

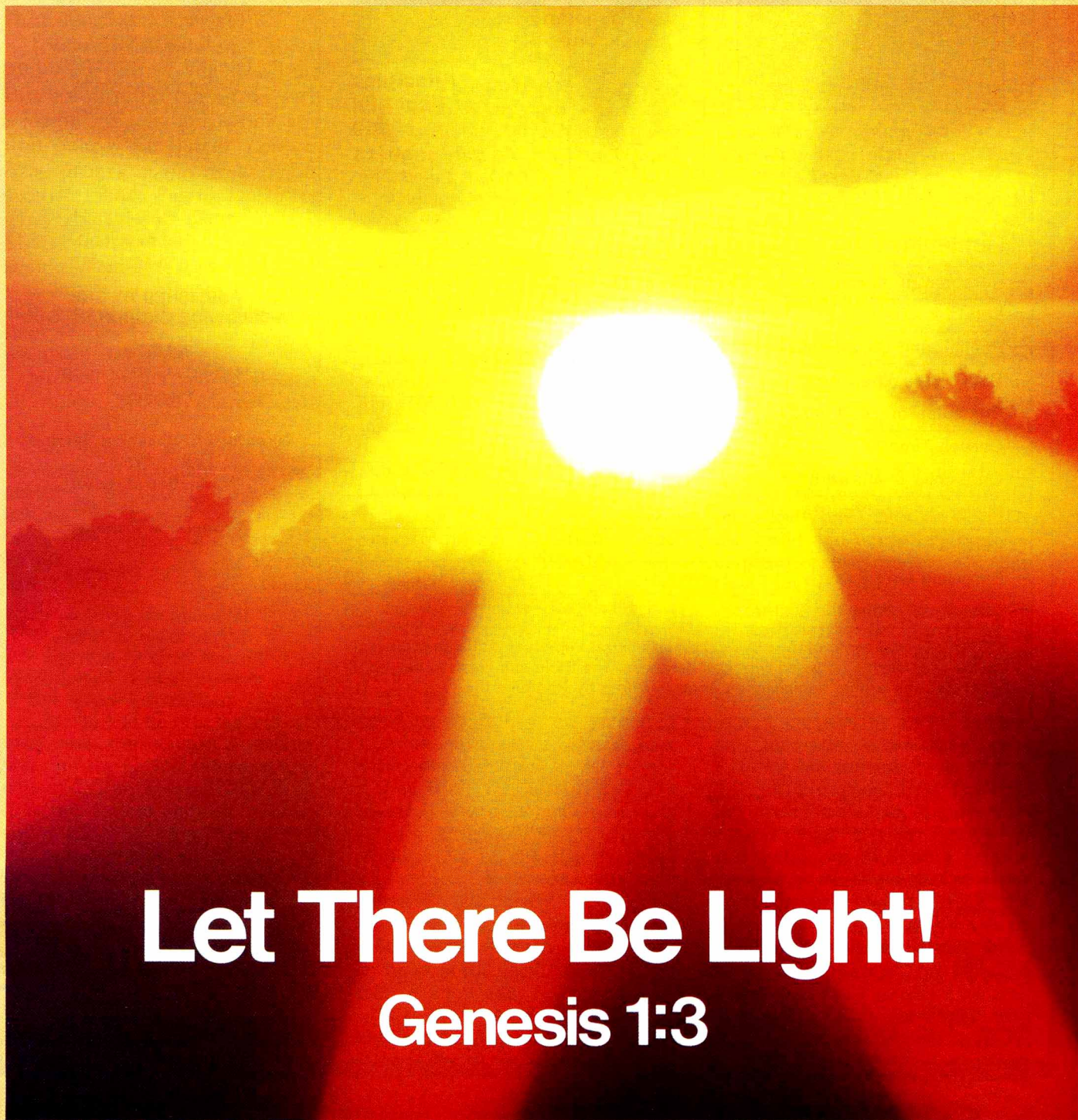
APRIL 1984

# The Good News

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OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

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**Let There Be Light!**

**Genesis 1:3**

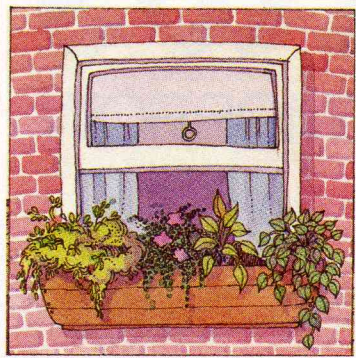
# The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW

APRIL 1984

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14



28



**Principles  
of Healthful  
Living**  
See page 11

## Contents:

Personal From Herbert W. Armstrong	1
Let There Be Light!	2
Psalms and Salvation: The Message Most Overlook!	5
GN Focus: When Will I Ever Overcome?	9
Principles of Healthful Living	11
Garden Time!	14
Questions & Answers	18
Ministudy: Are You Passing God's Test?	19
Letters	22
Forgiving Isn't Easy	25
Sharing: Walking the Tightrope	28

**COVER:** Few aspects of the physical realm illustrate spiritual truths as profoundly as the relationship between light and darkness. The Bible has much to say about light! See the article beginning on page 2. Photo by Photofile Ltd.

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## PERSONAL FROM



**A** woman in London, England, a subscriber, writes, "We do not agree with a lot of your teaching." Now there's nothing unusual about that.

I would estimate that about 99.99 percent of you who read this column did not agree with a lot of our teaching when you first heard the *World Tomorrow* program or first began reading *The Plain Truth* or *The Good News*.

THAT'S the *very reason* you should listen and read! If we tell you only what you already know and believe, we've wasted your time — we have failed to give what will profit YOU!

No two people believe alike in all things. Nobody agrees with EVERYBODY else.

Our purpose is to inform, to challenge, to stimulate THINKING, checking and PROVING what you believe. We always say, do not believe what we — or anyone else — say BECAUSE we say it. But listen without prejudice, check, verify, PROVE — and then believe what you find PROVED true. If you do, we think you'll come to believe what you read here.

But this lady wrote more.

"At the end of your second letter," she continued, "I noticed you said the Gospel message is an educational message. If this is so, it is not for us and for millions and millions of other people. And this statement is not biblical. . . . The Bible was not written to inform man's mind, but to change man's heart."

WHAT'S THAT? This statement of mine is not biblical? The Bible was not written to inform the MIND?!

It is VERY IMPORTANT that our

readers UNDERSTAND whether the Bible was written to inform the MIND! And whether the only TRUE Gospel is an educational message.

Entirely too many have been DECEIVED into the false idea that the GOSPEL is an irrational, sentimental, ethereal superstition. THAT IS THE REASON, more than any other single reason, that modern education and educated people today have utterly REJECTED the Bible, the true Gospel and belief in God!

And my statement is NOT BIBLICAL? I will now show you — if your mind is open — precisely how COMPLETELY biblical it is!

This woman in London put her finger on the very CRUX of *all* this world's tragedies, its sorrows, pains and sufferings, its heartaches, its poverty, illiteracy, filth and squalor, its crime, broken marriages, violence and wars!

The CAUSE of all unhappiness and wretchedness is WRONG type of education, and LACK of the knowledge that can be received *only* from the revelation of the Creator — in His Word.

And WHY?

Simply because the world has thrown away the BASIC TEXTBOOK of true education — the Holy Bible!

The world has gotten all mixed up. The world, like this woman in London, has not realized just WHAT the Bible IS!

The Bible IS the FOUNDATION of ALL KNOWLEDGE — and it reveals the true APPROACH to the acquisition of all discoverable knowledge. It is our Maker's INSTRUCTION BOOK of needed knowledge acquirable from no other source.

What is the very TRUNK of the tree of knowledge?

It is the PURPOSE for the very existence of human life here upon

the earth! It is to know the MEANING of life. It is to discern the TRUE values from the false. It is to know THE WAY to peace, happiness, abundant well-being and eternal life — THE WAY to what fundamentalists call "salvation." To know just what IS "salvation." Is it a PLACE — a geographical location? Is it a changed *condition*? Is it a change of *composition* — or WHAT? And HOW do we obtain it? Is that KNOWLEDGE important? Does the Bible teach it?

Is it rational? Does it make sense?

Nowhere but in the Bible can one obtain THIS BASIC, NECESSARY KNOWLEDGE! Of course, there seems to be an almost endless amount of knowledge that MAN can learn, discover or acquire by himself. God gave man eyes that see, ears that hear, hands that feel. God gave man a MIND that can reason, feet to carry him about, hands that can design and make instruments. He can make telescopes and microscopes. He can build and equip laboratories, conduct experiments. He can travel and explore.

But he cannot discover, by himself, WHAT he himself IS or WHY he is. Did he just *happen*, without intelligent design, by a purposeless process called "evolution"? Or was he CREATED and put here FOR A PURPOSE? And *what* is that purpose?

True education must teach us the art of peaceful, happy, successful living. Yet our schools DO NOT teach our oncoming generations HOW to live happily! None of the rulers, the scientists, the educators knows THE WAY TO PEACE — whether in the home, between neighbors or between NATIONS!

True education must teach how  
(Continued on page 21)

# Let There Be Light!

*The Bible has more to say about light — and the absence of it — than you may have thought!*

By Clayton D. Steep

About 6,000 years ago, the earth was a desolate planet, cloaked in a shroud of thick, murky darkness. The waters completely covering its surface rolled and tossed in the endless night, whipped by unobstructed winds.

How long it had been like this we do not know.

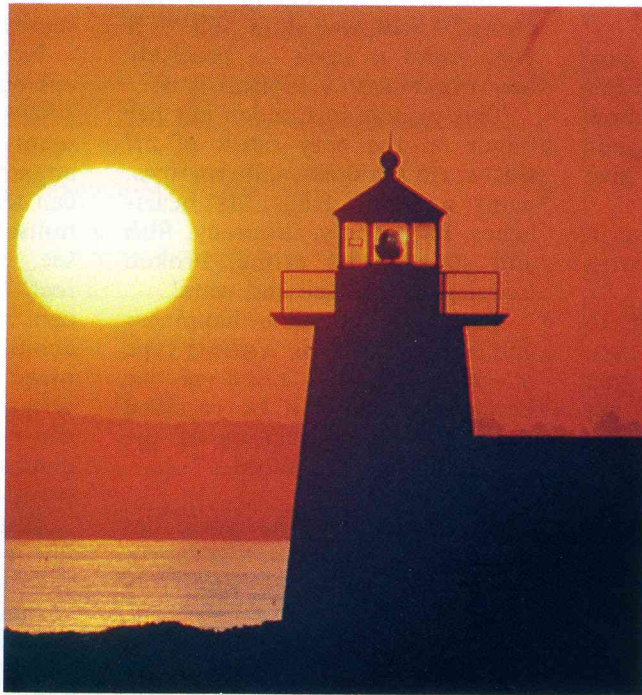
Then something momentous took place. This event is described in Genesis 1:3.

Above the churning, black waters, God waited, ready to act. Everything was finally ready. The time had come to start God's 7,000-year plan. Over the billow and surge of unilluminated waves a mighty voice ordered, "Let there be light!"

Immediately the blackness yielded as the awesome forces of the elements reacted in obedience to the almighty Creator.

And with those words God's plan was set in motion.

"Let there be light!" A command for illumination of a dark planet. Yes, but at the same time,



the words that launched God's plan reflect its outcome in a thrilling and inspiring way.

Actually, as we are about to see, there are few aspects of the physical, material realm that illustrate spiritual truths as profoundly as the relationship between light and darkness. Hundreds of scriptures draw the analogy. In this article there is space to cite only a few of them.

Many hours of rewarding Bible study await you if you will look up verses listed in a concordance

under the headings "light," "dark," "day," "night," "blindness" and related words.

## **The light of the world**

Think of it: The world was in total darkness until God made light to shine. The world hadn't always been in darkness. It *became* that way. How? Why? Because of sin!

When God first created the earth — perhaps millions of years ago — angelic beings described as "morning stars" sang for joy (Job 38:7). Many of them were given this earth as a place of habitation. They were ruled by the great archangel Lucifer, whose name meant "light-bringer" or "shining star of the dawn."

Do you know how bright stars are? Our sun, as bright as it is, is just a dwarf as stars are measured. With all those brilliant "stars" — angels of light — inhabiting this earth, it must have been a bright place indeed, at least spiritually speaking.

Then tragedy occurred. Lucifer, not satisfied with this earth, led a rebellion against almighty God in heaven.

The rebellion was not success-

Photo by Four by Five

ful. Lucifer and the angels who followed him were cast out of heaven (Isaiah 14:12, Revelation 12:3, 9). No longer was he called Lucifer or "Light-bringer." He was now called the devil and Satan, and his kingdom became a kingdom of spiritual darkness and confusion (Ephesians 6:12).

It was therefore fitting that the physical earth that was his domain be in darkness and confusion, too, rendered that way by the titanic battle Lucifer and his legions waged against the Eternal and His hosts.

And so the earth came to be in desolate darkness until God intervened some 6,000 years ago to bring light. It should be noted, however, that God did not totally abolish darkness at that time. He introduced light into the world. He divided the light from the darkness. He declared that the light was "good" (Genesis 1:4). But the darkness (which, it is interesting, He did not call "good") He allowed to persist.

There is something we can learn from this. As night coexists with day on our physical planet, so in the spiritual realm Satan and his rulers of darkness now coexist on earth with spiritual light.

Do you know what that spiritual light on earth is?

"You are the light of the world," Jesus said to His Church (Matthew 5:14). Yes, spiritually speaking, God's true Church is the only light on this planet. Each era of God's Church is symbolized as a single "lampstand" (Revelation 1:20). Each Church member individually is a child of light (Ephesians 5:8).

Have you wondered how Satan recognizes who, among the billions of human beings alive, are God's people? How does he pick you out as a target of his attack if you are converted?

If a million unlit matches were spread out in a vast, dark room, how could you locate a specific match? You couldn't. But light that one little match and immediately it is visible from everywhere. It stands out in striking contrast to all the

other 999,999 matches. Like that room, the whole world lies in spiritual darkness, its inhabitants swallowed up in the obscurity. But here and there in the spiritual blackness a light shines. You, if God's Spirit is "aglow" in you (Romans 12:11, Revised Standard Version), are such a light (Philippians 2:15).

Satan sees you clearly. He can pick you out. He sees the Church clearly. He hates what he sees (John 3:20), and he is exerting every effort possible to put out those lights.

Don't allow him to do so. Determine that your light shall continue to shine. Let there be light — always!

The final punishment determined for Satan and his demons, who are even now limited by "chains of darkness" (II Peter 2:4), is to be "wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever" (Jude 13). What a comedown for those who were once brilliant morning stars!

You've probably heard of the "black holes" out in space that astronomers are studying. Some black holes have been described as once-gigantic stars that shriveled up and folded in upon themselves. Now, instead of giving out light, they seek to draw everything to themselves, their gravity having become so intense that not even light can escape. Who knows? Maybe the likeness is more than coincidental.

