

# Sigmas

OF THE  
TIMES

DECEMBER  
1966 50c

GREATEST GIFT OF ALL

Sanford T. Whitman







## BABE DIVINE

by Helen Rogers Smith

*Eternal Babe of Bethlehem,  
Thou long-awaited One,  
We gaze on Thee in wondering awe,  
Thou fairest earthborn Son;  
Beholding in Thy manger-bed  
A holy mystery,  
As lowly beasts the radiance share  
At Thy nativity.*

*The glory of our Father-God  
Shines in Thy infant face;  
And in Thy life the promise lies  
Of His redeeming grace.  
God's love for us is now revealed,  
As angels sing Thy birth;  
And we, with all of heaven, rejoice  
Amid the strife of earth.*

*O Babe divine! What hope and joy  
Thy presence here imparts;  
For Thou hast brought to earth Thy peace  
To dwell within our hearts.*



## In This Issue...

Once more as Yuletide returns, Mary J. Vine brings us her Christmas message, telling what the Bethlehem story should mean to us all today. See "Christmas Comfort," on page 8.

Some months after the conclusion of Vatican II, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish leaders met at Notre Dame University for a "theological dialogue" and re-assessment of the accomplishments of the historic gathering in Rome. A report by Daniel Walther, "Aftermath of Vatican II," appears on page 12.

On page 14 Spencer G. C. Maxwell brings to a conclusion his series on "Heralds of His Coming," his final article dealing with the "loud cry" which will echo and reecho round the world in the days immediately preceding Christ's return.

Most of the news coming out of Vietnam today has to do with bombing, ambushes, terrorism, and all the ugly accompaniments of war. But there is another side to the story, as told by Daniel R. Guild on page 18. In "New View of Vietnam" he tells how Seventh-day Adventists, despite incredible difficulties, are continuing to bring the gospel of Christ to this war-torn land.

What happens when a church abandons God and substitutes secular activities for evangelism? Dr. Norval F. Pease suggests that it leads to the spiritual wilderness in which so many are wandering today. See his challenging article on page 21.

One of the finest addresses at the world conference of Seventh-day Adventists this past summer was delivered by George Romney, governor of Michigan. "What America Needs Most Today" was the burden of his message, a brief report of which will be found on page 24.

Looking forward to our next issue, we are reminded that it will be the beginning of yet another volume of the *Signs of the Times*, first published in 1874. Among the choice contents will be the following: "Time Ticks On," by T. R. Torkelson; "Billy Graham and His Critics," by W. L. Emmerson; "The Mercy Doctors," by William L. Roper; "Prophetic History of the World," by Raymond H. Libby; "Religious Liberty in the Catholic Church," by B. B. Beach; "Uncaptured Glory," by Carol Stuyvesant; and "Wonderful Good News," by the editor.

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# SIGNS

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A Magazine of Christian Living, Presenting  
 the Bible as the Word of God and Jesus  
 Christ as Man's Redeemer and Coming King

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# OUR WORLD TODAY



## Protein for Billions

Loma Linda University's Dr. U. D. Register, associate professor of biochemistry in the School of Medicine, and Dr. Merritt C. Horning, of the Lassen Foundation, reported to the International Congress of Nutrition in Hamburg, Germany, on studies by Adventist researchers of the comparative merits of meat and vegetarian diets over a fifteen-year period. "If the population explosion continues at its present rate," Dr. Register noted, "by the year 2050 the majority of the 16,000,000,000 people on the earth will have to eat a diet coming mainly from vegetable sources." Using nitrogen-balance studies, investigators found that three groups of students fed pure vegetarian, lactovegetarian, and non vegetarian diets received equally adequate protein. Also, there was no apparent difference in the digestibility of the three diets.

## "Bible Without Sneers"

A new book of Bible stories was recently placed on sale in Moscow and immediately became a sensation. For the first time since the Russian revolution, Muscovites were able to read what Western observers described as a "Bible without sneers." The book, a collection of Old Testament stories as told by a Pole, Zenon Kosibovsky, is written in simple prose style. It was published by Politizdat, the state political publishing house. Queues formed outside bookstores and all the 100,000 copies were sold within a few minutes.

## Dentists in the Desert

The first dental-care program for Utah Monument Valley's 10,000 Paiute and Navajo Indians was begun in October by Loma Linda University School of Dentistry professors and students under the direction of Kenneth E. Wical, D.D.S. The clinic director is assisted by two senior dental students and one senior student of dental hygiene who serve on a three-month rotating basis, three resident dental assistants, and a secretary-receptionist. Two Navajo girls

have already completed training as dental assistants at Loma Linda University and are serving full time at the clinic. Monument Valley Mission Hospital, established in 1950, now provides thirty hospital beds with two resident physicians.

## Growth of Lutheran Membership

Membership in North American Lutheran churches increased by nearly 100,000 during 1965, bringing the total to 9,098,792, the National Lutheran Council recently reported. An annual report issued by Helen M. Knubel, the NLC's secretary for research and statistics, listed 8,799,425 Lutherans in the United States and 299,367 in affiliated groups in Canada at the end of 1965. The ten Lutheran churches comprise the third largest denominational grouping in American Protestantism, after Baptists and Methodists.

## Catholicism's Married Deacons

Nine Brazilians are pursuing a new twenty-five-month training program to prepare them for ordination as married deacons in the Roman Catholic Church. The bishops of Brazil and Chile were the first to ask Rome for approval to begin such a program last winter. Only married men are accepted. Others are recommended for the priesthood. The future deacons must be elected by their respective communities. Their duties will be "to administer baptism solemnly, to be custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist, to assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church, to bring Viaticum to the dying, to read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful, to administer sacramentals, to officiate at funeral and burial services."

## Closing In on Crime

A new system giving law enforcement agencies immediate access to information which will help them apprehend law violators will begin operating in January, 1967. The nucleus of this system, known as the National Crime Information Center, will be the computers of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Washington, D.C. Police agencies of cities and states throughout the nation will be connected to the system, and this immense amount of information will be available to any member. Initially, data on stolen autos, stolen property, and wanted persons will be available. Other information will be added as the system develops. Police agencies with inquiries will contact the highway patrol of their state. If the information is not available in the patrol's records, the query will be relayed directly to the FBI in Washington. The entire process will take only a few seconds.

## Soaring Automobile Death Rate

In the United States the motor vehicle accident death rate has increased each year since 1961, from 20.8 per 100,000 population to 24.5 in 1964, a jump of 18 percent in three years. Canada recorded a 22 percent increase in four years, from 20.7 per 100,000 in 1960 to 25.3 in 1964. Finland and Italy registered increases of about 40 percent between 1959 and 1963. Austria reported a death rate of 27.3 per 100,000 in 1964, the highest among twenty countries studied by Metropolitan Life Insurance Company.



# THE FLIGHT OF TIME



UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

"Walking truck," being built by General Electric Research and Development Center, stands on six-foot legs and can transport a quarter-ton load over extremely rugged terrain that is impassable to other vehicles. The operator of the vehicle can maneuver it in any direction.



UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

Newly installed sonar dome bulging from the bow of U.S. Navy destroyer "Willis A. Lee" protects sensitive submarine-seeking sonar equipment below the waterline. The nine-ton dome, ten feet high and twenty feet long, is the largest product ever molded from rubber.

## THIRTY YEARS LATER

Christmas is a time of memories, when reminiscences, at least around the Yuletide log, are not only condoned but encouraged.

Consequently, unabashed, we note that with this December issue we complete thirty volumes of the *Signs*. Together with twenty-one volumes of the *British Present Truth*, this totals fifty-one years of editing, a veritable lifetime of deadlines.

In 1936, as we made our way to California and the Pacific Press Publishing Association, Hitler was at the height of his power in Germany, Mussolini was strutting about Italy trying to rebuild the Roman Empire, the League of Nations was at death's door, and President Roosevelt was still trying to pull the United States out of the Great Depression.

We found the *Signs* a sixteen-page black-and-white weekly—with occasional touches of color—and a circulation of 70,000.

What changes the years have wrought! World War II not only killed millions of people and destroyed billions of dollars' worth of property, it wiped out whole cities, nations, and empires and changed the face of the world.

Amid all the turmoil and terror, followed by the costly and confusing aftermath of reconstruction, the *Signs* continued its witness, growing in circulation from year to year.

One by one great world figures passed away. Roosevelt, Stalin, Churchill, and many others, having made their mark on history, went to their rest.

These three decades have seen five occupants of the White House—Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson—and three of the throne of England—King Edward VIII, King George VI, and Queen Elizabeth II. They have seen even more frequent changes of leadership in South American countries and in the scores of new nations that have risen from the ruins of an obsolete colonialism.

Through all the hubbub of elections, revolutions, and military coups the *Signs* has continued quietly on its way, constantly growing in influence and reaching into more and more countries from year to year. The printing order for the November issue this year was in excess of 300,000 copies, and the number of countries into which the journal goes is now over eighty.

All down the years we have emphasized one motto above all others: "Only the best is good enough for the *Signs*." This has applied not only to articles, poems, and pictures, but to copy editing, proofreading, layout, printing—indeed, to all the many processes that go into the production of a fine journal. And if the *Signs* today is recognized everywhere as one of the most beautiful of Christian periodicals, it is



because a spirit of personal concern and devotion permeates every member of the staff. Everyone who has part in its production feels that his touch must be his best. And for this devotion and loyalty we shall be forever grateful.

But no one recognizes more than we do that the success of a journal depends not only upon those who produce it but also, perhaps to an even greater degree, upon those who circulate it. Consequently we seize this opportunity to express anew our warmest thanks to pastors and directors of lay activities in hundreds of churches the world around for their never-flagging support of the *Signs*.

To our readers also we send the season's greetings—to those who have stayed with us all thirty years, or twenty, and to those who began to read the *Signs* for the first time in 1966. To one and all we say, "God bless you; today and through the years to come!"

Whatever changes the future may hold, the *Signs* will continue its ministry, never missing an issue, and growing more potent in its content, more delightful in its appearance, more widespread in its circulation, until its task is finished and the returning Lord shall say, "Well done!"

A. S. M.

## THESE INCREDIBLE TIMES

Well do we remember the day when the London *Daily Mail* offered £10,000—worth \$50,000 in those days—to anyone who would fly the English Channel, a distance of twenty-one miles!

When Bleriot won the prize in 1909, all the world was stirred, but no one in his wildest dreams thought the day would dawn when planes carrying over 200 passengers would crisscross the continents at more than 600 miles an hour. Nor did it occur to us then that we would live to see giant rockets soaring into space, en route to the moon.

We still recall the thrill of hearing a voice coming through a primitive crystal set. That was in 1920. Nobody imagined then that forty years later everybody would own a radio and almost every home would possess a television set. Nor did anyone dream that the day would come when the voices of astronauts, hundreds of miles above the earth, would be heard instantaneously by millions.

Some of the accomplishments of modern science are so marvelous that it is hard to believe they are really happening. These are indeed incredible times when the prophecy of Daniel 12:4 is being fulfilled in totally unexpected ways.

Growing up as a boy, we thought in terms of the British Empire, the French Empire, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the German Empire. If anyone had told us in 1914 that all these empires would pass away in our lifetime, we would have denied it hotly as absurd.

Yet the unbelievable has happened. All these great empires have either disappeared or been greatly diminished. In their place have arisen scores of new nations, large and small, weak and strong, each with its own flag, monetary system, and national pride. Only now, in the face of these incredible happenings, can we understand the prophecy of Joel 3:10-12, which long ago foretold the awakening of all nations in the hour of judgment.

In 1926—just forty years ago—we wrote a book entitled *Protestantism Imperilled*. It was very Protestant and not too friendly to Catholics. But in that far-off day we

didn't know about the changes that were coming. Nor did anybody else. True, the man who was to become Pope John was alive at the time, but nobody dreamed that this unknown priest would one day open the windows of this medieval organization and let the winds of change sweep out a vast accumulation of spiritual cobwebs. We thought then that Revelation 13:3 meant that the pope would rule again someday like his tyrannical predecessors of the Middle Ages. But we had misread the Greek. The passage should be translated, as in the New English Bible, "The whole world went after the beast in *wondering admiration*." Admiration, not fear. Nobody fears the pope today. Instead he is the most respected religious leader in the world. Protestants and Catholics alike speak well of him. Again, the incredible has happened.

