

Signs of the Times

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★ CAN YOU ANSWER THE PERTINENT QUESTION

What Is a Christian ?

THEN READ THIS INFORMATIVE DEFINITION

W. A. TOWNEND

A YOUNG Australian living in India was surprised to find the native staff in a maternity hospital there had put a label reading "Christian" on the cot of his first-born son.

Disagreeing with what the nurses had called his young son and heir, this man believed that babies were not *born* Christians, thus they ought not to be *called* Christian. "Christians," he said, "are such because of their own choice, not the choice of their parents." Was he right on this?

The very first people ever called "Christians" (Acts 11:26) were *actually* Christians before they were *called* Christians. Too, there may have been some "called Christians" in that group who were not really Christians at all. It is one thing to be named something; it can be quite another matter to really be that thing.

What is a Christian? Millions of people have asked this question. And not all have found the answer received particularly satisfying.

A Christian is one who has been called, converted, convicted, commissioned. A Christian has position, perspective, prospects.

Called

God's first recorded words to Adam after sin had separated earth's first man from his Creator were: "Where art thou?" (Gen. 3:9.) God still is calling man. He calls him through Christ the

crucified and risen Saviour and by the constant ministry of the Holy Spirit. A Christian is a man or woman or child who has first of all heard that call and from his place of hiding—his sinful life which has come between him and God—has answered "yes" to God, saying, in effect, "Yes, God, I'm here where I can't save myself. I am doomed unless You help me. I need God. I answer Your personal call to me."

Charles Wesley's heart overflowed in response to such a call. He wrote:

*Stupendous love of God most High!
He comes to meet us from the sky
In mildest majesty
Full of unutterable grace,
He calls the weary burdened race—
Come all for help to Me.*

That God is still calling is very clear. That people are still hearing and answering His call is equally clear. It is not too late.

Converted

Just above the place in your Bible where you first read the word Christian, you learn of those folk who were the first to be "called Christian," that they "believed, and turned unto the Lord." (Acts 11:21.)

These people of Antioch, like all people everywhere, were all born with their hearts turned away from God. When they "believed [Him] and turned unto the Lord," they were converted. That is what conversion, Christian conversion,



These children climbing over a reproduction of a prehistoric animal know little and care less about its name. Similarly it is the character of the Christian which is more important than the name by which he is called.

really means. Christians are converted people.

Now, conversion does not always have the exactly identical circumstances about it in each case. It is not the *types* of conversion but the *results* that are the same. Samuel, for instance, had what might be called a "sunrise" conversion. It was quiet, steady, unnoticed as his young life unfolded toward God.

Saul, on the other hand had a "dramatic" conversion. (Read Acts 9.) With the Ethiopian eunuch, conversion seems to have been of the "calm" kind. (Read Acts 8: 26-38.)

Conviction

Asked why she had consulted an astrologer, a Hollywood film star replied, "Oh, I believe in everything a little." Ours is largely a convictionless world today. And what a pity! For conviction gives life its challenge, sets life's course and gives it completion.

A Christian is a person of conviction. He has a deep and settled conviction concerning God. (Of course his feelings may vary quite a bit.) A Christian believes that God is, He always was, and He ever will be. He is sure God made and God sustains. He is equally certain that God in Christ, and through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can re-create. A Christian is also a person of conviction about these four things: He believes, 1, God loves him; 2, his sins have been forgiven; 3, God will see him through; 4, God in Christ will complete his redemption at Christ's second coming.

Commissioned

A Christian is a commissioned person. He has a commission from God. (Matt. 28: 18-20.) He takes this very seriously. He sees life's first task as being that of leading men and women to the salvation that is found only in Christ.

As Robert Dark once wrote, "a Christian belongs to the R.F.A.—Ready For Anything—provided it is for God's work with humanity."

Some Christians answer calls to full time paid service in foreign lands, while others enter similar service in the homeland. But not all Christians are on the payroll of a church. Far from it. But all real Christians work for the Christ, whose name they carry. They have been commissioned. By God's grace they seek to be true to their commission.

Position

No one has better standing than a Christian has. His position is "in Christ." In himself he's just another son of Adam—under the curse of sin and thus without standing where standing counts the most—with God.

But how different it is when this son of Adam hears God's call, is converted, convicted, and commissioned! Then it is that he stands "in Christ." What Christ has is his. What Christ did by way of the conquest of sin, He did for the Christian. Christ's victories are the Christian's. What standing!—"in Christ."

Perspective

The Christian's world is just like everybody else's. He lives in a world where there is sorrow, pain, death. It is a world where hearts ache, where disease is rampant, where the funeral train is an all too frequent sight. And yet things are different, very different, for the Christian—he has perspective. He sees meaning. Things add up. There is shape. There is a plan. There is a purpose. Life and the world in which it is lived have real meaning for the Christian.

Prospects

From his standing "in Christ" and the perspective it gives him, the Christian looks out and up to glorious prospects. John 14: 1-3 has real meaning. "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." A hundred other promises from God light up the future. Like Abraham (Heb. 11: 10) of old, the modern Christian knows there's a fortune in his future.

