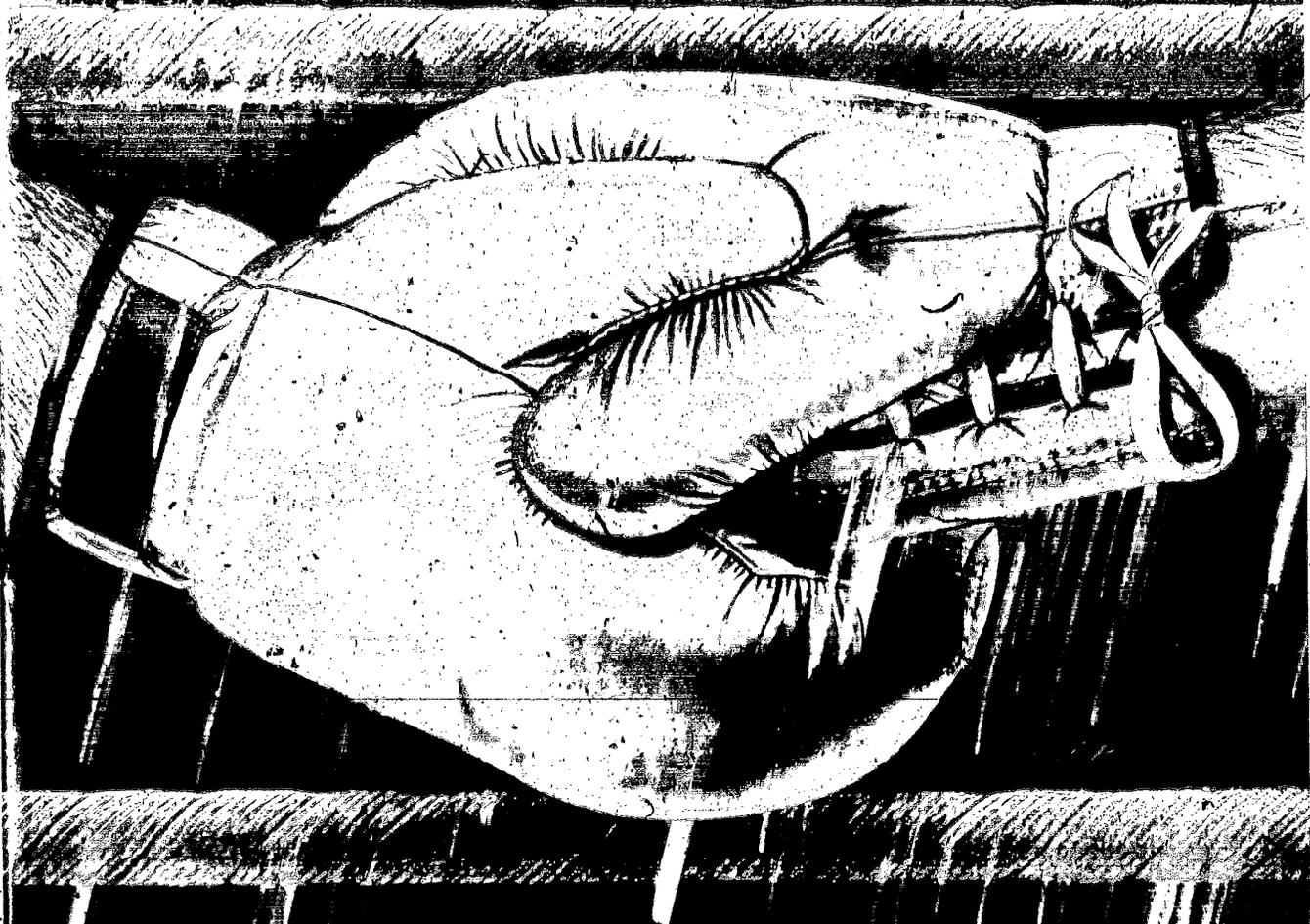


APRIL 1987

The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW //



HOW TO HANDLE CONFLICT

What Is the True Gospel?
Are You Overlooking Something?

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COVER: Life is full of personal conflicts! Yet God reveals, in the Bible, living laws that, when applied, foster successful human relationships. Be sure to read "How to Handle Conflict," beginning on page 5. Illustration by Ren Wicks.

Letters

"Personal" on Balaam

Your "Personal" in the latest *Good News* [January] was something I had not realized. I had thought that Balaam was God's prophet. More important, though, is that we do need to go the opposite direction from the wrong ways of living. We humans tend to go the way of Balaam.

Tom Wallace
Eagar, Ariz.

"Earth's Oldest Living Things"

Just wanted to let you know what a wonderful article you [published] in the January *Good News*, titled "Earth's Oldest Living Things — What They Teach Us." I was very deeply thankful for the quote from Mr. [Herbert W.] Armstrong that "God does not call people as a favor, but because he has something for them to do." I, too, want to remember that so I put it in the front of my Bible so that every time it is opened, I will be reminded of that.

Debi Montgomery
Tulsa, Okla.

"Why Do Some Pillars Fall?"

I must make a response to something said in Victor Root's article, "Why Do Some Pillars Fall?" [January].

It just struck me greatly that Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24:14 ("And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached . . .") was a great big vote of confidence and trust to the Philadelphia era that they would be close to God and drawing on His strength to get the job done.

Our elder brother surely does encourage and direct us in so many ways.

Mary Lou Baltosser
West Unity, Ohio

"Why God Hates Gossip"

Your article, "Why God Hates Gossip!" [January] really hit home and should be an example to all of us.

This one part I have cut out to remind me daily: "But there is no excuse for us in God's Church to behave like those who do not have God's Spirit. We must always tell the truth. We must never say anything that could hurt or harm our neighbors, never gossip, never spread rumors."

Thanks to you, I will add this to my daily prayers to ask God to help me become stronger in all this:

Lucie de Ruyter
Ocracoke, N.C.

Herbert Armstrong

DO YOU HAVE problems, difficulties, troubles?

Some seem to think God's people meet no trials or tests but are blessed with continual smooth sailing!

In my personal responsibilities in the conduct of this great, important, always growing Work of God, I have not found it a smooth, easygoing road with no difficulties. I have encountered repeated trials, problems, tests.

There have been critical crises. There has been real persecution. There has been deliberate, vicious, lying, unprincipled misrepresentation. One enemy printed and circulated a list of 20 things he claimed I believed and taught — and I didn't believe or teach a single one of them.

In this Work of the living God there has been deceitful, malicious, ruthless opposition. Obstacles have had to be hurdled frequently. Problems constantly require solution. It has required unwavering faith, perseverance, determination, constant prayer for guidance and reliance on God for both direction and protection.

Does the Bible teach smooth sailing for true Christians whom God is using? Did the men of God, whose lives pleased God, as recorded in the Bible, have only an easy time of it, or were they constantly meeting trials, tests, troubles of every sort — being continually forced to cry out to God for deliverance?

And why?

Listen to God's own instruction: "MANY are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all" (Ps. 34:19).

"For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked. . . . They are not in trouble as other men. . . . Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world;

they increase in riches. . . . For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning" (Ps. 73:3-14).

"We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts 14:22).

"All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. 3:12).

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him" (II Tim. 2:12).

"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer" (II Cor. 1:5-6).

But is God unfair? Does He hate Christians and punish them, while He loves the ungodly and prospers them? *Not at all!*

There is great purpose in the trials, tests, tribulations and sufferings the Christian must endure. For these are the very means of strengthening CHARACTER — of developing fine, upstanding, strong Christians.

God does not bless the ungodly with wealth — they acquire it usually in one or both of two ways: by setting their hearts and minds on acquiring it and following through this purpose to the exclusion of all else, until, without realizing it, the pursuit of MONEY becomes the pursuit of their god, destroying the soul; or by dishonest means.

But God does bless those who seek Him first — not always with great money and wealth, but always, in the end, with material prosperity they would not have had otherwise. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness," admonished Jesus, "and all these things [material prosperity in shelter, food, clothing] shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). That is Jesus' PROMISE.

God loves to see His servants prospering. He says so through David and John. He corrects and chastens every son whom He loves. He allows His true children to suffer much — to fall into troubles, difficulties, to face trials and tests for their strengthening.

But if we endure these tests, hard though they may be — and if we seek first our God, His righteousness and His Kingdom, putting material interests second in our hearts, then in His own due time God will always prosper His children even in a material way!

"But we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience" (Rom. 5:3). Therefore it produces GOOD in and for us.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations [alternate translation: "trials"]; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience" (Jas. 1:2-3).

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice" (I Pet. 4:12-13).

If you had to choose between receiving gold valued at \$50,000 or a great trouble to test your faith, which would you choose? The gold? You'd make the wrong choice if you did.

God says, through Peter: ". . . the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it [the trial of faith] be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ" (I Pet. 1:7).

Moses suffered affliction in order to lead the children of God, choosing this rather than the riches of the king's palace and the pleasures of sin for a season.

David suffered constant criticism and false accusation, his enemies continually tried to unseat him and his
(Continued on page 29)

What Is the True Gospel?

What is the true Gospel that Jesus preached? Did Paul preach a different gospel to the gentiles? Here, at last, is made plain the truth about the Kingdom of God.

By Herbert W. Armstrong

WHY SHOULD there be such perplexity — such confusion — in every phase of life today?

It should be the function of religion to point the way. Yet here, too, we find only confusion of tongues — hundreds of religious denominations and sects, in a Babylon of disagreement.

Even in the professing Christian religion of the Western world, we find different sects and denominations preaching a variety of different GOSPELS!

Some designate their gospel as "The Gospel of Jesus Christ." Others call their gospel "The Gospel of Salvation." Still others profess "The Gospel of Grace," some "The Gospel of the Kingdom."

WHY HAVE THEY LOST THE ONLY TRUE GOSPEL THAT GOD SENT BY JESUS CHRIST? WHY?

How many Gospels are there?

Does it make any difference which gospel we believe?

Listen to the answer of the eternal God, as inspired in Paul's letter to the Galatians — the first chapter, the eighth verse:

"But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any *other* gospel unto you than that which we have

preached unto you, let him be accursed."

And it is made a *double* curse! For the next verse says, "So say, I now again! If any man preach any *other* gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

WHY, then, has the world lost sight of that Gospel? Why do people believe *different* gospels today?

This is an astounding, incredible situation! It ought to shake you out of passive indifference. YOUR eternity is at stake! This is not an inconsequential, unimportant matter!

Jesus Christ said it is necessary to BELIEVE THE GOSPEL to be saved! Yet the *many* — the hundreds of millions — today do not know what *that Gospel is!*

Again, His parting commission to His apostles, being sent out as His ministers to build His Church, was this: "Go ye into all the world, and preach *the gospel!*" (Mark 16:15). They were to preach THE GOSPEL.

Jesus then said, "He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (verse 16).

Notice! Jesus said, "He that BELIEVETH." Believeth *what?* Why, BELIEVETH that which they PREACHED, of course — THE GOSPEL! Not a gospel. Not any gospel. THE Gospel!

On the authority of Jesus Christ, it is necessary to believe THAT PRE-

CHISE, IDENTICAL GOSPEL in order to be saved! And to BELIEVE the true Gospel, we must first come to KNOW what it is!

Now with whom, and from where, and to whom, did the true Gospel originate? With Christ? No, not with Christ!

The message sent from heaven

God the Father had promised to send a messenger into this world from heaven, bearing a message from HIM — God the FATHER!

God had promised that in Malachi 3:1:

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me [and that messenger, as explained in Mark 1:2, was John the Baptist, preparing the way before Jesus Christ]; and the LORD, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, EVEN THE MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT, whom ye delight in."

The very first sermon by which God had the Gospel preached to gentiles, when Peter was sent to the house of the gentile Cornelius, recorded in the 10th chapter of the book of Acts, gives us very explicit directions for locating the one and only TRUE GOSPEL.

Open your own Bible! I want you to read this with your own eyes! This is what the inspired Peter said, as recorded in Acts 10:36-37: "The word which GOD sent unto the chil-

dren of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:) That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached."

Which Gospel did Jesus preach?

Notice carefully these points:

1) With whom did this message — this Gospel — originate? Peter said: "The word which GOD sent."

2) TO WHOM did God send it? Peter said, "unto the children of Israel." Although now, 10 years later, this same Gospel was being opened up to gentiles of ALL nations, originally it was sent to the CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and it was sent by GOD the FATHER. It did not originate with Jesus Christ, nor with Peter, nor with the apostle Paul. It was sent by God the Father of Jesus Christ!

3) BY WHOM was it sent? Who was the divine Messenger who brought and preached the message? Peter said "by Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ was the divine MESSENGER. Malachi called Him the Messenger of the COVENANT.

That message, then, is the NEW covenant message, for Moses was the mediator of the old covenant, and Jesus Christ of the NEW, as affirmed by many scriptures. This message, then, is the NEW TESTAMENT GOSPEL.

Now, 4) WHERE was it first preached? To what geographical location shall we look for its beginning? Peter said it "began from Galilee." Yes, GALILEE, then, is the place where it was first preached. Not Jerusalem! Galilee!

When did Jesus begin to preach this particular Gospel in Galilee? Peter said "after the baptism which John preached." The true GOSPEL of the NEW covenant, then, did not begin with John the Baptist. It began after John had completed his baptismal ministry.

