

AUGUST 1985

The Good News

OF THE WORLD TOMORROW



SWEETEN YOUR MARRIAGE-
With the Fruits of
the Spirit

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COVER: Is your marriage getting better, or only more bitter? Using God's Holy Spirit will give you a solid, positive, joyous marriage relationship. Be sure to read "Sweeten Your Marriage — With the Fruits of the Spirit" beginning on page 6. Photo by G.A. Belluche Jr.

Editor-in-Chief
HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG

Managing Editor
Dexter H. Faulkner

Assistant Managing Editor

Norman L. Shoaf

Contributors

Dibar K. Apartian

Jeroid W. Aust

K. Neil Earle

John A. Halford

George M. Kackos

Ronald D. Kelly

Graemme J. Marshall

L. Leroy Neff

Bernard W. Schnippert

Richard H. Sedliacik

Clayton D. Steep

Philip Stevens

Earl H. Williams

Graphics

Minette Collins Smith

Editorial Assistants

Cheryl Ebeling

Robert C. Taylor

**PUBLISHED BY THE
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Publisher

Herbert W. Armstrong

Treasurer

L. Leroy Neff

Director of Publishing Services

Ray L. Wright

Production Director

Roger G. Lippross

Production Manager

Ron Taylor

Circulation Manager

Boyd L. Leeson

International Editions

Dutch: Bram de Bree

French: Dibar K. Apartian

German: John B. Karlson

Spanish: Don Walls

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Australia: P.O. Box 202, Burleigh Heads, Queensland 4220

Bahamas: P.O. Box N3934, Nassau NP

Barbados: P.O. Box 1021, Bridgetown

Bermuda: P.O. Box 908, Hamilton 5-24

Colombia: Apartado Aéreo 11430, Bogotá 1, D.E.

Denmark: Box 211, DK-8100 Aarhus C

Fiji: P.O. Box 3938, Samabula, Suva

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New Zealand and Pacific Isles: P.O. Box 2709, Auckland 1

Nigeria: P.M.B. 21006, Ikeja, Lagos State

Norway: Box 2513, Selli, Oslo 2

Philippines: P.O. Box 1111, Makati, Metro Manila 3117

Puerto Rico: G.P.O. Box 6063, San Juan, Puerto Rico

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Singapore: P.O. Box 111, Farrer Road Post Office, Singapore 9128

Solomon Islands: P.O. Box 508, Honiara

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Sweden: Box 5380, S-102 46 Stockholm

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Trinidad: P.O. Bag 114, Port of Spain

United Kingdom: P.O. Box 111, Borehamwood,

Herts., WD6 1LU

Zambia: P.O. Box 50117, Lusaka

Zimbabwe: P.O. Box U.A. 30, Union Ave.,

Harare

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Where This Breakdown in Family Life Is Taking Us

Family life in the Western world is crumbling. **WHY?** Where is it all leading?

The **VERY** foundation of any stable civilization is a solid **FAMILY STRUCTURE**. Today's civilization, with its foundation disintegrating, is itself on the way out!

WHY? The modern world has adopted what it calls "the new morality," which in truth means gross **IMMORALITY!** Mated with it has come "women's liberation." Women have been emancipated from the **HOME!** Women have their own incomes and a new spirit of independence.

Nothing in this material world is as important as a happy home life with father, mother and well-taught happy children — a close-knit **FAMILY**.

WHY?

It strikes at the very heart and core of humanity's future and eternity and the Gospel that Jesus Christ proclaimed.

His Gospel was the good news of the coming Kingdom of God. That Gospel, suppressed from the world for 1,900 years, reveals that God's Church is the affianced Bride of Christ — to marry Him at His glorious imminent return, establishing the world-ruling Kingdom of God. What has that to do with established **FAMILY LIFE?**

By approximately the middle

of the first century, Christ's **GOSPEL MESSAGE** was suppressed — not proclaimed to the world until the middle of the present 20th century!

And what was that Gospel message? It was the news of the coming Kingdom of God. And what is the Kingdom of God? It is the divine **FAMILY OF GOD**, ruling all earth's nations with the government of God.

WHO and **WHAT** is **GOD?**

God is **NOT** a "Trinity." Yet it is true God is more than one personage. Actually *God* is a family name.

In the very first verse in the Bible, Genesis 1:1, the English translation is, "In the beginning **GOD** created the heavens and the earth."

Moses originally wrote those words in Hebrew. The Hebrew for *God* is *Elohim*, a plural noun, such as the words *family, church, group*. **ONE** Church with many members — yet "from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies" (Ephesians 4:16).

Not many independent Christians, each going his own way as *he* feels is right in God's eyes — but **ONE BODY**, not only **JOINED TOGETHER**, but *fitly* joined together, all speaking the same thing (I Corinthians 1:10) and that "same thing" the Word of God — God's **TRUTH** as revealed in His Word.

A **FAMILY** is made up of more than one person, yet *only* one

family. And **GOD's** family on earth is not split up and divided, for "a house divided against itself cannot stand." It is **COMPACTED** together (Ephesians 4:16), and the word *compacted* means as closely bound together as if **GLUED** together — definitely not made up of independent Christians.

And so, in truth, God is not merely **ONE PERSONAGE** or even limited to a "Trinity," but is a **FAMILY**.

And God is a **KINGDOM** — that is, the supreme divine **FAMILY** that **RULES** the **UNIVERSE!** The whole Gospel, which Jesus Christ brought from God for mankind, is the **GOOD NEWS** of the coming **KINGDOM OF GOD**.

And the united, closely knit together family of Christians — the Church — will, at the coming of Christ and the time of the resurrection, become the **KINGDOM OF GOD!**

The Kingdom of God starts with a **FAMILY** relationship — first the physical human families, second, the **ONE** compacted together **CHURCH** and, finally, when the Church is changed to immortality, the **GOD FAMILY** — which is the **KINGDOM OF GOD!**

There is but the **ONE GOD**, even though that **GOD** is composed of more than **ONE PERSONAGE!** But those personages are closely **COMPACTED** together. Jesus said that He and God the Father are **ONE**. They are 100
(Continued on page 19)

How to Be an Overcomer

*WHY are we not more successful in living up to God's standard?
WHY do we slip and fall occasionally? Here is how YOU can
overcome where you are weakest and hardest tempted!*

By Herbert W. Armstrong

DO YOU have some "besetting sin" — some point of weakness, perhaps even secret, you have been unable to overcome?

Have you ever met temptation, struggled with it, only to wake up a little later to the remorseful fact that you had slipped and fallen, and failed to overcome?

Or perhaps you are struggling with some habit that holds you as its slave — struggling, wrestling, always fighting it, yet somehow never able to conquer it.

Only the overcomers

These things are serious. We *must* overcome these sins, these habits, these sudden temptations — be cleansed of them thoroughly — if we expect to get through to the Kingdom of God and inherit eternal life.

"To him who OVERCOMES," says Jesus, "I will grant to sit with Me on My throne" (Revelation 3:21).

"He who OVERCOMES, and keeps My works until the end, to HIM I will give power over the nations — 'He shall rule them with a rod of iron'" (Revelation 2:26-27).

Not all are even called, at this

time. Many, though they may have *heard* the true message, have never received a conscious convicting KNOWLEDGE of the truth. This is not the time when God is calling them.

But God is now calling SOME to a life of separation — to a new and different and Spirit-filled and Spirit-led life — in order that they may be wholly CLEANSED of sin, and that they may GROW in grace and knowledge, thus being prepared, trained, fitted for a position of solemn responsibility — that of king or priest — in God's KINGDOM!

And it is *only* those who qualify by the training, the overcoming, the spiritual development and growth, DURING THIS PRESENT LIFE, who shall thus reign with Christ. Study the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11-27.

So the Christian life is a new and a different life — an OVERCOMING life. Sin must be torn out, root and branch. We must be made righteous, holy.

Why we stumble and fall

Why, then, do so many of us continually stumble and fall? Yes, even those who do strive, struggle and even PRAY and PRAY for help, for victory, over some vicious habit?

WHY?

First, notice a portion of Paul's

instruction to the Philippians: "And be found in him, not having mine OWN righteousness, which is of the law, but *that which is through the faith of Christ*, the righteousness WHICH IS OF GOD *by faith*" (Philippians 3:9, Authorized Version).

Notice, it is not OUR righteousness, but GOD'S.

David was inspired to write, "All your commandments are righteousness" (Psalm 119:172). Yes, and LOVE is the fulfilling of the law (Romans 13:10).

The kind of love required

Right here is one trouble. Too many commandment-keepers are struggling along, trying to keep the commandments in their own power and strength — thinking it is THEIR own personal human love that fulfills the law! Too many commandment-keepers have only been converted to the ARGUMENT of keeping God's commandments, and have never really EXPERIENCED definite repentance — for a real conversion is a DEFINITE EXPERIENCE!

Such people need to go to a private place alone with God, and get to their knees, and pour out their hearts to God, and stay with it until they really KNOW they have really repented.

No wonder so many become discouraged, and feel like giving

up! We do not even HAVE the kind of love that fulfills God's law and makes us righteous! LOVE is of God, for God IS love!

And it takes "the love of God . . . poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5) to fulfill the law and give us GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The law is SPIRITUAL (Romans 7:14). We are carnal. It takes a SPIRITUAL love to fulfill a spiritual law. The Holy Spirit within us is merely GOD'S LAW IN ACTION! And since God alone can supply the LOVE that makes us righteous, it becomes GOD'S righteousness, not ours.

How to get faith

But how do we receive the LOVE? Note again the scripture quoted above: ". . . the righteousness which is of God BY FAITH."

It comes, then, by FAITH. Now most people seem to believe that the FAITH by which we must receive everything God gives us is something that we, ourselves, must work up and supply by some kind of hard effort.

And it does become *such an effort*, doesn't it, trying to strive to have FAITH?

Foolish babes in Christ! Can't we see that if WE were able to supply the faith that brings all else, that we, ourselves, would earn our own salvation by WORKS? It would be the kind of righteousness that is only FILTHY RAGS to God!

Stop trying to work up faith. YOU have no faith. The scripture above speaks only of "THE FAITH OF CHRIST"! Not *your* faith — CHRIST'S faith. Jesus had REAL FAITH! He performed miracles! And He rose from the dead — and HE LIVES.

Here is the secret! He gives — He imparts — His strong faith to you and to me! Yes, even FAITH is a gift of God — one of the spiritual GIFTS (Ephesians 2:8, I Corinthians 12:9).

Then how shall we go about getting more of it? By yielding, submitting our desires, our purposes, our wills, to HIM, by ASKING Him in real earnest persever-

ing prayer, and by trusting Him to give it!

Why we have not been delivered

God's Word promises: "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, *but with the temptation will also make the way of escape*, that you may be able to bear it" (I Corinthians 10:13).

But has it not often seemed, in your experience, that God has failed to keep this promise?

Temptation has come. You have struggled, even prayed, yet you were overpowered, and you did not find the way of escape! What is wrong?

Jesus said, "I will NEVER leave you nor forsake you." "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." God's Word promises, "Sin shall NOT have dominion over you."

Yet have you not found that sin has had DOMINION over you, holding you its slave? Have you not fought it desperately even with tears streaming down your face — only to fail?

How to apply and use faith

WHY? What is wrong? Simply that we have not known how to receive, apply and use the FAITH God promises to give!

First, there is something WE must do. Some go to one extreme and try to do it all. Others swing to the opposite extreme, plead with God, make little effort themselves and expect Him to do it all.

James says: "Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

Submit! Resist! This takes effort.

Peter says to humble ourselves, casting ALL our care upon the Lord, and to be sober and VIGILANT, because the devil is walking about, watching for the chance to tempt us when we are off our guard. We should "RESIST him, steadfast in the faith" (I Peter 5:6-9).

We are to resist Satan, and do

it in the faith of Christ — but HOW?

The key to it all is "BE VIGILANT." Be on your guard! Be ever watchful! Be prepared! That's where we fall down! It takes constant, continuous, vigilant effort, never letting down!

Unless we, ourselves, had to put forth some effort we could NOT be OVERCOMERS! But if we had power to do it all, we should not need God!

So it requires our effort — our continuous, watchful, ever VIGILANT effort — *empowered by GOD'S SPIRIT!*

James continues, "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you" (James 4:8).

Now we are getting closer to our answer! When temptation comes, we ARE TOO FAR FROM GOD — and we are then unable, SUDDENLY, on the spur of the moment, to get close enough to Him to get the help and the deliverance we need!

It sometimes takes TIME to get CLOSE to God — into that intimate contact with Him so that we can draw on Him for the power we suddenly need!

In other words, when temptation unexpectedly has come, we have found ourselves caught off guard — out of prayer — out of contact with God — OUT OF SPIRITUAL TRAINING!