### **Is your lamp lit?**

We must learn to hate spiritual darkness, though it is true that, physically speaking, we may in some ways enjoy nighttime. For one thing, we become tired and need to sleep. What is more, in our technological world, where a flick of a switch brings illumination, nighttime has lost most of its drawbacks.

If you lived in a society without artificial light, however, the night would be quite a bit more unwelcome. It would be easier to understand the lesson Jesus gave in John 11:9-10. He said, "If anyone walks in the day, he does not

stumble, because he sees the light of this world [the sun]. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

Light is not inherent in a human being. It must come from an outside source. The sun gives light by day. Without the sun at night — in a world without conveniences such as electricity — humans run the risk of stumbling. Oh, they may by their own efforts build a fire, but such human works amount to mere sparks and do not vanquish the night (Isaiah 50:11).

People in such a situation need light from the sun if they are to walk without stumbling, as Jesus pointed out.

Actually, the darkness engulfing human beings cut off from God is twofold. The Bible describes them as being in darkness (John 3:19) and blind (II Corinthians 4:4).

The eyes of those being called now, however, have been opened (Ephesians 1:18). Our source of light is God. "God is the Lord, and He has given us light" (Psalms 118:27). "For You will light my lamp," David exclaimed to the Eternal, "the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness" (Psalms 18:28).

A lamp — the kind the Bible speaks of — needs fuel to function. The Holy Spirit is the oil that fuels our lamps and keeps them burning.

We need a constant supply of that fuel. The more of God's Spirit we have, the brighter our light will shine.

How much effort do we expend seeking that precious oil? Like the five foolish virgins in Matthew 25:1-13, are we allowing our lamps to flicker and die out for lack of oil? Or do we always have an adequate supply, as did the five wise virgins?

### **As different as night from day**

"Let there be light!" That, in so many words, is what Jesus Christ commanded His followers (Matthew 5:14-16). In order to do that, we must seek an uninterrupted supply of the Holy Spirit.

But there is more that we must do. We need to study and put into practice God's Word. "The entrance of Your words gives light," the psalmist declared to God (Psalms 119:130). "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path," he exclaimed in verse 105.

Let there be more light in your life. Drink in of God's Word and put it to practice. "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light," states Proverbs 6:23. Outside of God's revealed laws and inspired testimony, there is no light (Isaiah 8:20).

Also, let there be light by getting involved in God's great commission of sending forth the "light of the gospel" (II Corinthians 4:4), emanating truth in a dark and dying world.

Of course, when we become Christians we do not shine in full brightness all at once. It takes time. It is something we grow into. But it is vital that growth be present and noticeable, for "the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).

From the first glimmer of dawn, the sun does not cease to grow brighter until it reaches its apex, what the Proverb refers to as "the perfect day." The sun does not retreat or regress. A Christian should constantly undergo self-examination, asking, "Am I making progress in shining brighter this year than last year, this week than last week, today than yesterday?"

Let there be light! How well those words sum up the Christian calling. How are you doing? Is your light shining ever brighter?

### **A striking contrast**

Light, as long as it is allowed to shine, always overcomes darkness. It always dominates (Ecclesiastes 2:13). When you turn on a light in a dark room, the darkness vanishes. But you cannot "turn on" darkness in a light room. The only way darkness can return is if the source of light is extinguished or covered up (Luke 11:34).

Light is a positive force. Dark-

ness is negative; it is the absence of light. Light symbolizes life (John 8:12) and truth (Psalms 43:3); darkness symbolizes death (Psalms 143:3) and error (Luke 11:34). Light symbolizes God; darkness symbolizes the power of Satan (Acts 26:18).

Light and darkness are opposites. They cannot get along together. "For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?" (II Corinthians 6:14). Answer: None!

The apostle Paul further amplifies this truth in Ephesians 5:8-13: "For you were once [before conversion] darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light [how?] (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), proving what is acceptable to the Lord" (verses 8-10). Living God's way — that is, generating light.

Paul continues: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them" (verse 11). To expose them as an individual member of God's Church does not mean in most cases to do so orally. Oral exposing is the job of the ministry that lifts up its voice like a trumpet (Isaiah 58:1).

Members of the Church, on the other hand, are to let their light shine. You can't hear light. A Christian exposes the works of darkness by being an example. It is the contrast between right and wrong that exposes the wrong.

If you are a Christian there must be a contrast, as clearly as light contrasts with darkness, between the way you do things, your outlook, your attitude — your total purpose in life — and that of the world, or something is amiss!

When you are tempted to blend in with surrounding darkness, to partake of things hidden in shadows, to do what you know you should not, to cover your lamp or compromise the bright glow it should be giving off, get a hold of yourself and think — say out loud to yourself if need be — "Let there be light!" and follow

through by doing what you know God's will to be.

### **The Day of the Lord**

Bible prophecy shows the Day of the Lord is the time God intervenes in world affairs and punishes rebellious nations at the return of Jesus Christ.

But that's only the beginning. Actually, Jesus' return will mark the beginning of the millennial "day" after the "night" of Satan-inspired human misrule (I Thessalonians 5:2-8, Romans 13:12-13).

Jesus is the "Sun of righteousness" who "shall arise with healing in His wings" (Malachi 4:2). The glorious day of God extends on past the Millennium, encompassing the ultimate transformation of the present heavens and earth into "new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (II Peter 3:10-13).

We must never lose sight of the awesome destiny we have before us. God is the "Father of lights" (James 1:17). That's us!

In God is no darkness (I John 1:5, Psalms 139:12), no shadow (James 1:17). He clothes Himself with light (Psalms 104:2). God dwells in "unapproachable light" (I Timothy 6:16).

Jesus, being the brightness of God's glory (Hebrews 1:3), shines as the sun in its full strength (Revelation 1:16). He is the bright and morning star (Revelation 22:16). We shall be like Him (I John 3:2). That's part of the "inheritance of the saints in the light" (Colossians 1:12).

In this age, evil and righteousness coexist like night and day. After the completion of God's 7,000-year plan, however, in the new Jerusalem, there will be no evil. Neither will there be night (Revelation 21:23, 22:5).

"Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). "Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament, and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever" (Daniel 12:3).

Let that be your destiny.

Let there be light! □

# Psalms and Salvation: *The Message Most Overlook!*

*Millions have turned to the Psalms for inspiration and solace. But the Psalms are more than pleasant poetry. The book of Psalms proclaims powerful prophecy!*

By Earl H. Williams

**P**salms stands as one of the Bible's most awesome books! Do you know why?

Certainly, the book's expressions of faith and praises to God have brought comfort and encouragement to people throughout the ages since they were written. But there is much more to this book — a vital message for us today.

This is not a reserved, quiet book designed to rock you to sleep. On the contrary, the Psalms will rock you into reality and awaken you to the earthshaking events of God's master plan for humanity!

The Psalms actually convey a powerful prophetic message, for those who understand. Let's see exactly what this means.

## **The Psalms — your time machine**

King David, a man "after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22), wrote many of the Psalms, according to Jesus Christ and His apostles (Luke 20:42, Acts 4:25, Hebrews 4:7). Some of the Psalms, though, date all the way back to the time of Moses (Psalm 90), while others were written decades after David's death, up to the Babylonian captivity, during

the days of Ezra and Nehemiah (Psalm 137). It is commonly believed that Ezra compiled the Psalms and arranged them in their present order.

The Psalms break down into five separate books, Book I comprising Psalms 1-41; Book II, Psalms 42-72; Book III, Psalms 73-89; Book IV, Psalms 90-106; and Book V, Psalms 107-150. The ancient and respected Jewish *Midrash*, a commentary, states: "Moses gave Israel the five books of the Torah [Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy], and correspondingly David gave them the five books of the Psalms."

The five books of the law, or Torah, combine with the five books of Psalms to deliver one powerful prophecy — the salvation of mankind!

The Psalms portray people in prophecy. The past human trials and triumphs of David and other personalities were prophetic, and transform Psalms into powerful prophecy for our day and the great future beyond.

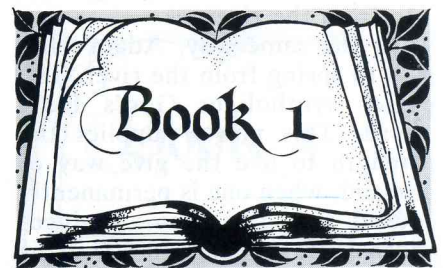
Step into your time machine, the book of Psalms, and travel with me through time and space from the world today to the world tomorrow and beyond. See the past, present and future — all in the book of Psalms.

Set the time dial to the past by

turning to Book I of Psalms. The success of our voyage into the future, after all, depends on our comprehension of and response to the past. Turn the dial all the way to the beginning of man's time on earth.

Ready? OK, hit the start button, and here we go. Events, people and places flash past us in a dizzying kaleidoscope of sight and sound. Thousands of years pass in minutes as we plunge into the past. Suddenly, we halt. Ah, the Garden of Eden blossoms before us.

Here we stand witness to the experiences of Adam and Eve, the first humans. Their decision determined the future course of humanity's history!



## **The beginning**

In the book of beginnings called *Genesis*, God records that He presented two ways of life to Adam and Eve in the form of two trees: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil

Illustrations by Joan Gryfness

(Genesis 2:9). Those two ways were the way of give and the way of get, the way of life and the way of death. The reaction of Adam and Eve to God's instruction would affect them and their children for the next 6,000 years.

The book of Psalms echoes the message of the two ways. The prophet David also transports us to the issues revealed in the Garden of Eden when he writes: "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly . . . his delight is in the law of the Lord [the tree of life, the give way]" (Psalms 1:1-2).

What happens when a person follows the give way? "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper" (verse 3).

The first psalm of the first of the five books in Psalms explodes with meaning. The tree referred to here is the tree of life. God intended for humans to eat of that tree by living the give way. Had Adam and Eve done so, they would have bloomed and grown to be like that tree — for we are what we eat. God's tree, God's way, is giving, for "God is love" (I John 4:8). Humanity's destiny is to be born as God's literal children!

For more information, write for our free full-length book *The Incredible Human Potential*.

The river in Psalms is the same river in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:10). The tree gets its life from the river.

In the same way, Adam's life was to spring from the river. The water symbolizes God's Holy Spirit. This power supplies the strength to live the give way of life and, when one is permanently locked into that way, produces eternal life (John 7:38-39). This water is the true fountain of youth. Adam's "leaf" did not have to "wither" (Psalms 1:3).

On the other hand, Psalms shows the tragic consequences of the get way. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil produces calamity: "The ungodly are not so, but are like the chaff

which the wind drives away. . . . For the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (verses 4, 6). In complete disappointment, we watch Adam and Eve choose the get way. Sadly, we watch them wither and become, just as the psalm says, dust in the wind. God warned them: "For dust you are, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). Adam's children rush headlong into the way of get and into the inescapable consequences of that way: destruction and misery (Psalms 2:1-5).

But is this the end? No! A new beginning, a new hope, rises from the dust: Jesus Christ.

The apostle Paul elsewhere proclaims the good news: "'The first man Adam became a living being.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. . . . The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven" (I Corinthians 15:45, 47).

Anxious for the coming of our Lord as Savior, let us speed forward 4,000 years. Suddenly, we find ourselves in Judea, the site where Jesus Christ fulfilled a special mission in His first coming to earth.

David testified what had been said long before in heaven: "The Lord has said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You'" (Psalms 2:7). Those words were fulfilled at the beginning of New Testament times (Matthew 3:17, Acts 13:33).

We watch Jesus grow into manhood and fulfill His destiny. His innermost feelings at what is called the Last Supper were expressed by David: "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me" (Psalms 41:9, John 13:18).

After the betrayal, Jesus' enemies took Him before the chief priest and the council. We hear the people hurling lies and false accusations at Jesus. The psalmist says: "False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not" (Psalms 35:11, Authorized Version).

Then the Romans scourge

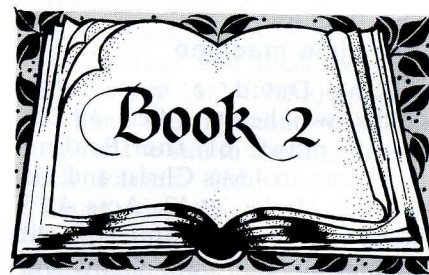
Jesus with a cat-o'-nine-tails. We cringe as the metal and bone tear into Jesus' back. His flesh is stripped away so horribly that, says the psalmist, prophetically, "I can count all My bones" (Psalms 22:17).

Hanging from the crucifixion stake, Jesus hears the crowds clamor against Him. The psalmist writes: "All those who see Me laugh Me to scorn; they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, 'He trusted in the Lord, let Him rescue Him; let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!'" (verses 7-8, Luke 23:35).

With our sins weighing heavily upon Him, Jesus cries: "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, and from the words of My groaning?" (Psalms 22:1, Matthew 27:46). Through deep mental and physical anguish, Jesus Christ endures, driven by two pervading thoughts: His resurrection and our salvation. Of His resurrection, Jesus says, "For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption" (Psalms 16:10, Acts 2:27).

What will be the end result of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection? Psalm 22:27 tells us, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You."

What a beginning for humanity — what an act of love! The first book of Psalms powerfully portrays the love of God — the beginning of salvation. These Psalms combine with Genesis to proclaim the beginning of God's plan for man.



## The Church

With the hope of salvation through the sacrifice of Jesus



Christ, let us boldly and confidently move forward in time. Set the time dial to the present, the age of God's Church, by turning to Book II of Psalms (chapters 42-72).

As we travel through nearly 2,000 years of Church history, God calls His people (John 6:44). God leads these people to repentance, His ministers baptize them and the Father begets them with His Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). With the power of the Holy Spirit, God's people overcome themselves, Satan and the world, qualifying for the coming Kingdom of God.

Book II of Psalms highlights God's relationship with His Church. Exodus, the second book of the law, parallels Book II of Psalms in its Church theme. In Exodus God calls His Church (ancient Israel) and leads them. *Exodus* actually means "going out from." God called Israel out of Egypt just as He calls Christians out of this worldly society.

God even baptized the Israelites in the Red Sea. Paul writes, "All were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea" (I Corinthians 10:2).

Israel's potential was incredible: "And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" (Exodus 19:6). Does that potential sound familiar? Compare I Peter 2:5, 9 and Revelation 5:10.

In Psalms, David portrays the theme of the Church from a personal perspective. He captures the feelings and thoughts of Christians in every age. David yearns for God's calling and truth: "Oh, send out Your light and Your truth!" (Psalms 43:3). The psalmist desires to be in God's Church: "Let them lead me; let them bring me to Your holy hill and to Your tabernacle" (verse 3).

