you say I am?"

Peter gave an enthusiastic reply. "You're the Christ, the Son of the living God!"

Jesus' true identity

"You are blessed, Simon Peter," said

Peter, James and John froze in amazed interest as they watched Jesus, His body enveloped in shimmering light, speaking, in vision, with Moses and Elijah.

Jesus began to disclose details of His coming death . . . Peter shook a finger . . . "Don't say that, Lord! Nothing like that will happen to you!" Turning . . . Jesus shook His head vigorously. "Get behind me, Satan!"

Jesus, nodding His head. "Human reasoning did not convince you of that, but my Father gave you understanding. Let me tell you something. You are Peter (a little rock), and upon this rock (Petra) I will build my Church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. I'll give you the keys of the Kingdom. Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. My authority backs you.

"I must caution you," Jesus added. He looked around to include them all. "Do not tell outsiders that I am the Christ."

Jesus began to disclose details of His coming death in Jerusalem. He exhorted the disciples to not despair over His death, because after lying three days and three nights in the tomb, He would be resurrected. Sensitive Peter shook a finger as if he were reprimanding an errant schoolboy. "Don't say that, Lord! Nothing like that will happen to you!"

Turning to Peter, Jesus shook His head vigorously. "Get behind me, Satan!" He said firmly, raising His voice. "You are an offense to me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men." Then Jesus explained that all the things that would happen to Him were necessary as part of God's plan for man's salvation.

Take up your cross

The crowd that normally collected wherever Jesus went had begun to hurry into the area, and He sat down to wait for them to assemble.

"If you want to come after me," He began, after the people were settled, "deny yourself. Take up your cross, and follow me. Shoulder your trials and daily problems and overcome them.

"Whoever desires to save his life will lose it," Jesus continued, "but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. What good is your life if you spend it on physical pursuits? How will you profit if you gain the whole world and lose out on your ultimate potential? Give your all for my sake and the Gospel's, and you'll have eternal life."

He paused, surveying the faces in the crowd before Him. Men, women and children from the surrounding towns sat quietly, awed by His presence and reputation. But few grasped the meaning of His words.

The disciples had formed a semicircle immediately before Him and He glanced to them occasionally as He spoke. "The Son of Man will come in the glory of the Father with a company of angels, and will reward every man for what he has done. Believe me, there are some standing here who will not taste death until after they see the Son of Man coming in glory."

An exclusive invitation

Six days later, Jesus and the disciples were resting near a bubbling spring in the shade of tall cedars that covered the mountain slopes of the area. The disciples had laid out a simple meal of bread, cheese, figs and dates. Jesus excused Himself and called Peter aside.

"I'm going up on the mountain. I'd like you to come along."

"Yes, sir."

"Please ask James and John to follow us."

"Yes, Lord. What about the rest of the fellows?"

Jesus shook His head. "They can wait here. Come along."

Turning, He started up the slope with a

Jesus' face seemed as bright as the sun, and His clothes were a brilliant, sparkling white. Choking back a frightened gasp, Peter . . . tried to slow the thumping of his heart. He gulped in a deep breath.

steady gait, on a route that led steadily upward among trees and boulders. He heard Peter, James and John following on the path He had chosen. They were having an earnest discussion about something. Jesus smiled. Young John, who could be so loving, could also become amazingly out of sorts with his brother and Peter when it came to the question of who would be greatest in the Kingdom.

As they drew near the mountain's round summit, the last red streaks in the sky began to fade into purple. Finding a sheltered area where a cluster of cedars grew at an angle against a craggy boulder, Jesus knelt to pray. Peter, James and John knelt a short distance away.

A soft wind sighed in the upper branches of the trees and Peter wrapped his cloak around him. Resettling himself, he saw that Jesus was gazing upward in rapt concentration. Bowing his head, Peter tried to pray. James and John exchanged whispers.

Then there was silence, except for the sighing of the branches as the wind tossed them fitfully in the dark sky.

Christ is transfigured

Peter, feeling chilled, pulled his sandaled feet in under his cloak. He felt sleepy. Then he felt an elbow jab his side and he opened his eyes.

John was kneeling beside him. "Look!" he whispered.

Turning his head, Peter saw that Jesus was standing a few yards away, His body enveloped in glittering brightness. Jesus' face seemed as bright as the sun, and His clothes were a brilliant, sparkling white.

Choking back a frightened gasp, Peter pulled his cloak over his head to keep out the brilliance. But after several moments,

he dared peep out again. John still knelt at his side, staring at the radiant figure, more amazed and interested than frightened. Peter tried to slow the thumping of his heart. He gulped in a deep breath.