Ever since Vatican II the Catholic Church has been in ferment, with bishops, priests, nuns, and seminarians asking more questions than have been raised in a thousand years. The great decree on religious liberty has been understood as setting everybody free to think and act as he pleases, resulting in a "crisis in obedience" all through this vast organization. Thus while many Protestants are becoming Catholics, many Catholics are seeking spiritual satisfaction outside their own organization in the biggest religious mix-up of the centuries. It is incredible but true, giving rise to the conviction that God is at work, pleading with all men everywhere to make their decision for truth and righteousness in the closing years of time.

There was a time when we wrote about Catholics burning the Bible—and there was good evidence of it in those days. But we wouldn't write that way now. It never occurred to us then that the Catholic Church would become—next to Seventh-day Adventists—one of the greatest champions of the Bible in the world. We never thought that while Protestant leaders would reject the Bible as a compilation of myths and legends, the Catholic hierarchy would officially declare the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God to be read with diligence and reverence in every Catholic home. This, too, is incredible, but it is true. And because it has happened, because millions of godly Catholics are reading the Bible for the first time with the blessing of their spiritual leaders, we may expect a religious upheaval of the first order to occur in the near future—a sign of the times which none will be able to ignore.

These amazing developments, which no one clearly foresaw twenty years ago, let alone half a century, reveal that we are living in history's crowning hour. In every phase of life, political, social, and religious, events are moving toward the long-predicted climax. Beyond all question Christ is about to return to this earth in power and glory.

Through the prophet Habakkuk God said to His people: "Behold, . . . and wonder marvelously: for I will work a work in your days, which ye will not believe, though it be told you." Chapter 1:5.

God did so. The incredible happened.

Today He is in action again, performing works so marvelous that many will not believe them, or their import. Today we can see the "fearful sights and great signs" which He predicted as omens of the final events in the drama of life on this planet. Luke 21:11.

A. S. M.



# TIME'S

Throughout history there have been many turning points when man's destiny has hung in the balance, such as the discovery of the New World and the release of atomic power. From the discovery of fire to the ignition of a space rocket man has stumbled from one breathtaking development to another. From the Tower of Babel to the holocaust of Hiroshima he has fought his way from disaster to disaster.

One event awaits mankind before which all others pale. It is time's momentous climax—the crowning event toward which all history moves. As a result of it the world will be drastically changed in nature and appearance.

Here is how Holy Scripture describes this event: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." 2 Peter 3:10.

Reentry by Jesus Christ will not only take the world by surprise but will also be visible to its entire population. "For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27. "Every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7.

To some this may seem a physical impossibility; but, remembering that one satellite, strategically placed, can feed signals to almost half the earth—and three can give global coverage, no problem remains. If man, with his limited knowledge of natural law, can accomplish so much, what cannot the Creator Himself do?

Christ's return will be a glorious event which will shatter the skies with its majesty and power. Everyone alive will see Him come. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels." 2 Thessalonians 1:7. "All the tribes of the earth . . . shall see the Son of man coming

by Walter R. L. Scragg

# MOMENTOUS CLIMAX

in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." Matthew 24:30.

Why is He coming again? In His promise to return Jesus stated, "I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:3. Resurrection is the purpose of His coming; reunion its result. As King of kings, He will look for those who have been His faithful servants. He will find them whether they have been locked in the prison house of death for years or for centuries. He will call them to life again. Whether dead or alive, all God's children will respond to His voice.

Not everybody will respond. For millions it will be a day of terror, for He will come "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1:8, 9. Thus there will be deliverance for one group and damnation for another. This is what Jesus had in mind when He said that one would be taken and another left. God opens wide the door of mercy; He pleads for all to enter; but one day the door will be shut, the pleading over.

Thus it will be in time's crowning moment. Great brilliance will flood the eastern sky. Fears of interstellar invaders or atomic warfare will fill imaginative minds. Soon it will become clear that nothing of the sort could fit such blinding glory. Faint memories of forgotten scriptures and half-remembered truths will stir in unnumbered minds, while multitudes will rejoice as they recognize the fulfillment of their fondest expectations.

From a cloud of dazzling radiance angels will dart like jets of fire to the far corners of the earth to gather God's chosen children to the footstool of their King. Meanwhile those who have spurned the name of Christ will seek to hide from His presence, but the blazing light of His presence will be more than they can bear. Quickly all will be over. Earth will sink into a millennium of rest while the redeemed journey to the dwelling of their King.

What a day that will be! No wonder the apostle Peter said, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." 2 Peter 3:11, 12. [END]



PROVONSHA, ARTIST, © P.P.P.A.

*The Crowning Event Toward Which All History Moves*



*What the Bethlehem Story  
May Mean for You Today*

# Christmas Comfort



REVIEW PICTURES

by Mary J. Vine

Many people need comfort today. Maybe you do.

Like the young woman up the street whose husband has just died, leaving her with three little ones.

Like two dear old ladies of my acquaintance, the last of their family, often given to wondering, and worrying, as to which will go first.

Like Martha, heartsick and weary, her marriage seemingly shattered beyond repair.

Like the little woman in the bungalow on the corner who asks, "What is my boy doing tonight?" The poor soul is a prey to torment and anxiety.

Like Jane, waiting pathetically for Peter and his paycheck, but with slim hopes. He must pass the "Blue Boar" between the factory and his front gate, and he can't resist the temptation. It's but a poor percentage of his pay that Jane ever sees.

Like Peter himself, knowing what he should be, knowing what he could be, and in his better moments regretting what he is and wishing miserably that he could give up the wasteful habit.

Indeed, none of us is exempt from some kind of worry. We are all in need of encouragement.

For which reason we can rejoice exceedingly this Christmastime; for if there is one story above all others that is charged with encouragement, it is that of our Saviour's birth when He whose name is "Wonderful, Counselor, The

Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" left the realms of glory and lay helpless, a Babe in mother Mary's arms, His court the creatures of the stable, His cot their crude manger.

Have you read it lately, that story? Read it, I mean, for yourself, for your own help and refreshment? If you have, read it again. If you have not, make sure that you do, at least once during these Christmas hours of leisure. Let nothing—nothing at all—rob you of the blessing therein enfolded for you.

Right there in the center of it you will find the comforting words especially appropriate for you.

For you, whoever you are, borne down under a load of doubt and uncertainty.

For you, so lone and sore bereft, your dearest gone, your future dark.

For you, old traveler, weary with the long, long road, yearning for the end, yet dreading the interim nevertheless.

For you, heart-heavy mothers and fathers, to whom all things have lost their savor while the boy wanders or the girl takes the wrong road.

For you, so many of you, who feel that your tasks are more than one mind can compass or one pair of hands accomplish, your burden more than one pair of shoulders can very well bear.

For you who are worried and perplexed.



For you who are harassed and driven.

For you who are in any kind of need or trouble.

You will find the story in the first two chapters of the Gospel according to Matthew, and in the second chapter of the Gospel according to Luke. It is Matthew who tells us about the visit of the wise men, while Luke tells us about the shepherds. Read both records. There is no detail that is not worth recalling, and every reminder that events were thus and so for the reason that "it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets" cannot but strengthen and confirm our faith.

Especially, however, read the words of the angel to the shepherds, who, Luke tells us, "were sore afraid."

Afraid—like us sometimes—afraid of the future, afraid of our own reactions, afraid because of our weaknesses, afraid for our loved ones, afraid of life's complexities, afraid to hold up our heads, unable to forget the past.

"Fear not," said the angel: "for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day . . . a Saviour."

"Unto *us* a Child is born, unto *us* a Son is given: and the government shall be upon *His* shoulder."

What a Child! What a Son! What a shoulder!

To you and me is born a Saviour, and that involves salvation not only in the great Messianic sense, the defeat of the last enemy, the downfall of the great adversary, and the final translation of His people at the time of His second coming; it means salvation *now*, in our daily extremities and perplexities.

It means the acquisition of power to overcome if we will but ask for it and take it. It means the provision of light for our next step.

It means a Rock to lean upon in the day of sudden shock and calamity. It means strength to bear sorrow. It means companionship in our day of loss.

It means that, however bleak the future, we can still go forward dauntless and unafraid, because He, the Saviour, has promised, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." It means that no matter how hard the task, we may attack it with courage, knowing that with our hands within His hands nothing is beyond our powers.

Best of all, it means that we cannot escape Him. Having done so much, left heaven as He did, lived as He did, suffered as He did, died as He did, He is not going to be balked of His reward unless we refuse to accept Him. The way we worry and fret sometimes would seem to suggest that we are apprehensive that the Lord will lose interest and stop short, as it were, when He has already gone to such lengths.

As though He would.

As though He could.

He tells us that we are the apple of His eye; that we are engraved on the palms of His hands.

Having gone to the uttermost, He will also continue to do the uttermost, right to the very end.

His birth in Bethlehem was a pledge and guarantee that His followers need fear nothing.

"Then shall the Priest say," says the Episcopal *Book of Common Prayer*, "Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all that truly turn to Him."

The Sacred Word is redolent with "comfortable" words, but these in the heart of the Christmas story embody them all. They are indeed "tidings of great joy." "Unto you," whoever you are, wherever you are, whatever your circumstances or condition, "Unto *you* is born this day . . . a Saviour."

Heaven be praised!

*Note:* If you would learn more about the comfort which Christ provides, turn to page 33. Fill out the Bible Course application coupon and mail it today.

[END]

## THE ART OF GIVING

*IN gratitude for God's gift of life to us we should share that gift with others. The art of giving encompasses many areas. It is an outgoing, overflowing way of life.*

*Basically we give what we are. "The thoughts you think," wrote Maeterlinck, "will irradiate you as though you are a transparent vase."*

*The gifts of things are never as precious as the gifts of thought.*

*Emerson said it well: "Rings and jewels are not gifts, but apologies for gifts. The only true gift is a portion of thyself."*

*We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the heart: love, kindness, joy, understanding, sympathy, tolerance, forgiveness.*

*We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the mind: ideas, dreams, purposes, ideals, principles, plans, inventions, projects, poetry.*

*We give of ourselves when we give gifts of the spirit: prayer, vision, beauty, aspiration, peace, faith.*

*We give of ourselves when we give the gift of time: when we are minute builders of more abundant living for others.*

*We give of ourselves when we give the gift of words: encouragement, inspiration, guidance.*

*We should give of ourselves with the radiant warmth of sunshine and the glow of the open fire.*

*We should give our community a good man.*

*We should give our home a devoted husband and father.*

*We should give our country a loyal citizen.*

*We should give our world a lift toward "that one far-off divine event toward which all creation moves."*

*The finest gift a man can give to his age and time is the gift of a constructive and creative life.*

—From "The Art of Living" (Copyright 1960, 1961), by Wilferd A. Peterson. Reprinted with the permission of Simon and Schuster, Inc.





ZINGARO, ARTIST, © P.P.P.

# THE MAN ON THE SHORE

*And the Ever-widening Circle of His Friends*

by **Horace E. Walsh**

Seven men had an appointment with Jesus Christ. The time: immediately after the Passover. The place: by the Sea of Galilee.

As the disciples waited, they were surrounded with reminders of their Master's mighty works. They remembered the fierce storm and how Jesus came walking on the angry billows to their rescue and how the tempest had been hushed by a word from His lips. Within sight was the place

where thousands had been fed from a few small loaves and fishes. Not far distant was Capernaum, scene of some of His greatest miracles.

It is significant that Jesus chose to meet His disciples by the Sea of Galilee. He did not choose the capital city, Jerusalem, but rather the scene of His opening ministry. This was where He had found so many of His disciples. This was the scene of His greatest success and acceptance.



There were Peter, Thomas, Nathaniel, James, John, and two other disciples. They were all in need of food and clothing, and a successful night's fishing would supply this urgent need. Peter, always aggressive, said, "I go a-fishing." All night long, as they toiled at the nets, the disciples talked of their absent Lord. They questioned as to their own future, and grew sad at the prospects they faced.

As morning light approached they were too preoccupied with their gloomy forebodings to recognize the figure of a Man standing on the shore. How their hearts would have rejoiced if they had realized that He was their beloved Master! Likewise today Jesus is near to His people in their hours of extremity, but often they are so absorbed with the cares and problems of life that they fail to recognize Him.