You were entering a CONTEST with Satan the devil. You tried to wrestle with him, but you were OUT OF TRAINING, out of spiritual condition.

Suppose a prizefighter would suddenly find himself, untrained and unprepared, in the ring in a contest with the world's heavy-weight champion! Do you think any living man could win?

How much STRONGER is Satan, by comparison? No wonder we fail! Could such a fighter, who had been dissipating, carousing, weakening himself physically, SUDDENLY summon enough strength and skill to conquer the champion of the world? Could a mile runner run a successful race and win, unless he trained and prepared himself carefully for the

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Where Are We NOW In Bible Prophecy?

*Famines in Africa highlight
where we now are in the sequence
of prophesied events.*

By Herman L. Hoeh

Jesus highlighted — only a few days before He was crucified — the sequence of events ending this age and introducing the world tomorrow.

“Take heed that no man deceive you,” He warned in Matthew 24:4-6. “For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of

wars and rumours of wars," He continued. "See that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet" (Authorized Version).

Not yet? Of course!

The world just now!

Never before have so many different, confusing religious and political voices had an impact on the world as in this day of mass media.

And, beginning in 1917, the world also has faced an ongoing period of civil wars and revolutions one after another, not to mention two world wars.

"But the end is not yet," said Jesus. "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." That is, religious, political and economic conflicts will continue — for humans are not solving their problems, which are spiritual in origin. But Jesus did not stop here.

"And there will be *famines*, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (verses 7-8).

What has been the consequence of false religious, social and political ideas? Civil wars and revolution, nation fighting nation!

And what is the result, now beginning on a major scale, of civil wars, revolution and terrorism? A solution to human problems? The creation of a better world? Not at all.

Instead, breakdowns of agricultural production have occurred in nations torn apart by civil strife, particularly in Africa and parts of Southeast Asia. Food often cannot be safely transported from where it is produced to where it is needed most. Or food may be seized from an already hungry countryside to feed urban populations to prevent yet more revolution. Changing weather patterns and droughts make matters even worse.

But this sequence of events Jesus described, and which Matthew, Mark and Luke record, has appeared before in history, beginning in the first century A.D. As

with many Bible prophecies, the first fulfillment occurred slowly, over a period of many centuries, and climaxed in plagues and 1,260 years of religious persecutions in the Middle Ages (Revelation 12:6).

But in this closing period of modern civilization, these very same prophecies are being fulfilled again, in much more rapid succession, climaxing in three and one-half years of persecution and world suffering (verse 14), at which point God will personally intervene in human affairs to bring us peace.

So where are we *now* in this second and final fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy? We have entered the period of "*famines... in various places*"! The situation is not reversible solely by human efforts.

Various writers of the 1960s thought the present situation would develop sooner. We did! So did the authors of the book *Famine — 1975!*

In this book, published in 1967, authors William and Paul Paddock "forecast a specific date, 1975, when the new crisis will be upon us in all its awesome importance." William Paddock had special training in agronomy, plant pathology and tropical agriculture. But neither he nor we fully foresaw the delay of a whole decade because of twin events: the Green Revolution in agriculture and the impact of abortion worldwide.

Students of world population, even United Nations experts, did not expect it would take to the year 1986 for the world's population to rise to five billion (or five thousand million, for our British readers). But notice, now, how quickly the population is multiplying, even with abortion.

In 1830 world population for the first time reached one billion. One hundred years later, in 1930, the figure was two billion. In 1960, only 30 years later, the figure was three billion. Fifteen years later, in 1975, four billion. Some time next year, in 1986, world population will reach five billion, and it is predicted that in

nine years — by 1995 — it will be about six billion.

The Green Revolution in agriculture and the explosion in numbers of abortions have combined to sustain this geometric rate of population growth, but over a somewhat longer period of time. We are, however, at a critical period.

Revolutionary struggles are escalating, no new breakthrough in the Green Revolution is at hand, the poor nations that need food most cannot afford to buy it in sufficient quantities and the food-surplus nations in Europe and in the English-speaking nations worldwide are facing economic crises in agriculture as a result.

Hunger, famines and bankrupt farmers in the industrial world are now world-news headlines. There is no turning back this sequence of events unless there is complete repentance on an international scale and an end to selfishness and self-justification among nations.

What next?

As always, there is a cause for every effect. And so with the spread of hunger and death there will inevitably be increases in disease epidemics, both in lands where famine and drought occur and in countries to which refugees flee.

Great strides have been made in medical efforts to prevent the spread of diseases. This, too, is a kind of revolution that can postpone the year when epidemics become a worldwide danger. But the costs of medical breakthroughs are not cheap.

Who will pay for the growing medical needs of refugees? Are we going to face in medicine the same cost factor that farmers in the richer nations face? The people who need food and health care most — who need special educational instruction in sanitation and nutrition — can least afford it!

We are at a critical moment in the sequence of events Jesus enumerated. Famines are here. Pestilences next! □

Several years ago, I sat looking into the eyes of a harried husband and wife. I was desperately trying to show them how to save their marriage.

They listened as I instructed them on how to love one another. Yes, they *listened* — week after week, month after month, sermon after sermon — but they did not *do!* Their marriage did not get any better, just bitter.

This marriage failed, ending in the pain and sorrow of divorce. But why did it fail? And why isn't your marriage, perhaps, as happy as it ought to be?

There is a missing dimension to marital happiness — a dimension millions have overlooked. Without this vital key, everything you try to improve your marriage will be futile.

Without this ingredient, marriages simply never reach the level of pure joy that they could and should reach or, more and more today, marriages decay and grow

Sweeten Your Marriage— With the Fruits of the Spirit

Is your marriage getting bitter instead of better? Every married couple needs to read and apply the information in this important article.

By Earl H. Williams

divine institution of marriage and gave access to this vital key to marital happiness. Let's go back to the first marriage and see what we can learn.

The tree of life — fruit for marriage

God said in Genesis 2:18, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him." Adam was very lonely. He even looked among the animals for a mate, but found none (verse 20).

Then God put Adam to sleep, took one of his ribs and fashioned a woman, Eve (verses 21-22). When Adam woke up, God presented Eve to him.

And what was Adam's response? Was it the calm, cool, collected "Now this is bone of my bones" that most Bible trans-

lations give (verse 23)? No! The original Hebrew word for "now" is *pa'am*. Its meaning is far more intense than a casual "now."

Pa'am means to "impel" or "move." And Adam was moved, all right, at the sight of Eve. He was a skyrocket in flight — "now" might be better rendered "wow"!

Adam was exuberant. He thought Eve was all he needed to be happy, that she was the answer to all of his problems.

But God knew better. You see, man cannot live by mate alone,

but by the very Spirit of God. So God entered their lives and performed the first wedding ceremony. This was not just for honor's sake, but was an example for all future married couples.

God married them, for it was



cold, often ending in divorce and family breakups.

What is this ingredient? The missing dimension in marital happiness is the Holy Spirit!

Surprised? Marriage partners need to *use* the Holy Spirit, not just *have* it. There is a big difference between the two. We may think about using the power of God's Holy Spirit to overcome personal sins and yet neglect using it to overcome one of the biggest and most personal sins of all — an unhappy marriage.

Almighty God created the





only by God living in each of them (through the Holy Spirit) that true marital happiness could have been produced. It is God in the midst of a marriage, dwelling in the lives of husband and wife, that joins them together in unending marital bliss (Matthew 19:6).

Unfortunately, Adam and Eve rejected God in their marriage. How, you ask? By rejecting the tree of life, which represented God's way of *give*, which can only abide in us through the Holy Spirit.

Had Adam and Eve chosen the tree of life, their marriage would have been blessed with all of the sweet, love-giving, beautiful fruits of the Spirit. But they chose the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which represented the way of *get*, the way that leads to unhappiness. This tree filled their marriage with the bitter, caustic, withered works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21).

With God out of their lives, the marriage of Adam and Eve

became a free-for-all of getting and taking from one another. Through following the way of get, they lost their beautiful home in Eden (Genesis 3).

What about your marriage? Which tree thrives in your married life?

The answer lies in its taste — sweet or bitter. You be the judge. Surely, all of us want our marriages to be sweeter, but how do we promote the fruits of the Spirit in our marriages?

Repentance: the key to the tree

Why did Adam and Eve reject the tree of life? Why do people reject it today? Because of their unrepentant, unyielding attitudes toward their Creator God.

Repentance is the key that unlocks the tree of life and all of its wonderful fruits. Repentance means change. It means to turn around and go the other way. But to change, you must have a totally conquered and yielded mind. Self and selfish desires must be com-

pletely removed, for selfishness is the No. 1 destroyer of marital happiness.

The apostle Paul repented and totally yielded his life to God. He put to death his carnal mind with all of its ego and selfish ways. Of his life he writes, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Galatians 2:20).

Repentance — death of one's selfish way and total yieldedness to God — is the only way to the tree of life. You must totally remove the self for God to dwell in you through the Holy Spirit. There is not enough room for both you and God in you. Somebody's got to go — let it be the carnal you.

Do as the apostle Peter commanded: "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

Your repentance of self and selfish desires must be a continual process. Sometimes we look at repentance as a state rather than a process. Repentance of self requires a second-by-second, thought-by-thought vigilance. You must bring every thought under scrutiny, and if it's selfish it must be destroyed (II Corinthians 10:5). How, you ask? By bringing a corresponding unselfish thought into your mind.

You need to repent — yield to God and get your self out of the way — and the tree of life will flourish in you through the power of God's Spirit. Then and only then will you be able to give happiness to your mate.

Now let's look at the fruits of the Spirit that will sweeten your marriage. They are listed for us in Galatians 5:22-23.

God's divine love

The first fruit of the Spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23 is *love*. Love could be considered

more of a vine than a fruit — it is the channel through which all of the fruits are given.

And what is love? Love is not a feeling or emotion. It is not the way your mate makes you feel, either. Love is giving. Love is a conscious, willful commitment to give to your mate, even though you may think he or she is undeserving, without expecting anything in return.

This kind of love is supernatural. It inspires a truly repentant, Spirit-filled person to give unconditionally. This kind of love comes only from God, and He gives it to us to give to our mates through the power of His Spirit (Romans 5:5).

Jesus told the selfish Pharisees to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 19:19). Jesus knew the only way they could understand love was if He made reference to the self.

Carnally, you will love only yourself — you won't love your mate, except in a human, selfish, perhaps only sentimental way. So who will love your mate — who will give your wife or husband the luscious fruits of the Spirit? God in you! Only God in you can give true love to your mate.

Notice that you *give* the fruits of the Spirit to your mate. You are to be a kind of tree of life in your marriage. Now think: Have you ever seen a tree eating its own fruit? Of course not. A tree gives its fruit for others to eat and enjoy. The fruits of the Spirit, flowing from you through the power of the Holy Spirit, are for your mate to enjoy.

As wise King Solomon said, "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life" (Proverbs 11:30).

Joy is the happy fruit. This fruit sweetens the entire flavor of your marriage. Joy is a positive, exhilarating attitude of happiness despite circumstances — yes, joy is present even in the face of problems. This takes the consistent power of the Holy Spirit, not fick-

le emotion. Our carnal, selfish minds automatically become irritable and negative when things do not go our way. Our mates receive the bitter fruit of sadness instead of the sweet fruit of joy, and our whole marriage turns sour.

You should repent the moment you sense your mind turning negative, by casting the thoughts out of your mind. Then ask God to inspire you with a positive attitude in the face of the problem. Joy is highly contagious. Let your outgoing joy radiate and fill your marriage and family.

Peace is the miracle fruit that produces harmony. When you give your mate the fruit of peace, your relationship becomes calm and cooperative.

Peace is not necessarily the absence of problems. It is the ability to solve those problems.

We are not peaceful naturally. Paul said we do not even know the way to peace on our own (Romans 3:17). Ask God to show you how unpeaceful you really are, and He will show you how striving to "have it your way" encourages conflict. You will see how you have upset the peace so many times by wanting to get rather than give.

Once God has shown you how contentious you have been, you must repent. Push out those raging desires to "win" that argument or disagreement. You may win the argument but lose your marriage in the process.

Yield to God's peaceful Spirit by turning God's inspired thoughts of peace into action. Give your mate that "soft answer" that "turns away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1). "Overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:21). It takes two to fight, but it takes only one to give. Give your mate peace and let that peace that "surpasses all [human] understanding" (Philippians 4:7) fill your marriage.

Longsuffering is the fruit that

never spoils. Here is one fruit you can never give enough of, and it lasts a long, long time. This fruit is also called patience. Your mate could always use some patience from you, and vice versa.

But longsuffering and patience seem to be in short supply in many marriages. Husbands and wives can easily get short-tempered with one another, especially when our mate fails to satisfy us when and how we want him or her to.