More brilliance flooded the mountain-side as two bright figures — two men — appeared beside Jesus. One of the men was Moses, who had delivered God's law to Israel. And with him was Elijah, one of God's great prophets and teachers. The three — Jesus, Moses and Elijah — talked together in low voices. Peter strained forward and heard them discussing Christ's coming death at Jerusalem (Matt. 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36).

The vision began to fade and Peter arose shakily from his knees. He spoke to Jesus, his mouth dry and his tongue thick. "Lord, it's good that we are here. Let's put up three tabernacles — one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." Dazed, Peter didn't know what he was saying.

But Jesus made no reply to Peter's suggestion. As He stood alone, His apparel began to slowly lose its luster.

Suddenly a cloud appeared, engulfing them all and frightening Peter, James and John. Then a voice spoke out of the cloud: "This is my beloved Son. Hear Him!"

At the sound of that supernatural voice, Peter, James and John dropped to the ground again. Going to them, Jesus comforted them and told them not to be afraid.

As they left the area, Jesus explained that what they had seen was a vision of God's coming Kingdom, fulfilling His promise that some would "see the Son of Man coming in glory." But He also warned them to tell no one of the vision until after His resurrection. □

Catholics

(Continued from page 1)

generosity, selfishness, competition and scheming to outwit other cows.

The human spirit added to human brain imparts power to KNOW, to THINK and REASON, to LOVE, LIKE or dislike, of purpose and will.

When Satan deceived mother Eve, and she and Adam obeyed Satan, disobeying God, SOMETHING HAPPENED TO THEIR MINDS. The ATTITUDE of SELF-CENTEREDNESS, hostility, competition, jealousy, envy, self-esteem and vanity entered them.

But how, then, did this vain and hostile attitude enter all mankind after them?

Satan is the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). He surcharges the air with this vain and hostile attitude.

Just as sounds, words and pictures are transmitted through the air into television sets, so Satan transmits evil ATTITUDES through the air.

These negative attitudes enter the minds of babies during the first months of human life. A child under 1 year already has an attitude of selfishness, rebellion, hostility against authority.

God's Spirit imparts spiritual understanding

When Adam made his decision, God CLOSED OFF the Holy Spirit from humanity UNTIL the coming of Christ, the second Adam, to pay the death penalty incurred by all humans by their sins. Thus, it was only through Christ that the human death penalty could be removed from humans. This penalty incurred by SIN had separated every sinner from access to God and His Holy Spirit.

But by the death of Christ, upon repentance and faith, a human now can be reconciled to God, who has eternal LIFE to give. This opens up to repentant sinners access to God and His Holy Spirit.

The Spirit-begotten child of

God has direct contact with God. Through Christ as the Word and Spokesman of God, God may now reveal SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE, and through the Holy Spirit in the Spirit-begotten Christian, he can UNDERSTAND spiritual knowledge.

But there are in the world millions of professing Christians who never fully surrendered to God, never fully believed Christ — believed what He says through the Bible. They are like those who "believed ON Christ," but did not believe Christ (John 8:30-45).

THEY PROFESS to be Christians, but do not have the Holy Spirit. They are not LED BY the Spirit of God (see Romans 8:14) and therefore are NOT truly begotten sons of God, nor do they rightly UNDERSTAND the Bible — which is what Christ SAYS — for it is the Word of God in writing as Christ is the Word in person.

Such professing Christians are always trying to water down Christ's teachings. They become LIBERAL, always straying farther and farther from God's TRUTH. They do not hunger for God's righteousness, but only this world's ways.

They know not HOW GOD DEFINES SIN!

Sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4). The law of God is a SPIRITUAL, not a physical, law (Rom. 7:14). The natural mind with its one human spirit cannot UNDERSTAND spiritual knowledge — cannot UNDERSTAND what is SIN.

Under the Old Covenant, God gave Israel His spiritual law, the Ten Commandments. But they never could UNDERSTAND that spiritual law, nor obey it IN THE SPIRIT. Some obeyed it to some extent "in the letter," but not in the spirit or obvious INTENT of the law.

To understand what I mean, notice II Corinthians 3:6. Paul says we, under the NEW Testament, are ministers, NOT of the strict letter of the law as they were under the Old Testament, but of the SPIRIT. We now have the Holy Spirit by which we may discern the very SPIRIT, or

OBVIOUS INTENT, of God's spiritual law, which defines SIN.

Jesus also explained this, in His Sermon on the Mount, speaking to His NEW Testament disciples.

In Old Testament times, by the strictness of the letter, one had not committed adultery except in the physical act. But in the NEW Testament, the SPIRIT or obvious intent of the law is violated when a man even lusts after a woman in his mind by looking at her.