Now these very definite directions lead us directly to the first chapter of Mark. The first verse tells us this is the record of the BEGINNING of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Then it relates the baptizing ministry of John, preaching, NOT the Gospel, but "the baptism of repentance," which prepares the way for the GOSPEL that the living God sent by Jesus Christ (verse 4).

And then we come to verses 14 and 15: "Now after that John was put in prison" — there is the exact TIME for the beginning of the preaching of the TRUE GOSPEL — "JESUS" — there is the divine Messenger BY whom God sent it — "came into GALILEE" — THE PRECISE GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION.

So we now have the TIME, the Israelites residing there to WHOM God sent the message, the PLACE and the MESSENGER — so whatever we find Jesus preaching here IS THE ONE AND ONLY TRUE GOSPEL.

And what do we read? "Jesus came into Galilee, PREACHING THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the KINGDOM OF GOD is at hand: REPENT YE, and BELIEVE THE GOSPEL."

Notice, Jesus said, "Believe THE GOSPEL."

WHAT Gospel? The one He was proclaiming — "the gospel of the kingdom of God."

But, one may ask, don't we need to believe on Jesus? Of course. Other scriptures teach that. But at this particular time Jesus said we must believe Him — believe what He said — believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God!

Some believed on Jesus, but did not believe Jesus — did not believe what He SAID (John 7:31, 8:30-31, 46).

What about the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

But if the one and only TRUE Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, what about the Gospel of Jesus Christ? Is that a false gospel?

Not at all. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel He brought as God's Messenger — the Gospel He proclaimed is the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is NOT man's gospel ABOUT the PERSON of Christ.

It is CHRIST'S Gospel — the Gospel Jesus PREACHED — the Gospel GOD SENT by Him, and therefore it is also called, in Scripture, the Gospel of God. The Gospel of God is God's Gospel — His message — His good news that He sent by Jesus.

Also the Gospel of Jesus Christ is Christ's Gospel — the Gospel Christ

brought, from God — the Gospel He proclaimed.

We hear a great deal today of the gospel of MEN about the PERSON of Jesus Christ — confining the message solely to the things ABOUT Jesus. As a result, millions believe on Christ who do NOT BELIEVE CHRIST! But Jesus' Gospel IS HIS MESSAGE!

And yet it was not only His, but His FATHER'S who sent Him, as He Himself said. In John 12:49-50, Jesus said:

"I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me. HE gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that HIS commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak."

Yes, the Father SENT Jesus bearing a message, which is the good news of THE KINGDOM OF GOD. Jesus is God's Spokesman — the WORD that was made flesh and lived, and taught, on this earth! In John 14:24 Jesus said, "The word which ye hear is NOT MINE, but the Father's which sent me."

And, descriptive of the religion of the Old Testament and the GOSPEL of the NEW, it is written in Luke 16:16, "The law and the prophets were UNTIL JOHN: since that time the KINGDOM OF GOD is preached."

What is the Kingdom of God?

And yet there are some in this modern day of religious confusion who believe the Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD is not for this age — this New Testament time of grace. They reject and therefore do not BELIEVE the true Gospel as Jesus commanded and thereby reject the very conditions to SALVATION, saying the Gospel of the KINGDOM is a gospel for some future age yet to come.

But as the apostle Paul said to the Thessalonians, I would not have you to be IGNORANT of the very Gospel that alone can bring us eternal life!

There was a definite TIME for the beginning of the Gospel — since John. The law and the prophets were UNTIL John. Since John's special preparatory ministry, the KINGDOM OF GOD is preached.

There was a definite TIME for this true New Testament Gospel to begin. And after John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, saying, "The

TIME is fulfilled," and preaching the Gospel.

And so now, WHAT is that Gospel?

The English word *gospel* comes from the word *godspel*, and means GOOD NEWS. Daily, we read the NEWS of world happenings — mostly BAD news! We live in a troubled, chaotic world. And the very BEST news you can hear in this day, or any other, is the GOOD NEWS of the KINGDOM OF GOD.

But what is a KINGDOM? Primarily, it is a GOVERNMENT — a NATION and the GOVERNMENT that rules it. And especially in this biblical sense, there is the DUAL sense of the NATION, including all its subjects or citizens, and the GOVERNMENT by which it is ruled. Again — in BIBLE usage, a kingdom is often a family from a single parent grown into a NATION.

Four things are necessary to constitute a KINGDOM: 1) the TERRITORY, with its specific location and definite boundary lines, with 2) a KING or supreme ruler or governing agent, ruling over 3) SUBJECTS or citizens within that territorial jurisdiction, with 4) LAWS and a form of GOVERNMENT.

If we leave out any one of these vital requisites, we do not have, and cannot BELIEVE, the true GOSPEL for this time.

We must know whether the Kingdom of God is here NOW, or coming later; whether its territory is the EARTH, or up in heaven; whether it is a literal kingdom of human mortals, or a kingdom of immortals; whether it is literal or figurative, real or unreal.

And on many of these things, a great many people are ALL MIXED UP!

But now what about the Gospel of GRACE — the Gospel of SALVATION?

Born into the Kingdom

Notice, when Nicodemus came to Jesus secretly, as recorded in John the third chapter, Jesus said to him: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the KINGDOM OF GOD" (verse 3).

Jesus was proclaiming the KINGDOM OF GOD — explaining a most important phase of it.

As Paul wrote to the church at

Corinth in I Corinthians 15:50, flesh and blood — that is, a mortal human — cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

The Church, then, cannot be the Kingdom of God, for it is composed of flesh-and-blood mortals. It is *not*, either, an ethereal something "set up in the hearts of men."

Jesus went on to show Nicodemus that we who are born of the flesh ARE flesh — just mortal flesh and blood. We were BORN that way — HUMAN — MORTAL.

But it is possible for us to be BORN AGAIN — next time, *not* as a mortal flesh-and-blood baby, but born of the SPIRIT. Then we shall *be* spirit — composed of spirit!

Now in the fourth chapter of John we read that GOD is a SPIRIT (verse 24). The Kingdom of GOD is, composed of those BORN of GOD. And as I have explained previously, GOD is not a single person, but the Hebrew word for God, *Elohim*, portrays God as a FAMILY of persons — a *single* family, or *kingdom*, but composed of MORE than one person.

We have the mineral *kingdom*, the plant *kingdom*, the animal *kingdom*. The Bible reveals an angel *kingdom*, created by God and composed of spirit, not matter.

And then, high above all, is the very CREATING Kingdom — the GOD Kingdom, or, in other words, THE KINGDOM OF GOD!

GOD IS REPRODUCING HIMSELF! God created man in GOD'S IMAGE, so that man may become impregnated, BEGOTTEN and, by a resurrection, be BORN as an immortal, SPIRIT-COMPOSED person in the KINGDOM OF GOD.

The apostle Paul made very plain to the Corinthians that while mortal flesh and blood cannot inherit, or enter into, the Kingdom of God, that through the resurrection of those BEGOTTEN BY THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD during this mortal life, this MORTAL then *puts on* IMMORTALITY, and we, like the very God Himself, become IMMORTAL, INCORRUPTIBLE, actually, literally, BORN of God's Spirit INTO the very GOD FAMILY.

Conditions of entering

Now, HOW may we enter into that glorious KINGDOM?

Jesus came preaching the Gospel

of the Kingdom of God, and saying "REPENT" and "BELIEVE THE GOSPEL."

Just TWO things we do — REPENT and BELIEVE. We must BELIEVE the Gospel, and that means also believing on JESUS CHRIST, the KING of the Kingdom of God, and coming KING of kings over all the families of the earth. It means believing in Him as personal SAVIOR, as High Priest now and as coming KING.

But to repent is to completely CHANGE THE MIND in respect to SIN, and "sin is the transgression of the LAW" (I John 3:4) — the law of GOD by which GOD RULES the Kingdom.

It means a total, complete CHANGE OF MIND AND OF LIFE. It means we REPENT of transgressing the rule, the will, the laws, of GOD. What did Jesus say to the young man who asked Him HOW to inherit eternal life? He said, "IF thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS" (Matt. 19:17).

He went on to show that He referred to the TEN COMMANDMENTS, God's great SPIRITUAL LAW, summing up, in principle, the WHOLE duty of righteous living.

It is a WAY OF LIFE, and a way *contrary* to human nature and to the ways and customs of this world! It is the basic spiritual law and way of life of the KINGDOM OF GOD — the WAY to peace of mind, to world peace, to happiness, prosperity and JOY — the WAY to eternal life.

Kingdom of God to be preached TODAY

Yes, JESUS proclaimed and taught the GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. But did He command His ministers, in BUILDING His CHURCH, to preach this same Gospel? Quickly let us notice the Scriptures.

Luke 9:1-2: "Then he called his twelve disciples together . . . And he sent them to PREACH THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

Luke 10:1-2, 9: "After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come.

"Therefore said he unto them . . . heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The KINGDOM OF GOD is come nigh unto you."

(Continued on page 29)

How to Handle Conflict

*Christians are promised troubles and conflicts!
How can we handle personal conflicts so
as to qualify for God's Kingdom of peacemakers?*

By Neil Earle

You've heard it before: "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).

This command of God's Word is no small order for those trying to live the way Jesus taught!

The Christian life is often punctuated with sharp clashes and conflicts: Sabbath employment problems. School schedules versus God's Holy Days. Explaining three tithes to unconverted mates. Returning Christmas gifts. Office Halloween parties. In-law conflicts, especially where only one mate is a member.

The list is long. Conflict, real or potential, is very much interwoven into our lives as we struggle to disengage ourselves from "this present world" (II Tim. 4:10).

The fact is that Christians are promised trouble (John 16:33, Acts 14:22). It is a required course.

How, then, can we fulfill Romans 12:18?

Apply the living laws

God, in the treasure chest that is



His precious Word, unlocks piercing insights into human behavior, strategy that, when applied, steers a Christian through much enervating conflict (Rom. 15:4).

What are the sound principles that, if applied, "give subtilty to the simple, to the young man [the inexperienced] knowledge and discretion" (Prov. 1:4)? Let's study some of the most important.

Yet note well this fact: Learning to handle or reduce conflict requires major changes in mental and emotional approaches, over a period of time. No gimmickry or cure-alls lie

hidden in the Word of God. Rather, the challenge is to search out and apply living laws of human relations.

To those willing to pay the price, the living Word of God, Jesus Christ — the Prince of peace Himself — promises overall success in resolving life's thorny situations (Rom. 16:20).

Let's examine these important keys.

Strive for a balanced, realistic approach to life

This is a broad but vital area. Even carnal human beings who make a sincere effort to overcome selfishness and immaturity find a payoff (Eccl. 2:13-14). These are the real achievers in society.

What is a balanced view of reality? I Corinthians 13:11 defines it: "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

What childish things must we put away before we can reach maturity?

Ponder this: Sweet, gentle infants are sometimes demanding, inconsiderate and dictatorial. They don't lie in their cribs thinking: "I'm hungry."

But it's 3 a.m., and Daddy's had a hard day. If I cry out I may wake up my brothers and sisters, and Mommy will miss sleep." We don't expect totally mature reactions from little children.

Personal growth means rejecting the selfish, inconsiderate responses of childhood and developing an approach characterized more by consideration for other's feelings — an accommodating, conciliatory attitude, a willingness to wait and suffer inconvenience, a nondictatorial expression of basic needs.

This is progress! This is transforming the reactions of *get by* the strategy of *give* (Acts 20:35). Sad to say, many people do not outgrow childish reactions and responses. Only a handful achieve responsible adulthood.

Immaturity is costly! Sooner or later we all are thwarted in the expression of desires, lawful or unlawful. Selfish disillusionment sets in. A hardness forms within us (Heb. 3:13). The beautiful childlike attitudes of innocence, trust and wonder wither.

All because, to one degree or another, we selfishly felt let down by life — or how we felt our lives should go. Since our lives revolve so much around selfish gratification (Ps. 39:5), we are ripe for absorbing the satanic spirit (Eph. 2:2).

This is how cynicism and bitterness start. Continual defeats and disillusionments crush the basic optimism of the human spirit (Eccl. 7:29). The world is harsher, crasser, more ignoble than we imagined. *God's guys don't always win!*

"There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked: again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous" (Eccl. 8:14). The rip-off society triumphs.

We then react selfishly, like spoiled children. "Everybody's doing it. I might as well get my share!" Too bad.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, enjoyed a balanced view of reality — a truly mature outlook. Notice Ecclesiastes 8:12: "Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know

that I shall be well with them that fear God."

How true! This perspective on life rallies our sometimes sagging zeal to fight on in the face of anguish and seeming futility.

Some people reading this article are single parents, some are married to alcoholics, some mourn loved ones lost in unexpected tragedies. How easy to feel life has dealt us a raw deal and fall into a "what's the use" attitude (I Cor. 15:32).

Yet God counsels, "Surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off" (Prov. 23:18). God's Word is emphatic: Every human being will give account for his physical life (II Cor. 5:10).