Repentance and begetting with the Holy Spirit characterize every truly converted person. David deeply repented of his sins. But David, like you and I, knew that he needed the power of God's Spirit to successfully overcome sin. Read his prayer: "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" (Psalms 51:10-11).

The writer of Psalms looks to Jesus Christ as the foundation of the Church: "Be my strong habitation . . . for You are my rock and my fortress" (Psalms 71:3). Jesus Christ told Peter, "And on this rock I will build My church" (Matthew 16:18). Jesus Christ is the rock upon which the Church stands (I Corinthians 10:4, Ephesians 2:20).



### The Great Tribulation

Perhaps you found the beginning of God's plan revealing, and the Church age seemed interesting. But you want to know about the future, right? Hop back into your time machine. Buckle up. It's going to be a rough ride. Set the time dial to the end of the age, by turning to Book III of Psalms (chapters 73-89).

The theme of Book III of Psalms reeks of destruction. As we zoom into the future, our bodies tremble and our hearts quiver at the disease and famine afflicting our homelands, people we know. The flashing light of nuclear mushroom clouds blinds our eyes.

This section of Psalms was mostly written by Levitical priests. It parallels the book of Leviticus in the law.

In Leviticus are prophecies of the coming destruction of Israel in the Great Tribulation. For this nation's disobedience and rebellion, God prophesies: "I also will do this to you: I will even appoint terror over you . . . I will break the pride of your power . . . I will lay your cities waste . . . You shall eat the flesh of your sons,

and you shall eat the flesh of your daughters" (Leviticus 26:16, 19, 31, 29).

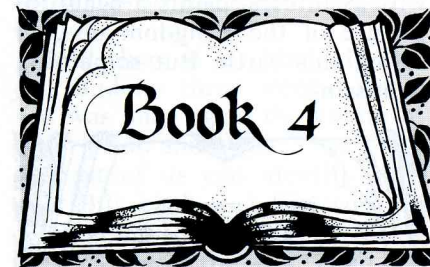
The psalmist also sees the coming destruction of our society: "Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors" (Psalms 73:18-19).

Jerusalem and the Temple weep and wail in desolation. The priest Asaph cries: "O God, the nations have come into Your inheritance; Your holy temple they have defiled; they have laid Jerusalem in heaps" (Psalms 79:1, Matthew 24:15).

Some of the saints are martyred: "The dead bodies of Your servants they have given as food for the birds of the heavens, the flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth" (Ps. 79:2).

The psalmist cries in desperation as destruction threatens all humanity: "Remember how short my time is; for what futility have You created all the children of men? What man can live and not see death? Can he deliver his life from the power of the grave?" (Psalms 89:47-48). Will man survive this darkest, most horrible period of human history?

Book III of Psalms, with the prophecies of Leviticus, deliver a dirge of death and destruction. Darkness and dreariness characterize our travel into the future — but a wonderful light follows the darkness.



### God's Kingdom

Let's get out of here! Quickly, set the time dial to the year "1 K.G." (first year of the Kingdom of God) by turning to Book IV of Psalms (chapters 90-106).

As we jet from the darkness of

the Great Tribulation, we catch on the horizon the first glimpse of light. It's the dawning of the glorious Kingdom of God.

The book of Numbers in the law parallels Book IV of Psalms. They tell the story of the peaceful, prosperous reign of God's Kingdom on earth.

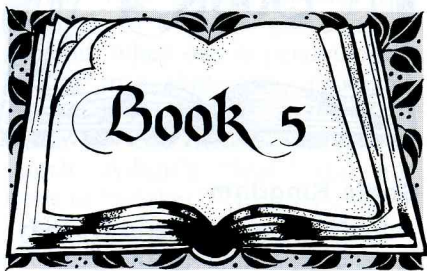
Numbers records Israel's journey through the wilderness, dwelling in tabernacles (temporary dwellings). In connection with keeping the Feast of Tabernacles, God commanded, "You shall dwell in booths for seven days" (Leviticus 23:42). Living in temporary dwellings teaches us that our physical bodies are temporary; we should seek eternal life in God's Kingdom.

Moses, who led physical Israel to the physical type of God's Kingdom, the promised land, tells about our eternal dwelling place: "Lord, You have been our dwelling place [tabernacle] in all generations" (Psalms 90:1). How long shall this age of the Kingdom last? "For a thousand years" (verse 4).

We see the whole world rejoicing at the rulership of God: "The Lord reigns; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad!" (Psalms 97:1).

Now God sets His hand, for the first time, to save the whole world: "The Lord has made known His salvation . . . all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God" (Psalms 98:2-3).

Book IV of Psalms, teamed with Numbers, paints a beautiful picture of the Kingdom of God ruling this earth. But something is missing.



### Complete salvation

After the Millennium — then what? Where to from here? You

may be thinking, Let's just stay here and enjoy all this physical beauty and prosperity. So what if we've been here a thousand years?

But what about the countless millions who have lived and died deceived, not knowing the true God, not having a chance for salvation, not experiencing the blessings of God's Kingdom? Shall we pretend they never existed?

Well, God remembers them. He cannot forget. Come on, let's continue our voyage. We'll set the time dial to after the Millennium (Isaiah 65:19-22) by turning to Book V of Psalms (chapters 107-150).

What a sight it is that confronts us — look at all those people! It looks like everybody who has ever lived must be here. "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books" (Revelation 20:12, Ezekiel 37:1-28).

Deuteronomy parallels Book V of Psalms in the theme of complete salvation for man. *Deuteronomy* literally means "the second law," concluding and summarizing the first four books of the law, just as Book V of Psalms concludes the plan of God.

On the theme of Deuteronomy the Jewish Publication Society states, "The single theme of Deuteronomy is the concept of oneness and universality of God and the unity of mankind." The universality of God will be achieved when every person has had a chance to be in the Kingdom of God.

Psalms, Book V, celebrates the complete salvation of mankind. Joyful shouts of thankfulness ascend to God: "Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy" (Psalms 107:1-2).

God will ultimately redeem all willing humans from the final

enemy — death (I Corinthians 15:54-57).

But what about the one who caused all of the world's problems in the first place — Satan the devil? What will finally happen to him?

Satan, the king and god of this present world, receives, along with his demons, his punishment by judgment of the saints: "To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute on them the written judgment — this honor have all His saints. Praise the Lord!" (Psalms 149:8-9).

Yes, you will judge and send Satan and his demons to their final fate, never again to deceive man (I Corinthians 6:3, Revelation 20:10).

The true brotherhood of all human beings will finally come to be reality: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like precious oil upon the head, running down on the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the edge of his garments. It is like the dew of Hermon, descending upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing — life forevermore" (Psalms 133:1-3). We will be at one with God and also at one with each other.

All mankind joins in chorus to praise God the Father, who now dwells with them on earth in the New Jerusalem: "Praise the Lord! Praise God in His sanctuary . . . Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord!" (Psalms 150:1-6).

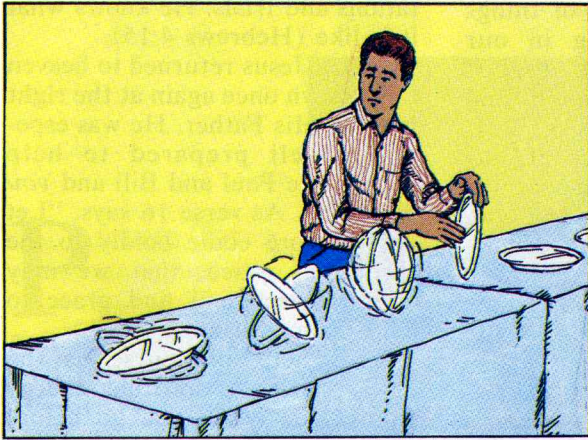
Every book of Psalms ends with an "Amen" except Book V. Why, you ask? Because, "Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end . . . from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:7).

Psalms proclaims powerful prophecy, propelling us into the past, present, future and beyond. You ask how long this voyage will last? Until the seventh of forever, and that's a long, long time. See you then! □

# When Will I Ever Overcome?

**B**ill was really upset. His carefully planned campaign for overcoming had just fallen apart.

He had been baptized only a few weeks earlier, and he was full of enthusiasm to grow spiritually. He realized that sin was a powerful enemy, but



he was sure that with diligent planning he could make steady progress.

So he made a list of his most obvious sins, which he recognized as being pride, anger and envy.

“OK,” Bill said to himself, “we’ll take them one at a time. Envy this week, pride the next and, with those two out of the way, I’ll concentrate on anger during week three.”

All went well at first. Bill always had been competitive — he wanted to be the best at everything. It really upset him when others got recognition and he didn’t. But now he went to work on solving the problem. His workmates noticed the difference: “What’s the matter with Bill? He’s so easy to get along with

these days.” “He must be sick or something.”

At the end of week one, Bill felt he had the sin of envy under control. Now it was time to work on pride. He hated to lose, and when he won, he wanted everyone to know about it. All that would have to stop, he told himself.

During the second week, he had several temptations. He made a breakthrough at work that saved his company several thousand dollars. But to the astonishment of his supervisor, he refused to take all the credit, explaining that others had helped him. By the weekend pride was licked. Two down and one to go.

Bill was known for his fiery temper, which could flare up when things didn’t go his way. His wife, children and workmates knew this only too well. But now Bill began to control his temper.

“That’s OK, we all make mistakes,” he told his wife when she lost a whole week’s grocery money. “Could have happened anytime,” he consoled his teenage son after the son had broken the lawn mower. “Just try to make the time up,” he told his fearful secretary, who had come back late from lunch.

Toward the end of the third week of his overcoming program, Bill was proud — er, better make that “well pleased” — with his progress.

And then, suddenly, it had all fallen apart. At church, of all

places. And over such a stupid little thing.

## Human nature resurfaces

It had happened after the service, when everyone was standing around talking. Bill was chatting with Ted, a young man who had recently gotten married, when the minister walked up. The minister greeted them both, and then said to Ted: “Say, Mrs. Smith told me that you and your wife helped her clean up her yard last week. I just wanted to let you know that I appreciate what you and your wife are doing.” Then he went off to greet someone else.

Bill felt the blood rush to his face. Why didn’t the minister say anything about him? What was so special about Ted? Didn’t the minister know that Bill was making progress, too? Why, in only three short weeks he had overcome envy, pride and anger. And yet here was Ted (a blue-collar worker Bill secretly looked down on a bit) getting publicly congratulated.

It just wasn’t fair! Bill stomped off to sulk by himself in the parking lot.

And there it hit him. He had just undone three weeks’ work, and was once again the victim of envy, pride and anger.

Most of us can identify with poor Bill, can’t we? We work on overcoming something and feel it is safely out of the way. Then one day, unexpectedly, it flares up all over again.

## A downward pull

Human nature, it seems, doesn’t play fair. Once it is seemingly licked, it doesn’t just stay

down. It is so frustrating! How can we ever make progress?

Take heart. This is a problem that dogged the footsteps of even God's most diligent servants.

Surely if anyone should have thought he was making progress, it was the apostle Paul. And yet, look what he wrote to the Christians in Rome, after he had been trying to live a Christian life for more than 20 years: "I am carnal, sold under sin. For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. . . . I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice" (Romans 7:14-19).

It seems that Paul had the same problem as Bill — he worked hard to overcome his human nature, but it wouldn't stay overcome. But he did understand what was wrong: "Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me" (verse 20).

Those long years of experience taught Paul some things about himself. He showed us that the downward pull of human nature is still strong, even though you are determined to overcome sin and obey God's law.

How Paul must have hated that nature, which still led him to do things he did not want to! Paul even became discouraged sometimes: "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?" (verse 7:24).

### **Needed: constant vigilance**

Paul's experience shows that we must not underestimate the problem of overcoming. Once you have overcome an aspect of your human nature, you must continually be watchful. Otherwise, like a weed that you can never quite kill, it will start growing back.

Our friend Bill (we left him kicking himself in the parking lot, remember) could not give up try-

ing to overcome just because he had badly underestimated the power of sin. What he had to do now was repent (perhaps more deeply than before) and start again. Only this time, he needed to watch out for his envy and his pride *while* working on his anger.

Well, Bill's a pretty determined guy, and so he squared his shoulders, apologized for his bad manners and began trying to overcome again.

And lived happily ever after?

Not quite. That might be the case if anger, pride and envy were the only faults he had. But there were many other problems that he hadn't even seen yet. Mercifully, God doesn't show us everything that is wrong all at once. We couldn't take it.

Jesus listed the kind of things that could be lurking in our hearts (Mark 7:21-23). And if that is not enough, you'll find another list in Galatians 5:19-21. These things are part of our natures and, given a chance, will be expressed. Overcoming can become quite a complicated business. There are so many things to concentrate on, it sometimes seems that we need to be some kind of acrobats.

### **Spiritual acrobats**

Last year, a wonderfully talented team of Chinese acrobats came from Beijing to give a performance at Ambassador College in Pasadena. There was one act I can never forget.

A man stood behind a long table on which was a row of about 30 plates. He picked up the first one and started it spinning. He repeated this with the second, then the third and a fourth.

By now the first one was beginning to wind down, so he quickly ran back and gave it another spin. Then he got a fifth, sixth and seventh spinning. But now the second and the third had nearly stopped, so he had to go back and spin them some more. He gave the fourth a boost for good measure. And then he got the eighth and ninth plates going, and was

about to spin the tenth when he noticed that the fifth was about to fall down, and the first needed some help again.

He continued until he had the entire row of plates spinning along the length of the table! By the time the last plate was spinning the poor fellow was really working. He had to keep running up and down the length of the table, watching every plate.

Overcoming is like that. You need constant vigilance. Once you relax for a while, you find yourself losing ground.

It is a struggle, but it can be done. And you don't have to do it alone, you know. You should ask for help — from God. He understands the problem.

Jesus Christ spent many years on earth, struggling against temptations and trials. He knows what it is like (Hebrews 4:15).

When Jesus returned to heaven to sit down once again at the right hand of His Father, He was especially well prepared to help people like Paul and Bill and *you* overcome. As verse 16 says, "Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

That help, of course, is the Holy Spirit — spiritual energy from God. When you go before God's throne in prayer to ask for help, Jesus Christ can literally think back to the time when He had a similar — perhaps the very same — problem. He can remember how He had to call out to His Father for the spiritual energy to resist sinning (Hebrews 5:7-8).

And then, from that throne of grace, your Father in heaven and your elder brother, Jesus Christ, can send you that same help. With that help, you'll keep going and you'll make progress.

You'll still make mistakes, and there will be times when you'll feel like asking, as Paul did, "Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

But you'll also understand Paul's answer: "I thank God — through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25). □



# Principles of Healthful Living

*Natural laws govern the physical world. Health results from cooperating with those laws, while disharmony with them produces sickness. Here are valuable principles you need to apply!*

**P**icture for a moment the average citizen of one of our industrialized Western countries. For lack of a better name, let's call him John Q. Citizen.