Under the strict, specific letter, one had not murdered until the victim was dead. But he violated the spirit of the law if he even hated his brother in his mind.

How we recognize sin

The early first-century, Ephesian-era Church received its teachings and doctrines from the apostles. The Philadelphia era has been led back on the track of God's TRUTH through Christ's apostle.

WHY do we recognize smoking as sin? Because Christ led His apostle to see it violated the obvious spiritual INTENT and PRINCIPLE of the law.

The law is summed up in one word, LOVE. It is expanded into the two great laws, love to God and love to neighbor. The same principle expands into the TEN Commandments. It is outflowing love.

Smoking does not express love toward either God or neighbor, but lust or self-desire injurious to self.

WHY do people smoke? To follow the world, for injurious self-enjoyment, to be like the world and do as the world does.

Why do women use cosmetics and "make up the face"? For vanity, or because they follow the world and want the world to think they are "one of them," or are afraid of what those of the world (Satan's world) would think of them — to be one of the world or please the world.

It violates the SPIRIT or obvious principle of the spiritual law of God, and is SIN!

Yet some women professing to be members of God's Church wear makeup when they know

they will be seen by the world, yet take it off when coming to Church services. When shopping they are part of the world and then they pretend to be part of the Church at services, when God's people will not see the colored dirt on their faces.

But GOD sees them both times, and HE through Christ is the JUDGE, and they ARE BEING JUDGED RIGHT NOW! And if they sin willfully — !

We must overcome

Now what is the connection between this and the new code of universal law to govern all Catho-

nized with escalating crime, violence and satanic UNrighteousness.

Now even the Roman Catholic Church, in order to keep alive in an immoral and unrighteous world, is relaxing and giving people what they like to call "their rights."

That same tendency was creeping into God's Church, especially between 1972 and 1978. But in 1979, Christ, through His apostle, recovering from total heart failure, began putting GOD's Church back on the track.

TIME IS NOW RUNNING OUT ON US! Jesus said, As it was in the

The moral and spiritual trend in the world is toward more liberalism — more permissiveness. . . . Now even the Roman Catholic Church . . . is relaxing and giving people what they like to call "their rights."

lics? Just this: Two different churches are foretold and pictured in the book of Revelation. One is a great and powerful church — largest religion in the world — the Roman Catholic and her daughter Protestants. The other is the small persecuted Church, GOD's Church, called by His name.

The new code of universal law to govern Catholics is a very definite trend of liberalism — watering down former codes — in conformity with the liberal trend of the world.

Newsweek magazine headlines it "A CATHOLIC BILL OF RIGHTS." The newsmagazine *Time* headlines it "EASING THE RULE OF LAW," with a subhead, "The Pope issues a new and more flexible code for Catholics."

The moral and spiritual trend in the world is toward more liberalism — more permissiveness. A well-known leader in one nation is quoted in the press saying the virtual raw pornography "X-rated" movies should be accepted as part of "growing up"! — growing up into more immorality, accompa-

nied with escalating crime, violence and satanic UNrighteousness.

days of Noah, so will it be just before the coming of Christ to rule (Luke 17:26). The world before the Flood was rampant with immorality and violence.

But the Word of God says that when Christ comes, His WIFE (this Church) shall have made herself READY spiritually to be changed into holy and righteous IMMORTALITY — that is IMMORTAL — not immoral.

I cannot believe that any man will rise in the air, changed into a GOD-Being, with a cigarette in his mouth, or a woman with a made-up, painted face. Some few members might think that over, and take a look into God's mirror (see James 1:23-25), seeing the dirt on one's face, and going on even further in sin.

Yes, time is running out on us, brethren. Look into that mirror of God's law, then go to your knees and PRAY for God's forgiveness, mercy and HELP in OVERCOMING. And while you are praying, pray for others in the Church — pray for the whole Church — and please pray for me also, as I pray for you! □

Inherit

(Continued from page 3)

our small tasks, we can be used to help millions find lasting happiness and fulfillment later.

Then — an eternity of accomplishment

At the end of the Millennium, God will begin to put the entire universe back on track. The planets are now pockmarked and broken as a result of Satan's rebellion (Isa. 14:12-14, Luke 10:18).

(For more information about Satan's origin, write for a free copy of one of Mr. Armstrong's newest booklets, *Did God Create a Devil?*)

But God will renew the face of the cosmos. Just think of all those billions of galaxies, each containing billions of stars and planets, awaiting the manifestation of the sons of God (Rom. 8:19). And what about all those empty spaces? God has not yet told us what will be done with them. But consider the possibilities!

God's true people are heirs to all things (Rev. 21:7). It is our incredible and undeserved privilege that God is inviting us to join His Family. God has a tremendous desire to see each of us in His Kingdom.