So take heart amidst life's difficulties! Conflicts and trials force us back to God to learn wisdom, vision, determination and faith. They refine our sometimes flawed and unsteady character (Jas. 1:2). Learning to handle conflict is a vital facet of character. The lessons will last for all eternity (II Cor. 4:17).

Accept your responsibility

"But it's all the other person's fault!" some complain. "I didn't do a thing. I'm dealing with a hopeless case."

In cases of alcoholism, wife beating or sexual abuses, major fault usually lies on one side, and such troublemakers have an amazing ability to make others, especially their mates, feel guilty. God's Word clearly condemns the incorrigible (Isa. 57:20-21).

Most conflict, however, especially in marriage, is not usually that starkly one-sided. It takes two to tangle, as they say. Even in conflicts over the Sabbath, unconverted mates, tithing and school problems, we still have a certain responsibility.

Why is this? For the simple reason that none of us approach and handle these delicate areas with perfect tact, sensitivity and balance (nor there is no man that sinneth not — I Kings 8:46). This is a spiritual matter!

Human relations is no precise science like engineering or architecture. Why? For the simple reason that human beings are largely creatures of emotion, bristling with prejudices, unwarranted assumptions and hostility. Thus we are obligated to

possess a measure of timing, discretion and diplomacy.

Yet how often do we enter delicate areas of life — parent-teacher meetings, asking for time off work, correcting a family member — without the skill and subtlety God provides free of charge (Prov. 1:1-5)? In scriptural terms, we "lean to our own understanding" (Prov. 3:5).

No wonder people sometimes react negatively to our sincere efforts. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident" (Prov. 14:16). Fools rush in where angels fear to tread (Eccl. 7:9).

Be honest. Let's analyze some of our present conflicts (II Cor. 13:5). Have we always armed ourselves with godly wisdom?

The apostle James put it succinctly: "In many things we offend all" (Jas. 3:2).

But take heart! The good news is that once we humble ourselves to see our own responsibility, we are more approachable, more reasonable, more willing to bury the hatchet.

Mature Christians possess a keen awareness of personal faults (Prov. 30:2). By taking the first feeble steps as peacemakers where it counts most — in our own minds — we are actually applying a living law of human relationships. Matthew 7:5: "Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."

This attitude prepares us spiritually. It helps salve tensions. Listen! How can there ever be peace on earth when every human being is himself a walking civil war, torn between strong impulses toward evil and weaker yearnings to do well (Gal. 5:17)?

No wonder humanity finds the road to peace blocked (Isa. 59:8, Jer. 10:23). Peace comes when we let God's Holy Spirit show us our own wrong attitudes, give us insight into our own behavior and help us evaluate our own wrong thoughts, the evil triggered by our carnal nature (John 16:13, II Cor. 10:5).

Don't be oversensitive

People who bear grudges, who store the real or imagined slights of others like some save stamps — do not find lasting peace of mind. People

hypersensitive to the words and actions of others and those convinced that others are out to get them are often labeled *paranoid*.

Listen to more priceless counsel: "Also take no heed unto all words; that are spoken, lest thou hear thy servant curse thee: For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others" (Ecc. 7:21-22).

There it is! If we understood our own human nature we'd be a lot more merciful and understanding toward those who offend us (1 Luke 6:35).

Do we really believe that people lie awake at night thinking up ways to make our lives miserable? Do we? In most of our life conflicts, it just can't that way.

When contentious, thoughtless people bother us, we must remember that they've offended others as well. So we are not the problem—they are. Then contentious, thoughtless, hostile approach doesn't pay. Read 1 Samuel 25 to see how one miserable ingrate shot off his mouth once too often.

Of course, when we grasp the big picture of human life, such people are to be pitied. "Anger roteth in the bosom of fools," Solomon said (Ecc. 7:9), and there is a penalty hanging over those who love conflict (Ps. 52:1-3).

Never allow others to dictate your emotional state. Don't allow people who chatter through life with all the grace and finesse of a Sherman tank ruin your day. "Fret not thyself because of the man who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath" (Ps. 37:7-8).

Shrewd Nehemiah refused to allow razzing and threats to distract him from his responsibilities (Neh. 6:2-3). He had work to do, and so do we. Nehemiah knew how important it was to put God in the center of his emotional life: "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls" (Prov. 25:28).

See the other person's point of view

Once upon a time the wise application of this principle guaranteed a nation 40 full years of peace. It was

during the dark period of the judges in ancient Israel.

God's servant Gideon, after many searching tests of faith, dealt cruel Midian a decisive blow (Judg. 7:19-21). Gideon alerted his Ephraimite brothers to cut off Midian's retreat, and they did so (verses 24-25). Ephraim swept the nation of Israel. But not everywhere.

"And the men of Ephraim said unto him, Why hast thou served us thus, that thou calledst us not, when thou wentest to fight with the Midianites? And they did chide with him sharply" (Judg. 8:1).

What a test! Gideon found that winning the peace was as difficult as waging war. What did Gideon do? How easily he could have snapped back that there were no Ephraimites around when he needed them most (Judg. 7:3). He could easily have put them in their place.

But Gideon didn't want the peace of Israel marred. He realized that the problem was with the Ephraimites' attitude, not with him. He refused to take their attack personally (Prov. 14:29). Read Judges 8:3-4 for his soft answer. It truly turned away wrath (Prov. 15:1). The result? "And the country was in quietness forty years in the days of Gideon" (Judg. 8:28).

Gideon's remarkable insight into the minds of others—his generosity of spirit—sowed peace. Millions limit themselves because they blindly refuse to understand the sensitivities of others. Yet Christ counsels, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16).

Don't waste time on revenge

The Greek noun *makrothumia* and the verb *makrothumeo* are characteristically New Testament words, unknown in classical Greek. Why?

"*Makrothumia* is the spirit which could take revenge if it liked, but utterly refuses to do so... the spirit which will never retaliate... To the Greek the big man was the man who went all out for vengeance. To the Christian the big man is the man who, even when he can, refuses to do so" (Barclay, *New Testament Words*, pp. 196-197).

Makrothumia is translated "long-suffering" and "patience." This godly forbearance is prized highly in Paul's writings to young churches

often plagued with internal bickerings and clashes (Eph. 4:2, Col. 3:13).

Revenge is the direct antithesis of *makrothumia*. Revenge only ups the ante in a dispute and leads to emotional escalation. Bitter words, which might not be forgotten, may be said (Prov. 6:2). "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city" (Prov. 18:19).

Let's not rub in the mistakes of our mates. We should resist making that choice remark when irritating people leave themselves open for a put-down. Instead of berating children for misbehavior, let's analyze the root cause and present the solution in a positive, challenging way.

This is much harder than self-righteously blowing our stack. There is a carnal satisfaction in getting even and storming away at people legitimately in our debt, but we shouldn't be surprised if we end up with few friends at the end of a lonely, barren life (Gal. 5:15).

Tests of character occur constantly. One key to escaping the spiritual ice age prophesied for this end time (Matt. 24:12) is to remember Jesus' brilliant parable of the unmerciful servant. The climax comes in Matthew 18:33: "Shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?"

This focuses us marvelously. A converted person's deep consciousness of his own need of God's lavish pardon should trigger the forgiving attitude, the meekness and conciliatory feelings that are antidotes to the spiritual cancer of hardheartedness and vindictiveness.

Notice this wonderful advice from the apostle James... some of the most beautiful words in any language: "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (Jas. 3:14-18). (1)

ME? Overcome What?

Exactly what must we overcome to qualify for God's Kingdom?

Let's face this question! God promises, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21:7).

But exactly *what* are we to overcome? We need to know our eternal future in God's Family is at stake!

The word *overcome*, according to Webster's dictionary, means "to conquer, to overpower or overwhelm, to render helpless." What are we to conquer or render helpless?

Many of us have been taught, and correctly so, that our "old man" or the "old self" is to be destroyed (Rom. 6:6). Believing this "old man" to be our human nature, we have struggled for years to overcome our own nature, only to find that it is still with us. As a result we feel a deep sense of failure and discouragement.

Is this what God meant? Are we put here on earth to overcome ourselves?

Human nature neutral

Human nature is neither good nor bad of itself. A human being, at birth, is not inherently evil. Human nature is neutral. It is variable—capable of adjusting to one form of behavior or another depending on those factors that influence it. In other words, our human nature is our tendency to follow the ways and customs of those around us.

The Bible often compares humans to sheep who either follow the Good Shepherd in paths of righteousness or wrong shepherds into paths of evil (John 10:7-9, 14; Isa. 53:6). Our human nature allows us to follow the ways of this world and become evil

By Jack R. Elliott

simply because we grew up in a world cut off from God and influenced by Satan.

It is not human nature (the sheep-like tendency to follow) that needs to be overcome, but the worldly character that we have acquired.

In order to overcome, we must disassociate ourselves from wrong guidance and wrong pulls and associate ourselves with God and those who follow God, in order to take on God's characteristics.

God's Church is the congregation of people who follow God and God's laws, ways and instructions. In His message to the historical era of God's Church since the Church was founded in A.D. 31 (Rev. 2,3), Christ showed each church one which of its works were righteous and which needed to be changed. If we study Christ's message carefully, we can learn what behavior pleases God and what behavior does not.

Notice what God's Church had been doing right: They had not tolerated evil; had checked up on false apostles and proved them liars; had hated pagan deeds; had endured patiently; had labored in righteousness for Christ's name's sake; had not fainted or given up; had endured tribulation—including poverty, prison and martyrdom; had held fast God's name; had not denied the faith; had charity (love), faith and good works; had watched; and had kept God's Word.

On the other hand, Christ listed the sins of which His Church needed to repent: One had left its first love (that first, tender love of God and

concern for neighbor that an individual has upon conversion); one embraced false doctrines; another had allowed one called Jezebel to teach and seduce members to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols; still another was lukewarm, having dead works.

Christ told the churches to repent of these dead and evil works. If they didn't, He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth and blot their names out of the book of life (2:16, 3:5). Repentance means to stop doing evil works and start doing right works, or righteousness.

Let's understand what evil is, and what it has been from the beginning.

What is evil?

God has always existed. He is "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life" (Job. 7:9). God created the heavens and the earth—the whole universe (John 1:13). He created the angels and He created you and me. Look around and appreciate the enormity of this creation.

If God could of His own power create all this—if He had the wisdom to put it all together, from its infinite size and scope down to its microscopic perfection—and make it function so intricately that generation after generation of intrigued scientists spend their lives just trying to figure it out, wouldn't God also know how His creation should live?

God's way is the right way. But what makes the other ways wrong?

When God created the world, perhaps billions of years ago, He set over the world—to administer God's government here—an archangel, one

God had created and made perfect in all his ways. This archangel's name was Lucifer. Lucifer was beautiful; his name meant "light bringer." He enlightened with God's wisdom all that was then on the earth.

But Lucifer rebelled, seeking to magnify his own glory instead of God's. He resisted God, fighting against the Creator, and enticed one third of all the angels to follow him in this rebellion (Ezek. 28:14-15, Isa. 14:12-14, Rev. 12:4). Lucifer was given a new name - Satan, meaning "adversary."

Thus Satan introduced rebellion and deception into the world. That is the basis of evil.

Evil is anything against God's perfect and righteous way. It is confusion, and it destroys the happiness and peace that come from right living. Evil is sin and sin is evil.

The definition of sin is found in 1 John 3:4: "Sin is the transgression of the law." Which law? God's perfect law of love and outgoing concern, as outlined in the Ten Commandments (Matt. 22:36-39, Ex. 20:1-17).

Sin is characterized by Satan himself. It is the way of rebellion against one's Creator. Adam and Eve chose to follow Satan - they pursued a way of life that they thought was best rather than following the one prescribed by God. All the world has followed suit, and it is out of this world and its systems, as influenced by Satan, that we must come.

Overcome the world

John instructs us to "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him" (1 John 2:15).

John later states that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world" (1 John 5:4). To be born of God, into God's very Family, we must overcome the world! This is a big order, but Christ said, "In the world, ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

How did Christ overcome the world? By loving the Father and following the Father's instructions, even though Christ was tempted in all the

ways we are (1 Heb. 4:15). By showing Satan, in a face-to-face confrontation, that He would not follow anyone else but God (Matt. 4:1-11).

By overcoming the world, Christ qualified to replace Satan's rebellious rulership over the earth, and the Father resurrected Christ to eternal life. Christ conquered the pulls and corruption of this world, which end in death.

We, as Christians, have been called to do something, too. There is work that needs to be done now. Aside from helping to get the Gospel out, we must follow Christ's example - follow the Good Shepherd and overcome the world.

Unlike Christ, however, we have been entangled in the world since birth, and have succumbed to Satan's temptations many times. Now we must come out of this world and overcome it by becoming free of its binding customs, its rewards and punishments and its will to have its own way apart from God. We must pursue, instead, God's way of love - giving the way of God's law.

Christ gave His life so we can be forgiven for our self-centered, rebellious living - our sins - when we repent of them. We must give up our lives - give up living after the flesh - and let Christ live His life in us, being led by God's Spirit (Gal. 2:20).

In so doing we become an example to the world. We become like a beacon of light for the world to see, and though the world hate the light, it will witness the Kingdom of God at work in us (Matt. 5:14-16). We must live the Gospel!

It is this process of turning away from evil and living by God's perfect way of love that is called overcoming.