Then the Man on the shore said, "Cast the net on the right side, . . . and ye shall find." In this case the right side was the side of faith. Being fishermen, they knew that under all normal circumstances it was too late in the day to expect success, but their faith was manifested in obedience. There is a lesson here for all in that the lack of former success must not discourage us from fresh ventures with Christ in faith. The first duty of every true disciple is to obey the Master's commands. So great was the reward for their faith that they were not able to draw in their net for the great number of fish which were caught.

It was John who first recognized Jesus, and in joy he cried out, "It is the Lord!" This is the greatest discovery any soul can make. This is the cry of faith on discovering Christ, and finding in Him the very truth of God. This is the cry of resignation and submission. When moments later Peter also discovered his Lord, so anxious was he to be with his Master that he plunged into the water and eagerly splashed and stumbled over the slippery stones to His side. Surely the water was cold and the morning air was chill, but nothing deterred him from worshiping at the feet of the Lord whom he loved so much and whom he had recently so shamefully denied. We also must be willing to cast ourselves upon the Lord with the same abandon.

Jesus knew that His disciples would be wet, cold, and hungry. Consequently in His tender compassion He had prepared breakfast and a fire by which they could warm and dry themselves. And He still ministers to both the physical and spiritual needs of His disciples today.

Can you picture this matchless scene? see the big, strong hands of the Carpenter of Nazareth as He turns the fish over the fire and breaks the bread for His disciples? These hands have more than the callouses of manual labor; they are eternally scarred. The disciples look tenderly at the nail prints and recognize the basis of His claim upon their lives. Here also is the basis of His claim upon your life and mine. At the sight of those precious hands the disciples were filled with awe and could only acknowledge Him as their Lord.

Let us enter the warmth and friendship of that little group around the fireside. See that small circle of adoring

men, and among them the Saviour of the world. The hands that framed the worlds; the hands that wielded the square and the plane; the hands that were often entwined in the curls of little children; the hands that brought hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, strength of limb to the paralytic; the hands that were nailed to the cross and folded in death, are once again ministering to the needs of hungry, cold, and tired fishermen.

You are not outside that circle, friend, if you will take Jesus as your Saviour.

That breakfast was the most wonderful meal of which these men or any others have ever partaken. And the same ministering Saviour says to you this day, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me." Revelation 3:20. He wants to invite you into His circle of friends. If there seems to be a sea of obstacles between you and Him, plunge in regardless of how cold the water or how chill the morning air. Jesus will comfort, sustain, and feed you. He invites you to breakfast with Him today. Can you refuse? [END]

## A. Moment's Prayer

by M. M. Duncan

*I love to take throughout the day  
A moment's quiet prayer,  
To sit and think about His love,  
And know that God is there.*

*When cares and worries try my soul,  
How comforting to share  
With One who fully understands,  
A moment's quiet prayer.*

*Then from my heart the burden falls,  
And with it every care.  
The peace I long for lies within  
That moment's quiet prayer.*

*Oh, every heart could know the joy  
That I have learned to share,  
If each of us would bring to God  
A moment's quiet prayer.*



# AFTERMATH OF VATICAN II



"THE MONITOR"

University of Notre Dame, where postconciliar discussions were held.

Early this year an unusual meeting was held on the campus of Notre Dame University in South Bend, Indiana. It was called to discuss the theological issues of Vatican II.

In his opening address, the widely respected president of Notre Dame, Theodore M. Hesburgh, announced that the University is initiating a long overdue Theological Seminary on a graduate level, as well as an "Institute for Advanced Studies." To emphasize its ecumenical character the new institute will be open to students of all faiths as well as to nonbelievers.

President Hesburgh welcomed what he termed "the greatest theological event in the Western Hemisphere in our time," referring to the meeting of some four hundred Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Orthodox theologians in an endeavor to appraise the results of Vatican II. Theology was, of course, the focal point; a *living* theology was considered "the best proof that God is not dead."

One of Catholicism's most respected theologians, Karl Rahner, gave a most significant address. From England came Christopher Butler and Lady Jackson (Barbara Ward). From France, Yves Congar, with his concern about the laity, also Henri Lubac and François Houtard. Voices from Greek Orthodoxy were those of the aged Florovsky and the youthful Schemann. Protestants gave their views in various ways: There was the old paladin of ecumenism, Methodist Outler, as well as Professors Minear and Sittler. Very articulate was George Lindbeck of Yale. I even noticed the controversial Anglican Bishop of Woolwich, James A. T. Robinson, author of the much-disputed *Honest to God*, who made a brief statement. One theologian termed *Honest to God* superficial and meaningless.

The "text" for the deliberations was the newly published 794 page paperback edition of *Documents of Vatican II*, containing the dogmatic constitutions of the Catholic Church and decrees on Religious Liberty, Ecumenism, Liturgy, etc. The basic document was the constitution *Lumen Gentium* (the light of men).

The first item for discussion was the nature of the church in a rapidly changing world. In former councils, including Vatican I (1869), the Catholic Church was regarded as the only true body of believers whose origin reaches back to the apostolic age. This was toned down in



*Theological Dialogue at Notre Dame*

by DANIEL WALTHER

Professor of Church History, Andrews University

Vatican II, where the church was defined as a community of believers that "exists in the Catholic Church."

Each Catholic council is identified by a significant expression. One word, used more often than any other at Vatican II, was the Italian term "aggiornamento" a "bringing-up-to-date" of the church. The Catholic Church had the will to reappraise its relation to the changing world, to redefine its teaching, and to gauge the possibilities of closer fellowship with the "separated brethren." However, a Catholic council is first of all for the Catholic Church. The hierarchy attempts to set its house in order. Then, to use an expression of John XXIII, the church invites the "separated brethren" back into the fold.

In a pleasant atmosphere the theological dialogue at Notre Dame was carried on in a sometimes spirited way. There were erudite debates on the new understanding of revelation. There were lively discussions of family planning, the role of women in the church, the relationship between clergy and laity, and, of course, the old concepts of infallibility and inerrancy. The tone was usually cordial, but at times sharp words were heard from some, pleading for a more evangelical view of revelation. Professor Lindbeck forcefully expressed traditional Protestant concepts, reminding the council that in spite of the amenities at this meeting there were historic cleavages which could not easily be bridged.

In discussing the Council's *Declaration of Religious Freedom*, Jesuit Courtney Murray of Woodstock College acknowledged that his church took a long time to recognize the true situation, and he expressed the hope that the next step would be to seek freedom within his church. Vatican II made definite progress in recognizing, at least officially, that religious freedom should be granted to non-Catholics, but it will take time to change the existing climate.

The first major split in Christendom occurred almost a thousand years ago when East (Constantinople) and West (Rome) parted company, partly because of theological differences. Efforts have been made, mostly by Rome, to heal that schism. The Orthodox Churches, members of the Protestant World Council, have been rather cool toward the overtures by the Roman Catholic Church. In the messages from Orthodox theologians at Notre Dame I detected

lingering frustration; the wound hasn't completely healed.

Nothing is easier than to sit in judgment on the shortcomings of Vatican II. But what have Protestants to offer? Theologically, they are in worse shape. The Catholics have displayed stamina in their determination to bring their church up to date. Protestants, in the view of Methodist Outler, are in a theological slump. Protestantism is historically anchored on the authority of Scripture. But where is that authority today?

Lessons can profitably be learned from the dialogue at Notre Dame. The Christian church is always in need of reformation, and Catholics are not alone in feeling that need. Ever since the Christian church came into existence, it has needed constant reformation.

What is meant by "reforming" the church? Instinctively it is a nostalgic desire to revert to the church as it was at the beginning. But at Notre Dame the thought was expressed that the church was not only unreformed but unreformable.

The present anxiety of Protestantism was expressed at Notre Dame by Walter Burghard when he referred to the staggering, if not impossible, task of contemporary theology which "makes it most difficult to find God." He called for a theological renewal in a time when the message of the church is barren and Godforsaken.

The church has a future if it will seek God, who is ever available. The answer to contemporary confusion does not lie in theological definitions but in man's willingness to find himself, to come to his senses and return to his Father.

When it comes to a renewal of the church, one basic element is overlooked. I did not hear it mentioned at Notre Dame. Is a theologian seriously interested in listening to what God says? Man wants a change; he organizes a council. Man argues, proposes, and offers new definitions, but he must remember God's method: "Behold, I make all things new." It is God who directs. It is God who disposes and who brings up to date.

What then can man do? Man must return to the Word of God and commit himself, with humility, to the divine Word. He must pray that God may send His Holy Spirit to bring about a blossoming of new life in His church.

[END]





CONVERSE, ARTIST, © P.P.P.A.

## MILLIONS PROCLAIM CHRIST'S ADVENT

"Come quickly. See, the stars are falling! Is not this the day of judgment?"

So thought thousands who rushed from their homes on the night of November 13, 1833, to witness the greatest meteoric shower on record. Though seen over much of the earth's surface, its major effect was in North America.

Fifty-five years earlier another phenomenon of nature had been observed. The sun had been miraculously darkened from midmorning onward, and the same evening the full moon failed to give its light. Secular writers from that time to the present generally agree that the true causes of

this remarkable astronomical phenomenon are not known.

But students of prophecy knew. These events, together with the earthquake at Lisbon, were recognized as the signs foretold in Scripture. Revelation 6:12, 13; Matthew 24:29.

As early as 1812, Lyman Beecher had said in a sermon, "The angel having the everlasting gospel to preach to men has begun his flight." See Revelation 14:6. By the time of the great meteoric shower of 1833, many voices had been raised to herald Christ's coming. Men of many denominations—Baptists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and



### *The Last "Loud Cry"*

#### *Concluding Article in the Series, "Heralds of His Coming"*

others—were declaring that Christ would return between 1843 and 1847.

The witness extended down to Mexico, where a Roman Catholic magistrate, De Rozas, proclaimed the approaching end of the 2300-day prophecy of Daniel 8 and 9.

Now, against the background of some seventy-five exponents of prophecy scattered among twelve nations, appeared the one whose name and views became known around the world.

In his early days no one would have selected William Miller as a herald of Christ's coming. Under the influence of deist friends, he showed little interest in spiritual things until 1816, when he decided to look into the Bible in his search for truth. With a concordance as his only help, he searched the sacred pages for two years. As a result he came face to face with the doctrine of the second advent.

To make sure of his position he spent a further four years checking all the texts and time prophecies which pointed to this great event.

Then came the conviction that, if the end of all things was as near as he understood it to be, the world should know about it. He commenced to preach. People were intensely interested. By 1834 he had started a series of meetings on prophecy. His travels took him far afield.

So convincing was his presentation of Bible prophecy and its forthcoming fulfillment in the return of Christ that other Bible students were attracted to him. Josiah Litch, a Methodist minister, J. V. Himes, a businessman, and many others accepted his views and began to share with him the proclamation of Christ's return.

A new movement was on its way. Yet it never occurred to its leaders to separate from the churches where they had their membership. People began to talk of the "Millerite movement." No creed was formulated or church status claimed. It was the simple preaching of a warning message.

At that time the year 1843 was regarded as the termination of Daniel's prophecy of the 2300 days. Miller expected the great event to happen sometime between 1843 and 1844, later fixing the exact date as October 22, 1844.

As the day approached, excitement increased. Bitter opposition came from the long-established churches. Adventists who had embraced the teachings of William Miller were disfellowshipped. Yet as the great day drew nearer many businessmen closed their shops and offices, and farmers left their crops unharvested in the fields.

On the final day, the faithful watched the heavens from sunrise to sunset and deep into the night. But nothing happened. Christ did not appear.

It is difficult to imagine the intensity of their disappointment. Faced with the ridicule of the world, the majority quickly gave up their belief in Christ's return. But not all.

This little group reviewed the time calculations again and again. Could they have been mistaken in the *nature* of the event which was to take place in 1844?

The next day after the passing of the time, it occurred to one of their number that Daniel 8:14 might possibly apply not to the cleansing of the earth, but rather to the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, of which the epistle to the Hebrews speaks so clearly.

To those seeking further light this view brought great comfort, and they gave themselves to prayer and Bible study. As a result they came upon other long-forgotten truths. Fifteen years later they organized themselves into a church body, taking the name Seventh-day Adventists. Thus the witness to Christ's return did not die out with the collapse of the Millerite movement but was reborn for the final phase of its heralding. The mid-nineteenth century saw the birth of a *movement* for the heralding of the second advent to all the world. In the words of the symbolic angel of Revelation 14, its work was to preach "the everlasting gospel" to people of every nation and to say "with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come."