If John is an average American, chances are about one in three that he is overweight. If John is a West German, chances are one in four that he suffers some form of circulatory disease.

Fifty-six percent of the British John Q. Citizens will lose all their teeth by age 55. A Frenchman's chances of dying of cirrhosis of the liver are surpassed only by his chances of dying of cancer or heart disease.

If John Q. is a Swede over 55 years old, he faces a whopping 88



percent chance that he will die of cancer. In fact, men and women aged 55 and over in every Western nation stand better than even chances of dying from the scourge of cancer.

You would probably agree that the chances of living a long, full life with no major health problems are somewhat slim for John Q. Citizen!

Mortality rates from modern degenerative diseases make mod-

ern warfare look tame in comparison. Every year the United States loses two and one half times more victims to heart disease and one and one half times more victims to cancer than it did in battle during World War II.

Not all these fatalities occur among people we would consider senior citizens. One in four heart attack victims is under 65 years of age.

And signs of advanced physical degeneration have even been found in people in their 20s.

As early as the Korean War, autopsies performed on soldiers with an average age of 22 revealed some degree of arteriosclerosis in more than three fourths of the cases. In 12 percent of this group, arterial obstruction exceeded the 50-percent level. And this was the "cream of the crop."

Photos by G.A. Belluche

Old age is not the only prerequisite for degenerative illness. According to Lewis Herber, author of *Our Synthetic Environment*, "Many an octogenarian has been found to have coronary arteries that a man in his forties would be fortunate to possess."

Says Herber, "Many American males between 20 and 30 years of age are on the brink of major cardiac disease."

Nor does the fact that more people now survive childhood account for this increased incidence of degenerative diseases among adults.

According to Gene Marine and Judith Van Allen, authors of *Food Pollution*, "It is not because of an improvement in the infant mortality rate that heart disease is now the leading cause of death, not only of the old, but of everyone over 45."

Once a person reaches middle age, his life expectancy is only a little better than the life expectancy of a person who lived around the turn of the century. In one sense this means that Western man has actually lost ground as far as the state of his overall health is concerned.

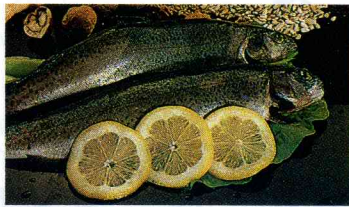
Lewis Herber explains why: "Today, sanitation, housing, working conditions and incomes have been improved greatly, while medicine has scaled undreamed-of heights. . . .

"If it weren't for the extraordinary medical advances and great improvements in material conditions of life, today's adult might well have a much shorter life span than his grandparents had. This is a remarkable indication of failure."

### A few basic principles

The vast sums spent on medical treatment and research don't seem to be solving the problem. The nation of Sweden is a case in point.

The Swedes spend more on



*Proper diet, avoiding processed foods when possible, helps build and maintain good health. Photos: above, Good News; right, G.A. Belluche.*



health than any other nation — \$518 per person per year — yet they also have the world's second-highest death rates from both cancer and heart disease. The Scandinavian countries, supposedly "model" welfare societies for the West, lead the world in rate of suicides.

The fact is that more medical dollars don't necessarily result in better physical and mental health. Life-style, exercise and dietary habits, though often overlooked, are really the key variables in the health equation.

Allan Chase, author of *The Biological Imperative*, explains, "Where and how well a person lives, makes his living and eats has as much to do with his state of health and that of his children as does anything a doctor can do for him."

Lewis Herber put it this way: "Whether he likes it or not, there are 'rules of the game,' which must be obeyed if an environmental change is to advance human vigor, resistance to disease and longevity.

"When these rules, simple as they may be, are transgressed, nature takes its revenge in the form of ill health and disease. When they are obeyed, man's life can be full, creative, and remarkably free of physical impairment."

The purpose of this article, then, is to discuss some of the

basic ground rules essential to achieving robust and radiant health.

### Food and fitness

The diet of many people in the Western world has to go down as one of the supreme ironies of modern history. While millions in the underdeveloped world are malnourished because of necessity, many Westerners are often on the short end nutritionally purely due to choice.

A study conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, for example, revealed that roughly one half of all Americans subsist on substandard diets, with junk foods accounting for some 35 percent of a typical American family's food budget.

Fifty percent of what Americans eat is processed food — laden with dyes, preservatives, moisture controls and thickeners.

Sugar consumption in the affluent West is at an all-time high. In 1750 the average Englishman consumed only four pounds of sugar a year. Today sweet-toothed Australians gulp down 126 pounds per person annually. Sugar now constitutes half of the average American's total calorie intake.

The rapid rise in sugar consumption is just one more indicator that there has been a fundamental shift in our basic dietary habits.

Dr. Jean Mayer, a leading nutritionist from Harvard University, made the following interesting comments on the average person's current dietary habits in an interview: "Perhaps as much as half of the foods consumed in the home are no longer the primary foods like meats, milk, eggs, bread . . . vegetables, fruits which were bought at the supermarket. A great many of them are prepared."

Vending machines, hamburger stands, drive-ins, ice cream parlors, TV dinners and the like have all added to the problem. The example of what happened on the Danes around World War I gives us fair warning as to where our highly processed food fads are taking us.

According to the authors of *Food Pollution*: "During World War I, Denmark simply stopped refining flour. Later it was found that the death rate had dropped, and there had been a marked decline in cancer, heart disease, diabetes, kidney trouble and high blood pressure. No other marked change in diet or living habits had taken place."

Today Westerners are paying for their highly refined, emasculated diets with a rash of diseases such as diabetes, hypoglycemia, obesity, anemia, colon cancer, and kidney, liver and gallbladder malfunctions.

The price for poor nutrition costs in terms of dollars as well. Dr. George Briggs, nutritionist at the University of California, estimated that \$30 billion of America's annual \$75 billion medical bill was the direct result of poor nutrition.

### Back to basics

The obvious way to avoid nutritional pitfalls is to avoid overconsumption of processed, refined foods when possible. Fresh fruits and vegetables and whole-grain breads and cereals are not only better for the consti-

tution but usually easier on the food budget.

Proper cooking methods can also help. Steaming at low temperatures rather than boiling can preserve much more of the value of your daily food fare.

Dietary substitution may be of value, also. For instance, you can eat fruits in place of candy, drink juices instead of soft drinks and refrain from using refined sugar when honey will do as well.

Balance is another important factor in food intake. Overreliance on one basic food type can lead to future health problems.

Unusual diets and overuse of food supplements should also be avoided. For example, a purely vegetarian diet may often lack in essential B vitamins as well as balanced proteins, unless foods are selected carefully. Excessive vitamin C supplements may be helpful for fighting colds, but can also lead to various digestive complications if they are wrongly administered.

Not moderating one's intake is also a major dietary problem that plagues many, living in an age where vigorous physical activity often is the exception rather than the rule.

Centuries ago, the apostle Paul

ing. Before making any changes in your diet, be sure you have thoroughly researched your particular problem and have sought proper counsel.

### The lost art of physical fitness

Someone once observed that most human progress has sprung from man's earnest desire to avoid work. Certainly for the past 200 years, we have hailed as progress ideas or inventions that reduced the need for human effort.

Our definition of a developed nation, in fact, implies a nation where muscle power has been largely replaced by machine power. We measure the quality of life in terms of how easy our work is, how abundant our leisure time is and how many laborsaving gadgets we have at our disposal.

Before the Industrial Revolution, most people got plenty of exercise whether they wanted to or not. But today, exercise can be all too easily avoided.

Millions have adopted the philosophy of Robert Hutchin in Christopher Hale's *Exit Screaming*: "When I feel a desire to exercise, I lie down until it goes away." Consequently, muscles



**Regular exercise** and recreation strengthen the heart and aid circulation. Balanced physical activities also help reduce destructive stress. Photos: left, *Good News*; right, Nathan Faulkner.

encouraged the Philippians to let their *moderation* be known to all men (Philippians 4:5, Authorized Version).

Solomon likewise warned against the consequences of overindulgence in both food and drink. Notice Proverbs 23:21, for example.

Obviously, every individual has to seek his own optimum level of food intake. Much information is available on the subject of diet-

weaken and atrophy from lack of use. Bodies bulge with fat as the metabolic processes hoard excess calories in anticipation of activity that never comes.

If future anthropologists had a chance to look back at 20th-century man, they might well classify us as "sitters," because that is the dominant posture of our age.

We sit in a car or bus on our way to work, where we sit at our  
(Continued on page 23)

**G**ardening is once again in vogue! Gardening for health, for purposes of saving money, for family togetherness, for relaxation and recreation — whatever the reasons, the idea is definitely returning in popularity.

And almost everyone can do some gardening, even in the concrete jungle of a sprawling city. Even germinating seeds in a jar for sprouts or using a window box for growing a few salad greens is a beginning.

The most obvious benefit of a garden is the nutritious food it can produce. But a garden can also provide inspiration, purpose and satisfaction, in addition to the benefits mentioned above.

According to a report from the U.S. National Commission of Food Marketing, most Americans spend about one sixth of their food budgets to purchase fruits and vegetables. Many willingly pay premium prices to get home-grown vegetables whenever they are available.

**Why? Flavor!**

No more do local truck farmers provide most of the food for major cities. Fruits and vegetables must often be shipped thousands of miles to market. This produces a gain in variety for the consumer, but a loss in flavor.

A loss in flavor indicates a loss in nutrients. Freshness is essential for the retention of

# Garden Time!

*Nearly everyone can enjoy the benefits gardening provides in today's frustrating economic and social conditions. Here's how, when and where to begin.*

By Dale L. Schurter

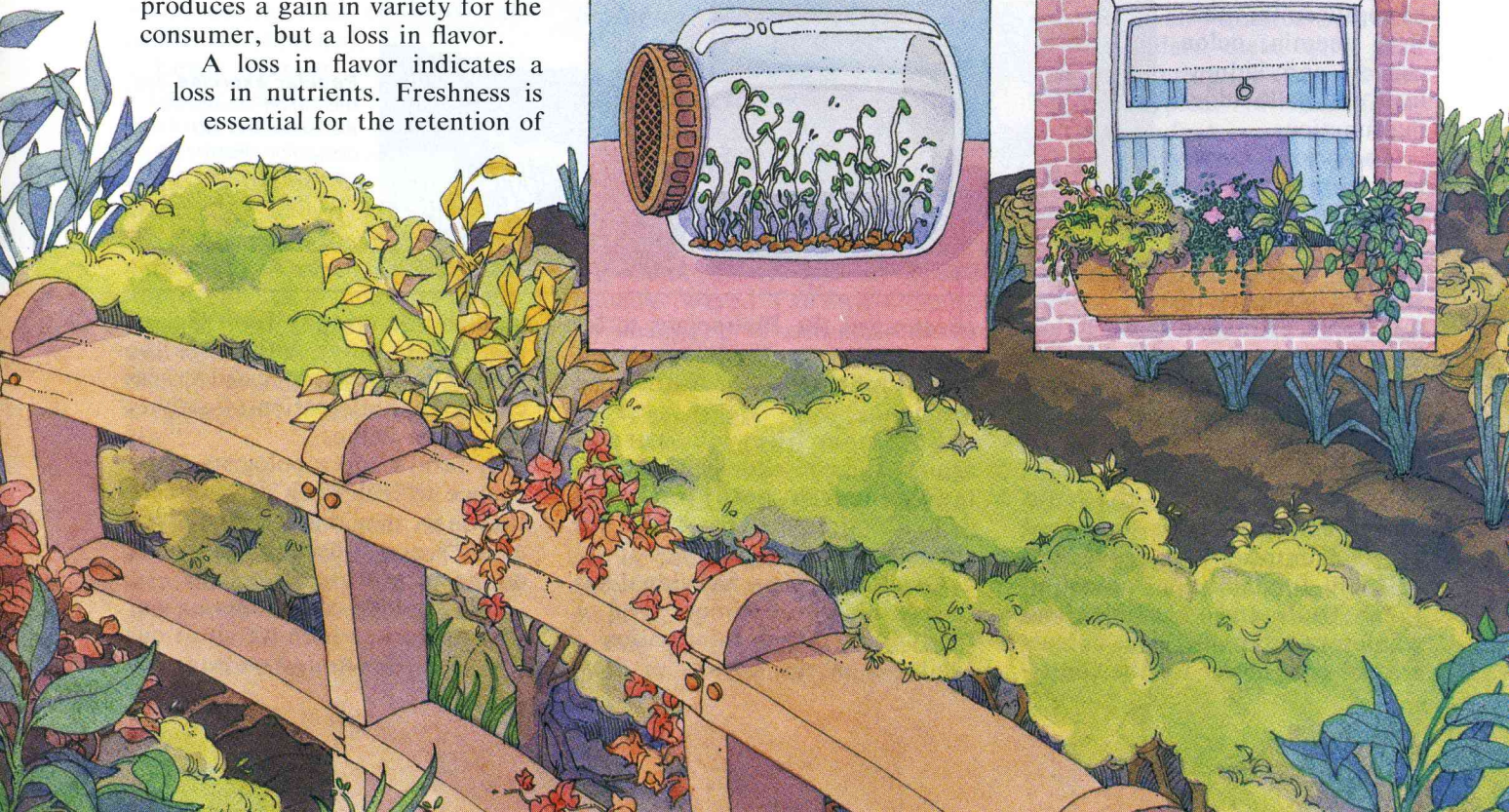
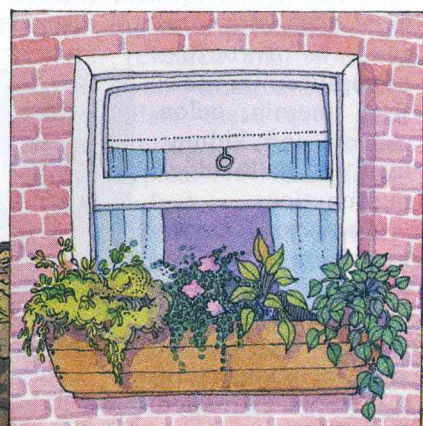
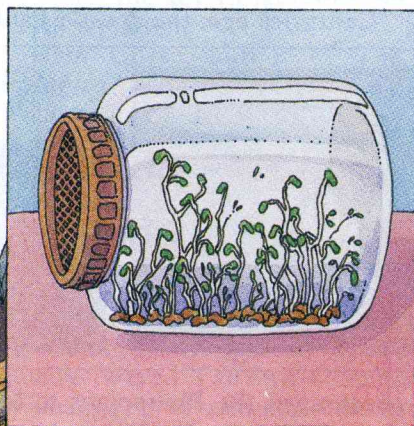
some vitamins. An ideal source of supply, to promote food flavor and quality, is your own garden.

## **Gardening in the Bible**

God Himself prepared the first garden: "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and

there He put the man whom He had formed" (Genesis 2:8). God intended for society to be largely oriented toward agriculture.