God is so concerned for us that even the hairs on our heads are numbered (Matt. 10:30). But He will not reduce the qualifying standards. God will not do for us the things we can do for ourselves.

We have to be the ones to wield the tools that He gives us. For example, God will not lift us out of bed in the morning and cook breakfast for us. We have to be up and accomplishing with the tools, physical and spiritual, He gives us for the asking.

We hold our destiny in our own hands. How we choose to pass through this life will determine whether we pass through the galaxies.

If we are faithful now in our tiny tasks, we will be changed into spirit beings at the return of Jesus Christ and given rulership

of this world (Rev. 2:26, 3:21). Not dependent on food and water, we will be equipped to eventually move across space, eternally expanding God's government.

"Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end" (Isa. 9:7).

Today, we must rule inner space — that difficult small space between our two ears. Outer space comes later.

Remember this: Only a tiny proportion of our life span needs to be spent human. A few decades of toil, trouble and trial is a small price for an eternity of productive happiness ruling the cosmos.

Qualify, and billions of years into the future we will look back on this life with a different perspective.

We will recall that God was doing a Work here and we had the honor to be part of that work. Nothing else will matter — not even the most severe problem that troubles you now.

In times yet future, when others ask how you qualified to be among the supreme, firstfruit members of God's Family, they won't want an exhaustive commentary of all the nitty-gritty of your life. It won't matter to them how much you owned or consumed. How big or small your bank account was will be of no significance then. Whether you lived in a palace or a thatched hut will be of no concern. It won't even matter, eons from now, whether you were an athlete bounding through this short life or were physically incapacitated and had to painfully grope your way to God's Kingdom (Rom. 8:18).

In the ages to come, when they ask how you qualified to become a galaxy-ruling God, it will be enough — and more than enough — to turn to them and simply say:

"I served with Herbert W. Armstrong and God's people during the Philadelphia era of God's Church on earth. I was on the team. I did whatever I could to help Christ's chosen apostle finish the great commission." □

Your Treasure

(Continued from page 19)

gift of eternal life. In Luke 16:12, Christ describes this reward you are qualifying for as "your own." Someone with a reward reserved in heaven has a real asset — a valuable investment. (How do I explain that to my tax man?)

Priceless dividends now

But a sound investment does not only have a long-term payoff — it pays a dividend now. Each year, a successful company sends its shareholders an amount of money based on the company's amount of profit and the number of shares investors own.

So does our spiritual investment — only the Kingdom of God does better than that. God provides us now with things that money can't buy. Notice what Christ taught when another of His disciples started worrying about the future:

"We have left all and followed You," said Peter (Mark 10:28).

Jesus interrupted him: "There is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold *now in this time* — houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions — and in the age to come, eternal life" (verses 29-30).

This, then, is the dividend of the Kingdom of God. Your commitment may mean persecution, the loss of some physical assets and perhaps even being hated by some family members. But, through the Church, you can still have all those things: genuine friends, homes where you feel welcome, peace of mind and real hope for the future.

Read Malachi 3:10. God promises to reward those who support His Work by opening the "windows of heaven" and pouring "out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it."

God has so much more to offer

than just material, physical blessings. How do you place a cash value on healing, peace of mind and knowing there is a purpose in your life? What would you exchange for your understanding of God's truth? Christ likened it to a pearl of great price, for which an investor was willing to liquidate all his other investments just to be able to purchase (Matt. 13:45-46).

Guaranteed by God

God takes a personal interest in the welfare of each of His "shareholders."

Fortunately, at the moment, most of God's people are not destitute. They live in countries where they are able to survive adequately. They don't yet have to live from hand to mouth.

But in the terrible times ahead, when conventional wealth is meaningless, your investment in the Kingdom of God will really begin to show its value. Don't expect God to keep you in luxury while the world falls apart. But He will take care of those who obey Him, who "seek first the kingdom" (Matt. 6:33).

Sooner or later, all of us will have to rely on God for the necessities of life. Don't worry, though. As Solomon pointed out in Ecclesiastes 7:14, "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider."

If you are blessed with some physical investments and assets at the moment, be thankful for them. But make sure that you don't neglect to build an investment portfolio in heaven, as well. These physical things may help for a while, but your treasure reserved in heaven will never let you down. You never have to worry about it being stolen (although you can lose it!). While it is reserved for you, it is steadily increasing in value.

And if that investment in heaven is the only major asset you have, don't worry. It is the best of all securities, guaranteed by God. You have no long-term financial worries. And you don't have to have an "anxious mind" about the short-term, either. □

A New Look at Vision

Vision is a critical ingredient in any success — especially that of a true Christian. Here are several important aspects of vision.