The idea of a worldwide proclamation of the second coming dawned gradually on those early Seventh-day Adventists. Joseph Bates, a ship's captain, sold all his possessions to advance the cause. James White worked as a day laborer. In the early days of the movement they and others received no salary and were often dependent on friends for traveling expenses to proclaim the glad tidings.

But faith in their message triumphed. Funds were found for printing a tract and then for establishing a weekly paper. In 1874 they sent their first missionary to Europe to kindle again the embers of the blessed hope which had burned so brightly a generation before.

From then on, heralds of His coming began to enter more and more countries. Before the end of the century Switzerland, Great Britain, Scandinavia, Africa, Australia, and Russia received the message. A ship was built to carry the tidings to the islands of the Pacific Ocean.

The story of the activities of those zealous pioneers would fill volumes. Impelled by unmistakable signs in every phase of world life today, they advanced to the very ends of the earth.

Today over two million believers give earnest testimony "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." What a transformation from the isolated voices heard down the ages! A mighty chorus is now proclaiming the glad tidings of Christ's imminent return. Everywhere His promise resounds: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be." And from every land is heard the echo, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:12, 20. [END]



by RAYMOND H. LIBBY

DAVID CORSON FROM DEVAHNET

# GOD'S TRUE CHURCH





### *To whom does the true church belong?*

"The church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28.

### *Who is the head of the church?*

"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory . . . set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places . . . and gave Him to be the Head over all things to the church." Ephesians 1:17-22.

*Note:* Christ alone has earned the right to be the Head of God's true church. No human being has earned this right or been given it by divine authority.

### *On what has Christ, the Head of the church, founded it?*

"Upon this rock I will build My church." Matthew 16:18.

*Note:* Peter defines who this Rock is: "Behold, I lay in Zion a Chief Cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded." 1 Peter 2:6. Peter points to Christ as the great foundation stone—the Rock—on which His church is built. Peter adds that human beings can be but priests or "lively stones" in this spiritual building.

### *Who are to become a part of Christ's church on earth?*

"The Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." Acts 2:47, New American Standard Bible.

*Note:* Romans 1:7 speaks of church members as "saints," or as the Knox translation reads, "whom God loves and has called to be holy."

### *What great work has God assigned to the members of His true church?*

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19, 20.

### *Whom has God placed over His church on earth, and why?*

"Some He has appointed to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, or pastors, or teachers. They are to order the lives of the faithful, minister to their needs, build up the frame of Christ's body, until we all realize our common unity through faith in the Son of God, and fuller knowledge of Him." Ephesians 4:11-13, Knox.

### *What are these appointed officers of the church to do?*

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." 2 Timothy 4:2.

*Note:* The Word of God is the basis of doctrine by which the church is to be guided, its members taught and corrected.

### *By what will the faith of the church be threatened?*

"The time is coming when men will not tolerate wholesome teaching. They will want something to tickle their own fancies, and they will collect teachers who will pander to their own desires. They will no longer listen to the truth, but will wander after man-made fictions." 2 Timothy 4:3, 4, Phillips.

*Note:* On the Holy Scriptures alone can man live, for it is the Word of God, filled with "spirit and life," emanat-

ing from "the mouth of God." Unity in the church is possible only when men earnestly look for and obey Bible truth. True ecumenicity is possible only when men accept and obey the Word of God.

### *How did Christ warn against man-made fictions in religious teaching?*

"Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matthew 15:3, 6.

*Note:* Jesus adds: "In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Verse 9. Isaiah 8:20 states: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

### *What kind of church is acceptable to Jesus Christ?*

"Christ gave Himself to make her [His church] holy, having cleansed her through the baptism of His Word—to make her an altogether glorious church in His eyes. She is to be free from spots, wrinkles or any other disfigurements—a church holy and perfect." "And we are all members of that body." Ephesians 5:25-27, 30, Phillips.

### *Under the symbol of a "woman," how does the Bible describe God's church?*

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Revelation 12:17.

*Note:* A pure woman (Revelation 12:1) depicts a pure church. A vile woman best describes a false church. Revelation 17:1-6. Throughout history the devil has sought to destroy the true church, as symbolized in Revelation 12. In these last days God still has a pure church—pure in doctrine, in faith, and in practice. It is the "remnant" or last end of His church, living today in the simple faith of the church He founded. God's true church has the faith of Jesus and is obedient to all of His commandments.

### *What matters most to God?*

"Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

*Note:* Even miracle working is no evidence of His true church, but rather, obedience—the fruit of good works. See verses 22, 23.

### *In the day of final judgment how will Christ recognize His saints?*

"I was anhungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in: naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me." Matthew 25:35, 36.

### *What experience fits us for heaven with Christ?*

"I will implant My law in their innermost thoughts, engrave it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be My people." Hebrews 8:10, Knox.

*Note:* Those who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb are forever finished with sin. They are Christ's handiwork. They do His commandments and enter into life—the church forever united in Christ. [END]





BY THE AUTHOR

## NEW VIEW OF VIETNAM

by  
Daniel  
R.  
Guild

◀ "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him."

The wedding hour had arrived. Friends of the groom had made elaborate preparations. It was now time to proceed to the home of the bride in another section of the city.

I had been in Vietnam only a few hours when the groom's friends, exuberant with enthusiasm, pressed the invitation, "Come with us to the wedding feast."

As the groom's entourage neared the bride's home, two page boys, each carrying a tray full of gift boxes wrapped in red, headed the procession. Crowds of curious neighbors lined the narrow street.

As I walked toward the bride's home in the midst of this joyful procession, the words of Scripture came to my mind, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." Matthew 25: 6, 13.

The meaning of this passage has become the keynote of my present visit to Vietnam, for a sense of urgency characterizes the work here. In this country made tired by twenty-five years of almost continuous war, Christians are alive, working, spreading the good news about Jesus Christ and His soon coming.

At a training conference for Christian laymen, a sense of dedicated urgency pervaded the atmosphere.

Above the speakers' platform a banner announced in bold red Vietnamese letters: "Every Layman an Evangelist Spreading the Good News."

On one side of the auditorium a large poster pictured a map of the world with a gleaming cross shedding rays of light over Vietnam. Beneath was the question: "If not here, Where?"

Across the auditorium another poster pictured a husband and a wife in Vietnamese dress, walking toward a home in their neighborhood. Superimposed over this background was the challenge: "If not you, Who?"

On another poster the hands of a giant clock stood at five minutes to twelve. Above the clock, the question was ominous: "If not now, When?"

With deep seriousness these dedicated laymen sat listening to the instructions being given. The roar of whirly-birds overhead, the screech of jets, the thunder of distant



BY THE AUTHOR



The Adventist welfare service distributing food to flood victims.

◀ The voice of Pastor Le Huu, the Voice of Prophecy radio speaker, penetrates the bamboo curtain.



## How Seventh-day Adventists Are Carrying the Good News of Christ to This War-torn Country

mortar fire and exploding bombs seemed to increase attention rather than distract from it. In evidence at the conference was a marked desire to sharpen God-given abilities, to make preparation for spreading the good news of the gospel to neighbors and friends.

### *Good News in the Air*

As we neared the broadcasting studio, the familiar strains of a well-known gospel song caught my ear:

"Lift up the trumpet, and loud let it ring:  
Jesus is coming again!"

Could it be the King's Heralds quartet of the American-based Voice of Prophecy radio broadcast?

I listened again. The voices were unmistakable. But the sounds were strange, for they were singing in Vietnamese. Vietnamese is but one of several languages in which this remarkable quartet sounds forth the gospel message.

In the recording studio, Pastor Le Huu, the Voice of Prophecy speaker for Vietnam, was preparing his weekly program. His voice is broadcast over thirteen stations to the fourteen million people of South Vietnam and penetrates the bamboo curtain to the north where it can be heard by additional millions.

The ring of Pastor Le Huu's message is: "Jesus, the Bridegroom, is coming. Get ready to meet Him."

In addition to the Vietnamese broadcasts, two in Chinese sound the message to the one million Chinese of Vietnam, most of whom are concentrated in Cholin, a twin city of Saigon.

The English Voice of Prophecy broadcast, produced in Los Angeles, California, with H. M. S. Richards as speaker, is heard by English-speaking Vietnamese as well as by thousands of GI's.

### *Publishing the Good News*

Near the Voice of Prophecy studio is the Vietnam Signs Press, where last year 3,309,150 pages of gospel literature were printed in Vietnamese.

A corps of eighty devoted literature evangelists pene-

trate the cities, villages, and countryside of Vietnam with these truth-filled publications.

Harassed by frequent aerial bombings, mistaken for spies because their work of traveling about the country is misunderstood, these earnest servants of Christ courageously face their task of spreading the good news about Jesus and the better world. Ten colporteurs have been held captive for weeks and even months, but when it becomes clear to their captors that they are not engaged in political activity, some are released and allowed to continue their work.

### *Inasmuch*

The pastors and members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of Vietnam are not so obsessed with the future life that they neglect the present needs of humanity. They take seriously the words of Jesus: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." During my visit of two short weeks I witnessed a deep concern for the needy.

On the day of my arrival the newspapers told of five hundred homes being destroyed by fire. Immediately the Seventh-day Adventist youth sprang into action. Not only did they furnish needed food and clothing for the refugees, but they organized work teams to help level the burned-out sites in preparation for rebuilding the homes.

The  
Saigon  
Adventist  
Hospital.



BY THE AUTHOR

A corps of lady colporteurs distributes gospel literature to the ancestor worshippers of Vietnam.

WILBUR BURTON

BY THE AUTHOR





Two years ago the central provinces were ravaged by a flood. Since it was the Year of the Dragon, when according to Vietnamese belief misfortune will almost certainly strike, few were surprised that the flood was "the country's worst natural disaster in living memory."

An eyewitness told me that typhoons Iris and Joan inundated 7,000 square miles, bringing death to 10,000 persons and suffering to 900,000 more who lost their homes, their possessions, their food, and their crops. Within hours the waters rose 210 feet, sweeping hundreds of houses into the sea.

In one small province helicopters rescued four thousand people from treetops and housetops on the first night of the flood.

In Saigon the Seventh-day Adventist welfare service took immediate action. Members of the Phu-Nhuan church donated fifteen tons of rice and clothing. These were rushed to the scene by three cargo planes.

The distribution of these goods in the flood-stricken area was done with such efficiency that government agencies appealed to the Adventist relief workers to help distribute government foods.

During my stay, the Saigon Adventist Hospital, ever alert to relieve suffering and to help men find a better life, sponsored five nights of group therapy for those who desired to stop smoking. On the first night a small boy who looked to be about nine years old was being turned away at the door when the little chap protested, "But, I smoke."

"How many?" the doorman asked.

"Eight sticks a day."

He and his two boyfriends were allowed to attend the five sessions. All three of them were freed from the shackles of the tobacco habit.

### *Christ the Answer*

The people of Vietnam need the gospel—the good news. In South Vietnam, with a population about equal to that of California and a land area only half as big, there are only about 90,000 Protestants. Numerically the largest group is the Christian Missionary Alliance, who were the first Protestants to send a missionary to Vietnam, just after the turn of the century.

Although Seventh-day Adventists sent their first missionary to Vietnam in the early thirties, today their work is broad-based, with a hospital, the only private nursing school in the country, a publishing house, and a chain of parochial schools, in addition to the evangelistic work carried on by the churches.

The only other Protestant group with an established work is the Baptist Church. They have been working for only a few years and are just now getting a foothold.

Since Catholic missionaries have been working in Vietnam for more than three hundred years, about 10 percent of the people are Catholics.

With a background of a highly developed culture re-

sulting from one thousand years of Chinese domination, the religion of the majority of the Vietnamese is a syncretism of Confucianism, with its commendable regard for filial piety, Taoism, with its nature worship, and Buddhism, with its manifold reincarnations and its ethical system of salvation by works. Heavily laced in all of this is animism, with its inbred fear of the spirits of the dead.

Dominating the sitting room in most Vietnamese homes is an altar before which homage is paid to the ancestors for the past four generations. The departed souls of the ancestors, these people suppose, participate with the family in all of their joys and sorrows. Since a person believes that his general behavior is witnessed by his dead ancestors and his everyday life is controlled by them, in times of prosperity he thanks them for their help and protection through prayers and through offering food, incense, candles, or flowers before the family altar.