Vineyards, herb gardens, nut gardens and cucumber gardens are all mentioned in Scripture. The term *vegetable garden*, how-





ever, does not appear in the Authorized Version because the word *vegetable* came into existence only about 200 years ago. Before that all of our everyday vegetables were known as herbs, even beets and carrots.

Hebrews 6:7 tells us: "For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God."

The importance of gardening began to receive new emphasis, even internationally, several years ago. In the United States, for instance, a Senate resolution entered into *The Congressional Record* April 6, 1972, concluded:

"Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that each American family is urged where practicable, to plant a vegetable garden for the purpose of fighting inflation, saving money, getting exercise and having the fun and pleasure of family vegetable growing."

Watching the "birth" and growth of a single plant can be satisfying and rewarding. Even a small child will beam with excitement when the first sprout begins to show from where a chubby little finger punched a few holes and dropped in the seeds.

Garden planning, planting and care can be an enjoyable, rewarding family project. Here are some valuable tips to promote successful gardening.

### Planning your garden

Success with a garden comes from proper planning, timing and management and following the laws that regulate soil fertility and quality plant growth (Leviticus 26:3-5).

Some will be able to grow a few vegetables right in their flower beds. Simply alternate rows — one row of flowers, one row of vegetables and so on.

Some vegetables, such as cherry tomatoes and artichokes, can be used as decorative plants and be planted beside the house or along the yard fence — almost anywhere. An area of only 6 feet square can produce many salad vegetables all summer.

Where garden space and storage facilities permit, you can plant enough vegetables for daily use and extra for canning and freezing.

An area open toward the morning sun, without shade from buildings or trees, is especially desirable in cool and cold climates. The soil will warm sooner and enable planting two to three weeks earlier, which will encourage faster growth.

If it is possible, it is best to



Illustration by Marla Frazee

plan your rows so that they run north and south. This way each plant will be better able to utilize sunlight.

Also, your garden should not be close to trees. Tree roots reach out many feet in all directions and will rob your growing plants of needed moisture and soil nutrients. However, in areas with hot climates, a tree row or building not too far away can provide welcome shade from the hot midafternoon sun.

Planting and harvest times vary in different parts of the world. In many areas, especially where temperatures seldom drop below freezing, a year-round garden is possible. Northerly areas and high-altitude or mountainous regions usually are colder and have later and shorter growing seasons. Cold frames, hot beds and greenhouses can extend home gardening to year-round production in most climates.

In the United States, the Department of Agriculture Home and Garden Bulletin No. 9, entitled *Suburban and Farm Vegetable Gardens*, gives guidelines as to which vegetables can withstand a light freeze and gives general freezing dates. It is available from the Department of Government Documents, Washington, D.C.

Readers in other countries can obtain similar information from the relevant governmental offices. Your library also provides helpful free information.

A general guide for determining when the last spring frosts occur is to notice when wild flowers are in full bloom in your area. Although killing frost dates vary from year to year and from place to place, wild flowers seldom blossom too early or too late.

Now, how can you "dig in" for a good beginning with your very own garden?

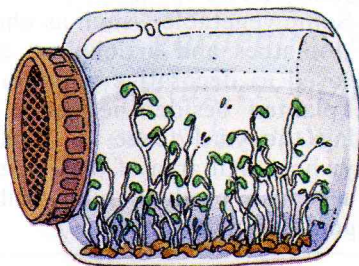
### Soil preparation and fertilization

After selecting the best location, you can prepare your plot for planting. Determining the soil's state of fertility can be useful. This can be accomplished through making a good soil analy-

sis, which should include testing for the pH balance, organic matter percentage, ammonium nitrogen, nitrate nitrogen, phosphate, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, sodium and cation exchange capacity or base saturation.

Perhaps at first thought the idea of having a soil analysis done sounds way out or difficult, but such helpful information is routinely provided by good agricultural laboratories.

A representative sample of soil from your selected garden site is important in securing an accurate



Success with a garden comes from proper planning, timing and following the laws that regulate soil fertility and plant growth.

soil fertility report. You can take individual samples with a spade, sampling tube (probe) or auger. The sample should be uniform in profile, representing the soil from the surface to around 7 inches deep, to include the major feeder root zone.

Collect several individual samples from random spots throughout your plot and mix them thoroughly in a clean plastic pail to make a composite sample. Then take about one and one-half cups from the composite sample for testing. Package the test sample, label it "vegetable garden" and send it to the testing laboratory. Test results and recommended amounts of each element needed will be provided to you for a small fee.

The addition of organic matter (manures, grass clippings and compost, for example) will help improve soil structure, fertility and productivity. A healthy, fertile soil is a living soil. The organic matter provides food and environment for propagation of microorganisms, earthworms and other soil life. For best results, apply it evenly and well in advance (several weeks, if possible) of planting, and mix it into the topsoil.

The topsoil is usually the richest part of soil and in some cases may be quite shallow. You should strive to loosen, mix and aerate the soil. A spade, hoe, rake or garden harrow is fine for preparing the seedbed. Remember, the object is to loosen and mix, but not invert, the soil.

### Seeds and planting

An important concern is your choice of seed. The old name varieties for some gardens usually produce the best flavor and nutritional quality.

Most major seed-company catalogs advertise both hybrid and open-pollinated varieties. You can specify a preference of open-pollinated varieties when placing an order, especially if you desire to save seed for the next season. Seed saved from hybrid plants often will not properly reproduce its own kind.

Local gardeners or garden stores near you can often provide good seed. Ask around and find out which vegetables and fruit and nut trees (and which varieties) grow best, produce best, store best and taste best in your particular area.

You may plant your garden in any artistic pattern that suits your taste. However, if you desire nice, straight rows, stretch a strong cord or rope taut along the ground. The corner of a hoe or a pointed stake will make a suitable furrow for most seeds.

A garden can and should be beautiful as well as useful. A variety of flowers can be planted for borders and interspersed in rows throughout the garden to add color and beauty. Flowers such as

marigolds and chrysanthemums also have helpful insect-repellent characteristics.

A good rule of thumb is to cover each kind of seed with an amount of soil equal to three times the diameter of the seed (or just check the directions on the seed packet). The number of days each requires to reach maturity is usually printed on the back of the seed package. When one crop comes off you can follow it with another throughout the season. This method of planting produces a continual vegetable harvest.

Wide-row planting is used by many, especially when space is limited. This method is viewed as more efficient and helps reduce weed populations because the soil will "shade over" sooner. Wide-row planting saves space and mulching, usually reduces insect damage, improves quality and keeps plants and produce cleaner. However, any width row is OK. You should use whatever works best for you.

Some garden vegetables such as Swiss chard and beets may intercross. Also, certain species of pumpkins and squashes will intercross. Species that will cross should not be planted near one another (Leviticus 19:19). Commercial growers separate them by at least one fourth of a mile.

Muskmelons (cantaloupes), watermelons and cucumbers will not mix or mingle with each other when planted in the same area. They can be planted next to almost any vegetable. However, two different varieties of watermelons, for example, will cross when planted in the same garden, forming hybrid seed. The same applies to cucumbers and cantaloupes. Such plantings are not recommended, since seed from each plant should be pure.

God ordained that every form of life would produce after its kind (Genesis 1:12). The fact that every plant reproduces itself is one of the many irrefutable proofs of God's existence!

### **Cultivation, pest control and watering**

Be sure to cultivate your gar-

den properly. Hoeing or cultivating too deeply, too often or too close to the plants causes unnecessary loss of moisture and can destroy plant roots.

After plants are well established, it is generally wise to mulch your garden. Mulching means spreading a 2-to-4-inch layer of grass clippings, straw or hay between the rows (and around the plants, if they are spaced far apart).

Mulching helps control weeds, save labor and conserve moisture. A mulch also encourages earthworm activity, helping to create good, strong soil for future crop excellence.

We do not recommend toxic hydrocarbon-base insecticides for insect control, nor herbicides for weed control for home gardens. Sabadilla dust, powdered sulfur, pyrethrum, rotenone, water-diluted garlic and onion spray, for example, are good for controlling garden insects. Good fertilization, wide-row planting, cultivating, mulching and hand weeding can handle the weeds.

If you have properly selected seed and have fertile soil, your plants should be, for the most part, insect and disease resistant. In a garden that is properly fertilized, beneficial insects such as lady bugs, praying mantises, lacewing flies and orange-and-black-spotted beetles will also help take care of the destructive insects.

Pest insects seem to have been created for the purpose of destroying weak, sickly and diseased plants. What we may consider "bad" insects often are only doing their duty by eliminating unhealthy plants not nutritionally fit for human consumption. They were created to protect our health.

Proper watering is another important consideration in caring for your garden. Too much moisture can contribute to unwanted fungus growth. Also, excessive watering may restrict root growth to the upper portion of the soil, thus reducing availability of subsoil nutrients and moisture to the plant. The result of a larger root system is better production.

A lack of moisture is often indicated when plants begin to show a dark bluish-green color, yellowing, beginning signs of wilting or burning. When watering is needed, a good, gentle soaking once a week is better than wetting the ground daily.

### **Soon — the harvest!**

To obtain the highest nutritional value, vegetables should be harvested when they are ripe. Home-grown vegetables served at the table mere minutes after being picked from your own garden are indeed delicious. Raw vegetables are especially good for you.

Clean, refrigerate, can, freeze, dry or otherwise preserve items as soon as possible after harvesting to prevent loss of valuable nutrients. Crops such as kidney beans, great northern and navy beans must be fully mature when harvested. This also applies to pumpkins and some types of squash.

At the end of your gardening season, if winter food crops will not be grown, you can increase soil fertility by applying manure or mulch to the garden area.

The Bible tells us that in the world tomorrow everyone will be able to have his own plot of land to provide fresh foods for himself and his family: "Everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid; for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken" (Micah 4:4).

For more information about what that tremendous time, now soon to begin, will be like, request our free booklet *The Wonderful World Tomorrow — What It Will Be Like*. Also request our free booklet *Principles of Healthful Living*, which offers invaluable information on maintaining good health through proper diet, exercise, stress reduction and other areas.

Whether in a window box or a flower bed, a 6-foot-by-6-foot plot or an acre, why not find out what an inspiring, enjoyable, educational and rewarding experience gardening can be for you and your whole family? □

# QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**What did Jesus Christ mean when He said: “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28)? How can the soul ever be destroyed?**

This verse says that even though one person may kill another, the killer cannot cause the ultimate destruction of life. Humans can destroy human life, but God has ordained that everyone is going to be resurrected at a future time (John 5:28-29). God alone is the ultimate judge and reserves to Himself the right to absolutely extinguish life permanently if He deems it necessary in any given case.

The meaning of Matthew 10:28 is clouded because the word *soul* has lost its true meaning because of religious confusion and misunderstanding. Actually, *soul* simply means “life.” Once this meaning is understood, Jesus’ statement becomes clear.

The English word *soul* is translated from the Greek word *psuche* and the Hebrew word *nepshesh*, both of which mean a living, breathing creature, whether referring to man or animal. *Soul* never means something immortal *in* man or animal. It simply pertains to the life of all physical creatures.

In Leviticus 17:11 the word translated “life” comes from the same Hebrew word elsewhere translated “soul.” The verse can be just as accurately rendered, “For the *soul* of the flesh is in the blood.” Jesus gave His *life* (translated from the same Greek word meaning “soul”) a ransom for us (Mark 10:45) by pouring out His *soul* (lifeblood) in payment for sin (Isaiah 53:12).

*Soul*, then, refers to the physical life in man or animals.

The soul is something that can be destroyed. Ezekiel twice said, “The soul that sinneth, it shall

die” (Ezekiel 18:4, 20, Authorized Version).

God can destroy the physical body *and* the soul or life. Luke quotes Jesus as saying, “But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell [the lake of fire — the final, second death]” (Luke 12:5). God allows man the power to take physical life. But such an act only causes a temporary cessation of life — the first death (Hebrews 9:27).

God has the power to resurrect and, if He then judges a person unworthy to be in His Kingdom, the condemned will be thrown into a lake of fire to be utterly consumed. This is the second death from which there will be no resurrection (Revelation 20:14-15, Malachi 4:1). The body and life (soul) of the incorrigibly wicked will be destroyed forever by hell fire.

Other common questions on this subject are answered by our free reprint articles “What Is Man?” and “Is There a Hell?” and by our free booklet *What Is the Reward of the Saved?* Write for your copies now.

**I have had some wonderful pets through the years, and came to love them dearly before they died. Is there any chance that I will see them again in God’s Kingdom?**

From all indications in the Bible, only humans, of all God’s physical creation, are destined to live again in the Kingdom of God. Only humans were made in God’s image (Genesis 1:26) and given minds for the purpose of developing righteous character, which fits us for eternal life.

Animals go to their graves when they die (Ecclesiastes 3:21), like all physical creatures, including humans. But humans will be resurrected (John 5:28-29). No such promise is given for beasts.

For more information on life after death and the resurrections,

write for our free booklet *Life After Death?*

**Is the practice of “confession” biblical?**

The Bible teaches that Christians are to confess their sins to God, not people. Notice Psalm 51, for instance, which records David’s confession of his sin with Bathsheba.

No human can forgive sins. Neither has any person been given the office of mediator between humanity and God. This office is held by Jesus Christ alone. Paul wrote, in I Timothy 2:5, “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” See also Hebrews 7:25.

John wrote that when we sin we have an Advocate with God — Jesus Christ the righteous (I John 2:1-2). God is faithful to forgive our sins when we confess to Him (I John 1:7-10). Therefore, we can come boldly to God’s throne of grace (Hebrews 4:14-16). Only God can forgive sin, since sin is against God’s law (I John 3:4).

The Scriptures do tell us that we may confess our *faults* to one another so we may pray for each other (James 5:16). But there is a difference between seeking a fellow Christian’s help in overcoming a fault — a human weakness — and confessing sins of the past. The latter usually need not be done because humans cannot forgive sin. And confessing our sins to other people probably should not be done, anyway — humans are prone to not forget, whereas God does forget our sins after He forgives them (Hebrews 8:12).

This would not preclude, of course, apologizing and trying to make things right when we wrong other people.

Our free booklet *Just What Do You Mean — Conversion?* explains true repentance and conversion. You may request this booklet by writing to our address nearest you. □

# Are You Passing God's Test?

SABBATH

While in school we had to take tests periodically. But do you realize every one of us is being tested regularly? God is testing us *every week*.

What kind of grade is God giving you?

As we have learned in previous ministudies, God is planning to restore His government to the earth through His divine Kingdom. God's government is based on His law, which is the basic spiritual law of love. It is love toward God and love toward fellowman. God's love is further magnified by the Ten Commandments. And one of these 10 is a *test* commandment.