By Steven Botha

In 1803 U.S. President Thomas Jefferson proved he was a leader with vision. With tremendous foresight, he saw the value of making the agreement that has become known as the Louisiana Purchase.

The Louisiana territory included the city of New Orleans and the area west of the Mississippi River, extending to the eastern spurs of the Rocky Mountains and to the British frontier of the north.

Opponents said the purchase price was too much to spend on such a territory. There were those who complained that the people

would all that land ever be, anyway, they asked.

President Jefferson was able to look beyond the apparent obstacles and see the future potential of this transaction. And history has certainly vindicated his decision! From our vantage point we all have to agree that the Louisiana Purchase was the finest act of Jefferson's term as President of the United States.

It takes vision to be a true success as the president of a nation, or in any other leadership role. It also takes vision to be a success as a human being.

Wise King Solomon understood this fact. He said, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18, Authorized Version).

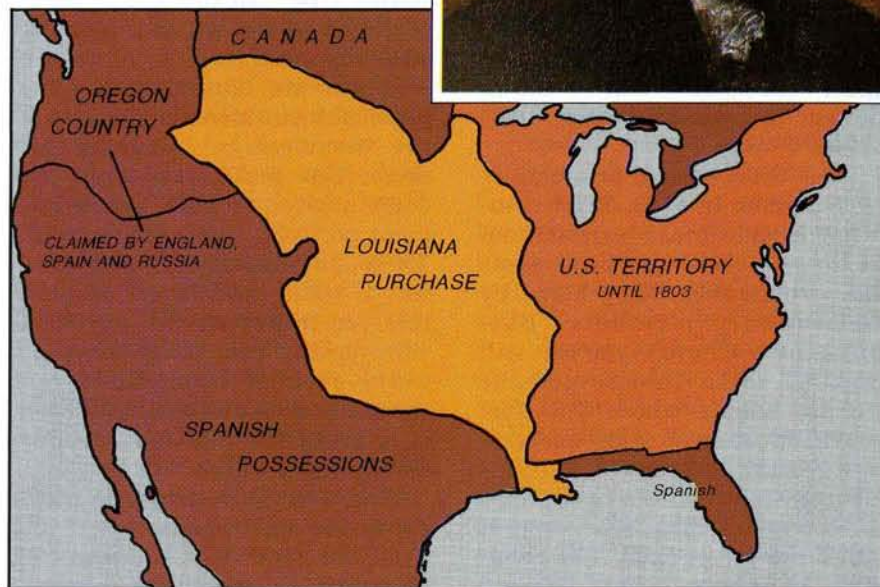
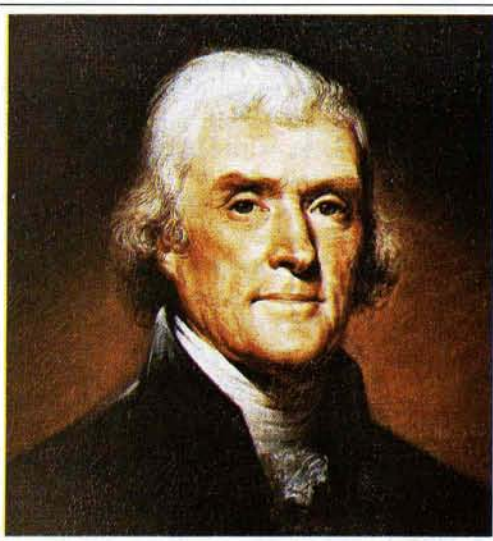
As God's people we need to understand the importance of having vision in our lives. So let's take a good look at vision. In fact, let's take a *new* look at vision.

Hindsight

Hindsight is the ability to look back and learn from the past.

It has been said that history repeats itself. That's because people don't learn the lessons of previous mistakes.

For example, consider marriage failures. A young man or woman marries only to find that he or she has nothing in common with the spouse. Their personalities clash violently, and the union dissolves. Yet those very people



Acquired from France for \$15 million, the Louisiana area nearly doubled the size of U.S. territorial holdings.

who lived in the area had strange customs, and that Americans would have difficulty getting along with them. And what use

will, many times, go on to marry other people who are similar to their previous spouses.

Or take employment. Some people have perpetual difficulty holding on to a job. They constantly bounce from one job to the next. It is easy to write such a situation off as "bad luck" or another "unfair" boss. But such people would do better to ask themselves what they have done to contribute to the situation. Did they slack off? Were they continually late or always leaving early? How easy was it for others to get along with them?

Paul tells us that we must look at the past and gain from those experiences.

Of the activities of ancient Israel, he says, "Now these things became our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted" (I Cor. 10:6).