Suddenly, our fuse sizzles and we explode, or we are disgruntled and dissatisfied because our mate is not changing fast enough — not growing fast enough in the way we want.

Repent of your short-fused, self-satisfying attitude, and guard your mind in the future. When you feel your fuse begin to burn at the imperfections and mistakes of your mate, stamp it out before you explode. You have a few imperfections of your own.

Yield to God's Spirit of longsuffering and patience. The apostle Paul preached that true love "endures all things" (I Corinthians 13:7).

Gentleness, or kindness, describes the delicate nature of our next fruit. Its meat is so soft and tender. What is gentleness? Gentleness is a delicate sensitivity to the needs of your mate. After sensing the need, gentleness fulfills the need with loving care.

Oh, how your mate needs God's gentleness from you. Do not let its delicate characteristics fool you, either. It will make your mate feel secure and strong in your love.

This satanic, sadistic society has stripped many husbands and

wives of "natural affection" (II Timothy 3:3, Authorized Version). Today, gentleness is equated with weakness, but the truth is that your marriage may be weakened by a lack of gentleness. Examine your own nature. Are you gentle or



harsh with your mate? Better yet (if you really want to know), ask your mate. It's time for you to change — to repent and bury the old, cold you. Promote the new, caring, gentle child of God in you (Romans 6:4-5).

Goodness is the biggest fruit of all. Goodness will fill and satisfy your mate's hunger for love like nothing else. Goodness is being bighearted. It is giving and doing for your mate without restraint.

What have you done for your mate lately? Not as much as you could have, right? Come on, now, be honest.

Carnally, you look for what your mate can do for you. You have your own little "Honey do" — Honey do this and Honey do that. The next time you are about to ask Honey to do, catch yourself and ask, "What am I doing for Honey?" Then repent of your self-serving attitude. Get up and do it yourself, and while you're at it, do something for your Honey, too.

Love is what you do, not just something you say or "feel inside." If you yield your will, God will inspire acts of goodness toward your mate.

Faithfulness — now here is a fruit that will stick to your mate's ribs. This fruit will give confidence and inspiration to your mate. Faithfulness is dedication and loyalty, but more than that, faithfulness is giving reassurance and encouragement.

How much of the fruit of faithfulness have you been giving? Are you faithful to your one and only mate? "Of course," you say. But what about your mind? Do your thoughts stray to others? Almighty God says that even an unfaithful thought is adultery (Matthew 5:28).

When those lustful thoughts come into your mind, repent by putting them out and replacing them with pleasant thoughts about your own mate.

What about encouragement? Do you inspire confidence and courage in your mate? Do you build up or tear down? It's so easy to criticize and find fault. Let the fruit of your tongue be

encouragement and praise. Look for the good and positive in your mate and concentrate on that.

When your mate is down, give the encouraging fruit of faithfulness to build up. When he or she feels like giving up, give the confident fruit of faithfulness to help your mate carry on.

Meekness is a great fruit in a small package. Meekness is the smallest yet most potent fruit of them all. Meekness is the spirit of humility. A truly meek mate realizes his or her smallness before Almighty God. A meek mate will "esteem others better than himself" (Philippians 2:3).

What is your attitude? Do you feel that you are better than your mate? What do your actions show? If your attitude has been one of pride and superiority, now is the time to change. Now is the time to humble yourself before God and your mate. Don't let your stubborn pride stand in the way of a happy marriage.

Husbands, give in to God's Spirit as it leads you to place your wife above yourself. That's right, she is not inferior to you. God created both man and woman in His image (Genesis 1:27).

But, you may be thinking, didn't Peter call wives "weaker vessels"? Yes, he did, but not in the way you may be thinking. In 1 Peter 3:7, Peter wrote that husbands should give "honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel."

Notice Peter used the word *honor*. This word gives positive direction to the whole verse. Peter speaks of a structurally weaker vessel that has esteem and value. The wife could be compared to a delicate yet beautiful piece of Steuben crystal. You put fine crystal in a showcase. You give it honor.

Structurally, a husband could be compared to a "stronger vessel." Perhaps you have a crusted old cast-iron skillet. That skillet may be the workhorse of your kitchen — perhaps you've been using it for years. Nothing can hurt it — it's indestructible.

Now, which vessel is more valuable? Neither! They mutually excel one another according to

their ordained purpose. If husbands and wives esteemed each other better than themselves, they would automatically treat each other with more respect. Feelings and actions of inferiority and superiority would not exist. So why not grow the fruit of meekness on your vine? Allow your mate to rise in your eyes. Let this tiny but potent fruit lift your marriage to new heights of ecstasy.

Self-control is the last fruit at the end of the vine. It regulates the taste, growth and giving of all the other fruits. This fruit also subjugates and destroys all carnal, selfish tendencies.

These fruits of the Spirit will not automatically grow or be given to your mate. Your marriage will not automatically become better instead of bitter, either — it takes effort. You must actively and consciously control your carnal mind every moment of your life. Then you must use God's Spirit by yielding to God's inspiration to produce all of the fruits of the Spirit for your mate.

You can increase the happiness



of your marriage by using God's Holy Spirit.

Time for action

We have talked enough — now is the time for action. Now is the time for you to turn your marriage around and make it sweet instead of bitter. "I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Galatians 5:16).

Satisfy your mate with good fruit — give, give, give. Sweeten your marriage with the fruits of God's Holy Spirit! □

Make Your Prayers Count!

Could you be overlooking some of the most basic principles regarding answered prayer?

By Clayton D. Steep

A major blunder. That's exactly what Henry had just made.

"I simply don't understand why God didn't give me the wisdom to make the right decision," Henry sighed, shaking his head.

Actually, Henry had made a double mistake. Double, because if we were to inquire of him, "Did you specifically *ask* God for the wisdom you needed?", Henry's reply would be something like: "Er, well, no — not specifically. But," he would hastily add, "God knew I needed it. He knows all things."

True, God knows all things. He is fully aware of our needs. As Jesus stated, "Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8).

But does that, therefore, render prayer unnecessary?

Not at all! The Bible clearly



points out that one of the reasons we sometimes do not receive the blessings we could enjoy is simply that we do not ask God for them (James 4:2).

"Ask, and it will be given to you," Jesus declared (Matthew 7:7). To illustrate, He gave the example of a child asking his father for some food. "If you then, being evil," Jesus continued, "know how to give good gifts

to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things . . ."

How? With no conditions? Always automatically? As a matter only of due course? Just because He knows we need them? Whether or not we ask? No! Read it: ". . . to those who *ask* Him!" (verse 11).

Henry should have read James 1:5 more closely. This verse doesn't say that if you need wisdom, God will automatically supply it because you are a Christian and He knows you need it.

Rather, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

God is filled with mercy and compassion. He knows what we need. He stands ready to give liberally. But He wants us to ask anyway.

Why? The fact that God tells us to is certainly good enough

Photo by S.A. Belluche Jr.

reason all by itself. But let's see if we can understand why God tells us to.

A vital factor

Prayer is not an isolated and optional religious exercise. It is a vital factor, significant in determining our eternal destiny!

The supreme purpose that God is working out here on earth is the expansion of His Kingdom — His Family. He wants to make out of human beings immortal members of His ruling Family.

These must be individuals who, by their own free choice, come to fully support God's way of doing things, who want to think as God thinks, perceive as God perceives, react as God reacts. They must want with all their hearts to be involved in whatever God is doing.

Such an attitude is essential in order to maintain, throughout eternity, harmony and peace in the God Family.

God has made us temporarily human. This existence is a testing ground so our Creator can try us and know what is in our hearts, whether or not He can trust us to live by His rules and laws (Deuteronomy 8:2). He must be sure. He is looking at us, closely examining our actions and reactions.

God takes note of what we say when we are talking to Him. Of course He knows our hearts and intents. And the Holy Spirit helps where we cannot adequately express ourselves (Romans 8:26-27). Still, as Jesus showed, the actual words we use are also important, and they ought to be meaningful, rather than vain repetitions (Matthew 6:7).

One of the obstacles to effective prayer is not often identified: It is the fact that we live in the age of devalued language. Words have never been so cheap, so frequently meaningless. All around us language is misused in advertising, politics, entertainment and casual conversation.

Because we have been disillusioned more than once by broken promises, exaggerations, shading of the truth, even outright lies, we have come to automatically doubt

that words mean what their face value would indicate.

This is one reason some have difficulty believing God's promises. It also could be one of the reasons some prayers are not as effective as they should be.

Remember that God really didn't have to ask Adam and Eve the series of questions about what they had done (Genesis 3:9-13). He already knew the answer. He didn't have to ask Cain where Abel was (Genesis 4:9). He didn't have to come down to earth to verify how evil Sodom was (Genesis 18:20-21). He didn't have to allow Jacob to contend with him all night (Genesis 32:22-30). But He wanted to — and wants to — hear from humans themselves what they have to say, and see their reactions.

Prayer changes things

The great Creator God is working out His plan. He keeps it on course, intervening when necessary in human affairs to do so. But do you realize that He allows humans with whom He is dealing to determine many of the details of how His plan develops?

Twice, Moses directly influenced, by prayer, the course of history. Because of the rebellion of the children of Israel, God on two separate occasions proposed rejecting them all and bringing forth through Moses a new nation to inherit the promises made to Abraham (Exodus 32:9-14, Numbers 14:11-20). Had Moses not fervently prayed to God to change His mind, the implication is that God would have done exactly what He had proposed.

Either way would not have impeded the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan. But Moses' prayers did determine the course that fulfillment took.

Prayer does make a difference. It changes things.

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest," Jesus urged (Luke 10:2). Whether or not or in what numbers laborers are sent out to do God's work must therefore

depend at least partly on prayers or the lack of them.

Make no mistake about it: God will accomplish His work of preaching the message preparing the world for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ — even if He has to cause the very rocks of the earth to cry the message out loud (Luke 19:40). Let us not take for granted the privilege we have of taking part in what God is doing! He doesn't need us. But He gives us the opportunity to participate. Are you participating?

Listen to the apostle Paul: "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Timothy 2:1-2). Whether or not or to what degree God's work has peaceful conditions in which to function also depends therefore, at least in part, on how diligently we pray.

If we don't ask, there is no promise we shall receive.

Do you pray every day for the work of God and for the human instruments carrying it out? You should. Do you pray every day for God's blessings on others as well as on your own endeavors? You should. Do you pray every day for protection and help as you function and move about in this evil and dangerous world? You should.

"Be anxious for nothing," Paul wrote, "but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known [even though God is already aware] to God" (Philippians 4:6). This means bringing God into every — yes, every — facet of your daily existence.

Believe and obey

Jesus said, "And all things, whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Matthew 21:22). So in addition to simply asking, we must believe. There is a definite and close relationship between the degree of one's sincerity and surrender to God and the degree to which one

is able to believe and pray in faith.

If you are, for example, lusting for something when you know better, if your mind is entertaining thoughts you know you should not have, you automatically cannot at the same time be asking God in unswerving faith to grant you a request. It just doesn't work that way.

Here's how the apostle John expressed it: "Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God" (I John 3:21). And our hearts won't condemn us if we are doing what is right. "And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (verse 22).

What does it mean to be always in an attitude of prayer? It doesn't mean you are talking to God every second. Even Jesus didn't do that. But He was always in the right attitude — His conscience was undefiled before God — so He could talk directly to His heavenly Father on the spur of the moment. His thoughts were on those things that are above.

Being able to pray at any moment and total surrender to God go hand in hand. On one occasion when Jesus suddenly began to pray, He said: "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me" (John 11:41-42).

How did Jesus know that? Why did God always hear Him? For the simple reason that Jesus always did those things that pleased His Father (John 8:29).

Wanting to pray or be in an attitude of prayer in "all things" is actually a valuable incentive to be obedient in all things.

Prayers of intercession

Our prayer life not only reveals to God how deeply we want Him to be involved in our lives and how deeply we want to be involved in what He is doing, but prayer also shows how interested we are in other people.

In all members of God's Family, God wants to see a sponta-

neous and universal expression of outgoing concern for the welfare of others. That's the only way to guarantee peace and harmony. It is the way of giving. Love for one's neighbor is the very essence of God's law (Leviticus 19:18).

One of the greatest gifts you can give to others, when you are close to God, is to pray for them. God loves it when people pray for each other. Certainly God will hear the prayers of an individual praying for his own needs. But the Bible leaves no doubt that God particularly enjoys hearing and answering the prayers of one person for the needs of another.

The apostle Paul wouldn't have petitioned the saints to "pray for us" (Hebrews 13:18) if it didn't make any difference whether they did.

If you want a specific request from God, have you ever thought to pray that the identical request be granted to someone else who needs it? In so doing, you get your mind off yourself and on the welfare of others. This is well pleasing to God.