The armor of God

Paul tells us, in Ephesians 6:11-13: "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

"Wherefore take unto you the

whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

What is this armor Paul describes? We are to be clothed in truth (verse 14), so that we can't be deceived, wearing the breastplate of righteousness, which is the keeping of God's law (Ps. 119:172). Our feet are to be shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15) - we are to be actively making way for the Kingdom of God (Matt. 24:14). The shield of faith (Eph. 6:16) helps us ward off attacks and enticements of the wicked, while wearing the helmet of salvation on our head (verse 17) keeps us properly oriented toward our goal. We are also to wield the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God!

Love or outgoing concern, the most important component in our godly armor, is expressed in verse 18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."

This world, at Satan's inspiration, will continue to push its way into our lives if we let it. We will have a continuing fight on our hands. But the Word of God is our sword, and His armor is our protection. With these weapons we cannot fail, unless we fail to try.

Develop right character

Merely learning of these things and doing them occasionally is not enough. We must grow in the habit of doing right consistently, persevering in godly behavior throughout our lives. When we do so, a pattern of behavior is formed - habits that give us a new character.

We must not only renounce Satan's ways and accept Jesus and His ways, but we must follow Christ's ways consistently in order to reflect godliness. We must completely put out the old character and not let it live in our lives again.

Our continuous behavior, led by God's Holy Spirit, finally becomes our habit and characterizes us as one of God's people - as true Christians.

That is what it means to overcome. □



What Did Christ Mean— 'Many Are Called, But Few Are Chosen'?

Let's face this question — it concerns our eternal future!

Exactly what did Jesus mean when He told the disciples, "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14)?

What does it mean to be "called" or to receive a "call" from God? And what is the significance of being "chosen"? Is there any difference between being called and being chosen?

Could you confidently and correctly explain Jesus' statement?

Christianity today is confused! Most

By Raymond F. McNair



professing Christians, even some who are supposedly in God's true Church, have not realized that before anyone can become a bona fide member of God's Church — Christ's Body — that person must first be both specially called and chosen by God.

"A chosen generation"

Jesus Christ told the disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you" (John 15:16). Christ elsewhere intimated, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44).

The apostle Peter, addressing true Christians — true members of God's

Church wrote: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God" (I Pet. 2:9-10).

Peter further admonished God's people — God's elect, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall" (II Pet. 1:10).

What is this whole business of "calling" and "choosing" and "election" about? And why were the saints admonished to make their calling and election "sure" — certain?

Bidden to the wedding

Since this era of God's Church began this end-time Work in the early 1930s, millions of people have been reached, in one way or the other, with the true Gospel — by way of radio, television, publishing or personal evangelism.

But of those who have been reached or witnessed to with Christ's true Gospel and who have been actually called by God, only a very few have ever fully accepted and responded to that call. The vast majority seem to pay little or no attention.

If we diligently study the parable of the king who made a marriage for his son (Matt. 22:1-14), we can better understand the meaning of Christ's statement that "Many are called, but few are chosen."

In this parable the king "sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come" (verse 3).

How does God call us? By the preaching of His Word. But the majority spurn that call. They pay little or no attention to God's royal invitation (verses 4-7).

Finally the king said, "Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid [call] to the marriage" (verse 9).

Of the millions who hear God's Word preached, few ever pay serious attention to that message.

Primarily, it is the "poor" of this

world — those who are desatished with their lot and who are willing to give God the yoke of day — who pay any real attention to God's message: "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas. 2:5).

The rich, the noble, the powerful and the wise are too self-satisfied with their lot in this life to heed God's call. They don't need God — so they think!

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (I Cor. 1:26-31).

Parable of the sower

Jesus Christ commissioned His apostles to preach the true Gospel to all the world (Matt. 28:19-20). The apostles were to "shake off the dust" from their feet when they left any house or city whose inhabitants would not heed their message or receive them (Matt. 10:14).

The parable of the sower (Luke 8:4-15) reveals that when His "seed" (God's Word) is sown, some seeds fall by the "way side" (verse 5). The vast majority who hear the Gospel do not let the Word of God take root in them. They hear God's Word, but they do not act on it (verse 12).

The "seed" that fell on "a rock" (verse 6), represents the Word of God being actually received by certain careless ones. They do not, however, lay a good foundation — do not put down deep roots. In a time of temptation they fall away (verse 13).

The "seed" that fell among the "thorns" (verse 7) represents those individuals who actually receive the Word of God and begin acting on it — even let it take root — but then allow various things to "choke" the Word so that it does not bring any fruit to full maturity or perfection (verse 14).

Only some of the "seed" falls on "good ground" (verse 8), representing "they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience" (verse 15).

In which of these four categories — the seed by the way side, the seed on a rock, the seed among the thorns

or the seed on the good ground — are you? If we are in God's Church — if we are part of God's elect — then we have been both called and chosen.

The seed along the way side represents those who were called, but were not chosen. It appears, however, that the seed on the thorns grew and among the thorns were both called and chosen by God but did not endure.

The seeds that fell on good ground represent those who hear the Word of God, receive it, are faithful to their call and endure unto the end, finally bringing forth good fruit.

"But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word [that is, his call], and understandeth it [because God opens his mind] which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty" (Matt. 13:23).

God's elect

The Bible often speaks of God's "elect." Who are these "elect"? They are God's chosen ones. God is the one who chooses us, as Christ told His disciples (John 15:16).

God's elect are the ones He calls out of this world. He opens their minds to grasp and understand His Word, His plan and His will.

Those whom He calls out of this darkened world and into "the light of the glorious gospel of Christ" (II Cor. 4:4) collectively form the Church of God. The English word Church is derived from the Greek term *ekklesia* and means "the called-out ones."

Now notice the three important steps we must take before we can actually be born into the Kingdom of God as God's very children:

- 1) We must be called by God.
- 2) When we respond to God's call, then God chooses us and grants us repentance, forgiveness, His Holy Spirit and His grace.
- 3) After God calls us and chooses us, we must "endure unto the end" (Matt. 24:13). We must hang in there — must be faithful unto death — or we will never be born, as glorified, spirit-composed beings, into the very Kingdom of God (John 3:3, I Cor. 15:50).

(Continued on page 29)



1. The former gas shop now houses the Ambassador Television Studio.
 2. From Mr. Armstrong's perspective, a view of the studio and cameras as he begins a new program.
 3. Cameraman Harry Sowder counts on for a close-up of Mr. Armstrong.
 4. At the end of the program, Mr. Armstrong offers The Plain Truth and other literature free to viewers.



A Behind-the-Scenes Look at The World Tomorrow Television Program

"Ready, Mr. Armstrong. Five, four, three, two, one . . ."

And the taping of another *World Tomorrow* television program is under way at the television studios on the Ambassador College campus in Pasadena.

A staff of about 50 and a complex array of electronic equipment back up Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong in preparing the telecast for more than 125 stations in the United States and several other countries.

In the main studio Mr. Armstrong's set, kept in constant readiness, was carefully designed. The white carpet, rosewood desk, paneling and accessories combine

with the lighting to reflect a quiet dignity.

After Mr. Armstrong finishes a taping session, hundreds of man hours are spent in preparing each program for broadcasting. Artwork and graphics are designed, film clips are created to illustrate world conditions as Mr. Armstrong describes them and scriptures are typed and inserted at the appropriate places.

Once ready for airing, the program is duplicated and shipped by truck and air to television stations around the world. However, technological advances may soon make this time-consuming step obsolete.

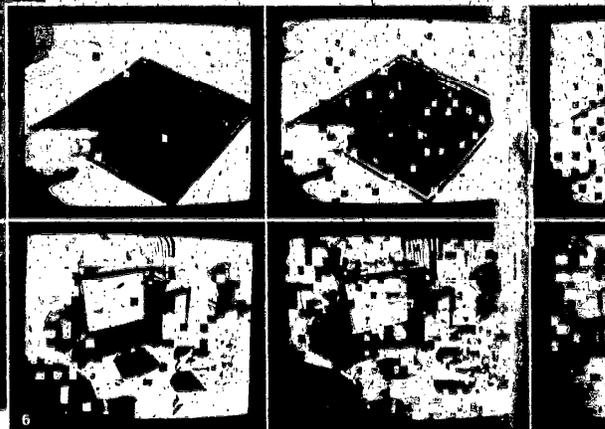
Even now, the program is sent by way of satellite transmission to about 20 stations. The program is beamed to a satellite in stationary orbit 23,000 miles above the earth.

5. During taping, Jon Hicks directs cameramen from the control room.

6. Steve Szabo in audio control mixes Mr. Armstrong's voice with music and sound effects for a video clip insert.



Photos by Warren Watson and Gary Rice



6. Special effects transition between three video scenes with
7. Video controller Rick Lundquist controls the quality of video
transmitted from cameras to tape machines.

1. Artist Nick Leaver completes a painting for the program.
2. Linda Hansen uses a word processor to prepare a typed transcript of one of Mr. Armstrong's programs.
3. Ed Paradis cleans and inspects tapes returned from stations after airing and before reusing.
4. At a video generator, Belinda Davies types French subtitles.
5. A sample of the French-subtitled program.





The satellite transmits the entire program back to earth in less than a quarter of a second, where television stations can receive and record the signal. The stations then broadcast the program during the assigned time slot. Another 20 stations will become able to receive the *World Tomorrow* program by satellite by mid 1982.

In January, 1982, another breakthrough occurred when the television studios in Pasadena began subtitled the program in French, for viewers in Belgium and northern France. A program subtitled in Dutch is also about to begin production, and other languages are expected soon. □



8. 11. Through satellite and microwave facilities, more of the earth is becoming accessible to instant television communications.
 9. During editing, Gary Ras loads a videotape onto tape machine.
 10. Modern technology allows an ever increasing number of people to see and hear God's message through Mr. Armstrong.

scenes within a program.
 quality of video signals



10

15

“Eureka!” The whiskered, old prospector's excited voice echoed through the hills. “Eureka! I found it!” After years of searching, he had struck pay dirt. Gold! Lots of it. And now it belonged to him.

In gold rush days, the hope of striking it rich lured multitudes across great distances. Some did strike it rich. Most did not. Have you ever wondered, though, what it would feel like to be one whose pickax unearthed the precious yellow metal?

Or what about explorers who chance upon ancient tombs? As they peer inside, they behold a vast store of royal wealth that has laid undisturbed for ages. Can you imagine yourself in their shoes?

How about the groups who search for sunken ships, especially old vessels known to have carried treasure chests? Now and then such a chest is located, whether by chance or through the use of modern technology. What must be the thrill of divers who search through the barnacle-encrusted remains of some ancient galleon and uncover gold coins, precious stones, jewelry and bullion hidden for centuries in the ocean depths?

Unfortunately, those who discover such wealth do not get to keep it for long. Robbers stand ready to kill in order to take. Or national governments claim territorial rights over the finds or tax them heavily. Or thieves and swindlers do their dirty work.

Even if one manages to retain some of the treasures for the rest of his life, they do him no good when this brief existence is over. They are, in fact, so much vanity.

Your own treasure chest

You, however, as one whom God is calling, have a treasure chest sitting on your desk or bookshelf. This trea-

Are You Overlooking Something?

Could you possibly be neglecting the study of the Bible?

By Clayton Steep



sure chest contains wealth far more valuable than gold, silver and precious stones.

• There is no need to fear thieves

taking this wealth. It is yours to enjoy in this life and, what is more, it brings you even greater wealth in the life to come. Eternal life itself is one of the benefits it provides.

We are, of course, talking about the Bible — God's Word — and the storehouse of wisdom and understanding it contains. Such wisdom is priceless, “for the gain from it is better than gain from silver and its profit better than gold. She [wisdom personified] is more precious than jewels, and nothing you

desire can compare with her. Long life [eternal life!] is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor” (Prov. 3:14-16, Revised Standard Version).

Proverbs 8:10-21 further describes the value of instruction, knowledge and wisdom: “Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness. My fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and my revenue than choice silver. . . . I . . . cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasures” (verses 18-21).

These are the riches that count. They lead to eternal inheritance of treasures and wealth that cannot even be described in physical terms.

These riches are available to us in unlimited amounts. True, we have to put forth some effort — do some digging. But this digging is far easier and surer than digging for gold or searching for lost physical treasure.

The question is, Why are we as individuals so often lax in mining the spiritual gems that lead to eternal life? How can we let such incredible wealth sit within easy reach and yet find so little time in the day to scoop up a handful of precious jewels?

Can you imagine a prospector locating a vast deposit of gold and then not finding the time to unearth and develop his find? Or perhaps

being content to pick away halfheartedly at a few small nuggets lying on the surface of the ground? And yet that's how some, if they are not careful, tend to approach Bible study.

For anybody with such an approach, working Bible study into the daily schedule is a real chore. It is more a matter of "getting it in."

Oh, such a person may set aside 30 minutes of the day, but when that period of the day arrives he sits down and halfheartedly reaches for the Bible. He doesn't really know where to begin. Maybe he lets the Bible fall open at random. Maybe he starts by reading in the Psalms or Proverbs. He knows he can find rather easy and interesting reading in Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Or certain sections in the Epistles.