The message is clear. Not only can you look at your own past and learn, but you can look at the lives of other human beings and gain significantly. Look at past mistakes — yours or others — see what brought them about, and don't repeat them.

Overview

As the old proverb says, sometimes we are "so close to the trees that we can't see the forest." It's important to get the big picture in any situation. That's what overview is.

Gather as much information as possible. See how an event in your life fits into the overall purpose of your existence. Base your view on God's master plan as revealed in the Bible. Base all of the decisions you make on God's law.

This is difficult to do. When faced with a crisis or an important decision, it's easy to be highly emotional and, as a result, not very objective. In this situation counsel can be of great value.

Solomon said, "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety" (Prov. 11:14).

If you are faced with a decision involving, for example, the pur-

chase of a used car, it would be best not to rely entirely on the counsel given by the used-car salesman. Acquire additional information. Ask a qualified automobile mechanic to inspect the vehicle for you.

Solomon adds one more pearl of wisdom to the subject when he said, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise" (Prov. 12:15).

There is a temptation to ignore counsel you may have received because it wasn't what you wanted to hear — it wasn't what you wanted to do about a situation. But don't ignore counsel, because it will help you gain an overview of a situation.

Insight

Insight is the capacity to get to the crux of the matter. It involves cutting through the fog — setting aside all peripheral matters and going to the heart of a situation. God's Holy Spirit gives true Christians insight into how life should be lived.

A young man of considerable means once came to Christ and asked, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" (Matt. 19:16).

Jesus could have waxed eloquent — given endless lists of dos and don'ts. But Christ cut straight to the core of the matter. He went to the trunk of the tree and answered, "If you want to enter into life, keep the commandments" (verse 17).

Christ stated unequivocally that obedience to God is the focal point of true Christianity. It is the way that leads to everlasting life.

The young man's response is interesting: "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" (verse 20). He really did not comprehend the magnitude of what Christ was telling him. This became more evident from what happened next (verses 21-22).

God Almighty was not the only true God in this man's life. Wealth had become his god, and he was unable to part with it to become Christ's disciple. Wealth

had obscured his vision. He had no insight.

Foresight

Foresight is the ability to look ahead, to anticipate.

Christ admonished His followers, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. 6:33). Christ said God's Kingdom and God's righteousness should be paramount in all our lives.

The Bible record shows that those who focused their lives on God's Kingdom were the true successes. We are told, for instance, how Abraham "waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb. 11:10).

Luke 23, describing what happened just after the brutal torture and hideous death of Jesus, gives us the striking example of Joseph of Arimathea. Verses 50 and 51 tell us Joseph was "a good and just man . . . who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God."

This Joseph made arrangements for Jesus' burial while everyone else, including the apostles, was completely shaken. When most of Jesus' intimate friends had fled, Joseph of Arimathea maintained a dignified calm. He had an understanding of the purpose and plan of God. He had foresight.

So also did all the great champions of God, from Abel to the prophets and on down to the present. You can read about many of these heroes in Hebrews 11. They all had vision and faith.

You, too, can have this kind of confidence — this assurance. If you have not read Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong's book *The Incredible Human Potential* or the booklet *Why Were You Born?*, please request copies.

Vision is extremely important in the lives of all human beings, and especially right now in the lives of Christians. Whether it be hindsight, overview, insight or foresight, without these key ingredients of vision, there can be no lasting success. □

sharing...

ISN'T IT ABOUT TIME?

By Darris L. McNeely

"Dost thou love life? Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of."

So went one of the maxims in *Poor Richard's Almanac*, published by Benjamin Franklin. And a wise maxim it is!

Do you realize how fragile and temporary this physical existence is? Do you really appreciate life? Are you fully using your time for accomplishment, or are you wasting the days, thinking life will go on forever?

There's another old saying that "time waits for no man" — and how true it is!

When someone is suddenly gone, we think more seriously about life and death. The death of a famous personality — Princess Grace of Monaco or Arthur Rubinstein, for example — or, especially, the loss of someone very close is a reminder that life is "a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (Jas. 4:14).

But why should it always take a brush with tragedy to make us stop and think about life and how suddenly it can evaporate?

King David's observation about his own life

should help us realize what a fine line we walk in today's world. After Saul had made an attempt on his life, David was forced to go into hiding. While devising a strategy with his friend Jonathan, the young man who had fought lions and faced Goliath remarked, "As the Lord lives and as your soul lives, there is but a step between me and death" (I Sam. 20:3). David well understood how brief life could be.

But what's the point of all this for members and co-workers of God's Church? Just this: Life can quickly evaporate while we procrastinate about accomplishing the important matters of Christian living.