In Jesus' sample prayer outline (commonly, though mistakenly, called the "Lord's Prayer") the words *I, me* or *my* do not appear once (Matthew 6:9-13). All the way through the words used are *we, us* and *our*, demonstrating an unselfish concern.

God wants to hear prayers of intercession (Isaiah 59:15-16). It was through the prayers of Abraham that Abimelech was forgiven (Genesis 20:17-18). Job's friends were forgiven through Job's prayers (Job 42:7-10). John wrote about praying for one another to be forgiven (I John 5:16). The Bible records numerous instances of people praying for one another.

For whom have you interceded recently?

In Jesus' early childhood, there was an elderly woman named Anna, "who did not depart from the temple, but served God [the word *God* is in italics to show it was added by translators] with fastings and prayers night and day" (Luke 2:37).

You can be sure that most of

that prayer and fasting was not to seek Anna's own needs and desires. There were probably many people in the area who, over the years, went to Anna when they had a problem, because God heard and answered her prayers and everyone knew it.

King Solomon recorded a vital principle in life that reflects on this subject: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up. Again, if two lie down together, they will keep warm; but how can one be warm alone? Though one may be overpowered by another, two can withstand him. And a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12).

You who are sick or afflicted, is someone praying *with* you for healing? The instruction from James is to "pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16). It makes a difference!

Don't lose heart

One of Jesus' parables was given to show us we ought to be persistent in prayer, that we "always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1-8).

Have you ever "lost heart" because you, along with others, have been asked to pray for someone, for example, who is terminally ill, and the person dies anyway? Have you immediately assumed something was wrong with your prayers, with your exercise of faith?

Maybe there was. On the other hand, that may not always be so. Maybe your prayers were what they should be. Maybe you did not waver in faith. But maybe enough others did not pray effectively. Did you ever think of that?

In any case, do not lose heart. Keep at it. Try again.

Being able to pray effectively does not come overnight. It has to be worked at. But it is eternally worth the effort, for through prayer you get to know God. And, just as importantly, He gets to know you. □

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Does Ephesians 2:6 indicate that Christians go to heaven?

Let's understand exactly what this verse means.

Ephesians 2:6 in the Authorized Version of the Bible says God "hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."

This verse is speaking of Christians *now*. Certainly we are not in heaven right now. Yet the verse says we are now sitting together in "heavenly places," whatever those are.

The word *heavenly* in this verse is translated from the Greek word *epouranios*, which refers to something high or lofty. It does not have to refer specifically to heaven.

Notice also that the word *places* is in italics. That means the word was not in the original Greek text, but was later added by translators. The verse literally says that we have been made, now, to "sit together in heavenly [or heavenlies] in Christ Jesus."

Ephesians 2:6 is saying that with God's Spirit leading us, we look at things from God's point of view, setting our minds "on things above, not on things on the earth" (Colossians 3:2). We become "ambassadors for Christ" (II Corinthians 5:20), called out of this world as "a royal priesthood . . . His own special people" (I Peter 2:9), to teach and set the example of God's perfect way of life, which is so different from the way this world lives.

We are, even now, in a relationship of high and lofty terms and conditions — we have indeed had the "heavenlies" opened to us!

Ephesians 2:7 refers to what will happen in the future — "in the ages to come." When God's Kingdom is set up, we shall reign as kings and priests with Christ on earth (Revelation 5:10). Christ promises that we shall actually sit with Him on His

throne on earth at that time (Revelation 3:21).

Ephesians 2:6 in no way contradicts John 3:13 and dozens of other scriptures that prove conclusively that Christians do not go to heaven. For more information, send for our free booklet *What Is the Reward of the Saved?* Mail the literature request card in this issue or write to our address nearest you.

Where did Cain get his wife?

Notice Genesis 5:4: "After he begot Seth, the days of Adam were eight hundred years; and he begot sons and daughters." Obviously Cain married one of his sisters — one of Adam's daughters — and Seth, Cain's brother, did likewise.

Adam and Eve, as God proposed, were fruitful (Genesis 1:28). In today's world, when many couples are having no more than one or two children, it's hard for us to grasp how many children Adam and Eve probably had during their great span of life, nearly a thousand years. Adam lived almost one sixth of all the time from his creation until now.

It was not wrong to marry a sister or a brother in the beginning — no physical harm would result. More than 2,000 years later, in the days of Abraham, a man could still marry a half sister. It was not until the days of Moses that God forbade brothers to marry their half sisters (Leviticus 18:6, 11).

In pre-Flood days, when people lived for centuries, they did not age as we do today. They were able to continue bearing children, undoubtedly, for hundreds of years. After the Flood, because of living contrary to God's laws, the human life span became greatly shortened.

I've been taught that the Third Commandment is, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." But you say it's the Fourth. Why? I've read it

in several articles and can't understand why your organization states that.

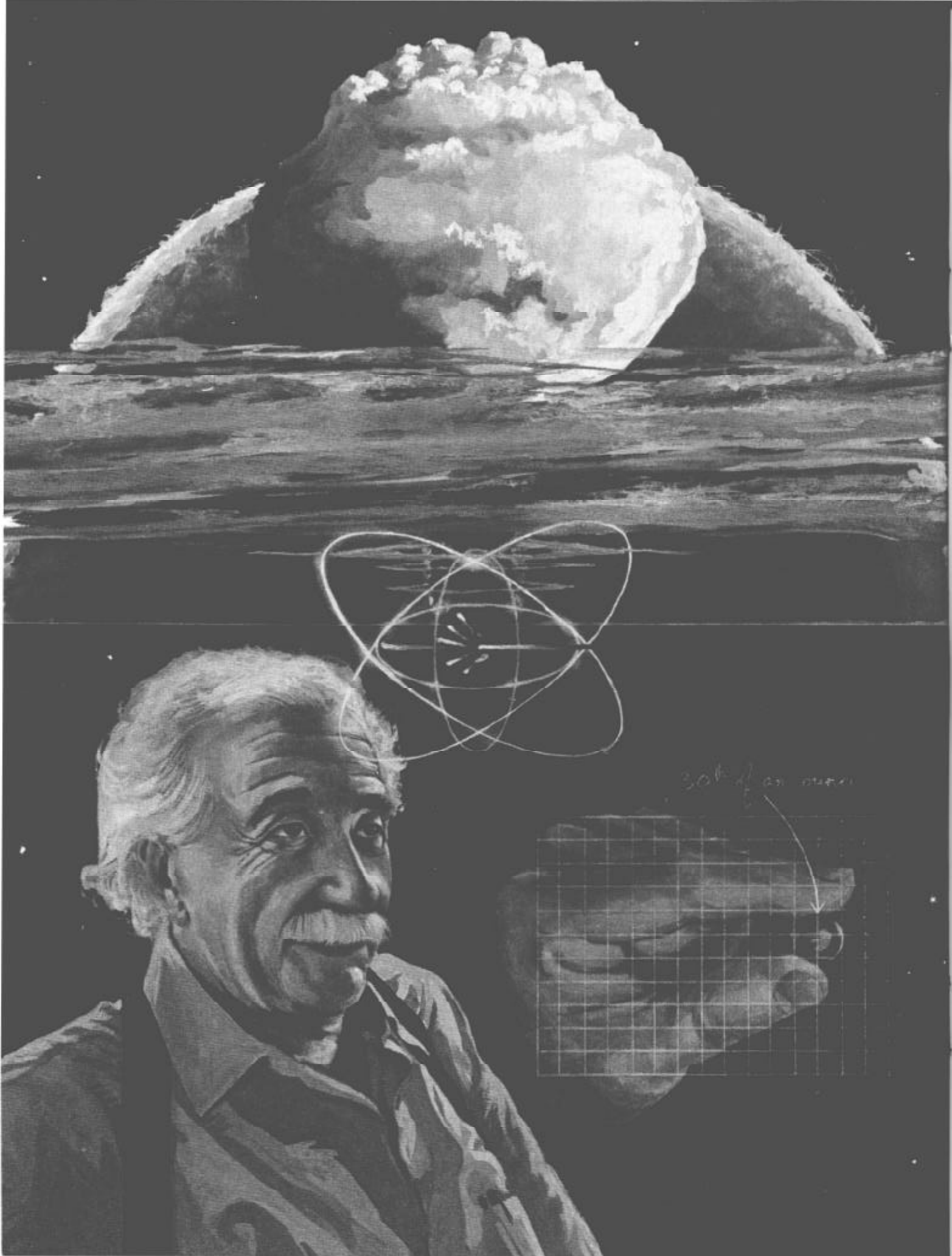
Remembering the Sabbath day is indeed the Third Commandment, according to the Roman Catholic and Lutheran enumeration. But according to the original enumeration in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, it is the Fourth.

The Catholic and Lutheran numbering comes from virtually dropping the Second Commandment, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them . . ." (Exodus 20:4-6, Authorized Version).

By omitting the Second Commandment from the Ten, the succeeding commandments become renumbered so that the Third becomes the Second and the Fourth becomes the Third, and so on. The Tenth Commandment is then divided into two separate commandments — coveting your neighbor's wife and coveting your neighbor's goods — to fill in the gap (*My Catholic Faith*, by Louis LaRavoire Morrow, page 194).

The Bible, however, gives no precedent for dividing this one commandment into two. Jesus referred to just one commandment against coveting in Luke 12:15, and the apostle Paul wrote: "I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, 'You shall not covet'" (Romans 7:7).

It is not logical to divide the first two points of the Tenth Commandment (coveting one's neighbor's house and coveting his wife) into two separate commandments while ignoring the four other items mentioned (manservant, maidservant, and donkey and ox). The overall principle of not coveting anything of one's neighbor's (the last point stated in the Tenth Commandment) adequately covers all potential situations (Exodus 20:17). □



30% of an ounce

Tap the Power of the Universe!

The forces binding matter together point to the immense power of the Creator God. That great God offers to share His power with us to help us overcome.

By John A. Halford

One night, long ago, King David looked up into the vastness of space. As he meditated on the power and majesty of the God who created the universe, he learned an important lesson.

He was inspired to write: "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands . . . night after night they display knowledge" (Psalm 19:1-2, New International Version). David wrote so that others might learn the lesson, too.

They didn't.

And so, about 3,000 years later, another group of men looked out at the night. It was just before dawn on July 16, 1945, and these men were about to test the world's first atomic bomb, in the desert of New Mexico.

It worked.

In a split second, the world's first atomic weapon released the power of 20,000 tons of conventional explosive.

Three weeks later, a second bomb was exploded. But this was no test. It was dropped over the Japanese city of Hiroshima, and in a flash of heat and light, the city was destroyed and 100,000 people were killed or injured. Conquered and conquerors alike

were awed by the power of this terrible new weapon.

"My God, what have we done?" asked the copilot of the *Enola Gay*, the B-29 bomber that carried the bomb to Japan.

The power of the atom

What they had done was turn a small piece of uranium — about one gram, or a 30th of an ounce — into raw energy. Scientists had long suspected that it was possible. It took the urgency of war for them to discover how.

But when they did, even those who worked on the project were sobered by the implications of the power they could unleash. "I had gooseflesh all over me when I realized what this meant for the future of humanity," wrote one scientist.

U.S. President Harry Truman summed it up in a warning to the people of Japan the day after Hiroshima was destroyed. "It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power . . . if [the Japanese] do not now accept our terms of surrender, they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth."

President Truman was right. Man had indeed harnessed the power of the universe, the very force from which the sun draws its power.

The atom bomb that devas-

tated Hiroshima was a mere firecracker compared to the weapons of today. Now we measure their destructive power in megatons — one megaton is the equivalent of a 300-mile-long trainload of conventional explosives! But we have become so accustomed to such figures that they no longer impress us.

We should look again at the power of the atom. It is indeed the force by which mankind will bring himself to the edge of destruction. But there is also an encouraging and reassuring side to it. By splitting the atom, we learn — or could learn, if we were willing — a little more about the awesome power of God.

So let me give you a quick — and, I hope, not too hard to understand — physics lesson.

Before nuclear physics

For most of his approximately 6,000 years on earth, man has been surprisingly ignorant about the true nature of his surroundings. The ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece and Rome made some progress in science. But after the fifth century, man's knowledge hardly advanced for 1,000 years.

During the Dark Ages, science, magic and witchcraft were considered to be much the same thing. Such scientists as there were wasted their time trying to find the elixir of life or a way to

Illustration by Sid Bingham

turn lead into gold. They thought the earth was flat and that angels pushed the sun and stars around it. Superstition rather than science guided men's thinking.

Then, in the middle of the 16th century, knowledge began to expand rapidly again. Navigators discovered that they could sail around the world without falling off. Copernicus showed that the earth was not the center of the universe, but just another planet in orbit around the sun. Galileo's experiments in astronomy and physics challenged some ideas that had remained unchanged (and wrong) since the days of Aristotle.