In any case, he frequently glances at the clock and he is always aware of where he is in his designated 30 minutes. And if, as often is the case, his Bible "study" is the last thing he does before going to bed, he may spend the final few minutes nodding. "Oh, well," he tells himself as he closes the Bible, completely uninspired and feeling guilty, "I'll have to do better tomorrow."

Perhaps it wasn't that way when he was first coming into the Church. Then everything was new to him. Bible study was interesting, scintillating. He was learning, one after the other, major truths he didn't dream were in the Scriptures.

But as time passed, Bible study became routine. Somehow the challenge disappeared. It was as though once he learned what the basic doctrines were, the Bible contained no more surprises for him. Bible "study" may even have come to mean merely reading the *Plain Truth* or *Good News*.

In any case, whenever one loses sight of the real reasons for studying the Scriptures, Bible study, or what passes for it, becomes tedious and is done more out of a sense of obligation than because of the tremendous opportunity it is.

Getting to know it

Bible study is more — much more — than reading the *Plain Truth* and *Good News*. It is more than learning what the basic doctrines are. The

basic doctrines are, so to speak, only the nuggets lying on the surface. Inexhaustible wealth waits just below the surface.

How much of that wealth we obtain depends on each of us individually — on the time and effort we are willing to put into mining this rich resource.

We are to live by every word of God (Matt. 4:4). How can we do that if we don't make an attempt to be familiar with every word of God?

To natural human beings, God declares, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isa. 55:8). But Christians are expected to change that condition.

We are to make God's thoughts and ways our thoughts and ways — to develop God's mind within us, to look at things as He looks at them. We'll never accomplish that, though, if we don't know what His ways and thoughts are.

Certainly it is well to read the *Plain Truth* and *Good News*. And the Correspondence Course is a valuable tool for Bible study. But we must also spend time getting to know the Bible itself — the whole Bible. The Scriptures reveal how God views human affairs. We need to be familiar with this information in order to be part of God's governing Kingdom.

There are two basic approaches to Bible study. One is to take a subject and gather together various verses and chapters that bear on that subject, such as is done in sermons. The other is to go through a chapter or book of the Bible verse by verse, such as ministers often do in formal group Bible studies.

Either way, it is important to have a goal in mind when you sit down with your Bible. Study a specific subject. Or go through a specific section. Just trying to "kill" 30 minutes by haphazard and superficial browsing is no way to handle the Word of life!

Seek to understand what you are reading. God is speaking to you personally. Ask Him to give you comprehension.

The Holy Spirit inspired the Scriptures in such a way that they cannot be understood by the natural mind. This is why theologians for centuries

have painstakingly copied every letter, researched the original languages, made concordances of every single word, compiled Bible dictionaries, wrote lengthy treatises and dissertations, all without grasping the real meaning and purpose of the Word of God.

It is only with the help of the Holy Spirit that the Scriptures can be understood. Pray as David did: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Ps. 119:18). Anyone who thinks Bible study is dull and uninteresting needs to pray for his eyes to be opened to discern the brilliant jewels and precious gems it contains.

"But I forget what I read!"

"It doesn't do me any good to study," some complain, "because I can't remember what I study."

Poor memories are indeed a problem — a widespread problem. A number of factors contribute to this situation.

Most of us have not been taught from early childhood how to most effectively assimilate and retain information. This is especially true of the "television generation" in which children grow up being allowed to sit for hours in a trance while the TV does their thinking for them.

Environment and the food we eat also have an effect, since the mind cannot work properly if the essential nutrients are not supplied.

If you are like most people, your memory is not as good as you would like it to be. That should not stop you from studying God's Word.

So you think you forget most of what you study. So what? Study it again. God is not going to reward us by how developed our memory is, but by how hard we try. Keep going over the material. Make notes. Review them. Some of it is bound to stick — probably more than you realize.

Meditate on God's Word often. This will help impress it on your memory. Use scripture cards or any other device you find helpful. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom" (Col. 3:16).

The book of Acts describes "a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and

mighty in the scriptures" (Acts 18:24). Most of us are far from eloquent, it is true.

But there is no reason we cannot be "mighty in the scriptures." Apollos did it and he didn't have Bibles as we do, with chapters and verses and marginal references to help locate passages. He didn't have concordances or Bible dictionaries. He didn't even have a personal copy of the entire Scriptures.

But you can be sure that whenever he had access to God's Word he drank it in. He didn't become "mighty in the scriptures" through occasional, 30-minute, sleepy-time periods of nonchalant reading.

Why study the Bible?

Why study and learn about God's Word?

Considering this question seems almost unnecessary. But, since motivation is so important, it doesn't hurt to review the reasons we do things. This helps us keep the perspective.

1) It leads to eternal life.

The Bible contains the instructions and wisdom we need to qualify for eternal life. That's why the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy about "the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation" (II Tim. 3:15). They are "the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

Is there anything more vital for us mortals to be concerned about? What in our day-to-day existences could possibly be more important?

And yet, incredibly, Jesus prophesied that, of those who are given to understand the Bible and in whom the Word of God begins to grow, some would lose out. They would let God's Word in their life be choked by thorns — stifled "with cares and riches and pleasures of this life" (Luke 8:7, 14).

Think over your past week. Was Bible study choked out of your schedule by "cares and riches and pleasures of this life"?

If by cares, worries, concerns, problems, are you now free from them as a result of all your preoccupation? If by riches, seeking material luxury, working extra hours for more physical possessions, are you really more wealthy now than you were a week ago? If by pleasures, entertainment, partying, was the time really

better spent than it would have been getting to know God's Word?

Not that all these things are wrong in themselves, but they certainly are if they take priority over God's Word.

2) It helps us avoid sin.

Jesus told the Sadducees that one of the reasons they were in error was their ignorance of the Scriptures. "Ye do err," Jesus declared to them, "not knowing the scriptures" (Matt. 22:29).

How many times do we err because we are not familiar with instructions in God's Word, instructions that could have spared us the trauma?

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee," David exclaimed to God (Ps. 119:11). We need to repeat, rehearse and review God's precepts — to learn them deeply — so they are constantly in our thoughts and readily available to direct us.

As a result of continually thinking about the Word of God, David was able to say, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path" (Ps. 119:105).

3) It strengthens faith.

If we are familiar with the biblical accounts of how God intervened to deliver those who trusted in Him, how He healed the sick, how He provided for, led and blessed His people, we will find it much easier to trust God when we are in need. That is how "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17).

There is no doubt about it. Whenever we lack the faith we should have, one of the major reasons is that God's promises, or examples of what He has done for others, are not fresh in our minds. In order to strengthen our faith, the "faith chapter," Hebrews 11, presents examples of fulfilled promises — "a cloud of witnesses" (Heb. 12:1).

But we have to become familiar with such promises and the stories of these witnesses for them to do us any good.

4) It en-

ables us to explain our beliefs to others.

As Christians, we should know why we believe what we do. And if anybody asks us, we should be able to give a satisfactory answer, referring to the Scriptures to prove what we believe is true.

Being able to explain the doctrines of God's Church is especially critical for parents. They should be prepared to teach their children — and their grandchildren — God's ways (Deut. 4:7-9).

5) It brings God's blessings.

God blesses those who treat His Word with respect and awe. It pleases Him when we seek to learn His ways.

Back in the days of Jehoshaphat, there was a revival of the knowledge of God. Jehoshaphat sent teachers throughout the land to give instruction in the Word of God. "And they taught in Judah, and had the book of the law of the Lord with them, and went about throughout all the cities of Judah, and taught the people" (II Chron. 17:9).

And the result? Next verse: "And the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms of the lands that were round about Judah, so that they made no war against Jehoshaphat."

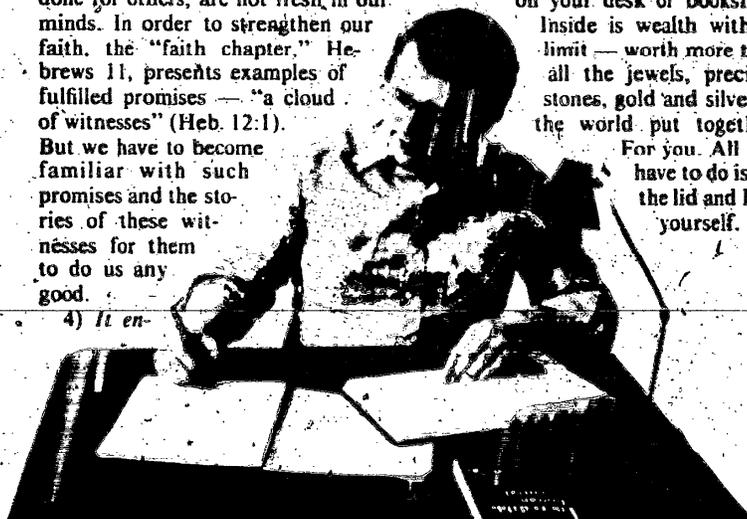
Things went well for Jehoshaphat. God will see to it that things go well for you, too, if you seek to learn of Him, if you delight in His Word and value the intense study of it.

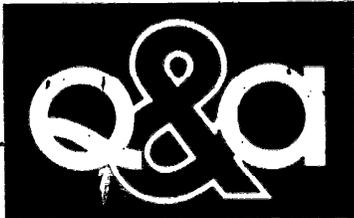
"I rejoice at thy word," David proclaimed, "as one that findeth great spoil" (Ps. 119:162). Yes, as one who finds treasure, as one who strikes it truly rich.

There it is: a treasure chest sitting on your desk or bookshelf.

Inside is wealth without limit — worth more than all the jewels, precious stones, gold and silver in the world put together.

For you. All you have to do is lift the lid and help yourself. □





How should a Christian honor unbelieving parents? How can one honor and respect parents who are not following God's ways? Can we look to them for leadership and example when they are doing things that are not really right in God's eyes?

God clearly commands us to honor our parents. He does not say "Honor your parents only if they deserve honoring" or "Honor your parents if they please you." God says, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee" (Ex. 20:12).

God condemns those who do not honor and respect their parents. "For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death" (Matt. 15:4).

However, in Ephesians 6:1, God says, through Paul, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Notice Paul says "in the Lord"; that is, as long as obeying your parents does not cause you to disobey God's laws. God does not tell us to follow the things our parents do if those things are not right in God's sight (Acts 5:29).

But understand this point: Obedience to God is not an excuse for dishonoring parents. Nor does God hold us responsible for their actions.

"Now, lo, if he [a father] beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like . . . he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. . . . When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them; he shall surely live" (Ezek. 18:14-19).

God does not say to look down your nose at and disrespect your parents and the office He has given them. Just because they are not per-

fect does not allow you — who also are not perfect — to disobey them. Remember that even a truly converted Christian is not perfect.

Respect, love and honor your parents and the office of authority God has given them. Have genuine humility. Obey them as much as possible.

Do not overlook the good in your folks. Don't forget how much your parents have fed, clothed, housed and educated you. If you are at home, go out of your way to be on good terms with your father and mother. Help with the chores.

Be with your family on outings together, so your parents can enjoy their children as long as they can. Never offend them or try to cram your beliefs or religion down their throats. Be a success for your parents in school or on the job. Write to them if you are away from home.

God feels strongly about this. He is our spiritual father and we owe Him awe and respect. He wants us to obey Him and His perfect way of living. God will not tolerate a rebellious individual who will not respect Him or earthly parents.

Remember what God says about your physical parents. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth" (Eph. 6:1-3).

If we properly honor our parents, God will bless us not only with long life and physical blessings, but also with spiritual blessings and everlasting life.

Is it wrong to plant crops according to the phases of the moon or the signs of the zodiac?

Some firmly believe that the success of their crops depends upon planting by the phases of the moon and the sign of the zodiac. But this is not what God says. God nowhere in the Bible tells us to build our lives around moon phases and the signs of the zodiac as astrologers teach. God prophesies that He will burn up unrepentant astrologers (Isa. 47:13-14).

Astrology is a form of idolatry, because it puts man's devices before God's ways. Astrologers teach people to try to obtain success by means of astrology. God expressly forbids this

worship of the constellations and the host of heaven (II Kings 23:5).

In Matthew 13:3-8 Christ mentioned several natural factors that govern crop production, including soil types, weather and weeds. He said nothing of astrological influence.

There is also a spiritual aspect to successful crop production. Those who obey God are promised success in every aspect of life — in crops, livestock, business and family health (Deut. 28:1-13). God also promises that if we are diligent in our work and pay His tithes to Him, He will rebuke the devourer for our sake and pour abundant blessings upon us (Mal. 3:8-11). Notice that in these verses there is not even a hint of a need for astrology.

The moon does have some effect on the tides and on some human and animal emotions, and possibly on the germination and growth of plants, but not enough to be a deciding factor in the success of crops.

The stars have no proven effect on the course of nature. Farmers should use the best possible agricultural methods and trust in God's promises to prosper His servants. Astrologers are headed for destruction, as God prophesied. Success in spiritual and material aspects of life comes only to those who are yielding themselves to almighty God.

Who are the 24 elders mentioned in the book of Revelation?

Some teach the false idea that the 24 elders are taken from among saved mortals. This assumption is primarily based on a mistranslation of Revelation 5:8-10.