There are many today who are willing to admit that the Ten Commandments should be obeyed, except one — the fourth. Most do not want to keep the Sabbath commandment!

Let's understand the truth about God's Sabbath day, and why it is so important that we pass this test commandment every week.

**1.** On what day of creation week did God rest? Genesis 2:1-3, Exodus 20:11. Did God rest because He was tired from all the work He had done during the previous six days? Isaiah 40:28.

God is composed of spirit and never becomes tired, as do physical human beings. Therefore, He had no reason to rest except that by the very act of resting, God made the Sabbath and set an example for humans to follow. (The seventh day of the week is the day we call Saturday. For more information send for our free booklet *Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?*)

**2.** Who in the God Family made that first Sabbath? Colossians 1:13-17, Mark 2:28.

Jesus Christ is Lord of the Sabbath because He made it! As other scriptures prove, He was the Lord of the Old Testament and the actual Creator of all things. (This is explained in more detail in our free reprint article *Is Jesus God?* You may have this article with no obligation.)

By ceasing to do any labor on the seventh day of creation week, Jesus Christ set apart that 24-hour period (beginning at sunset on the evening of the sixth day and ending at sunset on the evening of the seventh day — see Leviticus 23:32) and every seventh day afterward for a special and holy use.

**3.** For whom did Jesus say the Sabbath was

made? Mark 2:27. Who would that include? Exodus 20:8-10, especially verse 10.

"The Sabbath was made for man," declared Jesus. Every future seventh day from creation was singled out by God as time to be specially observed by mankind. It was to benefit all who would ever live.

**4.** How did Jesus Christ intend the Sabbath to benefit mankind? Deuteronomy 5:14. (Notice the word *rest*.)

The word *Sabbath* means "rest" in Hebrew, the original language of the Old Testament. Physical rest and mental refreshment after a busy week are obvious reasons for keeping the Sabbath. God knew humans would need periodic rest and change from work.

But the purpose for keeping God's Sabbath goes far beyond merely resting on this day. The seventh-day Sabbath has to do with God's great purpose for creating mankind.

Man desperately needs this time each week to have close spiritual contact with God. The Sabbath gives us time to think more about God, to pray and worship Him (both in private and in fellowship with others) and to study the Bible to understand more about God's purpose.

**5.** Should we pursue our own interests and pleasures on the Sabbath? Isaiah 58:13. Will God bless the faithful Sabbath keeper? Verse 14, Isaiah 56:2-7.

God made the seventh day of the week holy, and He commands us to keep it that way. The Sabbath, then, is holy time. Employment, shopping, hobbies, special interests, sports and other recreation are for the first six days of the week. The Sabbath is special time God claims — puts His name upon — and then gives back to us entirely for our own good. God promises us blessings now and eternal life in the resurrection for faithfully keeping His Sabbath.

**6.** Was the observance of the Sabbath day to be a special sign of identification between God and His people? Exodus 31:13, 16-17. Did God also make Sabbath observance a separate covenant with His people? Verse 16.

So that ancient Israel would especially remember that the eternal God is Creator, Sustainer and Supreme Ruler over all His creation,

God singled out Sabbath observance as the one great sign by which they would always be reminded of who He is and who they were — His *chosen* people. It was the one commandment that would make Israel especially stand out from all other nations.

And so God doubly commanded Sabbath observance by making it a separate covenant, or agreement, with His people Israel. (The Sabbath was already one of the Ten Commandments God gave them earlier.) It was to be an everlasting covenant — the sign that would identify the people of God of all generations.

**7.** Does the Bible plainly reveal that a real Christian is one who has become a spiritual Israelite — one of Abraham's "seed" through Jesus Christ? Galatians 3:28-29, Romans 4:16.

God made the special Sabbath covenant with Abraham's physical seed. It was to be obeyed throughout their generations. Today, all Spirit-begotten Christians have become Abraham's spiritual seed and therefore keep the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is a reminder of our Creator, who not only created the universe, but who is also creating His holy, righteous character in Spirit-begotten Christians — character that will endure forever when they are born into His divine Family. Thus the Sabbath reminds us every week of the Creator God and His wonderful purpose for mankind.

**8.** Was Sabbath keeping also a testing point to see if the Israelites would obey God? Exodus 16:4-5, 22-23.

How many do you know who keep God's seventh-day Sabbath? It is obvious to the rest of the world when one keeps God's Sabbath. That is why few do! Most people do not want to be identified as being separate from the world. Most are willing to acknowledge the other nine commandments, but the Sabbath command is the one they definitely reject.

Therefore the Sabbath command is the crucial test of obedience, for it identifies those who have surrendered to God — those who obey God regardless of persecution or cost.

**9.** Did Jesus Christ keep the Sabbath? Luke 4:16, 31.

Jesus regularly attended church (synagogue) services on the Sabbath day "as His custom was." He obeyed His own command to meet for services every Sabbath (Leviticus 23:3). This is the day He would naturally have observed, because He is the one who made the Sabbath and ordained that it be kept holy.

**10.** Was it the apostle Paul's custom to keep the Sabbath? Acts 17:1-2. What other evidence is there that the early New Testament Church of God observed the Sabbath? Acts 13:13-15, 42, 44, 18:1, 4, 11.

There is no question that the early true

Church observed the seventh-day Sabbath. Those who are striving to obey God today will also be keeping the same day Jesus, Paul and the entire Church kept.

**11.** What is God's warning to us in Hebrews 3:8-13, 18-19? (Notice the word *rest* in verses 11 and 18.) Was rebellion, especially Sabbath breaking, the reason God did not allow an entire generation of Israelites to enter His "rest"? Ezekiel 20:12-13, 15-16.

The land of Canaan — the promised "rest" into which Israel finally entered (Joshua 1:13) — is spoken of in the Bible as a type of the Christian's spiritual "rest" — of being born into the Family of God and living forever.

**12.** If we believe and obey God, will we enter God's "rest" — eternal life in God's Kingdom? Hebrews 4:3, first nine words, and verse 11.

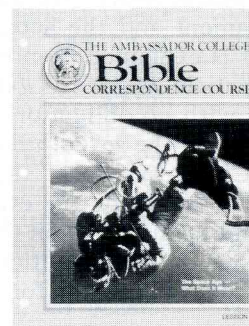
The equation is clear: Real belief in God equals active obedience. Those who really believe God will be keeping His Sabbath.

God's Sabbath is not to be treated lightly or forgotten. We are commanded: "*Remember* the Sabbath day" (Exodus 20:8) because it is a memorial of God's restoration of the earth and the creation of man. And the Sabbath pictures the coming eternal "rest" that true Christians will enter when born into the Family of God as literal, spirit-composed children of God.

**13.** Did God command the entire nation of Israel to meet together (a "convocation") on the Sabbath? Leviticus 23:3. What are New Testament Christians admonished regarding the assembling of themselves? Hebrews 10:25.

Today's God's people attend weekly Sabbath services of the Worldwide Church of God in more than 50 nations around the world. Every Sabbath, they meet together to receive spiritual instruction from the Bible, taught by the ministry of God's Church (Ephesians 4:11-13).

God's people rejoice in His Sabbath and enjoy fellowshiping with each other on this day. They are learning what a pleasure and great blessing it is to keep God's Sabbath holy — the day that reminds us of the Creator God and His stupendous purpose for mankind! □



## ENROLL IN FREE BIBLE COURSE

The short study you've just completed is a sample of the study method used in each monthly lesson of the eye-opening Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course. You can enroll in this free course by writing to the *Good News* office nearest you. See inside front cover for addresses.

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# PERSONAL

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(Continued from page 1)

to become physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually MATURE. Yet NO school, college or university on earth save Ambassador College, so far as I know, offers young people this FULL and COMPLETE and BALANCED type of education.

But the letter from this woman in London says “the Bible was not written to inform man’s mind” and it is “not biblical” to say that the Gospel is an EDUCATIONAL message!

THAT false supposition is a MAJOR CAUSE of all the world’s unhappy ills!

WHY? How could that be?

Simply because that has been the common conception since the so-called “old-fashioned gospel” of the evangelical, fundamentalist Protestant denominations was first introduced as the “newfangled” religion some 250 to 350 years ago.

This so-called “old-fashioned gospel” is NOT the true Gospel brought to mankind by Jesus Christ! It is NOT “the faith once delivered to the saints.” Yet millions have SUPPOSED IT IS! THEY HAVE SUPPOSED that the Gospel is a sentimental, nebulous, ethereal sort of EMOTION, irrational and UNRELATED to the MIND. They SUPPOSE that THIS false “gospel” came out of the Bible! Therefore they ASSUME that the Bible is an impractical book of maudlin sentimentality, utterly unrelated to rational KNOWLEDGE.

Thus the Bible has come to be regarded as outmoded superstition — a book of fables — or, in the Old Testament, the writings of an ancient race of Jews ignorantly searching for a national concept of a god.

So THINKERS, *without* thinking, and *without* checking to SEE what the Bible is, or what it says, have relegated it to the scrap heap of outworn superstition. The “EDUCATED” have thrown it out the window, without searching to PROVE their biased assumption.

And the followers of evangelic

Protestantism — many of them, at least — have SUPPOSED that “the Bible was not written to inform man’s mind, but to change man’s heart.” They have accepted a sanctimonious sentimentalism in which they get to “feel” that they are spiritual and that they are “saved,” largely shutting up their minds against the rational teaching of the Bible.

A very “religious” woman who fell into this category once exclaimed, in surprised amazement, “Why, you surely don’t read the Bible to try to UNDERSTAND it, do you?”

“Why, *of course!*” I replied emphatically. “Don’t you ever read the Bible?”

“Oh yes! I read it every day,”

fallen asleep” (I Thessalonians 4:13).

Was *this* written to inform man’s MIND — prevent IGNORANCE? But of course MOST people today, *because* they embrace a sanctimonious superstition INSTEAD OF THE BIBLE’S MESSAGE, do not understand this!

The woman in London says, “The Bible was not written to inform man’s mind, but to change man’s heart.” If the Bible was written to *change* man’s heart (AND IT WAS INDEED!) pray tell me HOW it can change man’s HEART, if it is never understood by the MIND?

Just what does the Bible *mean* when it speaks of man’s “heart”? The word *heart* is used, in this

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Millions, in vanity regarding themselves as *thinkers*, throw away the Bible without so much as examining its contents. Yet the Bible is the very SOURCE of basic TRUTH.

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she said, putting on a sanctimonious tone.

“Well then, do you mean you read it, but you don’t let it SPEAK to you — you don’t get any meaning from what you read?”

“But we’re not *supposed* to understand the Bible,” she persisted.

Like the woman in London, she thought it was not written to inform man’s MIND.

“Then WHY do you read it?” I asked.

“Why, just for INSPIRATION,” she replied.

Entirely too many people are DECEIVED by this false idea. NO WONDER the men of science and the educators of this world have ASSUMED that the Bible contains nothing RATIONAL — but only senseless, sentimental superstition, entirely irrational! Well, let’s just *read* a few words of it! It won’t poison your mind!

To the gentile-born Thessalonians, Paul wrote: “But I do not want you to be IGNORANT, brethren, concerning those who have

sense, to imply the ATTITUDE of MIND!

The BIBLE says, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jeremiah 17:9). It is not referring to the organ that pumps blood under man’s chest.

It is referring to man’s NATURE — his attitude or spirit or tendency of MIND. It is referring to his natural CHARACTER!

But HOW does God go about *changing* this deceitful, wicked NATURE — this “heart” — this attitude of MIND?

Only the Holy Spirit of God can do this. So *how* does one receive God’s Spirit?

Jesus began His Gospel ministry and teaching saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: REPENT ye, and BELIEVE the GOSPEL” (Mark 1:1, 14-15, Authorized Version). Two conditions He said WE must perform: REPENT and BELIEVE!

On the great day of Pentecost when Peter had received God’s Holy Spirit, he explained the

# LETTERS

## "What Lies Ahead Now?"

It is indeed a great pleasure to receive *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News* as well as the published booklets. I thank God continually for choosing you to be His apostle in this exciting and highly dangerous time of the end. And I thank you for choosing such diligent, willing and knowledgeable people to work for you.

Thank you for the most excellent, timely and informative article in the January issue, titled "What Lies Ahead Now?" It brings new light to that part of the book of Revelation for me and makes me realize how close we really are getting to the end. We must band together in strong and steady support for the work of God until it is finished! I for one am with you 100 percent. Please keep up your wonderful work.

Kenneth H. Wadsworth  
Pierson, Mich.

Thank you so much for the article, "What Lies Ahead Now?" Of course, I realize that God is the true author of it, but I just wanted you to know how much it enlightened me and encouraged me to hold fast to the trunk of the tree of God's work.

Thank you for the great work you do as the human head of God's government on earth at this time!

Reader  
Kansas City, Mo.

## A gold mine

The January *Good News* is a spiritual gold mine on every page. The cover pic-

ture is quite appropriate. I don't know if you can appreciate how much it has given me a lift just when I needed it most. Again, thank you for everything and keep up the good work!

Tom O'Leary  
Great Falls, Mont.

## Bible study and toddlers

"Study the Bible — Daily!" in the December issue of *The Good News* piqued my interest. The article mentioned the trouble that a mother with toddlers might encounter.

I have found, since my first child was born, one good time to study. Every day, about the same time as Sabbath services in our area, we all (three of us now) sit down and practice. While I read or study, they play quietly with things they would use in church services.

I get some study in, and they learn to be quiet for 30 minutes to an hour. Even if I can only do this two or three times a week, I have far fewer discipline problems at services with my 3-year-old and a baby.

The articles in *The Good News* and *The Plain Truth* always give me a great boost each month.

Reader  
Fort Worth, Tex.

## Index

I enjoy all the literature I receive from you. I'm keeping all my copies for future reference. They're so well written, easily understood, and the photography is excellent!

The 1983 index of *The Good News* and *The Plain Truth* is going to be so

helpful in finding the various topics in the magazines to be reviewed.

Edna Perkins  
Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

Fantastic! I just had to let those responsible for the *Good News* and *Plain Truth* index for 1983 know what a great idea it is. It surely will facilitate personal Bible study.

Norma Burgess  
Sylvania, Ohio

## Far-reaching principles

Please accept my sincere gratitude for sending me *The Plain Truth* and *The Good News*. They both have contained many meaningful and far-reaching principles that I had not even considered. It makes me realize how we humans do, indeed, delude ourselves! And that takes a lot of courage to write with such authority.

I hope you continue to publish such eye-opening — and uplifting — articles. Thank you for all the wonderful contents; they have really made me stop and think.

Deborah A. Jones  
Richmond, Va.

We hope you will be around for a long time telling us the good news, making the Bible seem like a primer book, it's so easy to understand. Keep on telling us the way God intended His saints and teachers to tell or explain, so we could grasp His truths. Thank you so much, Mr. Armstrong.