On the anniversary of the death of each ancestor the relatives gather around the altar for special ceremonies to venerate the dead. On these occasions, in addition to offering food to the dead, the family burns votive paper made in the form of money, clothing, and various objects such as a house, a car, a servant, a horse. They believe that by some unexplained phenomena the burning of these objects transfers them to reality in the realm of the dead.

Failure to worship dead ancestors, the people believe, causes them to become wandering souls—evil spirits. Unworshiped spirits become unhappy and bring calamity to the living. Some homes have a small mirror over the door to ward off these wandering spirits of the dead—the evil spirit entering the door supposedly sees itself in the mirror and is frightened away from the home.

The younger generation, oriented by a scientific age, is beginning to cast off these centuries-old beliefs, but skepticism and secularism are taking their place. So the youth as well as their superstition-bound elders need the gospel of Christ, and the abundant life, free from fear, that Christ offers to those who will come to Him.

### *God's Protecting Hand*

That the needy hearts of the non-Christian multitudes of Vietnam are being opened to the gospel is fully evident. An experience told to me by a veteran pastor illustrates this awakening.

In the area where this pastor ministers, bombers frequently plaster the countryside to within three miles of the church building. Mortar fire and machine-gun bullets often bring the fighting to within five hundred feet of the church.

Although there is a temple in the village, the non-Christians flee for refuge, not to the temple, but to the Seventh-day Adventist church building. Since the people believe there is divine protection in the church, as soon as they reach the building they become quiet and orderly. These people certainly need the good news of the gospel, the best news possible for Vietnam as well as for the whole world.

[END]





# WHEN THE CHURCH ABANDONS GOD

by NORVAL F. PEASE

*Professor of Applied Theology, Andrews University*

On Sunday, July 11, 1965, my wife and I boarded a train at Charing Cross station, London, for the area known as Woolwich on the south bank of the Thames. Our purpose was to attend the evening service at the parish church and hear its rector, the Reverend Nicolas Stacey. From Woolwich station a short walk in a characteristic London drizzle brought us to the beautifully situated church on the bank of the Thames. Inside, the Reverend Mr. Stacey conducted a modified Church of England service and preached a sermon on the theme, "No one shall rob you of your joy." Approximately seventy-five people comprised the congregation.

Why did we select this particular church from among the scores of churches where services were being held? Because there is a story behind this church and its rector—a story that is very significant in reference to the religious movements of our day. This story was made public by Mr. Stacey in an article in the *Observer* of December, 1964.

At the time of writing this article, Mr. Stacey had been rector of Woolwich for five years. He took over this charge at the persuasion of the well-known bishop of Woolwich, Dr. James A. T. Robinson, author of *Honest to God*. The church was run-down, with only a handful of people attending. Mr. Stacey gathered about him a competent team of well-trained and experienced men and began a program which he hoped would make an impact on the people. The church was remodeled, a coffee house being constructed in

one unused gallery and a lounge in the other. A mission church in the parish was converted into a hall, used mainly for bingo. A branch of the "Suicide Samaritans" was established to dissuade desperate people from taking their own lives. A massive house-to-house visiting campaign was undertaken. A marriage guidance service and a christening service were established. The church services were modified to make them more relevant to a modern congregation. Parish suppers, outings, and theater trips were planned. The clergy of the church participated wholeheartedly in community activities. Capital investment alone amounted to 30,000 pounds sterling, plus the salaries of the staff.

What were the results of all this effort? Mr. Stacey summarizes them thus:

"We have played every card in the pack. We have done everything we set out to do. But we have achieved virtually not one of the modest things we hoped for. The regular members of the congregation have increased from about fifty to a hundred, mostly drawn from socially superior areas outside our working-class parish. . . .

"Our congregations at Christmas, Easter, and Harvest Festival are very little larger than on ordinary Sundays. The number of confirmation candidates has progressively dropped in the five years I have been here—last year to an all-time low of eleven. Although we have a church school, none of our efforts has raised the Sunday School attendance above twenty-five."

*Secular Activities No Substitute for Evangelism. How Religionless Christianity Creates a Spiritual Wilderness.*



Regarding the visiting program, one member of Mr. Stacey's staff reported that "after house-to-house visiting for six hours a day for six months not one extra person had been to church as a result." The counseling and christening programs likewise failed to bring people to the church. The whole program became known throughout England as "The Woolwich Failure."

Stacey's honesty in publishing the results of the experiment is refreshing. The sincerity of the efforts of his team is unquestioned. The problem of reaching an average community—be it in America, England, or any other part of the world—with the message of the church is staggering. There are some lessons, however, that we need to learn from this experiment.

First, Mr. Stacey himself puts his finger on the core of the problem when he says, "Living among the trees, it is not easy to see the wood; and if I try to discover the lessons of the last five grueling years, I am faced at once with the absurd contradiction that our parishioners desperately need a faith, a dynamic and a purpose in life, but the church seems unable to help them find it."



by Mark Bullock

*The Christmas chimes ring out upon the air  
To tell a story of the long ago.  
There is a kindly spirit everywhere,  
And windows shine with light of tinsel glow.*

*Perhaps in all the gaiety and glee,  
In all the glitter that the eye beholds,  
There is a danger we may fail to see  
The truer values that the season holds.*

*Lord, may we all the deeper meaning find  
And see within the Christ child in the hay  
A hope to light the hearts of all mankind,  
The dawning of a bright and better day.*

*A Saviour born to banish sin and fear  
Were tidings that made even angels sing.  
Should it not be our highest joy to hear  
The message that He is our Lord and King?*

*Oh, may the songs that tell of Jesus' birth  
Resound with gladness in the hearts of men  
As Christmas chimes ring out to all the earth  
To tell the wondrous story once again.*

In view of this startling admission, does Mr. Stacey propose that the church recapture its lost faith in a personal God, Creator of heaven and earth, and His Son who became man, died on the cross for man's sin, and was raised from the dead? No. There is no hint in Mr. Stacey's article of any such return to the evangelical interpretation of Christianity. His proposed solution is revealed in the following quotation from his article:

"God is desperately needed, and yet I have reached the point where I can see little chance of our capturing people's imagination by the traditional methods, however lovingly, vigorously, and imaginatively performed, over however long a period. Indeed, I believe things may get harder still as the residue of formal Christianity disappears and the secularization of society is completed.

"In Woolwich we now intend to take the first tentative steps in a new experiment. We hope to appoint a paid lay bursar to run the parish, and most of the clergy on our staff will take secular jobs, leaving the evenings free for spiritual counseling, leading lay training groups, sick visiting, and so on. No doubt some will interpret this as a counsel of despair—a retreat for those who have lost their nerve and whose faith has got wobbly. To us it seems an advance. For hundreds of years the ecclesiastical structures have served society fairly well. Today they are becoming increasingly irrelevant. It is the secular ones that determine the shape and tone of the world. If the Christian has anything to say, he must say it from within them."

Mr. Stacey is obviously sold on the "religionless Christianity" so much discussed today. "Judging from the way they have been talking, it seems that a lot of Protestant ministers consider the local church as obsolete as the village well."—*Time*, March 11, 1966. A distinction is developing between "worship-directed churches" and "man-directed churches."

But must the churches surrender to secularism? What is secularism? It has been defined as the organization of life as if there were no God. Langdon Gilkey has defined it as "the absence of the religious, transcendent, or ultimate dimension or reference in all the facets of life, and the consequent derivation of all standards and goals solely from the natural and social environments in which men live. It is as if for our age the receiving set for religion had been tuned way down, or in some cases turned quite off."—*How the Church Can Minister to the World Without Losing Itself*, pages 20, 21. Is this the structure within which the church must work in the future?

One observer of Mr. Stacey's experiment makes this comment:

"Christianity is a supernatural faith. The work of the Holy Spirit is alone adequate to break through the barriers of sin and unbelief. The answer to the Woolwich problem—and that of every other parish—is not to secularize the supernatural, to eliminate one by one the objections to Christian belief. The fundamental problem is not a rational one at all. In the eighteenth century a comparatively small group of men on horseback, led by Wesley and Whitefield, were enabled to stir the people of Britain out of just such a spiritual apathy as we see today. Obviously there are differences in the situation then and now; but is there any fundamental change in human nature or human need? That is the real question. If this kind of secular psychol-



ogizing is all that the church has to offer, then no amount of devoted effort and skillful organization will be of any avail.

"The cure for Woolwich lies in Aldersgate Street."—*The Christian Minister*, March, 1965 (quoted from *The Christian*).

The case, though serious, is not hopeless. Even in London, where the Church of England reported less than 3 percent of London's population was in its churches on a recent Easter Sunday, hundreds turn out every Sunday to the old Westminster chapel to hear Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and to All Souls', Langham Place, London, to hear Reverend John R. W. Stott, both of whom are evangelical in their preaching. Only the "everlasting gospel" of the saving grace of God through Jesus Christ will save the church and reach the deep needs of the world. No amount of purely secular activity, however valuable in itself, will take the place of a personal relationship with a living God—a relationship that expresses itself in faith, worship, personal integrity, and social concern.

In looking across the centuries, Jesus said, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8. This text reflects concern lest faith disappear. There was a time when the conflict raged between a church on the side of faith and a world against it. But now faith is being built by churchmen and torn down by churchmen. Is it any wonder Jesus expressed alarm as He foresaw our day? In describing this faith, Berkouwer has said:

"The act of faith is as much being held by God as holding Him; the power of faith is exercised as much in capitulation as in conquering—the faith that overcomes the world is capitulation to Christ's great victory. This faith is truly a gift, a gift which is totally unique because of its object and which in that uniqueness can lead us on the way of salvation. Beware lest anyone sap this tree!"—*Faith and Justification*, pages 190, 191.

The final figure of speech in this quotation is appealing. Sapped trees stand stark and naked against the sky—no leaves—no life. Such is a faithless church. Such is the church when it becomes a mere social-service agency. Such will be the church if it surrenders to secularization.



CAMERA CLIX

## TEST YOUR "WORD" POWER

by Richard H. Utt

In the centuries-long controversy between good and evil, heroes and villains have often clashed. Each question below concerns one of the heroes of the Bible. Supply the correct answer to each question, choosing from the list of "villains" in the column at the right.

1. When Moses attempted to free his people from slavery and lead them to the "Promised Land," \_\_\_\_\_ stubbornly opposed him.
2. When Abel offered a sacrifice acceptable to God, his brother \_\_\_\_\_, in a fit of jealousy, murdered him.
3. Pilate offered to free one prisoner, either Jesus or a hardened criminal by the name of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. On Mount Carmel, Elijah and \_\_\_\_\_ met in a dramatic confrontation in which Jehovah triumphed over Baal.
5. The apostle Peter warned \_\_\_\_\_ not to try to buy sacred things.
6. Queen Esther accused \_\_\_\_\_ of trying to exterminate the entire Hebrew nation.
7. The prophetess Deborah successfully engaged \_\_\_\_\_, the Canaanite general, in battle.
8. David outdueled \_\_\_\_\_, the giant Philistine warrior.

Cain  
Goliath  
Ahab  
Simon the sorcerer  
Haman  
Barabbas  
Pharaoh  
Sisera

(Answers on page 32)





## Needs Most Today

I appreciate the opportunity to say a few words at your convention because there are areas of great concern in my public responsibility that I would like to discuss with you.

I happen to believe, on the basis of my experience, that our civilization with all its spiritual roots and values is seriously threatened. Recently I read in *U.S. News & World Report* a summarization of the road that has been followed by all great civilizations and all great nations. And they have all followed the same road. They started in bondage. They moved from bondage to great spiritual faith, from great spiritual faith to great courage, from courage to freedom, from freedom to abundance, from abundance to complacency and selfishness, and from complacency and selfishness to apathy and dependence, and back to bondage.

And I am concerned with our unequaled abundance, because no nation has ever enjoyed the material well-being that we enjoy. Our nation is starting in the direction of the other things that have followed—selfishness, complacency, apathy, and dependence.

In Washington, D.C., recently, the Washington press corps honored a woman who has become a celebrity because of her excellent reporting and particularly because of her

ability to ask penetrating questions. The correspondent I refer to is May Craig. After thirty years of reporting the Washington and national scene, she recently wrote:

"Unless there is a change deep down in the American people, a genuine crusade against self-indulgence, immorality—public and private—then we are witnesses to the decline and fall of the American republic. Death on the highway, a pack a day, cheating from top to bottom in our society, get rich quick, the breakup of the family, faltering in foreign policy, reckless theft—these have destroyed nations before us. Why should we think we can take that path and change history?