The English scientist Sir Isaac Newton demonstrated how physical phenomena

could be measured and quantified. He made it possible for scientists to build on their discoveries, rather than conduct isolated experiments. Newton realized there was a system of law governing gravity, mass, force, acceleration and motion. This laid the groundwork for the advances that made our modern world possible.

For two centuries nobody seriously questioned the validity of Newton's laws. In the 18th and 19th centuries it was considered indisputable that physical matter (the elements) and energy (heat and light) were separate entities that could neither be created nor destroyed. The amount of matter and the amount of energy in the universe were presumed fixed.

Matter could change its form through chemical reaction. Energy could also change — heat into light, for example. But matter could not turn into energy or vice versa. Or so they thought.

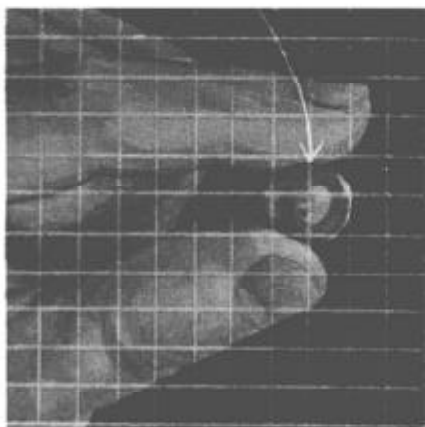
The theory of relativity

It was Albert Einstein who first understood that this was not

totally true. He put forward a theory that predicted that physical matter and energy were not separate — that they were, in a sense, interchangeable. Matter could be transformed into energy, and energy could be transformed into matter.

This "theory of relativity" rocked the scientific world. This article is no place to try to explain in detail these incredibly complicated ideas. But Dr. Einstein summed them up with the now

famous equation $E = mc^2$ (where $E =$ energy, $m =$ mass and $c =$ the speed of light, which is about 186,000 miles a second). What this means is that if you can



In the reaction that devastated Hiroshima, only about a 30th of an ounce of uranium was changed into energy. Think of the power locked into matter!

transform physical matter into energy, the amount of energy produced is equal to the mass of the matter times the speed of light multiplied by itself (i.e., $186,000 \times 186,000$).

You don't need to be a genius to realize that if this line of reasoning is true, even a small amount of matter can produce an astonishing amount of energy.

Splitting the atom

But how do you turn matter into energy? To do this, you would have to literally split the atom — or, to be specific, the

nucleus of the atom. And that is easier said than done.

Scientists had shown that the atom, once thought to be the smallest possible particle of matter, is composed of even smaller, subatomic particles — neutrons, protons and electrons among them. The protons and neutrons make up a central core or nucleus of an atom, while the electrons whirl around the nucleus rather like the planets orbit the sun, only much faster — billions of times in a millionth of a second. (The makeup of the atom is actually even more complex than this, but this will serve to make the point.)

These components of the atom each have an electrical charge — negative, positive or neutral. The electrons whirling around in orbit have a negative charge. The nucleus is made of neutrons, which have a neutral charge, and protons, which have a positive charge.

Think of these charges like the opposite poles of a magnet and you'll get the idea. If you have played with magnets, you've discovered that like poles repel each other, while opposite poles attract. It's the same with electrical charges.

So, since the nucleus of an atom is made up of neutral neutrons and positively charged protons, what stops the protons from repelling each other — or, in other words, why doesn't an atom's nucleus fly apart? (Again, think of it as trying to hold the like poles of two powerful magnets together. It takes a surprising amount of strength, and as soon as you let up, the magnets immediately push themselves away from each other.)

There must be a force that counteracts the repelling power of the protons and binds them together in the nucleus. Physicists call this the "strong force."

It is indeed so strong that, for centuries, nobody even suspected its existence. So firm was its grip on the core of the atom that no force available to man could even begin to persuade it to let go. Thus it was hardly surprising that

scientists thought the atom was the smallest possible division of matter.

In the 19th century it was discovered that some elements had a strange property. They gave off radiation — or, as we say now, were radioactive. Physicists realized that the atoms of these elements were slowly disintegrating. It happened very slowly — so slowly and unobtrusively that for thousands of years nobody even suspected it.

Strange, isn't it? For millennia, alchemists had wasted their time trying to turn one element into another, yet here it was happening naturally under their noses all the time. Uranium, for example, given enough time, will decay down to lead, a nonradioactive element.

Experiments showed that when one element is transformed into another, not *all* of it is changed. A *very small* percentage of matter is changed into energy.

But if Einstein was right and E really did equal mc^2 , that still meant a lot of energy would be released as an atom decayed. Just before the Second World War, scientists learned how to speed up the decay by splitting the atom with a nuclear reactor, releasing the power in the atom.

When a radioactive element decays in nature, a small amount of energy is produced. For example, one pound of radioactive uranium gives as much energy as is produced by 5,000 pounds of gasoline. But it needs a thousand million years to do it. In a nuclear reactor (or a nuclear bomb) the atom is literally split in two. Much greater amounts of energy are released, suddenly and violently.

In the reaction that caused the devastation at Hiroshima, only about 1/1000th of the uranium was transformed into energy — about a 30th of an ounce.

Think of the power that was locked into that speck of matter, when it was transformed into heat and radiation! And that was a very small bomb.

A hydrogen bomb is many times more powerful than an

atomic bomb. It takes an atomic explosion to produce enough energy to start the reaction.

But when the reaction does take place, it is with a flash of light brighter than the sun. Millions of degrees of heat are generated. That is why it is called a *thermonuclear* reaction. With the making of the hydrogen bomb, man has actually succeeded in duplicating the force that drives the sun.

The incredible sun

Look up at the sun. What you are seeing is a continuous chain of nuclear explosions in a reaction of unimaginable power.

The sun is actually a giant thermonuclear reactor. It is composed mainly of hydrogen that is gradually changing into helium. Deep inside the sun's core tre-

How can we even begin to comprehend the power God has available? But God has a great purpose for man. He is eager to share His power, but only if it is used properly.

mendous gravitational forces, 250 billion times those of earth, compress hydrogen atoms until the heat and pressure force a thermonuclear reaction to take place.

Energy released is thrust toward the surface, but the sun's great mass pulls it back. It may take up to 15 million years for the energy to jostle its way through to the surface and escape as heat and radiation.

Scientists estimate that nearly four million tons of hydrogen are transformed into energy every second in the nuclear holocaust on our sun. (Remember, it took

only a 30th of an ounce to destroy Hiroshima.)

And then stop and think about this: Our sun is only one star in our galaxy of 100 million stars. And there are probably 100 million other galaxies, each with another 100 million stars. That makes — oh, never mind. The point is that there is an almost inconceivable amount of power locked up in this awesome universe that surrounds us.

God made that universe by and out of His own power. "For He commanded and they were created," the Bible tells us (Psalm 148:5).

The power of God

How can we even begin to comprehend the power that God has available? How much energy had to be held together to forge the atoms of even the most commonplace and seemingly insignificant of God's creations — a sparrow, a spider or a leaf?

If *all* the energy compacted in a gram of matter could be released (it can't by any means now known to science), it would supply as much energy as Hoover Dam produces in about 18 and a half hours. Put another way, the matter in a 150-pound person, if converted completely to energy, would supply as much energy as Hoover Dam could produce in 144 years.

Yet God made giant stars 1,000 times the size of our sun!

Can we ever begin to appreciate just how great God is? No wonder He could never allow mortal man to see the full power that radiates from Him. Nothing made of flesh and blood could survive that experience.

But God has, through His creation, given us hints, mere suggestions, of the immensity of His power. "For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they [those who don't or won't believe in God] are without excuse," wrote Paul (Romans 1:20).

The physical things God has

made can teach us — if we have eyes to see. But, sad to say, many scientists today have rejected the very idea of God.

Never before have they known so much about the universe. Never before has there been more reason to believe in a Creator. Not so long ago, sailors were afraid to sail over the horizon for fear they would fall off the earth. Now we travel into space routinely, discovering, measuring, analyzing and quantifying. And every breakthrough leads inexorably toward one conclusion — that there must have been a time when all that we see began.

But that implies a Creator, and that is something that many scientists cannot — or will not — admit. And so they “became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened” (verse 21).

Perhaps if scientists had been willing to acknowledge the awesome power of God, they would never have dared tamper with those forces that bind the universe together.

In God’s hands, those forces are under control and are used only to do good. He has carefully regulated the inferno on the sun so that it makes life possible on earth.

But what has man done with nuclear power? Certainly there have been numerous peaceful industrial applications, although some argue that even these are hazardous. But our potential to split the atom is also lurking in the warheads of the weapons that will destroy all life if they ever are used.

Those weapons may be even more destructive than we dare think. President Truman threatened a “rain of ruin” on Japan. He didn’t know then that those relatively little bombs were paving the way for a possible nuclear winter that would eventually eliminate those who survived the initial blasts of nuclear bombs.

While the human heart is ruled by anger, lust and greed, it would be wiser to leave the “basic power of the universe” alone.

But it’s too late now. Once the

first atomic bomb went off successfully, the die was cast. A chain reaction began. The bombs got bigger, and Bible prophecy tells us that man will use the principle of $E = mc^2$ to batter the earth to the point where it can no longer sustain life.

Then, and only then, will the people of this world look out to the heavens and ask once again, “My God, what have we done?”

The lesson of Psalm 19

King David lived long before the days of nuclear power. He knew nothing of the theory of relativity or the splitting of atoms. But he did understand that there was a great Creator God. He also knew that God was to be respected and obeyed and worshiped.

When David saw the immensity of God’s power manifested in the universe, he was inspired and humbled. “When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained,” David marveled, “what is man that You are mindful of him?” (Psalm 8:3-4).

But David understood what man was, and why God was mindful of him. God has a great purpose for man. David realized that God was not selfish or power mad. He was eager to share His power, but only if it were used properly.

Before King David — or you and I — can share the great power of God, we must qualify. We saw at Hiroshima what even a small fragment of just one aspect of that power, wrongly used, can do. Before God shares all His power with us in the Kingdom of God, we must show Him that we will use it responsibly.

How do we show God this?

Let King David teach us, because although David sometimes let his mind soar in the magnificence of the universe, he kept his feet firmly on the ground. He continued in Psalm 19: “The law of God is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure . . . the statutes of the Lord are right . . . the

commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes . . . by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward” (Psalm 19:7-11).

David knew that God rules His Kingdom and regulates His power with the great law of love. Before humans can inherit that Kingdom, they must show that they will live in obedience to that law. Only then can God be sure that the great reserves of power will always be used for good and peaceful purposes.

So God watches us now, while we are still relatively powerless, to see how we live. He expects us to take seriously even the smallest details of His law, which is far more binding than even the strong force that holds the earth together, or the power that constrains the energy locked in the stars. “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away,” said Jesus Christ (Luke 21:33).

King David believed that. And so, when this righteous king looked into the heavens, he was filled with longing for the time when he could share that splendor as a born child of God. But he knew he had to qualify, and he knew he needed help. So he prayed, “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer” (Psalm 19:14).

God did help David. He gave him power — not the power of the atom, but the even greater power of the Holy Spirit. He began the greatest reaction process of all — the transformation of the very nature of David. One day, David will be resurrected in power and glory.

God will do the same for you. He will share His Spirit with you — just a little, for now. But you must use it properly — to overcome, to obey God’s law, to do good and serve others.

Then one day, you, too, will be welcomed by the great Creator God into His Kingdom, to live with Him in full brilliance and majesty and share His awesome power forever. □

PERSONAL

(Continued from page 1)

percent IN HARMONY. So must the CHURCH be!

Elohim is the divine FAMILY — only ONE family, and therefore ONE GOD!

When Jesus was born human, of the virgin Mary, He became the Son of God. He was "Immanuel" — God with us — God in mortal human flesh to make it possible for the rest of us humans to be born into the GOD Family!

In Genesis 1:26, *Elohim* said, "Let Us" — not let me — "make man in OUR IMAGE..." — in God's likeness as to form and shape, although man is made from the dust of the ground, mortal, and God is wholly SPIRIT, not matter or flesh.

So the eternal Father is GOD — a divine personage. And Jesus is a different person and is GOD! They are two separate and individual persons (Revelation 4:2, 5:1). The Father is divine supreme HEAD of the GOD FAMILY. He is the LAWGIVER, Christ is the administrator — He does the work by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Word or Spokesman — He speaks and it is done.

But when Jesus was begotten in the womb of the virgin Mary, He was NOT, as all other humans, begotten by a human father, but by GOD the divine Father, by the power of God's Spirit, which emanates from His very person. When Jesus became adult, He set us the example of praying to His FATHER in heaven. He had become the Son of God. And so we have the divine Family relationship — Father and Son. That is a FAMILY relationship!