Henrietta Curry  
Cincinnati, Ohio

WAY of salvation: "REPENT, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Again, same teaching: two conditions — REPENT and BELIEVE. To "be baptized" is the outward ceremony of the inward BELIEVING.

Example: The eunuch said to Philip: "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?" And Philip said, "If you BELIEVE with all your heart, you may" (Acts 8:36-37).

Yes, TWO conditions. That, WE must do. Then GOD does the

"saving" — the converting. GOD GIVES His Holy Spirit.

But now HOW does one REPENT? What does the word *repent* MEAN?

The dictionary definition is "to change one's MIND." "Godly sorrow produces repentance" (II Corinthians 7:10). This is done in and by the MIND!

Paul was concerned about the MIND. He said, "Let this MIND be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).

How does one BELIEVE, in order to be "saved"? One must BELIEVE with the MIND.

The very last words of the apostle Peter's letter were: "But

grow in the grace and KNOWLEDGE of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (II Peter 3:18).

What is the FOUNDATION of knowledge — the *starting approach* to wisdom? The Bible tells us: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; a good UNDERSTANDING have all those who do His commandments. His praise endures forever" (Psalm 111:10).

Speaking of the spiritual GIFTS — which God gives to His begotten children — to the heirs of salvation — we read this INSTRUCTION to the MIND:

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have



you ignorant." Through Paul, GOD says He does not want us to be IGNORANT — but UNDERSTANDING and KNOWLEDGEABLE of MIND!

Continue: "Wherefore I give you to UNDERSTAND . . . Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . For to one is given by the Spirit the word of WISDOM; to another the word of KNOWLEDGE by the same Spirit; to another FAITH by the same Spirit" (I Corinthians 12:1, 3-4, 8-9, AV).

The MOST IMPORTANT of all the spiritual gifts that God gives His people are, first of all, WISDOM; second in importance, KNOWLEDGE; third, FAITH. These all are imparted to the MIND!

Jesus Christ said that we should actually LIVE BY "every word of God" — that is, every word in the Bible (Luke 4:4). How may we do that, unless we allow God's Word to speak to and instruct our MINDS?

What does *study* mean? Do we "STUDY" with our MINDS — or our hearts? We find this INSTRUCTION and TEACHING: "STUDY to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15, AV).

That is a COMMAND! One can STUDY and *rightly* divide the Word of God *only with his MIND!*

God teaches — yes, COMMANDS! — that the Scriptures are to be STUDIED — with the MIND. Otherwise, how could we know God's WILL for us? So we find *this* command: "Therefore do not be unwise, but UNDERSTAND what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17).

What a tragedy that so much of this world is DECEIVED.

MILLIONS have been deceived into a FALSE "salvation," inoculated with the spiritual poison that salvation and the Gospel are concerned only with a sanctimonious mental anesthetic, shutting up the MIND to God's real TRUTH, accepting the counterfeit of a sentimental feeling of piety.

And other MILLIONS have been

conversely deceived into supposing that this ethereal, impractical, irrational superstition of these professing but deceived "Christians" constitutes the teaching of the Bible.

So *these* millions, in their vanity wanting to be considered rational and educated — wanting to regard themselves as *thinkers* — throw away the Bible without so much as an examination of its contents.

BOTH these pious sentimentalists and these intellectuals are DECEIVED!

Going off in opposite directions, to the opposite extremes from the TRUTH, these groups are both headed for the same ultimate destination, unless there can be a mind-opening!

The Bible is the very SOURCE of TRUE RATIONALISM, of basic TRUTH.

Also the Bible is the very SOURCE of the only TRUE Gospel and genuine SALVATION.

Surely it is the Book almost NOBODY knows!

What, then, *IS* the Holy BIBLE?

It is the FOUNDATION of *all* knowledge — knowledge that is otherwise utterly inaccessible to the mind of man — the knowledge of WHAT man is — of WHY man is — of the true values — of THE WAY to peace, happiness, abundant well-being, success — of ETERNAL life.

It is the FOUNDATION of *all* knowledge — scientific, physical and spiritual. *Not* the sum total of knowledge — far, far from it! It is the *starting point* — the BASIS, providing the proper *approach* toward the acquisition of knowledge that *is* discoverable by man.

It contains history, prophecy, wisdom, spiritual knowledge, TRUTH.

No one can be properly EDUCATED except by and through it. No one can know the way to eternal life, except by what it contains.

Yes, I REPEAT! The Gospel message *IS* an educational message! It is RATIONAL! It MAKES SENSE! And it is REAL! □

## Health

(Continued from page 13)

desk for eight hours a day. Then we sit down again to travel home, where after sitting for dinner, we sit in front of the TV set for several hours. On weekends, for recreation, we sit in front of stages or movie screens to be entertained, or pay for the pleasure of sitting in the bleachers to watch paid professionals get the exercise we so desperately need ourselves.

### A matter of the heart

When questioned on the subject, 49 percent of all American men and women admit that they do not engage in physical activities for the purpose of exercise. That leaves 51 percent who do — a slim majority.

But Dr. Laurence E. Morehouse, founding director of the Human Performance Laboratory, University of California, Los Angeles, thinks the picture is actually gloomier than statistics indicate. In his best-selling book *Total Fitness in 30 Minutes a Week*, he states:

"Newspapers and magazines make much of statistics indicating that millions of Americans are on a fitness kick. That isn't really true. . . .

"When the activities themselves are analyzed, it's apparent that at least eighty percent of the adult population isn't exercising sufficiently or properly to arrest physiological decay."

To understand why Dr. Morehouse came to this conclusion, we need to examine the words "physical fitness" and "exercise."

Health and longevity don't depend exclusively on rippling muscles and slender contours. Rather, physical fitness is determined by the condition of the heart, the size and elasticity of the arteries that feed blood to the heart and the elasticity of the lungs.

The key, then, to a well-conditioned body is the circulatory system. No part of the body can survive, let alone thrive, without the

service of the heart and bloodstream.

The blood carries nutriment and oxygen to every cell of the body and exchanges these substances for waste materials, which it then helps dispose of. It distributes hormones to regulate many bodily functions and, with the aid of white blood corpuscles, the bloodstream fights infectious diseases that attack the body.

Truly, as the Bible declares, "The life of the flesh is in the blood" (Leviticus 17:11).

The Bible also tells us we should exercise regularly and moderately throughout our lives. I Timothy 4:8, correctly translated, shows that bodily exercise

they are primarily concerned with exercises that help the heart and control weight.

In looking at the physically active 51 percent of the population, Dr. Morehouse saw that most people were not engaged in the kind of exercise that conditions the body.

Bowling, golf, softball and volleyball rank among the most popular sports people participate in, but none of these have the sustained level of activity needed for proper conditioning.

"At the risk of being immediately deported," wrote Dr. Mayer, in the magazine *Family Health*, "let me say that neither baseball nor football is, by itself, a

before starting any program. Exercise can condition the body, but strenuous exercise can also kill you if you don't build up to it gradually.

2) Read widely on the subject of exercise. Programs and methods are as varied as the people who write about them. Get a feel for different approaches and schools of thought. Be wary of any regime that makes extravagant promises or radical demands on your way of living.

There is no one magic method to produce good health. You don't have to adopt a Spartan existence to be physically fit.

3) Select a program that is right for you — one that fits your life-style, not someone else's.

A professional football player needs a lot of endurance and strength to earn his salary. Chances are that you don't. So the football player's physical fitness program is not for you. What you need is a program that enables you to feel well and cope with the stresses and rigors of your own personal life. What you want is exercise tailored to your personality and to the time you have available.

Some people like rugged games and activities requiring a lot of exertion — such as soccer, basketball and weight lifting. Others prefer tennis, swimming or bicycling. Exercise is highly individualistic; one of the most common pitfalls that leads to discouragement and failure is to choose a program tailored to someone else.

But the main thing you should remember is that your body needs some form of exercise. Failure to keep it in reasonable trim could lead to significant health problems in the future.

In addition to physical factors such as diet and exercise, your health is affected, for better or for worse, by your emotional condition, your mental attitude and psychological stress. Next month we will discuss these areas and discover more about what the Bible has to say about maintaining good health. □

(To be continued)

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## Life-style, exercise and dietary habits are key variables in the health equation. Failure to properly regulate these important areas could lead to significant health problems in a person's future.

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profits "for a little while" — that is, in this life. The right kind of exercise improves the functional capacity of the heart and the circulation. The key phrase is "right kind."

### Play vs. exercise

Unlike food, which we often describe at rapturous length and prepare using innumerable recipes, we seldom bother to break exercise down into many different types.

"I think I'll get some exercise," we say as we jog out the door. Or, "Now that summer is here I hope to get a lot of exercise in the garden."

Are gardening and jogging the same? Hardly, but we rarely differentiate — especially in discussing exercise needed for good health.

There are exercises for strength — such as weight lifting. There are sports and games of skill such as baseball and bowling. But when health experts talk about exercise for physical fitness

good body conditioner. And let me add certain games of skill to this list, games that are great entertainment but are no longer physical exercise.

"For instance, if you play golf out of a golf cart, or shoot at clay pigeons on a rifle range, or take up archery, you are not really exercising; you're just playing."

This doesn't mean that exercise must be all work and no play. You don't have to throw away your golf clubs or bowling ball in favor of jogging by the dawn's early light and sweating through a regime of calisthenics. The point is to realize that not all exercise is of equal value to the conditioning of the body.

### Choosing a conditioner

If you seek to reduce your waistline, improve your wind or build a few muscles, here are some suggestions in selecting an exercise program:

1) If you are seriously overweight or over 30 years of age, you should seek wise counsel

# Forgiving Isn't Easy

*"I'll never forgive nor forget what they did to me." This common saying reflects the deep hurts of life. But, God requires Christians to forgive the evils done to them.*

By Graemme J. Marshall

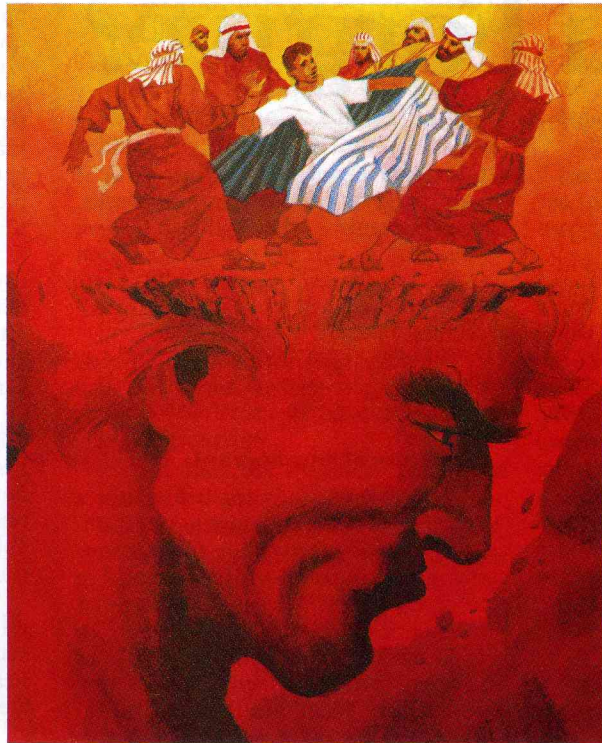
**H**e clutched in vain for the wall of the well as he was pushed over the edge. With a rush he fell freely into the blackness.

As he tried to right his falling body, a mighty whoosh came from the beating wings of a host of bats as they swarmed past him to the surface. His thoughts raced. How deep? Was there water at the bottom?

In a moment his heels hit with a crushing jolt. His legs jackknifed and his spine jarred as his bottom took the impact. His elbow cracked against a rock, sending pins and needles coursing through his arm.

He cried out in pain, shock and anguish at his dilemma. His lungs gasped in dank, moist air, fighting to regain the oxygen expelled on impact. For a dazed moment he sat in a crumpled heap.

As sense came back, he jerked his face upward. No evidence of his assailants — only the bright circle of the well top outlining the clear, blue sky. Gingerly he felt around the bottom with his feet to take stock of his dungeon. It



was dark and sandy and he was glad it was dry. It stank of bat droppings.

Regaining some composure, he began to yell to attract his brothers: "Hey, you guys, get me out! Why did you do that to me? Wait till I get home and tell Dad. You'll be in trouble again, I can tell you." No response. Again: "Hey up there! Get me out!" Only stillness.

He settled down to wait. After all, his brothers had been preparing lunch when he arrived unex-

pectedly. He mused on the day's happenings.

## **An evil turn of events**

He had dutifully obeyed his father's instruction to go and find out how his brothers were getting on as they herded the sheep. He had gone to where they were supposed to be, but they were not to be found. He was unfamiliar with the area and, as he circled around trying to pick up their tracks, he became lost.

He panicked and began to run, first one way and then another. Fearful at being lost, he was wandering aimlessly when a stranger suddenly appeared out of nowhere. The stranger asked him what he was looking for and was most

helpful. He told him how his brothers had been there earlier and how he had overheard them saying they were going to Dothan.

The kind stranger gave directions, which proved right as he soon came upon his brothers' encampment, with the sheep grazing on grassy slopes. He had come up happily relieved to meet them. But as soon as he entered camp they roughly grabbed him and violently threw him down the well with a final taunt: "See if

Illustration by Ken Tunell

your dreams get you out of this!”

Well, he knew they didn't like his dreams. He couldn't help it. The dreams just came to him. His brothers got upset when he told them about them. Even his father did once, too. And there was his coat of many colors. It seemed that everything he did made them envious, jealous and determined not to speak a nice word to him.

Then, voices at the top. Faces appeared above, at the rim of the well. Then a rope was lowered, the end hitting him in the face. At last, he thought, they have come to their senses.

He quickly scrambled his way

up the rope. As he came out into the dazzling daylight, about to recriminate them, a cloth gag was stuffed into his mouth. He was roughly grabbed and his hands were tied with rope.

He saw camels, traders and his brother Judah haggling with someone and then receiving money. An Ishmaelite suddenly took the rope that held him, pulled him over to a camel and latched him on behind. The caravan moved off and he struggled vainly to free himself.

Dust obscured his vision as he searched for the eyes of his brothers, hoping that somehow all of this was just a bad joke. The gag

stifled his protests; his brothers turned their backs. He was only 17!

This was the selling of Joseph into Egypt. And this was only the beginning of some lifelong hurts he suffered. On arriving in Egypt, he was sold as a slave to Potiphar, chief of the royal guard (Genesis 37).

### More injustices

The years passed and Joseph settled into becoming an able manager of Potiphar's home and property. His success must have become legendary. Potiphar knew that he was being blessed because of Joseph, and turned all his per-

# Do You Forgive?

By Philip Stevens

Racked with pain, with each breath more excruciating than the previous, Jesus still had supreme concern for His murderers.