"Look around you and everywhere you see lack of principle and steadfastness in the land of the brave. The disgraceful cover on a recent issue of a publication with a nationwide circulation and its palliating story of sexual immorality, adds adult consent to the looseness of our youth already far down the road to delinquency, shiftlessness, and derogation of virginity in our girls who will be the mothers of tomorrow.

"We are losing the respect of the world, and respect is more necessary to a person, to a nation, than affection. We

*Address Before the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Detroit, Michigan*



get little affection from the people we have helped over the years, and we are losing their respect. Nobody respects a fumbler, a weak man, a wobbler in policy or deed. Every one of us has to clean out his weakness, and selfishness and immorality of all kinds, then choose leaders who with strength and intelligence will lead us to where we can have self-respect and respect of others."

Six years ago Billy Graham said: "I have recently visited most nations of the earth. I have visited most college and university campuses of the land. There is a vacuum in the colleges and universities of America. There is a vacuum of meaning and purpose in the lives of our young people. And unless we can fill that vacuum we will have in this country what we deplore abroad."

That prediction has come true. We have seen at home what we then deplored abroad. I believe that there is a great need to provide a sense of purpose and meaning in the lives of our young people.

It is faith such as yours that is essential in changing the nature of man, and is providing individuals with a power greater than themselves to overcome those habits and attitudes that prevent our having the kind of world that we would all like to have. And I believe that the essential mission of the church is to produce individuals who will seek to know God's will and strive to do it. What American society needs most is spiritually and morally responsible individuals capable of being good parents and good citizens.

Now, the churches have a very important role to play in the making of public policy; and when public policy is not what it ought to be, it seems to me that we should take a look at the church's role. I believe that the church's role should be to nurture a strong spiritual and moral climate as a background against which public policy is made. Because public decision-making will be no better than the public demand, and public office holders will be no better than the public elect.

Another major area of church activity in public affairs, it seems to me, is to take positions, if they so desire, on important public issues that have moral and spiritual implications, presenting their views to the people and the party's political decision makers. I don't see any reason why a church group shouldn't indicate its position with respect to public issues that have moral and spiritual implication.

In discharging these responsibilities, I think the churches have to be careful to avoid several pitfalls. For instance, churches as such should not become active or identified with political parties or political candidates. To do so would be an abuse of a church's position of moral and spiritual responsibility, and would undermine the church's effectiveness in the moral and spiritual area. After all, the thing that makes possible a society such as we have is the separation of church and state. If church and state were not separated, the citizens, if they made the proper choice, would give greater obedience to the highest authority—to the church—rather than to the government. If you are going to have a free society, you have to separate the two.

Churches must be alert to maintain this essential separation of church and state on which religious and political freedom depend, because although churches may resist encroachment by the state, they may be tempted to breach the

wall in the other direction by behaving as a pressure group, and I think that is about the most unfortunate thing that could happen to a church. This not only abuses their authority and diminishes their effectiveness but also eventually will result in making the church dependent upon government. And acceptance of too many favors from the state will make the state the master of the churches. This is wrong.

I think there is another pitfall that the churches must avoid, and that is, they must not abdicate to the government their responsibility to love their neighbor and show their love in acts of helpfulness. You must avoid the modern tendency to hire a Good Samaritan in the form of the Government as a substitute for being one yourself, because neither the church nor its members can develop unless they do things that they want to do because they are worth doing and because they care and want to help others.

We don't develop by doing only those things that we have to do. We could give 90 percent of our income to the government in the form of taxes and it would not reduce our selfishness and greed one iota. It might increase it, as a matter of fact. But we could give 10 percent voluntarily to others and it will reduce our selfishness and greed and increase our charity and our kindness and our love. And, after all, this is the great message of the second mile.

When Jesus lived on earth, the Jews were required to serve as guides for a Roman centurion at any time they were requested to do so. They had to do this even though they might be going to see a sick wife in the opposite direction. And they hated it. The Master said they should go the second mile. Why? Because if they elected to go the second mile, the situation would be completely different. In the first mile they were slaves; they had to do it, they had no choice, there was no benefit from it. But in the second mile, they were in charge, the centurion was dependent upon them. They were doing it because they wanted to do it, and therefore they benefited from it, and they grew from it.

We must do things that need to be done because we want to do them if we are going to develop character and capacity to build the kind of work we want. I believe, without reservation, in separation of church and state. But you can't teach the history of this country and an understanding of what this country represents without relating it to the fact that we are all children of a common Creator and therefore are brothers and sisters and have the obligation of brotherhood.

In my business experience I found that having a panel of advisers consisting of experts in moral and spiritual matters was a great help. We organized such a panel in American Motors to advise us on the moral and ethical aspects of collective bargaining. When I became governor, I saw no reason why I shouldn't create a similar advisory panel called The Governor's Ethical and Moral Panel, consisting of laymen and a representative group of clergymen that I called together from time to time to get their viewpoint on public matters from an ethical, moral, and spiritual standpoint.

At a meeting about a year ago, we took a look at the most disturbing facts that had come to light during my administration, as far as I am concerned. And those facts are these, that 77 percent

*(Continued on page 33)*

by **George Romney**, Governor of Michigan



"This situation is hard on my ulcer," a young friend remarked while I was urging him to break away from his present employment so he could continue his education.

Apparently he noticed the quick glance I gave at his mention of "ulcer," for he added, "Of course I don't have an ulcer—yet. But in this condition of uncertainty, I am sure it will not take long for one to develop."

The nervous system is organized to keep the various organs of the body functioning harmoniously. The human body is a "tuned" mechanism in which no part operates independently of the others. It is the brain that exerts the controlling influence and modifies the functions of the various organs to fit the needs of the moment.

However, this is not the only function of the brain. Its other function—that of permitting abstract thinking and creative imagery—is the most important evidence that the human being is superior to other forms of life. It is understandable, then, with the brain having two functions to perform, that the control of the organs is often affected by a person's thoughts and emotions. My friend who was talking about the possibility of developing a stomach ulcer was expressing a fact of life—that troubled thoughts have an adverse effect on the functions of one's organs.

Strong emotions such as fear and hate cause the organs to make drastic preparation for a momentary emergency. When these strong emotions persist, the organs eventually weaken under the strain of the continuing state of preparedness for action, and various forms of functional illness and even organic disease may develop.

The sober thoughts a person thinks, though not accompanied by violent emotions, can have their influence on the body's state of affairs. Thoughts in conflict, a decision which is difficult to make, and mental turmoil over an unanswered philosophical question do their mischief by upsetting the delicate balances of nervous control that regulate the activities of the organs.

#### *Why? Is a Major Question*

The question which is probably the most upsetting to a person and the one that can do the most to undermine his state of health is the simple question Why?

A young child uses Why? as a tool to discover the world about him and to satisfy his curiosity regarding people, things, and relationships. And the quest continues on through life. This is the question that impels a scientist to engage in research and a philosopher to try to fathom the unknown. The student of history, of politics, or of human relations is constantly seeking answers to the same question. A businessman bases his plans for investment or for expansion on the best answers he can find to this question.

But the setting in which the question becomes most troublesome is that in which a person examines his relationship to the sequence of life—present, past, and future. It is this question, applied to oneself, which can either provide the motivation for major accomplishments or ruin one's peace of mind and, therefore, one's health.

## HOW FAITH CAN KEEP YOU WELL

by Harold Shryock, M.D.



MILLER FROM BLACK ST.

*Trust in God Essential to Happiness and Proper Functioning of the Body*



It is in pursuing the question *Why?* that the human mind meets its greatest challenge. And it is in finding the answers to this question, as they relate to the individual, that a person is in greatest need of a prevailing, stabilizing influence against which he can measure himself and by means of which he can be comfortably reconciled to his station in life and to the circumstances with which he must deal. This is the area in which faith comes into its own.

Let us now consider eight of the *Why?* questions with which a person has to wrestle. After listing the questions, we will go over them again to show how faith provides the only satisfactory answers.

1. *Why am I who I am?* This is a question that relates to factors over which an individual has no control. As a child becomes old enough to evaluate his station in life, he may wish that he were a boy instead of a girl, that he had been born into a family which lives in a more favored part of town, or that he had the personal aptitudes which enable him to be outstanding in a field of his own choosing.

2. *Why was I born at this particular time?* Most people admire the technical progress of our modern times, so they are glad they have been born in this era rather than at some previous time. There are some, however, who feel confused and overwhelmed by modern complexities. These are the ones who moan, "I wish I could have lived in 'the good old days.'"

3. *Why am I here?* This question takes on broad meaning for those who indulge in philosophical speculation on What is the purpose of life? Those with abundant ambition come under the spell of a desire to accomplish great things and make their lives really worthwhile.

4. *Why do unwelcome circumstances come to me?* Many take pride in planning their lives to fulfill their personal desires. Plans are excellent and help a person to use his advantages and energies effectively. But sometimes plans miscarry. Illness, misfortune, hardship, lack of appreciation, displacement by a rival, unexpected obligations, unhappiness at home, or failure in some cherished endeavor—any of these may prevent a person from fulfilling his plans or realizing the benefits he had expected to enjoy. Then it is that the question of *Why?* becomes colored with resentment for life's inequities.

5. *Why does God forbid some of the things I would like to do?* Wrestling with one's conscience is detrimental to peace of mind, and when it continues over long periods, it can have an adverse effect on the general health.

6. *Why does God permit wickedness?* It is law-abiding people who ask this question. They know that God's law forbids base conduct, and they question His equity in dealing with mankind when they observe that some who are dishonest, cruel, and immoral seem to prosper more in life than others whose conduct is exemplary.

7. *Why does God permit suffering and tragedy?* This is another question that tests a person's faith in God's method of dealing with His human creatures. We are accustomed to believing that a person who does well should reap the

favorable rewards of his efforts. Therefore one is disappointed if, after he has tried sincerely to do what he believes is best, he becomes the victim of tragedy.

8. *Why does God not answer my prayer the way I want Him to?* This is asked by persons who believe in the efficacy of prayer but who have tried to use prayer as a convenient means of realizing selfish desires.

### *The Bible Provides the Answers*

The questions just listed are the principal ones that cause people to become confused, fill their minds with doubt, and thus promote poor health. Fortunately, God does not leave us without satisfactory answers. It requires faith, however, to accept and apply in daily living the answers He gives.

Once a person develops the degree of faith which enables him to accept the answers, there is no longer a conflict in his thinking. He becomes reconciled to God's pattern of dealing with the human race, and, being thus reconciled, he no longer experiences mental turmoil. Faith enables a person to trust God to direct the affairs of his life. Confidence in God's dealings removes the anxiety, the fear, and the doubts that rob a person of vitality and health.

Let us now repeat the questions and notice how the Bible provides the answers.

1. *Why am I who I am?* In Psalm 139 we find David's statement that the individual was known to God even before birth and that God supervised the marvelous events of human development: "For Thou hast possessed my reins: Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. . . . My substance was not hid from Thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth [the womb]. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfected; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Psalm 139:13-16.

2. *Why was I born at this particular time?* In the fourth chapter of the book of Esther, verse 14, Mordecai counsels his niece, Queen Esther, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

It was clear in Mordecai's mind, as it is to everyone who reads the book of Esther, that this young woman was born at the right time to fulfill God's purpose in molding the affairs of the kingdom of Persia to protect His chosen people. The same God who prearranged the life and circumstances of Queen Esther will do this for every individual who, by faith, submits to God's way in his life.

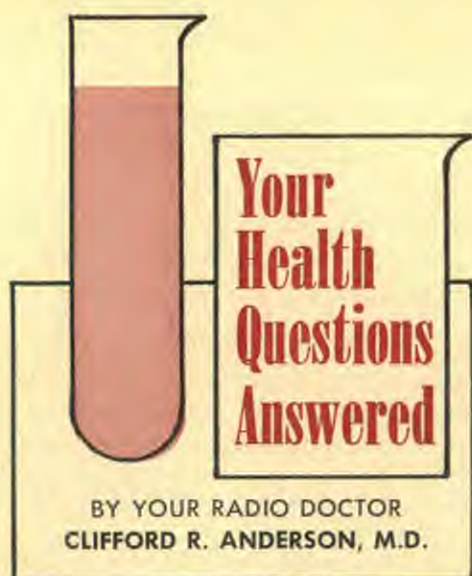
3. *Why am I here?* Our answer to this question is found in Romans 8:28, where we read: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

God has a purpose for every individual. The divine plan is not a mandate, however, for it remains with the individual to accept or reject God's plan.