But humans, if called by God the Father, made physically in the likeness of God, may receive the gift of God's Holy Spirit, thus being *begotten*, but not yet born of God. Though not yet *born* of God, we do become the begotten children of God (Romans 8:14-17).

The Church of God is the affianced Bride of Christ, to MAR-

RY Christ at His coming in glory, when the Church will be changed from physical mortal flesh to immortal SPIRIT.

The Church will, then, become the actual *born* INHERITORS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, the DIVINE Family!

The Kingdom of God will then become the GOD FAMILY, ruling the UNIVERSE!

Did you ever come to realize that this FAMILY relationship is given to no other beings God ever created, but to us as humans? Angels do not reproduce children, have no FAMILY relationship. Animals, birds, fish have no close and lifelong family relationship as do humans.

Satan is subtly DESTROYING the human FAMILY relationship. He is doing it through the women's liberation movement and through the new-morality attitude toward sex.

The number of men who have become perverted in their minds as homosexuals and the smaller number of women lesbians tend to reduce the number of families and to destroy a God-blessed family relationship. The divorce rate is also gradually tending to destroy the human family relationship.

Satan is doing everything in his power to destroy GOD's Church and GOD's way of life — the way of His law, His government!

And this world is heading at accelerating speed into the final CRISIS — the END of this evil world and the DAWN of a peaceful and happy WORLD TOMORROW, ruled by the Kingdom of God.

Then human mortals still living will be ruled by the Kingdom of God. Satan will be gone from earth.

And, in that happy WORLD TOMORROW, mortal humans, taught and ruled by the GOD FAMILY, will learn the joys and blessings of a healthy home-and-family relationship, with spiritual salvation and eternal life to look forward to.

Jesus taught us to pray: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10)! □

Overcomer

(Continued from page 3)

race — unless he were IN CONDITION when it came?

We can no more win these SPIRITUAL battles when out of SPIRITUAL training. All spiritual power and strength must come from God. We can drink it in from Him only when we are IN CONTACT with Him — close to Him — in communion with Him!

Otherwise, when the temptations suddenly assail you, no matter how hard you then try, or cry out to God for help, you are simply TOO FAR AWAY FROM HIM to get help!

Spiritual training, to get and KEEP in constant vigilant condition to meet the foe of temptation and sin, requires *continuous, earnest, persistent PRAYER!* That is why we are commanded to PRAY WITHOUT CEASING! TO KEEP IT UP!

Draw close to God

If we draw nigh to God, and then KEEP close to Him, our problem will be solved. We will then have the FAITH. We will then be FILLED with His Spirit — His power to overcome.

We can keep in spiritual training only if we keep our affections — our minds — our thoughts — on SPIRITUAL things.

Read Colossians 3:1-10. Most of us keep our minds filled with earthly, material cares, turning to the spiritual only occasionally! Seek FIRST the Kingdom of God and His RIGHTEOUSNESS!

Sometimes it takes a siege of FASTING AND PRAYER — earnest, *determined, persevering prayer* — *seeking* God with all our might — with weeping — staying with it, DETERMINED, until we get through. Then we must keep in CONTINUOUS prayer.

CAST ALL our cares upon HIM. We are not doing that. If we do, there will be many things each day to pray about! And it takes daily PRIVATE prayer, in real earnest, besides family prayer. Is eternal life WORTH IT? □

LETTERS

"How Your Financial Future Is Determined"

Please accept my very first tithe for your ministry of the Gospel. I've been receiving *The Good News* for a while now, and things I've never understood are clearing up for me.

Today I was very depressed over a cut in pay and demotion at work. I picked up the April *Good News* when I arrived home and turned to the first page. There staring me in the face was the "Personal From Herbert W. Armstrong" entitled "How Your Financial Future Is Determined." Upon reading this I truly realized why I haven't been getting anywhere financially. I've never tithed in my life, though I have thought on the subject. I'm just barely making it now, so you see I need all the help I can get.

I'm hoping the more I learn, the more I'll grow.

Reader
Shirley, Ind.

I just read "How Your Financial Future Is Determined." Fantastic! This was something I really needed. I have been unemployed for too long and I need to step out on faith and get a job.

Enclosed is an offering and tithe on the few dollars I made on the sale of some products, along with a commitment to get a job tomorrow or at least make a full-time job of getting a job, or turn my selling profession into a full-time job by going out and *doing it*.

I have got to be prudent and produce for my family and God's work. I have been on welfare and unemployment for too long now and blaming "back problems." The problems are real — but not real enough to keep me down unless I let them.

Mr. Armstrong said: "It is not *good* for a person to get something for nothing, or for very little effort. This evil human urge to GET without giving — to receive without paying — is the very thing in human nature that produces criminals."

I have got to stop getting something for nothing and start producing. As I said before, I commit to do this in writing as I send my first check for tithes and offerings of many more to come.

Reader
Windber, Pa.

"The Train's Done Gone"

I want to especially thank William J. Kessler for his article, "The Train's Done Gone." In this world today it is so easy to

be blinded and wake up to find yourself slowly slipping back into the way of this world. I thank you, Mr. Kessler, because this timely article shows us how we must stay on our toes, striving each and every day to qualify to enter God's Kingdom.

LeRoy F. Washington
Raleigh, N.C.

Lives being changed

I just came in contact with God's Church about eight months ago after a very radical and sinful 21 years. Through your publications, I have learned how bad I was. I found out why I was so miserable and unhappy. They also showed me why all the bad things always seemed to happen to me.

It was very hard, but I decided to give God's way a chance. It seemed like everything I did was wrong. I started out slowly, one or two things at a time.

First was the unclean meats. After I had stopped eating pork and rabbit, I was amazed at how well I made it through the worst part of winter. I had only one cold, which lasted about three days, whereas I'm usually sick most of the winter.

After that, I began tithing and keeping the Sabbath. I finally began to realize that it was true that you are blessed to the degree that you obey.

I am now attending Sabbath services at the local Worldwide Church of God congregation here. If it wasn't for your hard work and dedication, I'm not sure where I would be right now.

Reader
Louisiana

I thank God and you for *The Good News* coming to me and others each month. I was at a friend's house, and *The Plain Truth* was lying on a table. I picked it up and began to read. I have gained more knowledge in the three years since I've been studying *The Good News*, *The Plain Truth* and the Bible Correspondence Course than I did in the 33 years I went to church and heard the preacher preach a false gospel about Christ.

Martha Anderson
Gurdon, Ark.

I feel great pleasure in writing you this letter. May the eternal God be with you. I'm so thankful, I haven't words to thank you for the large amount of knowledge I've learned from you.

I ask myself: Who are you? What kind of church are you? Where do you come from? It doesn't matter — I've learned

many things about the way of God and His salvation. Glory be to the highest God.

Victor Húñez
San Cristóbal, Dominican Republic

In defense of fathers

I am a teenager. I know many think that we should be seen and not heard! I am also a girl. Many think that women should remain silent at all times! I believe that both of these beliefs are in error.

After reading Earl H. Williams' article, "Confessions of a Busy Father," in the January *Good News*, I pondered if I should write to the editor in defense of fathers.

Mr. Williams' daughter knew that her father truly loved her when he showed up at her big track meet. There are many ways a father shows his true love to his daughter. For my father to watch me run in track, or be inducted into the National Honor Society, or receive awards on Awards Day at school, he would have to allow half an hour driving time to get home, shower and change clothes, get to school for the event, go back home, put on his work clothes, drive half an hour back to work and then put up with an upset boss for taking off half a day's work!

A father must be considerate of his employer's viewpoint, especially if he wants his employer to be considerate of his viewpoint when it comes to days off for religious Holy Days.

My father shows me love by providing the comforts as well as the necessities of life, by talking to me as a mature person with a mature understanding in this realistic world.

Mr. Williams said that "Dad is the most important person in a teenage girl's life." I believe that both of my parents are equally important in my life, and that they each show they truly love me in equally different ways.

Karan Ka Witham
Mason, Ohio

Thanks for your well-taken comments, Karan. The point is that showing love for your family, however you do so, should take priority over other areas.

Correction: On page 17 of the June-July Good News, under the subhead "A new commandment," the first sentence should read, "We have now seen that each of the Ten Commandments is commanded in the New Testament."

Are You Preparing to Rule With Christ?

Jesus Christ will soon return as supreme ruler to establish the world-ruling Kingdom of God on earth. But what about you? Will you be one of Christ's assistants in the world tomorrow?

Are you preparing to rule with Christ?

Preparation to rule begins with repentance, baptism and the receipt of God's Holy Spirit. One then becomes a Spirit-begotten child of God — a true Christian. Then, as recent mini-studies have explained, one must overcome spiritually and grow in the character of God.

This growth is what prepares one to rule with Christ in the world tomorrow!

Let's begin to understand.

1. Even though Christ was the very Son of God, did He still have to learn obedience? Hebrews 5:8-9. Did Christ overcome? John 16:33. Did He resist the temptations of the flesh? Hebrews 4:15.

2. Because Christ overcame during His human life and was born again by a resurrection, where is He now seated? Revelation 3:21. Have all angels, authorities and powers been made subject to Him under His Father? I Peter 3:22, Ephesians 1:20-22, I Corinthians 15:27.

3. Just how great is the authority Christ has already inherited? Hebrews 1:1-2, Matthew 28:18.

Notice how the Moffatt translation renders the original Greek of Hebrews 1:2: "But in these days at the end he has spoken to us by a Son — a Son whom he appointed heir of the universe!"

4. Will Christ be the only inheritor and ruler of this earth and the vast universe? Or will there be co-rulers, joint heirs with him to share His great inheritance and responsibility? Romans 8:16-17, Revelation 21:7.

We, if we are true Christians, are heirs — joint heirs with Jesus Christ — destined to inherit and help rule everything God has created when we are born again at the resurrection as members of the Family of God!

5. What does the Bible say the resurrected saints will be doing in the Kingdom of God during the first thousand years of their eternal life? Revelation 2:26, 3:21, 5:10, 20:4, 6. Just

how important is overcoming to their being in God's Kingdom and ruling with Christ? Revelation 2:26, 3:21, 21:7.

The above scriptures clearly tell us that in the world tomorrow Spirit-born Christians will receive positions of rulership as kings and priests (teachers), administrators and assistants under Christ in the world-ruling Kingdom of God. These responsibilities are in addition to the gift of eternal life (Romans 6:23).

The Christian life today is one of overcoming, growing, preparing and developing spiritually for great service through rulership in tomorrow's world. All Spirit-begotten Christians are now in training for significant roles in helping Christ teach the world God's way and administer the government of God for the good of the humans who will then be living on earth. Let's understand further.

6. Will one's spiritual "works" in this life determine his reward — his opportunity for great service — in God's Kingdom? Matthew 16:27.

Through overcoming the sinful pulls and impulses of the flesh, the world and the devil, and instead submitting to God and God's way, spiritual character is being developed in God's begotten children. God, with their willing cooperation, is building His character within them. And the more they overcome and develop God's character, the greater the responsibility Christ will give them in His government. Thus the greater will be their reward.

But no one can overcome and produce spiritual works for us. It requires putting forth effort on our part, together with the help of God's Holy Spirit, to become the spiritually minded and motivated persons God can use in His Kingdom. Overcoming (ceasing from doing) the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21) involves letting Christ, by means of His Spirit, live in us to empower us to bear spiritual fruit — to perform spiritual works.

7. By what great principle can a person of ordinary ability and humble opportunity in this life qualify to take on far greater responsibility in the Kingdom of God? Luke 16:10. (Notice

also verses 11-12.) What will Christ say to those who have been faithful over the little that He entrusted to their care? Matthew 25:21.

We learn to rule by being faithful — conscientious — in whatever we do as we live by the principles and laws we learn from God's Word. Even the person who considers himself or herself as having only little ability and natural talent can qualify to rule — serve — in God's Kingdom.

Let's notice further the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. This parable illustrates that God will reward us according to our works. But it also illustrates another aspect — God's complete fairness in rewarding His overcomers, taking into consideration their own natural limitations.

8. In what way did the rich man, who represents Christ, divide up his goods? Matthew 25:15.

Notice that the quantities were not equal. The amounts were given according to each servant's natural ability. (The Greek word translated "talent" is *talanton*, which was a measure by which gold or silver was weighed.) These units of money picture spiritual gifts. God knows some have more hereditary ability, aptitudes, personality or physical strength than others. Some also have had more education and better opportunities.

9. In this parable, what did the servants do with the money given to them before Christ came back to settle accounts with them — to judge their works? Verses 16-19. How were the first two judged? Verses 20-23.

The servant who was given five talents doubled his spiritual stock-in-trade. Likewise, although the man with two produced less in number than the one with five, he also doubled what he started with. He did as well in proportion to his ability.

Notice how fair God is. Even though each servant was originally given an amount based on his natural abilities, both of the first two servants grew 100 percent. Christ therefore puts both essentially on an equal level in rewarding them. The Bible here reveals the principle that God will judge us according to how well we do with what we have to work with.