The last half of this section, according to the original inspired Greek in which John wrote, should read: ". . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed *them* [the saints, — not us, meaning the 24 elders] to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made *them* [not us] unto our God kings and priests: and *they* [not we] shall reign on the earth."

How clear! These elders are powerful spirit beings — not men — who exercise authority at God's throne in heaven. They reign with God in heaven. On the other hand, the resurrected saints will reign on earth. It is

impossible for the 24 elders to be saved humans, because no man has ascended to the heaven of God's throne except Jesus Christ (John 3:13). All saved human beings — those who are Christ's true servants — will be given immortality at Christ's coming, when He returns to the earth to rule and reign (1 Cor. 15:23).

The 24 elders, then, are spirits, part of the created heavenly host of beings. They have been given positions of responsibility as advisers in the government of God, through which God rules the universe.

In Luke 14:26 Jesus is quoted as saying: "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." What did Jesus mean?

Let's understand this verse in its context.

Jesus charged His disciples, "But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies" (Luke 6:27). He also said: "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise." For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them" (verses 31-32).

In other words, Jesus clearly commands us not only to love those who love us — which should include our relatives — but also to love our enemies who hate us.

The Bible does not contradict itself. "The scripture cannot be broken" (John 10:35). Then what did Jesus mean when He said "hate" in Luke 14:26?

The Greek word for "hate" in this verse is *miseo*. Its root can mean "to detest" or, especially, "to persecute." But by extension this root can mean "to love less, to postpone in love or esteem, to slight."

What Jesus was saying, then, is that anyone who follows Him must love Him more than family, relatives or even his own life.

In comparison to the great love we ought to have for Jesus Christ — the One who died for us, our Savior and Redeemer — the love we have for human relatives must be less by comparison.

Jesus said that the second great commandment is "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matt.

22:39). But what is the first great commandment? "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment" (verses 37-38).

One who has such love for God and God's way of life will not compromise. He will not put any human relationship first.

We should love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength and love our neighbors as ourselves — yes, we must even love our enemies. But what Jesus meant in Luke 14:26 is that we must not put the demands and desires of our relatives and friends first — above our obedience to God Almighty.

I have been told that God's ministers should not be called "Reverend." Why is this?

When we look into the Bible we find that the word *reverend* refers only to God — not once is it applied to man. In Psalm 111:9 we read, "He [God] hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name." The New English Bible renders this last phrase "Holy is his name, inspiring awe [that is, worthy of worship]."

God alone has a name worthy of reverence. No man — no minister — has a name worthy of such respect or worship.

Nowhere in the New Testament was Paul, Peter, James, John or any other minister ever addressed as Reverend. If we follow the Bible example, which we are commanded to do, then we should not use the title Reverend for any minister. See also Matthew 23:8-10.

The use of titles such as Reverend began when the great apostasy set in at the close of the first century. Ministers put themselves "in the place of Christ." Hence they took upon themselves the attributes and titles of divinity. God's true ministers have not done so.

Will God hear and answer my prayers even though I am not yet baptized? Should I pray at all?

Jesus showed in His parable in Luke 18:1-8 that "men ought always to pray, and not to faint" (verse 1).

True, God does not hear the prayers of sinners (John 9:31). And

we know that everyone has sinned and cut himself off from God: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:2).

But does this mean that one must wait until he is perfect before beginning to pray? Of course not! Jesus Christ is the only human who lived a perfect life. Everyone else has sinned (Rom. 3:23). How, then, can sinners seek God?

The prophet Isaiah tells us, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." How do we call upon God? How do we seek Him? "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon" (Isa. 55:6-7).

God will hear and answer the prayers of those who approach Him in a repentant, humble attitude: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor [humble] and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2).

A sinner must repent of transgressing God's law — forsake the way he has been living and start to obey God. Once he repents of going the wrong way and is baptized, accepting the sacrifice of Jesus Christ for his sins, he is no longer a sinner in God's sight. God will hear and give His Holy Spirit to such a person, if the person obeys Him (Acts 5:32). The person must be willing to forsake his ways and thoughts and go the way of God.

God will hear and answer the prayers of those He is calling to a knowledge of His truth.

Before conversion and baptism, God sends His Holy Spirit to work with us and lead us. After repentance and baptism, He actually puts His Spirit within us, enabling us to grow and develop spiritually as His own sons. Then He will hear us, because we "keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).

For further information about prayer and becoming a begotten son of God, write for our free reprint articles entitled "The Answer to Unanswered Prayer" and "How You Can Be Imbued with the Power of God."

MINISTUDY

Beware of Your Adversary!

Prepared by Richard H. Sedlack

God's Word warns us, prophetically, that Satan the devil will be extremely active in this end time.

As the conclusion of Satan's rule over this earth rapidly approaches, the archdeceiver and his demon henchmen know that only a short time remains before they will be completely restrained by God. Soon they will no longer be able to deceive the world and work to thwart God's plan for mankind. Therefore, Satan is pulling out all stops in a last-ditch effort to destroy God's spiritual Church!

Forewarned is forearmed. Though no human is a match for the powerful, cunning Satan, this study will show you how to be victorious in your battle with Satan's kingdom. But first, let's review a few basic facts about Satan's origin and why he is determined to destroy all Spirit-begotten Christians.

The Bible reveals that God created multitudes of angels before bringing the earth into existence (Job 38:4-7). Among these was a powerful, wise and beautiful cherub — the great archangel Lucifer, who was perfect in all his ways.

Later, the earth was created and became the home or abode of angels. And God set Lucifer over the angels to administer God's government on earth (Ezek. 28:13-17, Isa. 14:12-14).

1. Was Lucifer originally one of the anointed cherubs who covered God's throne in heaven? Ezek. 28:14, Ex. 25:18-20.

Lucifer was originally stationed at the very throne of God. He was already trained in the administration of God's government when God placed him in charge of the angels on earth.

2. Lucifer, the super archangel, was perfect in all his ways from the day of his creation until something happened. What was found in him? Ezek. 28:15. Did he become vain and corrupt? Verse 17.

When Lucifer began thinking thoughts of competition and greed, resentment and rebellion welled up in him. His mind became perverted, distorted, twisted. His thinking became totally warped.

3. Did Lucifer decide to leave the earth and

ascend to heaven in an attempt to exalt his throne (which was in "Eden the garden of God" — Ezek. 28:13) above all the angels ("stars") of God? Isa. 14:12-14.

Did he convince other angels to follow him in his rebellion and thus sin against God? Jude 6, II Pet. 2:4. How many of God's angels did Lucifer subvert? Rev. 12:3-4.

4. Did Lucifer actually want to be like the most high God? Isa. 14:14.

Lucifer had nothing less in mind than knocking the Creator God off His throne and becoming supreme ruler himself. He was no longer satisfied with rule over only one planet. He wanted to rule the universe.

Thus Lucifer became the first sinner.

5. What happened to Lucifer's and his angels' attempt to wrest control of the universe from their Creator? Isa. 14:12, Rev. 12:3-4. (Also see Revelation 12:7-9, which describes a second attempt to dethrone God.) How did Jesus describe Satan's original fall from heaven? Luke 10:18.

Lucifer deliberately became his Maker's adversary. That was Lucifer's choice. And so God changed his name to what he became — Satan — which means adversary, competitor, enemy. And the angels who were cast back down to the earth with him became known as demons.

6. Has God allowed Satan to continue as the invisible ruler of this world? II Cor. 4:4. When and how will Satan's rule over the world come to an end? Rev. 20:1-3.

A basic principle of God's government is that the state can never be without a head. God originally placed Lucifer on the throne of God's government on earth. When Lucifer rebelled against God, he ceased to administer that government and disqualified himself. But he must remain on that throne until his successor, Jesus Christ, who has qualified to replace him, dethrones him and assumes world rulership at His Second Coming.

7. Are we plainly told that "the world to come" — the 1,000 years and thereafter — will not be ruled by angels? Heb. 2:5.

SATAN

MINISTUDY

But if we become the born-again sons of God, are we promised rulership over all the angels? Verses 6-8, I Cor. 6:2-3. Only humans have the potential to be begotten and born into the very Family of God. We can become the sons of God and rule this earth and ultimately the entire universe with Jesus Christ. Satan knows and hates this fact.

With his perverted and twisted mind, Satan, who tried to usurp all God's power and authority, now looks upon mankind as competitors.

Satan attempted to thwart God's plan to reproduce Himself by inducing the "first Adam" to rebel against his Creator (Gen. 3:1-6, 22-24), thus disqualifying Adam from replacing Satan.

He then attempted to have Christ, the "last Adam" (I Cor. 15:45), killed by the human civil government while Christ was still a young child. Then, when Christ was an adult, Satan attempted to destroy Him spiritually by tempting Him to sin (Matt. 4:1-11). Christ won that titanic spiritual battle with Satan by proving He would obey the government of God and faithfully rule by God's law throughout eternity.

And so must we before God will make us co-rulers of this earth and the entire universe with Christ. We, too, must overcome Satan by the Word and Spirit of God as Christ did.

8. Are we plainly told that Spirit-begotten Christians are in an all-out battle for their spiritual lives? I Pet. 5:8, Eph. 6:12, I Cor. 2:11.

We are in spiritual warfare with wicked spirits. We need to know how to protect ourselves from these invisible enemies who are out to destroy us spiritually.

9. What is the chief weapon Satan uses in his attempt to destroy God's saints? Eph. 2:2-3.

Satan broadcasts his sinful attitude to all humanity. But once the Holy Spirit of God is added to a person's mind upon repentance and baptism, the person has the spiritual awareness and strength to resist the attitudes of lust, greed, vanity, jealousy, resentment, bitterness and hate that Satan broadcasts.

The devil has no power to force anyone to obey his impulses. But the unsuspecting automatically do so without realizing what is taking place in their minds (Gal. 5:19-21).

10. After your begetting by God's Holy Spirit — after you become a real Christian (Rom. 8:9) — will the devil continue to try to deceive you and lead you away from Christ and Christ's ways? I Cor. 11:2-3. Did some Christians in Paul's day begin to fall victim to the devil's promptings again? Gal. 1:6-8, 3:1. Does Satan also have his

own ministers through whom he works? I Cor. 11:13-15.

Conversion does not shield us from Satan's wavelength. He continues to broadcast the attitudes of his nature to our minds in an attempt to overthrow us. Those who have turned from Satan's way must be on guard against him and fight to overcome his subtle urgings and to remain true to God's way.

11. Are Christians today to resist the devil by remaining firm in the truth God has revealed to them? I Pet. 5:8-9. What must the devil do if we resist him steadfastly? Jas. 4:7.

12. The apostle Paul gives us specific instructions on fighting against the impulses and attitudes of the devil. What are Christians to put on in order to fight this spiritual battle? Eph. 6:10-13. Of what does God's spiritual armor consist? Verses 14-20.

"Truth," the first piece in the Christian's spiritual armor, refers to the inspired Word of God (John 17:17). The "breastplate of righteousness" is obedience to God's commandments (Ps. 119:172); the "gospel" is the good news of the coming government of God on earth and the righteous rule of Christ.

The "shield of faith" refers to the faith of Jesus Christ, which can be within us (Gal. 2:20, Phil. 3:9). This faith is God's gift and is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22). It is this faith — Christ's faith within us — that will enable us to conquer and overcome Satan and sin.

The "helmet of salvation" is the knowledge of salvation — the purpose of life, the true goal and potential of mankind — becoming Spirit-born members of God's Family.

The "sword of the Spirit" refers to the written Word of God (Heb. 4:12). It is the Christian's only offensive weapon in fighting against the wiles of the devil. But in order to rightly use this weapon in waging a winning battle against the crafty rulers of darkness, we must study the Bible and learn God's will and His promises.

Paul lastly mentions "prayer" as an aid in withstanding the attacks of Satan. Christians are to draw close to God in persevering prayer (I Thess. 5:17) — praying for the work and ministry of God's Church, for all of God's people and themselves.

This is the way to overcome Satan and force him to flee. This is the perfect strategy for defeating the devil's army of demons. If you will diligently follow this formula, your success in overcoming these deadly foes is guaranteed! □

Are you struggling with personal trials and difficulties?

Are you sometimes discouraged by the battles you must continually wage with yourself and with the world around you?

Welcome to the human race. Life often seems filled with fears, worries, tests, troubles.

And mark this well: There may come a time in your life when all you have built will be reduced to a heap of rubble at your feet (1 Pet. 4:12). There will be no crowds to cheer you forward. And you will freeze in your tracks to numbly survey the wreckage of your fondest hopes and dreams.

At such a time you may conclude that you are finished. You may feel like giving up altogether.

But such a time can be a new beginning! Some people have several such beginnings during the course of their lives.

Consider, for instance, the life story of this man:

Age 23: Ran for U.S. legislature and was defeated.

Age 24: Failed in business.

Age 26: Sweetheart died.

Age 27: Suffered severe mental depression and discouragement.

Age 29: Defeated for Speaker of Illinois legislature.

Age 31: Again defeated for Speaker of Illinois legislature.

Ages 34: Lost

party nomination

for congressional election.

Age 37: Elected to Congress.

Age 46: Lost nomination for Senate election.

Age 47: Defeated for Vice President.

Age 49: Defeated for Senate.