4. *Why do unwelcome circumstances come to me?* Paul, in his letter to the

*(Continued on page 31)*





### POOR SCHOOLWORK

**Q.** *Can anything be done to help a child who is not doing well in school?*

**A.** Yes. A good medical examination should be the first consideration. Many a child who is not doing well has been found to need glasses. Others may be suffering from some serious condition that should be corrected. For instance, recent studies on twenty-two such patients at Johns Hopkins University showed all of them to be suffering from various stages of thyroid disease. Two were forced to repeat a grade, six had difficulty in concentrating in class, four were considered unstable students, and nine were abnormally nervous when in school. Some of these youngsters had too much thyroid activity; others had too little, resulting in a slowing of mental functioning. All of these children apparently did well after they were given the right treatment. Seventeen of these patients were girls; five were boys. This is about the same ratio of thyroid disease that occurs in the population as a whole. Although your child may not have any actual thyroid deficiency, he should be carefully checked for other abnormalities. Every youngster deserves a fair chance in life. He should not be left to fail through neglect of proper medical care.

### LIVER CANCER

**Q.** *Is there any proof that cancer is a virus disease?*

**A.** Yes, in some cases there seems to be no doubt. Recent experiments at Duke University would certainly point in that direction. Experimental chickens were inoculated with a certain virus from which they apparently developed liver cancer. This is perhaps the first time virus transmission of cancer has been reasonably established. Whether there is any direct relationship between these experiments in chickens and the development of other forms of cancer in humans is still to be proved. Some scientists believe the cancer virus enters certain cells, producing an unfavorable reaction, after which the body is able to eliminate the virus from the human system. But once the cancer process has begun, it continues on, invading other nearby tissues. If it is not eliminated, either by the body itself or by some surgical

or other means, the cancer may continue to grow, finally leading to death of the patient. However, much more research needs to be done before we can assume that it actually happens. Meanwhile it is important for all of us to have regular medical examinations to rule out the presence of cancer and all other serious diseases.

### BOTTLE

**Q.** *Why should a child only five months old refuse to drink from a bottle? We disregarded this peculiarity at first, thinking he was teething, but now he has most of his teeth and yet refuses the bottle. How can we get him to take the milk?*

**A.** Some infants at five or six months old may do well using a cup of their own, and this may be the case with your baby as well. Even in the earliest months of life personalities differ, perhaps because the child is already observing older people around him. Maybe he prefers a different type of food. Young children often prefer the specially prepared baby foods so widely used today. If he refuses the bottle, give him some of these and let him try to use an unbreakable cup. The chances are he will do quite well, even if he does seem different from others his age. Above all, give him a sense of belonging to the family. Surround him with love and acceptance, for this will help him develop an optimistic attitude toward life and will enable him to build a good personality for the future.

### LISP

**Q.** *For some years I have had a terrible lisp which seems to be getting worse each day as I grow older. I wear partial plates, both upper and lower, and wondered if that could be causing an impediment in my speech. I can hardly pronounce certain words at times and have to refrain from speaking because of the difficulty in avoiding such words. What would you advise?*

**A.** First of all, go back to your dentist and make sure the partial dentures fit well. Then try to find some good speech teacher to guide you as you retrain yourself to speak. If no such person is available in your area, find some good friend, such as your pastor, who might be able to counsel you in this. You can do much to help yourself by reading aloud in the quietness of your own room, pronouncing each letter and syllable distinctly and as clearly as possible. It is a sad commentary on our age that so many people are so slovenly in their speech. Reading aloud will often help. If you have access to a tape recorder, try recording your own speech and then listen carefully as you play it back. You can do much to help yourself by correcting improper inflections and faulty sounds. Reading fine poetry or good literature such as the Scriptures will also improve the tone of your voice while at the same time strengthening the muscles of your face, lips, and tongue. Be patient with yourself. Training yourself to speak well every day will not only improve your speech, but will give you more confidence in yourself, and this will inspire others' confidence. There is no more beautiful sound than a well-modulated human voice. Nothing reveals your personality for what you really are more than the tones and the language you use to communicate with others. Therefore all such efforts at self-improvement are well worthwhile.





## GOD AND YOUR HEALTH

*Wise Counsel, Ages Old, Which Can Keep You Well Today* — by Clark B. McCall

In his first letter to the Christians in Corinth the apostle Paul asked this question, "Do you know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are." 1 Corinthians 3:16, 17, R.S.V.

Throughout Old Testament times God gave detailed instructions on how to care for the body temple. He had promised, "If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord your God, and do that which is right in His eyes, and give heed to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases upon you which I put upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord, your Healer." Exodus 15:26, R.S.V.

This instruction was largely overlooked, and a long night of darkness and superstition engulfed the world.

During the Dark Ages, the black death took millions of lives. In the fourteenth century this dread disease killed one out of every four Europeans.

What finally brought the major plagues of the Middle Ages under control? According to Dr. George Rosen, of Columbia University, it was quarantine, as taught in the book of Leviticus. "All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be defiled; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." Leviticus 13:46.

What a tragedy that millions of lives were lost before medical science rediscovered a directive God had given Moses 3,000 years earlier!

While the black death, leprosy, and other diseases were brought under control, men continued to ignore God's promise that they would be free of disease if they would obey His laws of health. Intestinal diseases such as typhoid fever, cholera, and dysentery took a heavy toll of lives.

In the early 1840's a young Vienna doctor, Ignaz Semmelweis, was given charge of the obstetrical ward in a city hospital. He became alarmed over the high mortality rate among the patients.



It was routine practice of physicians and students in those days to perform autopsies on victims who had died within the preceeding twenty-four hours. Afterward, without washing their hands, the doctors would enter the maternity wards to examine the living patients. Noting that it was particularly the women examined by the doctors and students who died, Dr. Semmelweis established a rule in his ward that all who performed autopsies must first wash their hands before examining patients. This created a howl of protest. However, whereas in April, 1847, before the new rule went into effect, fifty-seven women died in Dr. Semmelweis's ward, in June only one out of every forty-two women died. In July the number was reduced to one out of every eighty-four.

Semmelweis was not acclaimed by his associates, despite the amazing statistical evidence he amassed. His mind broke under the strain of scorn from his fellows, and he died without receiving the recognition he deserved.

Semmelweis had rediscovered the instruction God had given Moses thousands of years before regarding the proper method for washing the hands after handling the dead or the infected living. See Numbers 19. There were to be repeated washings in running water, with time intervals for drying and exposure to the sun to kill bacteria. Clothing was to be changed, also washed and dried. Thousands of lives would have been saved had men remembered God's health commandments.

In his fascinating book *None of These Diseases*, Dr. S. I. McMillen, a former medical missionary for the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Africa, relates an interesting fact about circumcision. It has been discovered that a newborn infant has a peculiar susceptibility to bleeding between the second and fifth days of life. Physicians feel that the tendency to hemorrhage is due to the fact that the important blood-clotting element vitamin K is not formed in the normal amount until the fifth to the seventh day of life.

A second element which is also necessary for the normal clotting of blood is prothrombin. Data reveals that on the third day of a baby's life the available prothrombin is only 30 percent of normal. However, on the eighth day the prothrombin skyrockets to 110 percent and then levels off to the normal 100 percent. Thus on the eighth day a baby has more available prothrombin than on any other day in its entire life.

Medical science has concluded, after years of research and great expense, that the perfect day to perform a circumcision is the eighth day. Yet this knowledge was made available thousands of years ago by the Creator of vitamin K and prothrombin. God told Abraham, "And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised." Genesis 17:12.

With each passing year medical research confirms anew the divine origin of the Bible. Our faith is strengthened in a heavenly Father who cared enough to give commandments that would preserve our physical health as well as our spiritual life. When we obey these laws we prosper, but when we violate them we suffer unhappy consequences.

Recent statistics reveal that diseased arteries are responsible for over half of all deaths. Heart attacks, strokes, and other diseases are caused by the clogging of the arteries. Then the blood supply to vital tissues is cut off.

In recent years great emphasis has been placed on reducing cholesterol in the blood, since there appears to be

a close connection between a high cholesterol level and heart disease. Medical science has awakened to the fact that eating animal fat forms cholesterol tumors within the walls of the arteries, which hinder the flow of blood.

Thirty-five hundred years ago God warned His people "Ye shall eat no manner of fat, of ox, or of sheep, or of goat." Leviticus 7:23.

Researchers have discovered that smoking also increases the cholesterol in the blood. In a study of 187,000 men over a period of forty-four months, it was discovered that one third of the coronary deaths were attributable to smoking. Researchers reported that nicotine caused the formation of the following substances, in this order: adrenaline, free fatty acids, and cholesterol. Smoking produces adrenaline, and adrenaline calls forth from the fatty deposits of the body the cholesterol.

We may be assured God was seeking to save us from the suffering of heart disease, cancer, and other tobacco-related diseases, when He warned, "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." 1 Corinthians 3:17.

Solomon warned against another common killer: "Listen, my son, and be wise, be guided by good sense: never sit down with tipsy men or among gluttons; the drunkard and the glutton come to poverty, and reveling leaves men in rags." "Who shriek? Who groan? Who quarrel and grumble? Who are bruised for nothing? Who have bleary eyes? Those who linger over the bottle, those who relish blended wines. Then look not on the wine so red, that sparkles in the cup; it glides down smoothly at the first, but in the end it bites like any snake, it stings you like an adder." Proverbs 23:19-21, 29-32, Moffatt.

When we compute the loss of life, health, and money resulting from the consumption of alcoholic beverages, we realize the extent of the misery mankind could have avoided through obedience to the Book of books.

In recent years medicine has recognized the close relationship existing between the mind and the body. Medicine today recognizes that millions suffer physical ills as a result of improper thinking. Mabel K. Gill in her book *Mind, Body, and Religion*, page 67, states "The real situation in mind-caused diseases is not, 'She thinks she is sick,' but, 'Her thoughts have made her sick.'"

Fear, worry, hate, selfishness, greed, and a host of other negative thoughts and emotions are responsible for the development of scores of ailments afflicting mankind today.

Doctors tell us that the brain is connected to the body's organs, glands, and muscles by nerves. When the mind is filled with stress, the message is carried to all parts of the body via these nerves.

As a hospital chaplain for two years I noted the close tie between the mental state of the patients and the speed of their recovery. I witnessed the vital role that Christian hope and faith played in the patients' healing and final recovery.

The One who planned the complex machinery of human life stated the first principle of psychosomatic medicine when He said, "For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he." Proverbs 23:7.

The type of thinking that will promote life and health was prescribed by the apostle Paul: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure,



whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Philippians 4:8.

Perhaps your mind has been fearful. Then banish fear with the assurance, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." Psalm 91:11. If your mind has been filled with depression, Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27.

Does a feeling of inadequacy or inferiority lessen your strength and vitality? Then claim the sweet assurance, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

Is it a guilty conscience that is slowly eroding your life forces? The remedy is provided in this precious promise, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Whatever the burden that may weigh on your mind, God has a healing promise in His life-giving Word. As you read His blessed prescriptions, you will find the answer to your need.

The Bible was given not only to provide the hope of eternal life through Christ in a better world. It was given to furnish principles for putting new meaning into our present lives. We may be sure Christ was thinking of our practical needs when He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10. [END]

## How Faith Can Keep You Well

*(Continued from page 27)*

Hebrews, answers this question by stating: "No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Hebrews 12:11.

Here we observe that unwelcome circumstances ("chastening") are God's means of developing noble characters among His followers.

5. Why does God forbid some of the things I would like to do? This question brings up a consideration of God's law—the rule of conduct by which He indicates the type of behavior which is acceptable to Him.

Early in the book of Romans the apostle Paul mentions the importance of faith when he says, "The just shall live by faith." But most of the book of Romans is devoted to a discussion of God's law. In chapter 3, using an interesting figure of speech, Paul tells the function of the law: "It is the straightedge of the law that shows us how crooked we are." Romans 3:20, Phillips.

God is our Creator and Judge. It is not for us to challenge His wisdom in stating, through His law, the type of conduct He requires.

6. Why does God permit wickedness? This question bothered King David, for we notice in Psalm 73:3 that he wrote, "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked." David observed that many times the wicked escape punishment and seem to be favored above those who are abiding by God's law.