10. Does this parable reveal that each servant who is faithful "over a few things" — that is, over his or her limited abilities and opportunities of this life — will be rewarded with rulership over "many things" when Christ returns? Verses 21, 23.

Christ will not establish world rule until He has first trained His assistants. God will entrust the incomprehensibly great powers of His ruling Family only to those who, in this human life, obeyed Him and learned to properly control the

small powers we all have at our disposal. God wants to know that we will use His incredible power in love and self-control and for the good of all under our authority.

We prepare to responsibly rule for the good of ourselves and others in the world tomorrow by learning to better manage the affairs in our control today, no matter how small they may be. There are many chances to grow right on the job, at school or in the home — in whatever our circumstances.

11. Does the principle of Matthew 24:46-47 illustrate that it is only those who are faithful and overcome to the very end — those who are still growing in character at Christ's return (or at their death, if that comes first) — who shall inherit God's Kingdom and receive a reward?

12. Does II Peter 1:5-9 also show there is need for continual spiritual growth as long as a person lives? Do verses 10-11 show that those who don't continue to grow and overcome will not be born into God's Kingdom?

13. In what capacity is Christ now serving true Christians? Hebrews 4:14-16.

As the High Priest of all Spirit-begotten children of God, Jesus Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is always available to help us overcome. He takes special interest in our spiritual development, helping prepare us so we can eventually inherit all things with Him.

If we have been begotten by God's Holy Spirit and continue to overcome and grow spiritually, thus building the character of God until death or until the moment Jesus Christ returns, God will at the resurrection instantly change our weak, mortal bodies into powerful, sinless, glorified spirit bodies (Philippians 3:20-21).

It is then that we will be rewarded with stimulating responsibilities and opportunities to do great good serving in the world tomorrow as members of the ruling Family of God.

It's a breathtaking, exciting, incredible calling! A glorious, wonderful future! Have you begun to walk spiritually toward that goal?

Are you preparing to rule with Jesus Christ? □

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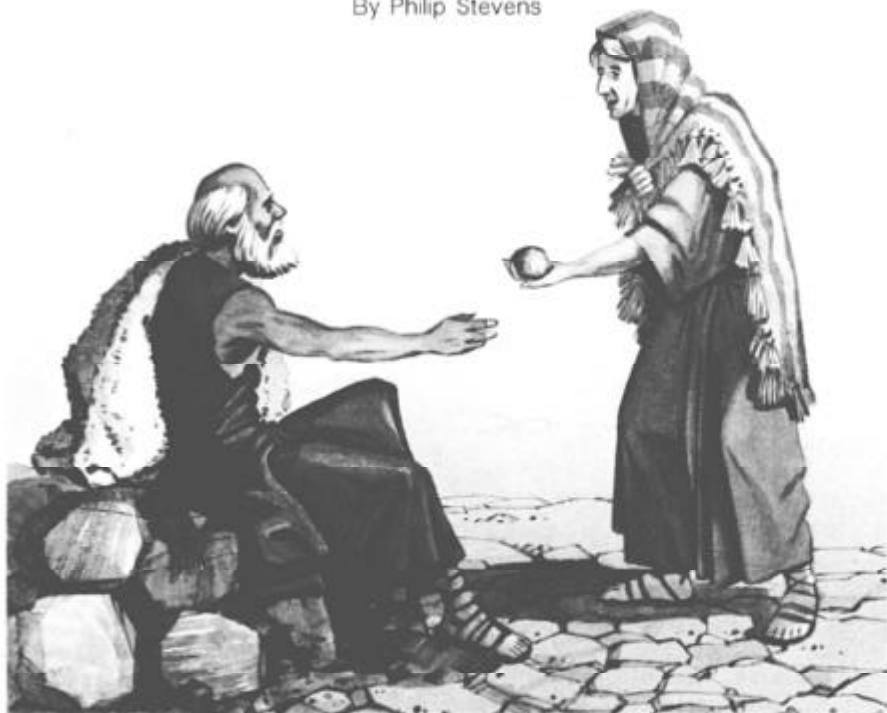
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Wanting the Best for Others

*We all need to be more concerned
with the needs of others than with ourselves.*

By Philip Stevens



Everywhere he looked there was dust. Elijah had followed God's instructions and was taking the trail to Zarephath. The effects of the devastating drought were widespread. Crops were failing and animal herds were gradually being killed off as the months of rainless skies took their toll.

Fortunately, there was still some precious water in the well at

Zarephath, and as the prophet stopped to rest, he asked a passing woman to fetch him a drink.

Then he made another request — one that, at first, seemed difficult for the woman — a widow — to fulfill. After all, the drought had caused a famine. Food was not readily available.

"And as she was going to get it [the water], he called to her and said, 'Please bring me a morsel of bread in your hand.' Then she said, 'As the Lord your God lives,

I do not have bread, only a handful of flour in a bin, and a little oil in a jar; and see, I am gathering a couple of sticks that I may go in and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it, and die' " (I Kings 17:11-12).

Here was a woman suffering from the very worst of the famine. Weak and exhausted, she just wanted to prepare one final treat for herself and her boy. Yet, as she was going about collecting for that last meal, here was a stranger asking for a share of the meager food.

But Elijah had some comforting — and surprising — words for the woman.

"And Elijah said to her, 'Do not fear: go and do as you have said, but make me a small cake from it first, and bring it to me; and afterward make some for yourself and your son. For thus says the Lord God of Israel: "The bin of flour shall not be used up, nor shall the jar of oil run dry, until the day the Lord sends rain on the earth" ' " (verses 13-14).

It would have been easy for the widow to tell Elijah that he was being unreasonable. She was facing certain death by starvation! Couldn't this traveler understand what it meant to watch a loved son wasting away before her eyes?

But the woman didn't react in this natural, carnal way. She had the faith to believe that this man resting against the side of the well was a servant of God. And because of that belief, she did as she had been asked.

The result? The jar of oil was maintained and the flour did not run out, just as Elijah had promised. And this little group did have enough to eat until the rains came again (verses 15-16).

The give way of life

This story only occupies a few short verses in the Bible, yet it is a striking example of God's way of living. This episode ranked high in the mind of Jesus Christ, for He used it as an example in Luke 4:26.

Of course, this story is a tremendous illustration of living by

Illustration by Ken Tavel

faith. But beyond that, it also serves to show just what is meant by living the *give* way of life. Only by putting the interests of others first can we have those things we ourselves need.

This attitude of sharing was missing from the mind of a rich man Christ talked of in a parable (Luke 12:16-21).

It seems this individual, a farmer, had experienced several successful harvests. His barns were full to bursting. He had more than enough for his own needs, not just for the moment, but also for the next several years. He felt he had it made.

Unfortunately, his good fortune blinded him to the plight of the poor in the society around him. So, instead of sharing his wealth with the needy, he planned to build bigger barns in which to store his produce, an action God called foolish: "You fool! This very night you will have to give up your life; then who will get all these things you have kept for yourself?" (Luke 12:20, Good News Bible).

Quite a contrast to the account of the hungry widow! Yet, sad to say, this farmer displayed a common trait.

It is easy to give in to the pull of the carnal mind that says: "My happiness is dependent on how much I have. Give me more money, position or goods, and then I'll be content." Yet the very things that are needful for us, including food, clothing and shelter, are promised to us by God — if we are willing to put the interests of others first.

"And do not seek what you should eat or what you should drink, nor have an anxious mind," said Jesus. "For all these things the nations of the world seek after [by putting self-interest foremost], and your Father knows that you need these things. But seek the kingdom of God [by living the way that considers others first], and all these things shall be added to you" (Luke 12:29-31).

A living law

The difference between the hungry widow at Zarephath and

the greedy farmer revolves around one basic law: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!" (Galatians 5:14-15).

This same law is expressed in I Corinthians 10:24 with the apostle Paul's words, "Let no one seek his own, but each one the other's well-being."

The purpose of this article is not to suggest that you go out and give away all of your money. God expects us to provide for our families, and that means, wherever possible, the provision of some kind of emergency fund for unforeseen eventualities, in addition to everyday necessities.

God does not expect us to impoverish ourselves unnecessarily. Christ came that we might have abundant life (John 10:10), and it is good to try to have the best we can afford — to try to create a positive, quality environment in every way possible — without devoting our hearts and energies to the pursuit of material wealth.

But if we see a need, whether a need for God's Church as a whole or something an individual requires, and we have the capacity to help, then it is our duty to do so. "But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?" (I John 3:17).

Of course, the ultimate solution to this world's poverty and other ills will not occur until Jesus Christ intervenes at His Second Coming to earth. Worldly charities and stopgap aid programs are for the most part ineffective. They treat symptoms rather than causes and thus fail to prevent food shortages and other such problems from recurring.

Sometimes the best way we can give to others is to pray fervently that God will step in to set up His government on earth as soon as possible.

Being concerned for the wel-

fare of others also involves giving words of encouragement to those who are depressed, or offering of help to the elderly or sick (Galatians 6:2, 9).

Of course, the greatest example of putting self-interest in second place was shown by Jesus Christ. If He had not been prepared to come to earth as a human and die for mankind, then none of us would have a future to look forward to. His was the ultimate act of giving consideration to others above oneself.

Whose interests do we serve?

So each of us must ask the question: Do we put our own interests first or, like the woman at the well, are we willing to put primary importance on service to others?

If the widow had refused Elijah's request, she would have eaten that last little cake and then died. As it was, she went ahead and helped the weary traveler, and lived.

What's more, she lived to see another major miracle — the restoration of her son to life (I Kings 17:17-24). She gave and as a consequence received more than she might have dared hope for.

Today, that same law is in operation.

As Christians we have three basic areas to overcome — Satan, the world and self. The key to fighting ourselves is to direct our thoughts toward the interests of others.

Instead of thinking, How can I get the best of this situation?, we must instead ask, How can I turn this situation into an advantage for the other person?

Human nature says, "Take from others, and I'll have more."

God's law states: "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38).

God's way is the only one that works, and it's guaranteed! □

Are You a Tourist in the Bible?

I remember the first time my wife and I visited Thailand. We went as tourists. We visited the glittering palaces and old temples, toured the canals of Bangkok and, for the first time, saw rice being planted.

It was a bit intimidating to



us — the heat, the crowds, the unfamiliar food — so we would often retreat to the predictable atmosphere of our hotel's coffee shop for a cold drink and a hamburger.

I've gone back to Thailand many times since then. I don't even feel like a tourist anymore. Thailand has become just another place to work and get things done. But you know, even though Thailand no longer seems mysterious, it has become even more fascinating and enjoyable. I'm always noticing more details —

things a tourist would never notice. Every time I visit Thailand, I find it more interesting.

The Bible is like that.

Most people who live in the Western world have "visited" the Bible occasionally. Maybe it was in Sunday school or church, or maybe they leafed through just to see what was in it.

Perhaps they recognized some of the "famous sights" — Daniel in the lion's den, David and Goliath and, of course, Jesus in the manger. They probably couldn't find them again without a guide, but at least they've been there.

But a quick visit usually convinces most people that they will never really understand the Bible, and they quickly retreat to more familiar territory.

Are you like that? If so, you need to come to know this book, which is God's inspired Word. You need to visit it again and again until you feel at home there, and

more important, so you can get some useful work done.

Don't be satisfied with a superficial tour. Here are some suggestions to help you make God's Word familiar territory.

Know your way around

Be able to find your way about without having to look at the map every five minutes (that's the sur-

est sign of a tourist). Most people know that the Bible is divided into different books. Determine to remember where those books are. A good way to practice getting around is to always look up the scripture references in *Good News* and *Plain Truth* articles.

But don't just look and hurry on. Tourists do that. Ask yourself some questions.

Why did David kill Goliath? Why was Daniel put in the lion's den? God says the prophets are examples for Christians today (James 5:10). Why? And why are Paul's epistles called Corinthians, Ephesians and Colossians?

If you know something about the background, the lessons contained in the books really start coming to life.

Use the Bible

God gave us the Bible to instruct us in how to live (II Timothy 3:16-17). So, as you face problems in life, go often to the Bible for advice and help.

One of the best ways to get to know a new place is to have a guided tour. Not just a superficial ride around on a bus, but a thorough tour with someone who knows the territory.

The Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course will take you on a carefully planned tour of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. You will discover the Bible's real message and how to apply it to your life today.

Thousands of students have found this course to be an interesting and reliable guide. And it is free! To enroll, mail the request envelope in this issue or write to our address nearest you. □





Peace treaty ceremony in Manila Bay. Japan's surrender brought World War II to an end. God demands unconditional surrender — the end of all our hostilities against Him. Photo courtesy O.F. Kraft II.

requires from us? Complete capitulation — the end of all our hostilities toward God's authority and His way of life — total release of all rights and claims to our former, self-serving ways — absolute acceptance of all God's terms.