A unique opportunity

God's people are the most blessed group in today's world, because they know the purpose of human existence. The rest of the world, in its blinded state, does not know why life exists.

Today, the real purpose of life is actually kept from the world

and is revealed only to those called by God. Because of this knowledge, judgment is now on the house of God (I Pet. 4:17)! The knowledge of the true purpose of life includes much responsibility.

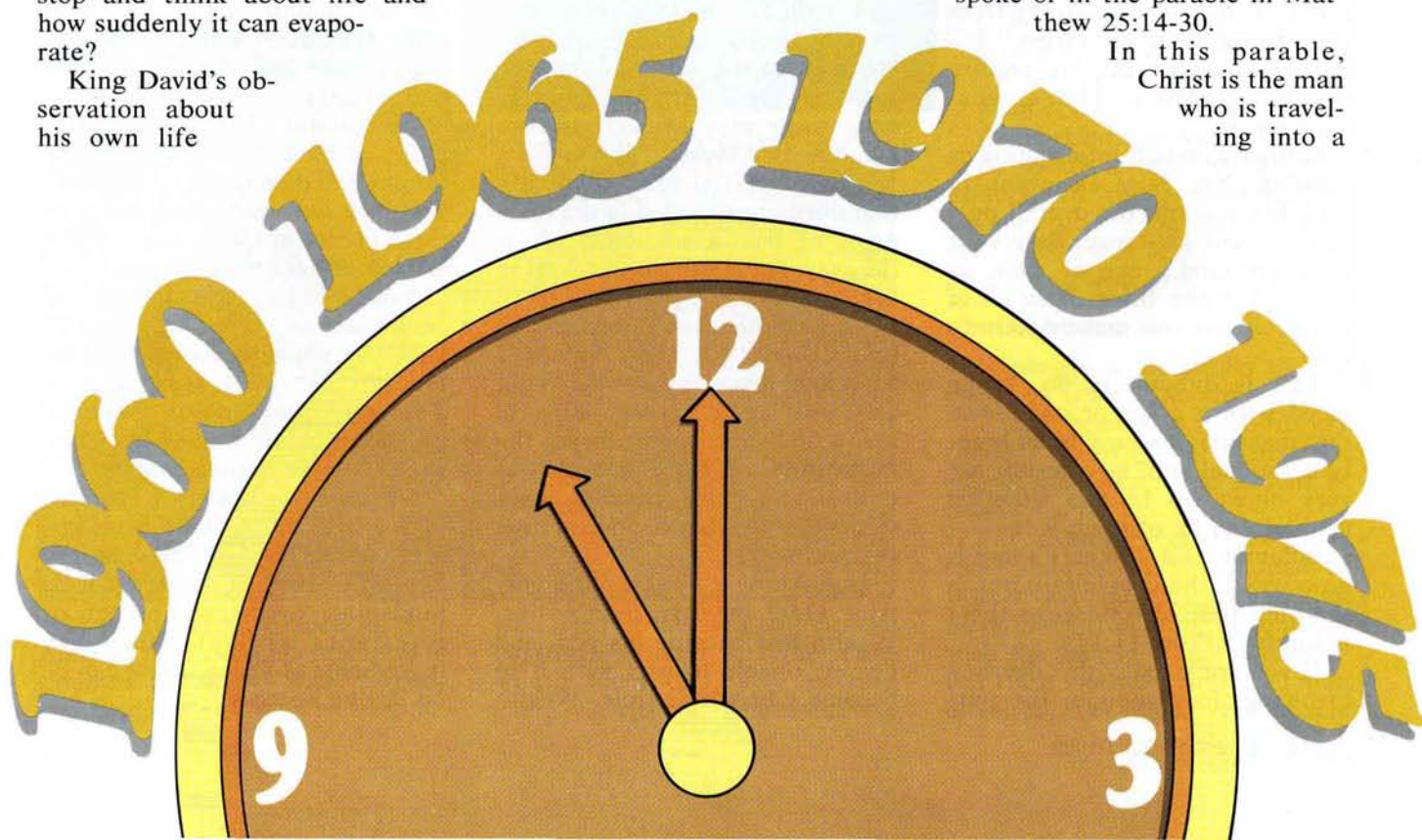
In Luke 12, Christ warned about those who would waste time before His Second Coming. The parable of the stewards shows there would be some who would not faithfully use the knowledge of the truth and would therefore be cut off from God's Kingdom. In verse 48, Christ shows that "to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more."

How are you using this time of judgment before the return of Christ? Are you using the gift of life to produce fruit toward God's Kingdom?

The talent everyone has

The time we have in this life is much like the talents that Christ spoke of in the parable in Matthew 25:14-30.