He had been falsely accused and illegally condemned to death by a kangaroo court made up of His worst enemies. He had experienced the cruel torture of a Roman scourging, which left His skin hanging in shreds. He was nailed to a stake between two criminals. His head was thumping with almost unbearable force.

Yet through this suffering, and with His tormentors shouting abuse to His battered face, Jesus uttered, in total sincerity, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Jesus Christ died as He had lived — setting us an example.

### A forgiving spirit

A forgiving spirit toward those who wrong us is a vital element in the Christian life. In teaching His disciples to pray, Jesus showed that we must ask God's forgiveness for the sins we commit: "And forgive us our debts." He then went on to declare the approach we should take toward those who wrong us: "As we forgive our debtors" (Matthew 6:12).

To emphasize the importance of this aspect of our Christian growth, Jesus immediately elaborated this particular point, the only part of the so-called Lord's Prayer that He chose

to expand upon at that time: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (verses 14-15).

Whether God forgives us depends on our forgiveness of others! See also Mark 11:25-26.

### The unforgiving servant

Remember the apostle Peter's seemingly natural, human question: "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus' answer must have shocked Peter: "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven" (Matthew 18:21-22). Then Jesus went on to illustrate His point with this story:

Somehow, a royal servant had managed to accumulate a massive debt totaling some 10,000 talents. The day came when the money had to be returned, but the servant just didn't have that huge amount available to repay the king. In order to recoup his loss, the sovereign ordered that the servant, along with his family, should be sold.

When the servant heard his fate, he threw himself before his master and begged for time to make the debt good. The king was moved with compassion and released the servant from the complete debt. Relieved at his

escape, the man went on his way, only to meet a fellow worker who owed him a small amount of money. Grabbing him by the throat, the servant demanded the return of the 100 pence. Struggling free, the shaken man fell to his knees and asked for a little longer to repay the sum. But his plea fell on deaf ears. The servant had him cast into the debtors' prison.

When the other workers in the royal household heard about this incident, they brought it to the king's attention. The king became angry and summoned the unmerciful servant.

"You wicked servant!" the king said. "I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?" With that, the king ordered the servant to be thrown into prison.

"So My heavenly Father also will do to you," Jesus concluded the account, "if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses" (verses 23-35).

### Exercise mercy

God demands that we exercise a great deal of mercy toward other human beings. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," taught Jesus (Matthew 5:7).

Paul wrote, "And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (Ephesians 4:32).

It isn't always possible for us to judge the motives behind another person's actions. Someone may have wronged us through ignorance. Perhaps he or she, was caught in a moment of weakness. We cannot

sonal affairs over to Joseph to manage.

We must assume that Joseph was never in a position to seek to return home or to get in contact with his father, Jacob.

Joseph was at the pinnacle of success — and then, sudden disaster struck. He was framed on trumped-up charges after he rejected the romantic advances of Potiphar's wife. No judge and jury helped here — he was automatically sent to prison. And there he languished to contemplate the twists of fate that can happen to a young, innocent adult.

The mud of false accusation

always tell, yet we must forgive. If we find it difficult to forgive someone who has done wrong, then we should follow the principle Jesus gave in Matthew 5:44: "Pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you."

If we are really following these instructions, our animosity will leave us. By praying for another individual, we will increase our concern for that person and a forgiving attitude will be generated.

Paul found it necessary to correct the Corinthian church in their attitude toward a wrongdoer in the congregation (I Corinthians 5). Later the offender repented, and the apostle then explained how the church should display its forgiveness toward the individual: "On the contrary, you ought rather to forgive and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with too much sorrow. Therefore I urge you to reaffirm your love to him" (II Corinthians 2:7-8).

Here, then, is the Bible teaching on how to practice forgiveness. Merely saying "I forgive you" is not enough. Our actions toward the other party must prove our willingness to let the offending incident drop from memory, if the person is sincerely sorry, has changed and will strive not to repeat the offense.

We need God's forgiveness. And we need to exercise that same quality of forgiveness toward other people. For our eternal life's sake, we have to follow Jesus Christ's example and forgive. As He Himself said: "Therefore be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. . . . Forgive, and you will be forgiven" (Luke 6:36-37). □

had been thrown and it had stuck. No one tried to wipe it off his face. An employer had believed a false charge; a husband had believed a concocted story of attempted rape. They threw the mud and it stuck.

All his good — all his fruits — were not remembered. There was unquestioning acceptance of false charges, and he was unceremoniously led off to prison (Genesis 39).

Years later, when Joseph was made second in command of all Egypt, one wonders where Potiphar and his wife were. The Bible records no attempt on Joseph's part to wipe off the mud of the years before.

Joseph nursed a lot of hurts in his life — events and circumstances hard to forgive. His brothers lived with the guilt of the lies they told. Such things are hard to forget and to forgive. When the brothers and their father Jacob came to Egypt to live, were all these things forgotten because of better times?

Joseph settled his father and brothers comfortably in Goshen. They prospered and he saw to their welfare. For 17 years, they lived in tranquillity and privileged position.

But had his brothers forgotten the evil deed they had done some 30 years before?

When Jacob died, we find that the first act of the brothers was to send an immediate message to Joseph, not of condolence and sympathy, but of fear. They thought that now that the father was out of the way, Joseph would take revenge.

Joseph was astounded. He had come to see a reason for his suffering and held nothing against them anymore. He saw it was God's guiding hand (Genesis 50:15-21). His brothers still suffered guilt.

The story shows that forgiveness isn't easy. Broken trust does alter relationships. But forgiveness is required of Christians.

### **Why do we need to forgive?**

There are two important reasons why we as Christians must

forgive. First, unless we are prepared to forgive those who hurt us, God says He will not forgive us for what we have done (Matthew 6:14-15). And second, a forgiving nature is part of the character of God Himself (Joel 2:13). Christians who are seeking to eventually become spirit-composed members of God's Family must have forgiveness as a trait in their lives.

The Psalms reveal David's attitude toward those who wished him harm. First, he tried to overcome evil with good, even praying and fasting for enemies (Psalm 35:11-14). When wrongfully accused he even tried to restore that which he didn't take in the first place (Psalm 69:4). For much of the love he tried to show, David received back antagonism, and so he simply committed the problems to God (Psalm 109:4-5).

So if you are in a position to help an enemy, you should do what you can (Exodus 23:4-5). And if an enemy falls into personal calamity, the Bible warns about not rejoicing at it (Proverbs 24:17-18).

David did pray that God would reward enemies according to their evil intent (Psalm 70). This was not David taking the matter into his own hands, but rather committing it to God to deal with as God saw fit. And although David was ever prepared to be forgiving, he did not forget the evil within some people, and took precautions to protect himself from their influence.

### **The greatest example**

These are the lessons of Joseph and David. Yet, Jesus Christ's example is obviously the greatest of all. While you were yet a sinner, Christ forgave you (Romans 5:8). And when He hung on the stake dying from loss of blood, suffering unbearable thirst and wounds, His reaction to the people who had put Him there and who had hammered spikes into His flesh was, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Christians — followers of Christ — can do no less. □

# Walking the Tightrope

**C**harles Blondin, a Frenchman, made history in 1859 when he performed a marvelous, unusual and highly dangerous stunt, not just once but several times.

probably one of the most difficult attributes to develop.

What is balance, and in which areas do we need it most?

## What is balance?

Several expressions could be used in place of the word *balance*

“I am the Lord, I do not change” (Malachi 3:6).

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” (Hebrews 13:8).

God is never changing, always constant and balanced. God wants us to build these characteristics — these traits of His own nature — into our lives.

God gives humans various abilities, potentials and powers. But humans can and too often do abuse these. Their right use demands that we control our wills and energies with the help of God’s Holy Spirit.

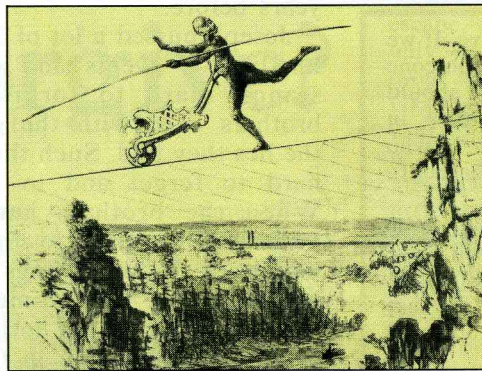
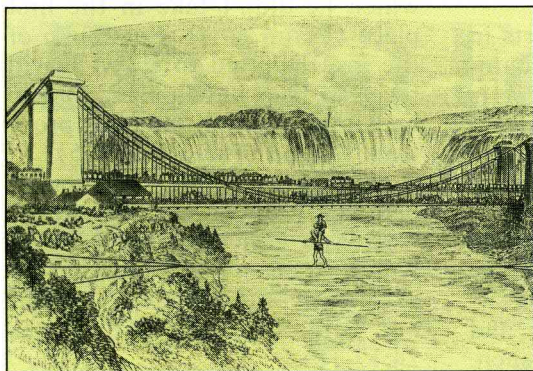
It’s interesting that the list of the fruits of the Spirit, recorded by Paul in Galatians 5:22-23, RAV, ends with self-control (the Authorized Version has “temperance,” which is actually only one form of self-control). The Greek word translated “self-control” or “temperance” is derived from the root *kratos*, meaning “strength.” In other words, all of the attributes in the list must be balanced and controlled by the strength of God’s Spirit.

What are some of the areas of life where we need balance most? Here are four:

## Marriage and family life

From the beginning, a main reason God gave man a wife, and vice versa, is to give each marriage partner balance. The man is not complete alone, and neither is the woman (Genesis 2:18).

Before marriage we can often be more self-centered. God ordained marriage as an area of



The feat? He walked a tightrope across Niagara Falls! And very carefully, no doubt!

Such was Blondin’s worldwide fame that he repeated the deed, with variations, on several occasions — blindfolded, pushing a wheelbarrow, even on stilts.

Apparently oblivious to the death-defying nature of his work, Blondin took his last walk the year before he died — and he was 73 at the time of his death in Middlesex, England.

Charles Blondin, one certainly must say, was a truly balanced individual, at least acrobatically.

When God calls us to His way of life, it’s to a life of balance, poise and self-control. Yet the type of balance God wants in us is



**Balance!** Charles Blondin walked a tightrope across Niagara Falls several times, even carrying another person, left, and pushing a wheelbarrow while dressed in a monkey suit, above. Proper balance was the key.

to describe a truly balanced person. *Balance* means stability, constancy, immutability, having a harmonious equilibrium in

parts, soundness and so on. *Self-control* includes self-command, reliance, being filled with restraint, continence and humility.

Certainly God Himself manifests all these characteristics. God’s perfect character may be beautifully summed up, in short, by two similar scriptures, one from each of the testaments:

our life experience to help us gain equilibrium (Proverbs 18:22, 19:14, 31:10-12). It is when the husband or wife or both act selfishly that marital problems erupt.

The family environment, homemaking and child rearing are difficult areas in terms of character building, overcoming and maturing. Having children helps us to adjust to different characters and personalities, especially as children grow into adults.

Solomon's statement in Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 certainly applies to marriage: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall [get off balance], one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls... a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

### Personality

Jesus Christ's personality was so well-rounded and harmonious that he could relate to and speak to all — tax collectors, fishermen, businessmen, priests, doctors of law, the high and the low on the social scale. He was so balanced in this area that He was accused by some who lacked this very trait (Luke 5:30, 7:34).

Paul explained that we must be all things to all people — and that takes a balanced personality (Romans 1:14-15, I Corinthians 9:19-23). Balance in this major area is essential to a good marriage, in the home, at work, socially and in every other walk of life.

Communication is a major aspect of personality. Yet today there is a paradox: There are more highly developed *technical* means of communication than ever before, yet a tremendous lack in practical dialogue that equitably bridges the gap between people!

Because of lack of emotional self-control, some have been offended (Ecclesiastes 7:21-22). Gossip, for instance, is communication, but totally lacking in self-control. James had plenty to say about wrong uses of the tongue

(James 3:1-12). Remember the old adage: "Put brain into gear before engaging mouth!"

Philippians 4:8 offers a good summation of the qualities that make up a pleasant, attractive personality. We all need to be more concerned with our actions and obligations to our fellow human beings.

### Work

We start life in a family, then we learn to communicate. And pretty soon we have to work! In emphasizing the Sabbath command, God said that six out of every seven days is given over to work (Exodus 20:8-11). We must be balanced in this area to live a satisfying life.

Solomon didn't always see this. At one stage he even said he hated work (Ecclesiastes 2:17-18). Overall, however, he realized the need to have a balanced, controlled view of this area, which occupies much of our lives (Ecclesiastes 2:24, 3:22, 9:10).

How we work is very important. It should be sincere, honest labor, as if our real boss were Jesus Christ Himself (He is, you know). No matter who we are or what work we have, in the end, we'll have to give an account of our labors (Ephesians 6:5-8).

Being "workaholics" to the detriment of our families or our own health is not balanced (Ecclesiastes 2:4, 11, 22-23). Nor is doing nothing, expecting others to feed and clothe us, for those who do not work, as Paul said, ought not to eat (II Thessalonians 3:10).

Work should be a fulfilling experience — not an end in itself, but an area of service to our fellowman and a place for personal character growth.

### Spiritual balance

Perhaps the most difficult area of all in which to gain and maintain equilibrium, stability and self-control with humility is in the area of spiritual pursuits. Jesus said that we would know the truly mature Christian by his fruits (Matthew 7:15-23). It is so

easy to get off balance spiritually.

Take a bunch of grapes. They all come from the same vine. But if we examine each individual grape — look at the texture, size and shape of each and then finally taste each one — we find differences in maturity. One may be truly succulent and perfect. Another has been overly exposed to the heat of the sun and is almost a raisin. Yet another, hidden in the middle of the bunch, is stunted, still green and tastes sour. But the source of all the grapes is the same.

So it is with the fruits of God's Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). As Christian branches of God's vine (John 15:1-7), we are watered and tended so we may bring forth various fruits (I Corinthians 3:6-8) and, depending on the nutrients we receive, we shall bring forth various amounts of growth (Matthew 13:23).

Christians are given various spiritual gifts and placed within the Body of Christ — the Church — in a balanced, harmonious fashion as God sees fit (I Corinthians 12:18).

Within that family, the Church, the "mother of us all" engenders stability in growth in us, her children, through a balanced diet of doctrinal teaching, personal prayer and study, fasting, congregational worship, social activities and fellowship.

This very magazine, *The Good News*, is designed to foster harmony, sound biblical doctrine, temperance in the widest sense of the word and constancy, helping readers produce balance in their Christian lives.

There are many areas, of course, where balance must be gained. But these four main ones probably cover a majority of the spectrum of life's experiences. These become our overall Christian responsibilities.

We all need to deeply meditate on how to be balanced, self-controlled, stable persons, and strive to become such people, leading a positive, practical way of life. □

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