However, instead of captivity and an uncertain future, which result from surrender in human wars, our surrender to God pro-

Unconditional Surrender!

Will God accept you and me "just as we are"? How, exactly, does God expect us to respond to His workings in our lives?

By Jerold W. Aust

On August 10, 1945, the surrender of Japan brought World War II to an end.

After an atomic bomb was dropped on each of the Japanese industrial cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan had had enough.

The nation sued for peace through the Swiss government, stating that the terms of the Potsdam ultimatum would be accepted if Japan's political structure could be preserved.

On August 11, the United States transmitted a reply stating: "From the moment of surrender the authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule

the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers, who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate the surrender terms."

On August 15, 1945, Emperor Hirohito of Japan made a dramatic broadcast, announcing the surrender to his people. It was unconditional surrender subject to the victor's dictates.

Unconditional surrender — a complete capitulation signaling the end of hostilities, a total release of all rights, claims and privileges. It was this type of surrender that concluded the greatest war in human history.

And it is exactly this type of surrender that God demands of true Christians!

Do you realize what God

duces unlimited short-term and long-term blessings!

Two kinds of captivity

Humanity grows up in spiritual captivity, under an insidious yoke of bondage to sin and the death penalty sin incurs (Romans 6:23, Galatians 5:1). Humanity, in a very real sense, is at war against God and God's way!

Humanity, though, does not know this, being blinded to its condition by Satan the devil, "who deceives the whole world" (Revelation 12:9).

We all grew up in captivity to the works of the flesh, expressing the nature of Satan (Galatians 5:19-21).

But God, according to His particular timetable, has guaranteed

release for humanity from subjugation, beginning with a very few people at this time (Romans 5:6, II Corinthians 6:2, Isaiah 49:8). And one of God's major conditions for deliverance from Satan is unconditional surrender to Him. We actually come into captivity to God.

We are to replace Satan's yoke of bondage with the easy "yoke" of Jesus Christ. God requires us to accept His way — the way that produces joy and every desirable blessing. God actually forces us to be happy. This "yoke" is indeed agreeable!

"Just as I am"?

Some will remember the old hymn that intones, "Just as I am, without one plea." The implication is that Jesus did it all, so there is nothing required from us.

What heinous lies Satan foists on a deceived mankind! There is much we must do (I John 2:3-6). Our walk with God requires daily, willing obedience to His life-giving laws.

Rebellion or reluctance to wholeheartedly follow God is contrary to the submission required of us (I Samuel 15:23). God commands that we expunge the wrong ways of this world — those ways contrary to God's laws — the ways that produce death — from our thoughts and actions (II Corinthians 6:14-18).

The first steps

Jesus clearly explained to His disciples that it was His Father's sole prerogative to reveal Himself to whomsoever He will (John 6:44). And God is only revealing Himself to a small group at this time.

We — you and I — did not "find" the only true God (Ecclesiastes 3:11). God found us!

Within this context of our Father drawing us to Him, we heard God's call through His modern-day work through Herbert W. Armstrong, either by way of radio, television or the printed word.

Further, we began to respond to the instruction to obey such

basic commands of God as observing the Sabbath and the annual Holy Days, eating clean meats and keeping all 10 of God's basic commandments (Ephesians 2:10, Matthew 19:17).

However, this does not mean we immediately or automatically come into complete accord with our patient and merciful Maker. To accomplish this requires experience and time — a total commitment to His laws, His principles and His ways and a desire to inculcate His will, His thoughts and conduct.

This is all part of how we come to unconditionally surrender to our mighty Majesty on high!

Is any choice involved?

However, would God expect you and me to do all this unthinkingly, as automatons, without minds of our own?

No! After we are called by God and start to follow His way, we must continue throughout life to choose to follow Him, to do exactly as His Word dictates.

Remember, we have no choice *what* we obey — that is preserved in the Word of God, with Christ as the example of how to live the perfect way (John 12:49). Our choice is *whether* we obey God's dictates. Don't be deceived!

And, as Mr. Armstrong has pointed out, the Bible does not contain a "Thou shalt" or a "Thou shalt not" for every single area of life in which we might find ourselves. It is in these areas that we learn how to apply the spirit of God's law — the *give* way — to obey God and continue developing His character.

Satan would have you and me think that God is unfair not to let us find out for ourselves which is the right or wrong way to go. But God's laws keep us on the right path, off the "way which seems right" but ends only in death (Proverbs 14:12, 16:25).

Unconditional surrender — the benefits

God's holy laws are designed to bless those obedient to them (Deuteronomy 30:19-20, Psalm 119:143, 165). We have grown up

in Satan's world (II Corinthians 4:4), held captive by the lusts of our flesh (Ephesians 2:1-3). But God, through Jesus Christ's sacrifice, liberates us from our death-dealing sins (John 8:31-32, James 1:25). He gives us His Holy Spirit — His own mind and power — so that we can live His way and reap the benefits.

God has given us several forms of encouragement to inspire us to unconditional surrender — spiritual atomic bombs, if you will.

Two most positive ones include the blessings in this physical life that come from obeying God's laws (and that precede the gift of eternal, spirit life), and the positive example of Jesus Christ Himself, who never sinned.

There is also a persuasive element that discourages us from reverting to our former ways: the prophesied lake of fire that one day will engulf this earth and purge it of anything left that opposes God (II Peter 3:7, 10).

In that lake of fire the incorrigible — those who once knew the truth but discarded it, severing themselves from God by rejecting His Holy Spirit, in effect again declaring war against God — will be blotted out of existence (Hebrews 6:4-8, Revelation 20:14-15, Hebrews 10:27).

God's great desire is to have us live forever. His gift of eternal life, however, demands the surrender of our wills to His. We must place God ahead of everything else (Luke 14:26).

For those who would enjoy favor with God now, who would be under His protection in the evil days ahead and eventually would experience life eternal, unconditional surrender to our great, loving and merciful God is the only answer:

"Whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple" (Luke 14:33).

"And they [true Christians] overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death" (Revelation 12:11).

That epitomizes unconditional surrender! □

PROVE ALL THINGS

What It Means to Be Converted

“Unless you are converted . . .” said Jesus Christ in Matthew 18:3, “you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.”

Clear words, those. And vital ones, too.

This plain and simple statement should rivet our attention. It literally demands that we find out what Jesus Christ meant — what it means to be converted! For unless we know what true conversion is, and further, unless we become converted, we will have no place in the Kingdom of God, and our hope is lost. This is what Christ our Savior said.

The basic doctrine

Conversion is the changing of our minds and actions from the carnal way of the natural man to the spiritual way of thinking and acting of God Himself.

It includes changing, or converting, us from the physico-chemical state of mere existence in which we now find ourselves to the immortal, glorified life that God Himself enjoys. It begins at baptism with the receipt of the Holy Spirit, continues throughout life with the spiritual growth of the individual and culminates at the resurrection when one is born into God's Kingdom as a new creature — a spirit-composed member of God's Family.

The usual teachings of this world

The religious teachers of this world have not fully understood this vital process. They have instead attached a meaning to the word *conversion* far diluted from

the pure truth of the Bible. Commonly the term is used to mean the simple change one makes when he embraces a new faith or denomination. Hence one who changes his beliefs, as it were, from, say, Judaism to Christianity (of whatever denomination) is said to “convert.”

But this is not the true substance and meaning of conversion as explained in God's holy Word. To the contrary, Christ's statement cited above (that unless they were converted they would not enter the Kingdom of God) was made to ones already labeled by the Bible as “disciples.” Certainly such ones would already be professing a belief in Jesus and hence be already “converted” in the sense most often meant by this world.

Further, Christ told Peter — yes, the *apostle* Peter — “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren” (Luke 22:32, Authorized Version). Clearly, even the apostles, although in every way expressing their profound belief in Jesus, were not, during Jesus' life, even themselves yet converted.

Just what, then, is true conver-

sion? To begin, we need look no further than the plain and simple meaning of the word *conversion* itself as we might use it in any other, nonreligious context.

The Bible teaching

To convert something means to change it from one purpose or form or use to another one. This is not hard to understand when applied to the physical world and context, such as in the case of the conversion of a farm into a real estate subdivision for homes. The use and purpose of the land has been changed from one thing into something different.

Likewise, when one is converted, or goes through conversion, he or she is changed from one thing — one type of creature — into another totally different type of person. This conversion is not merely a change in profession of faith (although that is included), or of some merely outward form, but is a total and inward change.

Of course, to change a person means to change his or her mind — that is, the way one thinks — for a person is his or her mind. Proverbs 23:7 says, “As he thinks . . . so is he.” One's mind is the core of one's personality, character and thought. To change a person you do not simply change the hairstyle or wardrobe. To change the person you change his or her mind (Romans 12:2).

The key to understanding conversion is to understand that there are two possible types of minds that a person can possess (with God's help, in the case of one of them). There is the carnal



mind, and there is the spiritual mind.

The carnal or fleshly mind (the word *carnal* literally means "fleshly") is the natural mind that a person has apart from God and influenced by this world. It is not the mind of a mere animal, but the superior mind of a human, and consists of the brain and the spirit in man (this spirit in man should not be confused with the pagan concept of the "immortal soul").

Paul wrote of this carnal mind when he asked, "What man knows the things of a man except [by] the spirit of the man which is in him?" (I Corinthians 2:11).

But this mind, although it is the mind that occurs naturally and normally within a man, is insufficient for salvation. Paul goes on to explain, in part, why: "The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2:14).

So one reason why the carnal mind is not sufficient is that it cannot discern spiritual things, and indeed such spiritual things seem like foolishness to it.

But Paul in another place proclaims the need to convert the carnal mind to the spiritual mind in even stronger terms: "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh [those who have a carnal mind] cannot please God" (Romans 8:6-8).

This, then, is the reason Christ said if we are not converted we cannot enter the Kingdom of God. The carnal, unconverted mind cannot know the things of God, cannot obey God, cannot please God. It is therefore cut off from God. "To be carnally minded is death" (verse 6)! But

the spiritual mind, on the other hand, is different from the carnal mind. It has an additional component — the Holy Spirit of God.

Indeed, this is what Paul says next: "But you are not in the flesh [you do not have a mere carnal mind] but in the Spirit [you have a spiritual mind] if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His" (verse 9).

Yes, to have a spiritual mind and be converted — to even *be* a Christian in God's eyes — you must have a spiritual mind. And that only comes from having God's Spirit dwelling within you (I Corinthians 2:11-12).

Acts 2:38 tells us how we may receive that converting Holy Spirit of God. Upon repentance, we can be baptized, and after the laying on of hands, which follows baptism, we will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit — the Holy Spirit that gives us a spiritual mind and converts us to creatures God can use. Therefore, to become converted, we must repent and be baptized. There is no other way.

But even here, some have misunderstood. They think that once a person has received God's Spirit, conversion is total and complete, and that the person cannot or will not sin at all — ever. Such is not the case. Conversion is a process, and is likened in the Bible to the process of a baby's gestation and birth.

In both cases, the newly conceived person — be it a physical child or a spiritual child of God — must grow and develop over time before birth. Spiritually, Paul talks about this growth process in many places, including Romans 7.

Read all of Romans 7 and see how Paul describes the struggle he had to endure while the still-remaining carnal component of his nature struggled against the Spirit of God dwelling within

him. In the case of a physical child, in time it will be born as a separate person able to live on its own. Likewise, a spiritual convert must change and grow until the resurrection, when he or she will be literally "born again" (John 3:3-6) — this time of the Spirit — and will enter God's Family as a spirit being.

At that time the conversion from physical to spiritual will be complete, and our carnal, fleshly mortality will be displaced and "swallowed up by life" (II Corinthians 5:4).

We will be quite literally a new creature!

Truly, to see the Kingdom of God, we must indeed be converted — in mind and, eventually, in body as well.

Key verses

The process of conversion is so important that it is helpful to remember, and perhaps mark in one's Bible, key verses describing this process. Here are some of them: Matthew 18:3 — we must be converted or we will not enter God's Kingdom. Luke 22:32 — conversion is not merely belief, because even Peter, though he believed, was told he had yet to be converted. Romans 12:2 — conversion involves a change in our mind. I Corinthians 2:9-14 — the carnal mind does not understand spiritual things — only the spiritual mind does. Romans 8:5-9 — the carnal mind is not sufficient for salvation, and the indwelling of God's Spirit is the source of the spiritual mind. Acts 2:38 — the Spirit of God is given to those who repent and are properly baptized.

"Unless you are converted . . ." proclaimed Jesus, "you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." But with proper baptism and the consequent receipt of God's Holy Spirit, we can become a new creature (II Corinthians 5:17) — converted — with the hope of eternal glory! □

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