In this parable, Christ is the man who is traveling into a



far country. God's people are those who are given the goods, or talents, to keep in trust until Christ returns. "To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability" (verse 15).

Those who had received the five and two talents doubled what they had by trading and hard effort. They wisely used their time and skills to grow in grace and knowledge. The individual who had received only one talent went and buried it in the ground and made no effort to produce more than he had been given.

Upon his return (in other words, Christ at His Second Coming), the man called his stewards in for an accounting of what had been given them. Those who had been faithful were rewarded for their efforts.

What is interesting is that the person who had been given the one talent, who did nothing, had his only talent removed and given to another (verses 28-29)!

Perhaps you have felt that you have no talent and have wondered where you fit in this parable about Christian living. Has it ever occurred to you that the one talent we all have is our time? God has given us all the gift of life. Our time is our most valuable asset. Are you a good steward of the time God has given to you?

Redeem the time

In Ephesians 5:16 Paul admonishes us to be "redeeming the time, because the days are evil." This is a warning to wisely use our time to produce the fruits of God's Holy Spirit!

Many are called into God's way with little or no material wealth. Skills and abilities vary among God's people worldwide. But

the one talent we are equal in is time. And God is going to judge us all on how effectively we use our time in this physical life.

What accomplishments have you put off in your life, thinking life would go on endlessly? Most of us put off until tomorrow decisions about our lives that require change or considerable thought. Necessary character changes are easy to put off when we carelessly assume our lives are progressing smoothly. And after all, we may reason, since some of our problems haven't caught up with us, then God must not be too upset with our conduct.

Does Solomon's observance about human character apply to you? "Because the sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11).

What are you waiting for?

Many reading this magazine right now have discovered the meaning of life and their awesome future potential by reading this magazine and the other publications distributed by this Work of God. How about you?

Perhaps you have known for years which day is the real Christian Sabbath, but circumstances and your reasonings have kept you from standing up and obeying God on this important test command.

How much longer will you wait to act on the truth you know? How much more time in this "present evil world" (Gal. 1:4, Authorized Version) will you need before you turn your com-

plete attention to the way of God? Will it take a brush with extreme suffering or even death to wake you up?

Don't gamble that you might be as fortunate as King Hezekiah of Judah.

II Kings 20:1-7 recounts Hezekiah's reaction to a sickness that would have ended his life. Evidently there were many things he wanted to do. Maybe he had put them off, thinking he would live much longer. But with death staring him in the face, he desperately appealed to God for more time. God granted Hezekiah's request and added 15 years to his life.

How many years do you need to get your life in order? Will you continue to put off the day when you sit down and take stock of what you have done with your life?

Richard Bolles in his job-hunting manual *What Color is Your Parachute?* offers a practical exercise to help people decide what they want to do with their lives. He suggests that a person write an article entitled "Before I Die, I Want To . . ." In this article a person writes down the things he would like to do before he dies.

You might adapt this idea to pinpoint the spiritual goals in your life. Writing them down can be a first step toward achieving them.

Take a hard look at your life. Don't let your time keep slipping away. It is your most valuable asset.

Be a wise steward and begin now to achieve the truly important values of life. □

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WHAT IS 'SPEAKING IN TONGUES' SAYING?

Is "speaking in tongues" evidence of baptism with the Holy Spirit?

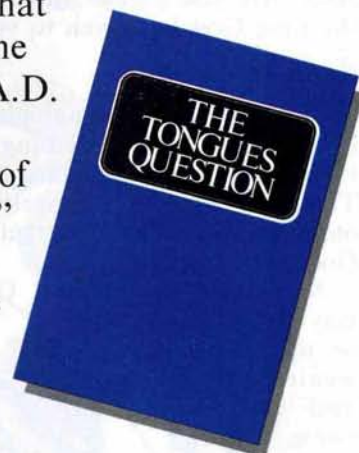
The most important business of this human life is the receiving of the baptism with the Holy Spirit of God. Salvation itself, in fact, simply means the indwelling presence of this Holy Spirit, the very life of God! We must learn, then, how one receives God's Holy Spirit, and how one knows *when* he has received that Spirit.

Thousands believe they are baptized with the Spirit by experiencing the modern phenomenon of "speaking in tongues." They assume the only way to receive the abundant power available through God's Spirit is by attending

"tarry meetings" or by "praying down another Pentecost."

But let us not just assume — let us discover what the Bible reveals!

Our booklet *The Tongues Question* explains how the presence of God's Spirit is manifested in a person's life. The booklet shows what really happened on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 31, and details the truth about instances of "speaking in tongues" in the early Church. You may have a free copy by writing to our nearest office.



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