It is God's plan to permit us to exercise our power of

choice. Each individual is allowed to accept or reject God's plan for his life. In Hebrews, chapter 11, we have an insight into what this meant in the experience of Moses.

It is very clear that Moses was a child of providence and that there was a plan for him to do a great work for God. However, Moses could have turned his back on God's plan and could have chosen to follow personal inclinations. His choice is described thus: "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Hebrews 11:24, 25.

Many do otherwise than Moses did, preferring "to enjoy the pleasures of sin." God in His mercy permits this to be so, reserving for the day of final judgment the penalty or the reward, as the case may be.

7. Why does God permit suffering and tragedy? The Scriptures teach that the difficult experiences of life are God's means of developing character and of providing a demonstration of the individual's sincerity when he chooses to follow God's way. In Hebrews 12:5-7 we read, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him: for whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

When you undergo hardships, therefore, you should accept these as evidence that God is arranging circumstances to bring the best out of you and to prepare you for the place in life which He has planned for you to fill.

8. Why does God not answer my prayer the way I want Him to? The more we learn about God and His character, the more we realize that He is merciful and that His interests are to bring to His human children the greatest opportunities for development in harmony with the divine purpose. God knows our motives when we pray and translates our prayers in ways that will bring to us the greatest eternal benefits rather than catering to our whims and selfish desires of the moment. The prophet Isaiah summarized this principle when he said, "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Isaiah 59:2. In other words, our selfishness and perversity prevent our prayers from being answered in the ways we would prefer. When we pray as did the Master, "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39), we can be assured that God will hear and answer in the way that is best.

### *Faith Brings Peace and Health*

Now that we have observed the Bible's answers to the questions that disquiet the human mind and make the body susceptible to disease, let me emphasize that it is the exercise of faith that enables a person to apply these answers in his own experience. By such an exercise one's mind becomes at peace and his health is sustained by the wholesome mental attitude which results.

"Don't worry over anything whatever; tell God every detail of your needs in earnest and thankful prayer, and the peace of God, which transcends human understanding, will keep constant guard over your hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:6, 7, Phillips.

[END]



# YOUR BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED

by CHARLES D. UTT

## GENERATIONS OF THE HEAVENS AND EARTH

In three or more places the Bible says that God made the heavens and earth in six days and rested on the seventh. Why would the Bible say this if it were not literally true? What about the word "generations" in Genesis 2:4?

J. M. M.

Genesis 2:4 reads as follows: "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."

This does not contradict the teaching of chapter 1 that the earth was made in six days. The word "generations" is derived from the Hebrew word that means to bear or bring forth. The thought then is, "This is the birth, or origin, of the earth," without implying that the "generations" were long periods of time. The Smith and Goodspeed American Translation reads, "The following are the origins of the heavens and the earth in their creation." Another modern translation reads "Such origin heaven and earth had in the day of their fashioning." Knox.

The days of creation are appropriately called generations because each one marked a distinct stage in the outworking of God's creative plan.

## SEVEN WOMEN AND ONE MAN

Please explain Isaiah 4:1, 5. Who are represented by the seven women and one man?

A. K.

"And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." This verse is a continuation of the last verses of chapter 3. There were no chapter divisions in the book originally.

Chapter 3 is a prophecy of destruction to come upon Judah and Jerusalem for their sins. Most of the men will be killed. Verse 25. Only in the way described will women be able to

have husbands at all. They will not ask for a husband's support, but only his name, so that they will not have the disgrace of being unmarried and childless. In Bible times it was considered a great reproach to a woman of marriageable age not to be married.

In verses 2 to 4 are God's promises of protection for the survivors in Zion and Jerusalem who are spared in these trying times. They will enjoy both God's blessing and the produce of the land. Verse 5 is clearly an allusion to the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night that was the token of God's presence during Israel's wilderness wanderings. "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defense." Again He will be their protection, as is further brought out in the following verse: "And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."

## INTERNATIONAL SERVICE

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This prophecy is interpreted by some to forecast a time when seven women—in symbolic prophecy, churches—will want nothing more of Christ's than His name. They will go their own worldly ways, wear their own apparel of human righteousness instead of Christ's robe of righteousness, and eat their own spiritually impoverished food in preference to the bread of life. Such an interpretation, however, overlooks the context in which the verse is found.

## BOTTLE OF TEARS

What does David mean by the words, "Put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?" Psalm 56:8.

D. K.

In the preceding verses David has prayed for God's help against his enemies. Though they might swallow him up, he has confidence in God's knowledge of his situation. He says, "Thou tellest my wanderings: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle: are they not in Thy book?" The word "tellect" has the old meaning of count. (A bank teller is one who counts money.) David evidently refers to his experiences as a fugitive when Saul sought to kill him. At God's command Samuel had anointed David to be king over Israel (1 Samuel 16), but the way to the throne was beset with many difficulties. Still David believed that God had noted his wanderings and would keep account of his hiding places.

The ancient "bottle" was the skin of an animal prepared to hold liquids, as milk or wine. See Judges 4:19; 1 Samuel 16:29. David did not mean that God literally put his tears in a bottle, but that God had taken account of all the tears he had shed because of the hostility of his enemies. Changing the figure of speech, David expresses the desire that a record of his tears be kept in God's book, the book of remembrance. Psalm 139:16; Malachi 3:16. The bottle and the book would serve the same purpose, to keep a record of his tears. David did not think that his tears were shed in vain or that God would forget them.

## Answers to "Test Your Word Power"

1. Pharaoh (Exodus, chapters 3 to 14).
2. Cain (Genesis 4:1-8).
3. Barabbas (Matthew 27:15-18).
4. Ahab (1 Kings 18:17-40).
5. Simon the sorcerer (Acts 8:9-24).
6. Haman (Book of Esther).
7. Sisera (Judges, chapter 4).
8. Goliath (1 Samuel 17:23-54).

## SCORE

- 8 correct, excellent
- 6-7 correct, good
- 4-5 correct, fair
- 0-3 correct, more Bible study needed



# What America Needs Most Today

(Continued from page 25)

of the major crimes committed in this state—I don't mean the misdemeanors, I mean the felonies, the major crimes—are committed by young people twenty-one years of age or less; and 56 percent of the crimes are committed by young people sixteen years of age or less.

In the course of one of these regional conferences a high school principal gave me this letter written by a fifteen-year-old girl. I want to read it because I think the problem in America that is frequently described as juvenile delinquency is not primarily juvenile delinquency but adult debauchery and delinquency, and a preoccupation of adults with activities other than the well-being of their own children. This letter was written in answer to the question, "What type of help would you most like to have?" Under the title, "Please Help Us!" this fifteen-year-old girl wrote:

"Too many teen-agers are deprived of discipline. My mother, like the others, is looking for an easy way out. She is afraid to exert the authority she has as a mother. Instead of telling us, 'Clean up your room!' she says, 'I don't see how you can stand your room that way. I would be embarrassed to let my friends see my room like that. I wonder what they tell their parents when they get home.' She continues this complaining, but it never does any good. She works, and she is often very tired; but instead of telling us, or ordering us, to have the house clean when she gets home, and enforcing it, she again whines and complains. Of course, we are sorry then, but what good does it do? We can't, or won't start cleaning just because she is complaining. Then she will complain even more.

"I, and all other teens, want and need discipline. Very few will dislike their parents because they punish a teen fairly and for good reason. Many more will dislike their parents because they don't punish them, because it seems

as if they don't care. Of course, you will find very few teens who will jump the instant an order is given. They want their parents to prove they really care if it is done, and if the teens themselves have to do it. If the parents give up easily and do it themselves, the children are disappointed with them and lose respect.

"Too often my mother will tell me or my sister to do something; and if we don't consent right away, she does it herself. We are so used to it now, we hardly ever do anything around the house. I don't know how often I have wished my parents would punish me for not doing something instead of complaining and nagging. I'm so used to their nagging now I just stop listening. I've heard everything at least once anyway.

"I have little respect for my parents now. They let me do anything I want. No one can respect someone with no authority at all, and I feel that few teens do respect their parents if they don't discipline them; and therefore they lose respect for all other grownups and even themselves, because they feel as if they are not important enough to help or care about. It is from these teens that our selfish, immature adults come. You must work to teach people the necessity of discipline so more parents won't be anguished by what are called wild, unruly teen-agers, the ones who give all teens a bad name; and so no more young adults will grow up unprepared for the cruel, cruel world."

Now the facts are that teen-agers are more exacting on their contemporaries than the adults are, and in most instances the failure of adult discipline and adult guidance is a lack of conviction and standards. I respect you people for your high standards.

I think we live in an age when there is a need for churches to spearhead a revival of faith in God, faith in the individual, faith in truth, faith in the family, and faith in our fellowmen. I think we need to dedicate our lives and our efforts to the basic spiritual principles on which this nation is founded.

[END]

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## **GREATEST GIFT OF ALL** by Sanford T. Whitman

In the little home on Beaver Meadows, Christmas is always a simple occasion. By choice these people hold to the plain things of life. They believe that a daily experience of selfless love is more satisfying personally and more pleasing to God than excessive seasonal display.

Nevertheless, festivity is in the air. The children are home from school, father from work. Company is on the way. There is a tree in the corner. Or by the window. And even practical presents are intriguing.

For father, Christmas day begins like all others. He arises early, kindles a fire on the hearth, draws up a rocking chair, and watches the tiny flicker grow to a leaping flame. Sometimes he reads. Sometimes he writes. Sometimes he listens to the wind—or the rain on the roof.

On this particular morning his thoughts took an unusual turn. This was the best Christmas he had known, and he was keenly aware of his blessings. Resting by the fire, with the storm king raking the high country and daylight more than an hour away, he found himself repeating the familiar words of Scripture:

"For God so loved . . . that He gave His . . . Son."  
John 3:16.

"Mountains of presents," he muttered to himself, "but how many are aware of the greatest Gift of all? *God's gift of His Son?*"

The truth of his observation is obvious to every believer. How many of us are conscious of God's Gift, much less mindful of its value?

What does God give when He gives His Son?

**Life.** In our fallen state we are blind to truth, disobedient to the law of love, deaf to the voice of the Spirit, dead in trespasses and sins. Ephesians 2:1, The life we live is not original with us. It is a given life. A loaned life. It is ours to use for a time but not ours eternally, except through the operation of the gospel.

**Light.** God does more than give life. Into our darkness

He sends light. Into our error He sends truth. Into our ignorance He sends wisdom. Into our confusion He sends perspective. Into our despair He sends hope.

**Deliverance.** Our souls cry out to God for the help they must have, help which only He can give. In His Son God provides a quickening Spirit. An abhorrence for sin. A longing for holiness. Faith to believe. Willingness to accept. Power to obey. The charm of sin is shattered. The burden of sin is lifted. The shackles of sin are broken. Those who have been captive are now free.

**Love.** The basic law and greatest power in the universe. The measureless tide of infinite love. Love that planned and built the universe. Love that planned and gave life to our physical bodies. Love that blueprinted and activated redemption. The love of Calvary. Love that offers joint heirship in the kingdom of the Son. Love that cannot be idle and can only do good.

**Peace.** The peace of sins removed. The peace of sin conquered. The peace of holy living. Peace that can only broaden and deepen and become more satisfying as time goes on.

**All things.** Every lack supplied. Every deficiency made up. Everything that separates us from God removed. Everything that makes us unlike God corrected.

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.

God's Gift is symbolized in several ways. The Lamb of God. The Light of the world. The Bread of heaven. The Water of life. The Good Shepherd. By every means known to infinite wisdom, by every energy of infinite power, God seeks to make the inestimable Gift known to men. With inexpressible yearning the Spirit woos us.

Who on Christmas morning would refuse even the least gift under the tree? How much less should we refuse or neglect the Gift that God has given!



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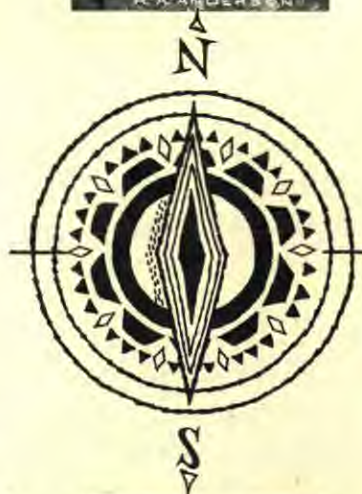
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