Was that much of a success story? If this man had died at the age of 49, how would history have viewed him? As a failure, probably, if history took note of him at all.

However, part of the story was omitted. Here it is:

Age 51: Elected President of the United States.

This man's name was Abraham Lincoln! Many Americans, understandably, regard him as the greatest President the United States ever had. He resolutely led his nation through one of its most terrible times of turmoil, the Civil War. His example of patience, intelligence, tact, and strength is still regarded with awe and admiration.

Early, President Lincoln had learned well, in the school of hard knocks, the value of perseverance.

Perseverance is one of the laws of success that God revealed to Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong. Mr. Armstrong explains perseverance and the other vital factors leading to success in our free booklet, *The Seven Laws of Success*, which you may have free by writing to the Good News office nearest you.

Perseverance is possibly the single

most important ingredient in the mix we call character. Mr. Armstrong has had to practice and prove the quality of perseverance again and again in the acid crucible of experience. Throughout a vigorous, long, successful life of accomplishment, Mr. Armstrong has persevered through many hard and sore trials.

It never was easy

The people of God have not lived on easy street. The patriarch Joseph's story exemplifies the rigors the biblical heroes endured.

When Joseph was 17, God caused him to dream that he would someday rule his brothers (Gen. 37:5-8). When Joseph rushed to his brothers with this piece of news, they didn't receive it too favorably. Eventually Joseph's own brothers sold him into slavery in Egypt!

In servitude to one of Pharaoh's officers, Joseph rose to a position of trust (Gen. 39:1-4). He tried not to bring reproach on himself, but a scheming woman unjustly accused him and he was thrown into jail.

Undaunted, Joseph again rose to a position of trust, this time in prison (verses 21-23). He tried to convince Pharaoh's chief butler to ask Pharaoh to release him, but the butler didn't. Humanly forgotten, Joseph continued to languish in his cell (Gen. 40).

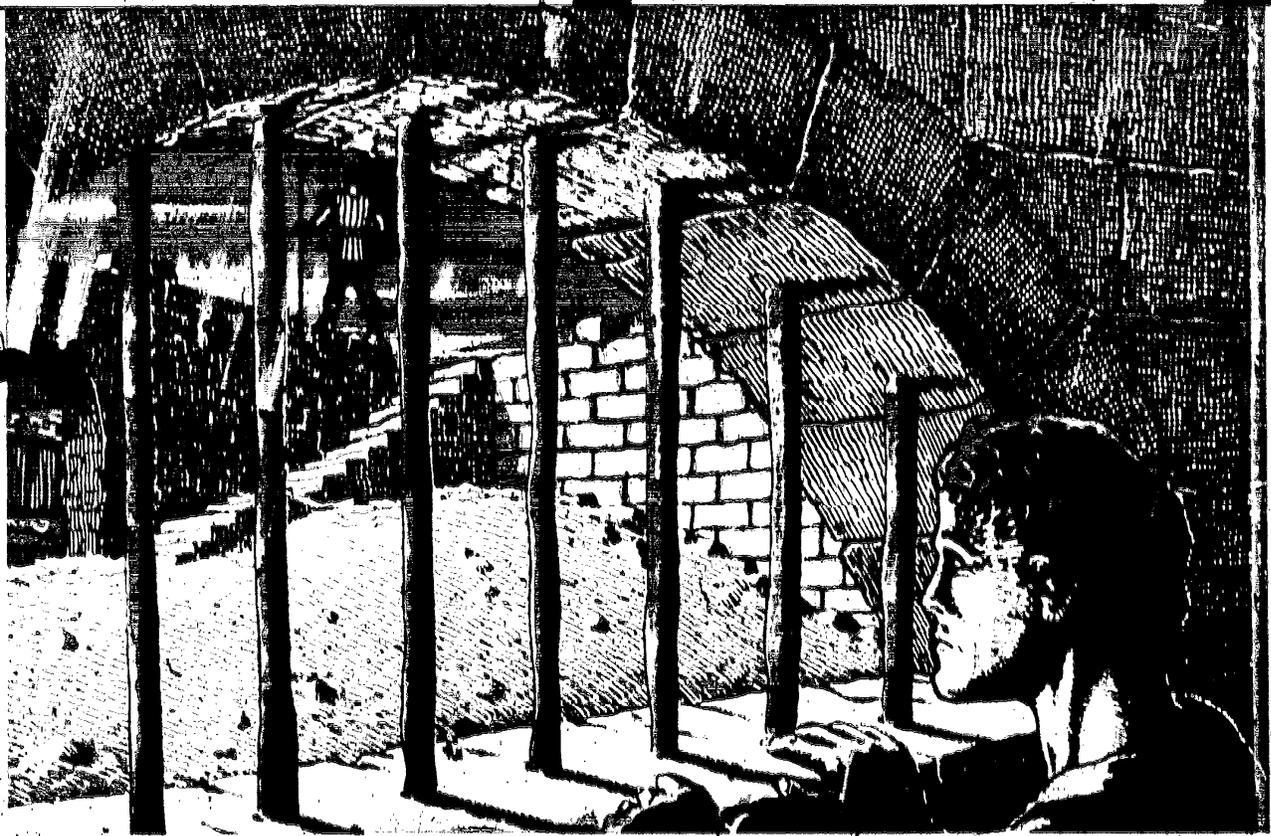
But everything turned out right in the end. It always does for those who persist in obeying the laws of God.

A Matter of

PERSPECTIVE

By Malcolm Tolts

*What do you do when problems come your way?
Here is an important principle to remember.*



(Rom. 8:28). The one who entered Egypt as a slave rose to become supreme ruler in the land, second only to Pharaoh himself (Gen. 41:39-43).

Joseph eventually understood the reason for his trials (Gen. 45:7). But when Joseph was living chapter 37 of Genesis, chapter 45 hadn't been written yet! He couldn't flip forward a few pages, as we have just done, to see the end of the story. He had to resolutely persevere, full of faith, through some hammer blows of life. We can do the same.

The book of Job illustrates how another servant of God was humbled in three main areas.

First, Job was blocked and frustrated in his work (Job 1:14-17). Loss of opportunity, prestige or pay can quickly knock a person to the ground.

Second, Job's family was destroyed (verses 18-19). A serious domestic problem or the death of a family member — physical or spiritual — can speedily bring a person to his knees.

Third, Job himself was allowed to experience excruciating physical suf-

fering (Job 2:7). A prolonged illness or handicap has broken many a human being's pride.

Most of our problems are probably in one or more of these three areas. Job persevered through all his trials, and God was able to work with him to develop in him godly character. With God's help we can persevere and grow, too.

The key is having the vision — the perspective — to look at a situation the way God looks at it. "Where there is no vision, the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Prov. 29:18).

God even now sees us as His sons (1 John 3:2). If we persevere and grow through all the trials we face in this life, we are destined to be literally born as spirit beings into God's Family.

If we keep our eyes on that goal — if we look at our problems from that perspective — overcoming will not seem so difficult.

Troubles promised

As long as we are human, we will have troubles (Job 5:7). But a wise

Humanly forgotten, the patriarch Joseph languished in an Egyptian prison, having been falsely accused by a scheming woman. But he resolutely persevered, obeying God, and God led him to tremendous success in the end.

person doesn't go looking for them. On the contrary, he avoids as many troubles as he can (Prov. 22:3). Only a fool goes around sticking his nose into troubles — he usually gets his nose bloodied.

A wise person simply learns to cope with the problems that come his way. A person grows through enduring (Acts 14:22). Without struggle and chastisement, even from God Himself, there can be no growth toward perfection (Heb. 12:6-8).

Every human story can have a happy ending. Everyone can succeed. That is the exciting news that Mr. Armstrong vigorously proclaims around the world.

Our job as Christians is to help, in whatever way we can, to send that message to the world. In so doing we qualify to personally help put this world back on track in the Millennium (Rev. 2:26-27). That is our goal (Matt. 6:33).

Without a goal we are merely drifting along the streams of life like a ship without a rudder, blown about by all the vagaries of weather. With a goal, we are transformed — we can cheerfully endure whatever comes.

It is the enduring that brings out the best in us. Through constant effort we can avoid being swayed by Satan into following the wrong direction. One day soon, in God's Kingdom, the value of persistence will be taught in every home and school. And we can be doing that teaching.

Right now, we all have problems. We aren't living in the Millennium yet. Most of us are pitifully weak. But isn't that what Paul wrote?

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty; not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen. . . . That no flesh should glory in his presence" (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Physically, each of us is merely a few buckets of water plus several pounds of assorted chemicals. Having this perspective should help us look to God to see us through any crisis.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. 4:6). With God's Spirit we can endure whatever needs enduring. Without it we are just dust.

Our High Priest

We can trust life to produce all the problems we need to keep us humble. But we need not suffer alone.

In the days of Herod the Great, in one small corner of the Roman Empire, a woman who could find no place in an inn gave birth to her son in a stable.

The child grew to be a teacher. His teachings caused no changes in the political system of his day. The religious leaders attributed the miracles he performed to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. Only a few openly followed him.

To the Roman officers, he was a

rebel promising to set up a new kingdom. To the Jews, he was a blasphemer claiming to be equal with God.

In the hour of his greatest trial, when he had the greatest need for friendship, his friends all forsook him. Betrayed by a trusted companion, scourged until he could scarcely be recognized as a man, he was, illegally, convicted and sentenced to death. Misunderstood, maligned and persecuted, he was crucified between two common criminals.

His name was Jesus-Christ. And His was the greatest success story this world has ever seen.

What His followers thought was a shameful debacle turned into a stunning triumph (often success is apparent defeat turned inside out). By surrendering His life, as He planned to all along (1 Pet. 1:19-20), He paid the penalty for our past sins and made it possible for us to qualify for God's Kingdom.

He's there now at the right hand of God, ready to make intercession for us. He understands all our sufferings and has the compassion of one who has also faced trouble (Heb. 4:15).

Many get discouraged by trials and quit when a little more effort would bring them success. As Solomon observed, success is almost always preceded by failure: "A just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again" (Prov. 24:16).

Even the youngest children should understand that. We have all seen toddlers falling at their first attempts to walk. Suppose such a toddler quit. Can you imagine him 50 years later? He would be dressed in a business suit and on his way to his office, but he would still be crawling! He'd have to say: "I'm just not a walker! I tried it, but gave up — too difficult for me."

Ridiculous? Yes. But it makes the point. One of the saddest parts of our lives as Christians is to see fellow Christians quit, even at the very time when all signs about us show that Satan's rule on earth will end soon.

Man's sordid story

The story of man is a story of war. Warfare has a fatal fascination for many who've not seen it. But war is

not fascinating to those who personally must suffer through it.

History is the bloody record of man's ferocity toward his fellowman! Let's face it: Many of man's scientific and technological advancements have been produced specifically for defense or aggression against other people!

I once stood in a little field in Belgium where, in one afternoon, 400,000 men in the prime of their lives killed one another with their lethal gadgets.

And now we are well advanced into the nuclear age. Progress in this grisly business of death has made it feasible for whole populations to be quickly and cheaply eliminated. Global destruction is possible!

What, then, are the prospects for peace? We can't look to mankind's greatest minds for solutions. On the contrary, it is often the most brilliant minds who export their peoples into combat. The most dangerous brand of fool is a brilliant fool (Rom. 1:21).

How, then, may we have peace? Where in the world is there a place without trouble?

Spin a globe. Problems are everywhere. Don't think you are the only one with traumas. The whole world is in anguish. And don't deceive yourself. These problems will not simply pass away or solve themselves. They will only be solved when somebody does something about them.

Jesus Christ is going to do something about the problems.

He's coming soon. With power.

Mr. Armstrong has been sent to prepare the way (Mal. 3:1). An important part of that preparation is to train a called and chosen people in the laws of success. Then, those people can qualify to rule in the Millennium.

In his booklet, *The Seven Laws of Success*, Christ's apostle writes: "Come in ten, at least once or twice in a lifetime, come to the place where they appear to be totally defeated! All is lost! — apparently, that is. They give up and quit, when just a little more determined hanging on, just a little more faith and perseverance — just a little more STUCK-TO-ITIVENESS would have turned apparent certain failure into glorious success."

Precious child of God, if at first you don't succeed — try, try, TRY again! — FT



What Is Your Self-Concept?

When you look at yourself, are you satisfied with what you see? How does God look at you? Is He satisfied?

By Joseph Tkach

Look in a mirror. What do you see? A happy, beaming face? A furrowed brow? Bloodshot eyes? Your crisp new shirt? A loose thread on your dress? A skin blemish? A smart, new hairstyle? Maybe a bit of a bulge around your midsection? More important, what do you see

when you look beyond that mirrored reflection at yourself as a person? A generally happy, generous type? A person with lots of drive and enthusiasm? Someone worldly wise, full of common sense, with widely varied life experiences behind him or her? A basically likable man or woman? What we see when we look at ourselves, and what we think about what we see when we look at ourselves,

combine to give us what psychologists call our *self-concept*. Psychologists view the discovery and understanding of the self-concept as one of the most significant advances in their field.

Poor mental health?

How do you feel about yourself? Are you happy with the image you see? Are you satisfied with who and what you are?

Psychologists tell us that if we have a poor self-concept—a weak self-image and low self-esteem—then we are suffering from poor mental health. And the lower the image we have of ourselves, the poorer our mental health, according to the experts.

Would this apply to true Christians? What if we put ourselves in God's place—how does God view us? How should we, as Christians, view ourselves?

Let's look at how some of the great men of the Bible viewed themselves. Take, for instance, the patriarch Job. In Job 42:1-6, we see Job after he repented of his self-righteousness. What did he say?

"Then Job answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do every thing, and that no thought can be withholden from thee.

"Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."

Job had come to a much greater understanding of what God stood for, what God represented and what his personal relationship with God should have been. And where Job was, before, pretty pleased with himself, self-satisfied, he now said, "Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job loathed himself—detested what he was—and abased himself before God.

What would the psychologists say about Job? Job here displayed such a low self-concept, apparently, that psychologists would probably consid-

er Job's mental health very poor.

Now notice Romans 7:18. This is the apostle Paul speaking: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." A war was raging in Paul's mind — the carnal mind against the Spirit of God.

Paul continued: "For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me" (verses 19-20).

Prerequisite to conversion

To become a true Christian, one must first become convicted against the way of life he has been living — against his sinful nature — and repent.

We must know what we are repenting of — we must see ourselves as God sees us — and come to loathe our carnal nature. Even after conversion, the carnal, natural mind takes over on occasion — overrides the Spirit of God — and forces us to do things that, with our new, godly nature, we do not want to do.

"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (verses 21-22).

God said He would write His laws in our hearts (Jer. 31:33). Our minds are coupled with God's Holy Spirit, which enables us to look at life from a different perspective. We no longer think as much of ourselves as we once did.

"But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. 7:23-24).

The apostle Paul, through the power of God's Holy Spirit, was able to see himself as God viewed him before he was converted, and as God viewed the carnal nature. Paul still manifested on occasion.

God doesn't look on the outward man. He looks on the heart (1 Sam. 16:7). It makes no difference whether we are outwardly beautiful, strong or

intellectual. Pleasing God requires that we submit ourselves to Him and obey Him. As submissive tools in God's hands, we can perform what is required of us.

But how would psychologists approach this knowledge? What would they think of begotten members of God's Family? They would no doubt classify Job, Paul, Jeremiah and other true Christians — as included — as having poor mental health.

But are we mentally ill because we abhor what we are? A vast difference — a tremendous conflict — exists between the standards of psychologists and those of the Bible.

"Weak of the world"

Psychologists would have us believe that we should, by using human reasoning, see ourselves as greater than we really are, and that doing so will lead us to greater achievements and accomplishments.

Not so! Unless we are in tune with God through the power of His Spirit, there will be a vast difference between what we are and what we become.

God says, through the prophet Isaiah, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways" (Isa. 55:8). God must give us His Holy Spirit to open our minds — and He has, if we have been truly called and have turned to Him and His way. God must give us the conviction — grant us the ability to see and understand what repentance is all about.

The apostle Paul describes, in 1 Corinthians 1:26-29, the people God has called: "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."

God didn't call us based on the world's standards. And neither should we compare ourselves among ourselves based on the world's standards. When we do, we either think we are better than our neighbor, or we think we are so inferior that we just can't accomplish anything. And self-pity amounts to false humility.

True humility, on the other hand, makes us focus on ourselves as the

root cause of all our problems. We have no one else to blame but ourselves and our own human nature.

God doesn't want anyone to think that he was called because he has above-average intelligence or is tremendously beautiful or extra strong or just born somehow better than anyone else.

God says, through Jeremiah: "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight" (Jer. 9:23-24).

The only ones who deserve any credit are God and Jesus Christ. Our calling is not something that we have earned — it is not something we have captured or something we can inherit. Our calling is a result of God's love and mercy — an individual and specific miracle, a gift from God (John 6:44, 65).

Not to remain foolish

But, just because we are called as the "foolish," "weak" and "base things of the world" (1 Cor. 1:26-29), does that mean we are to remain in this state?

No! We are to grow in grace and in the knowledge of God's ways (11 Pet. 3:18). As we do, we incorporate into our lives the very character of God. Our nature becomes God's nature, and we begin to produce the fruits with which God is pleased.

In John 15, Christ gave an analogy showing this need for true Christians to bear good fruit: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit" (verses 1-2). This purging process includes the everyday trials and hardships with which we are confronted.

"Now ye are clean through the word [we are washed with the water of God's Word and with the blood of Jesus Christ] which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you.

As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing" (verses 3-5).

Without Christ living His life in us through His Spirit, we can accomplish nothing.

Notice the attitude God wants us to take on — notice to whom God looks: "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man [regardless of our heritage, our background, the walk of life from which we have been called or the depths of depravity to which we might have descended] will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word" (Isa. 66:2).

That's what it takes. It doesn't matter who we, carnally, think we are or who or what we have been in this world.

Certainly, some people are born with more natural talent and ability, but in God's eyes they're under-achievers. They haven't accomplished as much as those who have less ability but who throw themselves on God's mercy and allow God to use them as He sees fit.

God uses these truly humble, converted people as instruments that simply befuddle the minds of the psychologists and the intellect of this society. God judges us according to the works we produce after He reveals to us the right way of life.

It has been said that there are four kinds of people in this world, and we all fall into one of these categories. The first kind of people are those who can. We may know of a lot of such people. Because of where they were born and their station in life, their resources and circumstances guarantee a life of material success.

Then there are those who can, but don't. These individuals have tremendous abilities, but use them for destructive, rather than constructive, purposes. Criminals in many cases fall into this category — many have been brilliant and creative. But, typically, criminals have a poor self-concept, and achieve the wrong things.

People in this group don't make many positive contributions to society.

The third group is made up of people who can't and don't. We've all known people who were always trying but not succeeding, not accomplishing. They never reach the goal they're shooting for.

Finally we have the fourth group, and it is to be hoped that all of us, if we are true Christians, fall into this category. This last group is made up of people who can't, but do.

You see, we weren't called because of our great intellect, our noble backgrounds, the mighty strength and power we have of ourselves. In this category we have people who have risen above the circumstances, however poor, in which they started. Against all odds, these people become the greatest achievers, not because of themselves, but because of God's Spirit working through them and Christ living His life over in them.

This is the group that we, as members of God's Church, are in. Paul said God called the weak of the world to confound the wise (1 Cor. 1:26-29). God gives His Spirit to those who are willing to obey Him (Acts 5:32), and with that Spirit, God's people can achieve incredible successes.

Use God's Spirit

Regardless of our physical position in this life, the ultimate evaluation of our worth will depend on how much we exercise the Spirit of God. God judges according to our works. In Matthew 20, in the parable of the laborers, Christ showed how God will judge all of us:

"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace. And said unto them: Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way" (verses 1-4).

God calls people at different times. Seniority doesn't matter. It's no guarantee of salvation. We will be judged

according to what we do with what we are given (Luke 12:48).

Christ's parable of the talents shows that God rewards us according to the effort we expend (Matt. 25:14-21). More will be required from those who have been given much.

The right self-concept

What, then, is the self-concept that we as Christians should have? Just this: The right self-concept is realizing our own potential. And we can only realize what our potential is if we realize who and what we are and have been.

We have been given, through God's mercy, the knowledge of God's way. If we deceive ourselves into believing that we are anything other than what we are — unworthy benefactors of God's grace — we become like the person described in James 1:23-24:

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was."

The bottom line of true humility is recognizing that we have problems because of ourselves — because of the carnal nature still within us. What we were before conversion can prevent us from attaining salvation and eternal life if we don't overcome.

James continues, "But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed" (verse 25).

Paul admonishes, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2:5). If we let Christ's mind reside in us and guide us, we're going to accomplish great feats — we're going to accomplish wonderful works that please God. If we have the mind of Christ, we're going to be doing our Father's business, just as Christ did (John 9:4).

To perform the works that please God, we need to have God's Spirit residing in us, along with a childlike attitude — a submissive, teachable attitude, one that yields to God's way in everything. □

True Gospel?

(Continued from page 4)

In Jesus' prayer, so commonly called the "Lord's Prayer," He prayed, "THY KINGDOM COME" — then it wasn't here yet, and it isn't here yet, today — but He taught us to pray for it to COME, for His KINGDOM, and that ALONE shall bring PEACE and HAPPINESS to this sin-sick, war-weary earth! "Thy kingdom COME, THY WILL BE DONE in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). The FATHER'S WILL.

What Gospel did the early evangelists preach, in first sending out the FAITH ONCE DELIVERED? How did the early Church carry out the commission?

Notice PHILIP preaching at Samaria! Acts 8:12: "But when they BELIEVED Philip preaching the things concerning THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." Philip preached the things concerning THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Paul? Acts 20:25, 21: "I have gone preaching THE KINGDOM OF GOD, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and FAITH toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

And notice the Gospel Paul preached to GENTILES, after he had turned completely away from the Jews.

Acts 28:30-31: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him. Preaching THE KINGDOM OF GOD, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ."

And, lastly, WHAT GOSPEL did Jesus say should be preached TODAY?

Matthew 24:14, speaking of the PRESENT: "And this GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM shall be preached in ALL THE WORLD for a witness" — for a WITNESS — "unto ALL NATIONS; and then shall the END come" — the end of this AGE.

That is the true Gospel proclaimed in the *Good News of the World Tomorrow* — proclaimed on the *World Tomorrow* broadcast on the air worldwide — "IN ALL THE WORLD." □

The GOOD NEWS April 1982

Few Are Chosen

(Continued from page 11)

When the glorified, crowned Jesus Christ returns to this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords, He will immediately gather unto Himself His elect (Matt. 24:31).

Who is it who will be united with Jesus Christ at that momentous occasion? It will be those in the Church who are clothed in "fine linen, clean and white" (Rev. 19:8) — those who are without "spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," those who are "holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:27).

"Called, and chosen, and faithful"

When Jesus Christ returns to this earth as world ruler — as King of kings and Lord of lords — He will be joined by those and only those who have faithfully kept His commandments: "And they that are [at that time] with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" (Rev. 17:14).

Yes, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Few ever become part of God's Church, part of God's elect, His specially chosen ones.

And, even if Christ chooses us and puts us into His Church, we will not be with Him at His Second Coming unless we remain faithful unto the very end (Rev. 2:10)!

Some who have been called and chosen have not been faithful unto the end. Look at the many God has called and chosen — placed in His Church — who have not remained faithful. It is truly saddening.

Those who haven't endured this life's trials will not make it into the Kingdom of God at Christ's Second Coming unless they deeply repent of their faithlessness, throw themselves on God's mercy and receive the grace and strength from God to be counted faithful at Christ's coming.

When you study the parable of the sower, where do you think you fit in? Will you be among those seed that fell on the stony places? Or will you be among those that fell amid the thorns?

Or will you be counted among the seed that fell on the good ground and brought forth good fruit — 30-fold, 60-fold or 100-fold?

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

trials were so great sometimes it seemed God would never come to his rescue — yet God always did!

Truly these trials teach us to be patient — for it often seems an eternity before God finally delivers us. How often I have experienced this personally. Yet, always God has intervened before it was too late!

God chose Paul to be an apostle of Jesus Christ, and the Lord said, "I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake" (Acts 9:16).

And late in life Paul wrote: "In all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments [people probably would call Paul a crook, a racketeer, an impostor and a jailbird today], in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings" (II Cor. 6:4-5). Paul outlined more of his troubles and sufferings in II Corinthians 11:23-28.

Perhaps a chosen servant of God may be called upon to endure more trials, troubles and tests of faith than other Christians — but every Christian shall suffer persecution and meet fiery trials, sorrows, troubles, tests of faith. All our readers who are Christians will understand. Let us not murmur or grumble. Let us have FAITH, and endure in our faith patiently.

All these problems, troubles and trials are allowed to test us, strengthen us in faith and character and prepare us for joy eternally in God's Kingdom. Paul wrote, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the GLORY which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18). □

Of all the billions of people now inhabiting this earth, we, the few, have been chosen by God to do a special job — to preach the Gospel to the world (Matt. 24:14) — and to receive salvation now. Let us make certain that we remain obediently "faithful unto death" so that we will receive the "crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him" (Jas. 1:12). □

DOES GOD EXIST?

HOW DO YOU KNOW?

- ? What two possibilities could account for the origin of life on earth?
- ? Why do most "dyed-in-the-wool" evolutionists accept the theory of evolution?
- ? True or false: Unlike the idea of creation, which is based on faith, the theory of evolution is founded on certain proofs.
- ? What does the law of biogenesis show about the existence of life?
- ? True or false: The material creation is now complete — it is not now going on.
- ? Radioactivity, a process of disintegration, reveals what about the history of matter?
- ? What is the basic, rational and positive proof of God's existence?

No question is more fundamental to man's own existence than whether an all-powerful, all-knowing Creator sits at the controls of the universe. Skeptics doubt it. Many scientists say it cannot be proven. How can you know for sure? Can the existence of God be demonstrated to the rational mind? Have you proven to yourself that God exists? Could you prove it to others? Why not reread our free booklet, *Does God Exist?* Or, if you've not read it, request a free copy by using the card in this issue or write to the Good News office at the address nearest you.