Heaven to him is a real place for real people. Eternal life to him is "life more abundant" for ever. Verily it will be life without end.

Prospects?—brilliant and never fading—as solid as the promises of God—these are the Christian's.

What is a Christian? Well, for a thumb-nail sketch of one, a sketch in which are the miniatures of the things we have written about, turn in your Bible

to the second verse before where you read "Christian" for the first time. Of Barnabas Acts 11: 24 says, "For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord."

Barnabas was called, converted, convicted, and commissioned. And he surely had position, perspective, and prospects.

"Christianity is Christ." Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas says in his book bearing this title that Christianity is "the only religion in the world that rests on the Person of its founder." He also observes that one could be a Mohammedan without being concerned about the person of Mohammed, or a Buddhist without knowing much about Buddha. Not so with Christianity, for "Christianity is Christ."

Thinker Foakes-Jackson crisply put it this way. "Christianity is in essence adherence to the Person of Christ." And Dr. Thomas, whom we have already quoted, comes in with: "Christianity is so bound up with Christ that our view of the Person of Christ involves and determines our view of Christianity."

*Immortal love, for ever full,
For ever flowing free,
For ever shared, for ever whole,
A never-ebbing sea.
O Lord and Master of us all,
What'er our name or sign,
We own Thy way, we hear Thy call,
We test our lives by Thine.
We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray;
But, dim or clear, we own in Thee
The Light, the Truth, the Way.*
Whittier.

And Christian— isn't it good to be a Christian? If perchance you have not as yet experienced this joy, NOW is the time for you to commence.

STRANGE BUT TRUE

WHAT has happened to our civilization in 1958? We have the most elaborate welfare programme and rehabilitation service—but crime increases and our goals are crowded.

We spend more and more millions on education but see less results in genuine

learning. In fact we have produced too many "blackboard jungles."

We have marriage counselling, classes on marital relations in high school and college—and more divorces!

Never before has man been able to travel as swiftly and easily to distant lands—and never has he been more restricted when he tried to travel.

We know more about the life and customs of the people of earth than ever before—and two world wars have killed more of our fellow men than any previous conflicts.

We have invented marvels that the wildest dreams of a century ago could not have predicted—and by our genius we stand helplessly waiting for our world to be blown to bits.

We have more churches, a greater interest in religion—but where can be found genuine godliness and deep spiritual strength?

We can send man-made satellites into space, and we hear of travel to the moon—but we have not learned how to live happily with our next-door neighbour.

Yes, it is a strange world we live in; of that we are certain!

Come, Follow Me

INEZ BRASIER

I read in an old, old chapter,
Of Jesus near the sea
Calling Peter and James and John,
"Fishermen, follow Me."

I think His voice is yet calling
Through every busy day,
Ever to be His disciples,
Ever to go His way.

My heart is stirred. "Come, follow Me!"
These words I hear Him say.
Gladly I walk with Him, my Lord,
Along life's path today.

CURRENT EVENTS
AND OPINIONS

Lambeth Speaks

ONE of the most important ecclesiastical happenings during the year which has just closed, was without doubt the Lambeth Conference in England, attended by some 310 archbishops and bishops of the Anglican Communion. It was only natural that the secular press spent more time commenting on the views expressed by the Conference in connection with international affairs. For this reason we have awaited with considerable interest a fuller report of the deliberations of this august assemblage, and the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is indebted to its British counterpart, *The Bible and Our Times*, for this report.

It is quite apparent that one of the major issues discussed was that of ecumenical church unity. In their Encyclical Message, the Lambeth bishops indicated the importance they placed upon this phase of their discussions when they declared: "A divided church cannot heal the wounds of a divided world. Therefore our most urgent concern has been with our divisions." The SIGNS has already commented editorially on statements concerning the desirability of church union made by the Archbishop of Melbourne on his return from Lambeth, but it is interesting to note our London editor's report. He states: "If the Non-conformist churches were expecting any relaxation of the Anglican position on the necessity of returning to the historical episcopate, they will be disappointed, for in categorical terms it was affirmed that 'loyalty to the age-long tradition of the church . . . compels us to believe that a ministry to be acknowledged by every part of the church can only be attained through the historic episcopate.'"

"In other words, the Anglican Communion believes its vocation to be in the restoration of a world-wide 'Catholic and Apostolic' church, first by reuniting all the non-Roman churches of Christendom with the 'historic episcopate' which it has inherited from the primitive church, and ultimately achieving reconciliation with the 'Catholic and Apostolic' church of Rome."

While this very clear directive to work for church unity given by the Lambeth Conference has evoked the most comment, we feel that there was another very significant section of their report which dealt with the authority of the Bible. All Fundamentalists—those who believe in a literal understanding of what the Bible states—will read this declaration with a great deal of interest: "The Con-

ference affirms that Jesus Christ lives in His church through the Holy Spirit according to His promise, and that the church is therefore both guardian and interpreter of Holy Scripture."

This statement has a very familiar ring about it, for, of course, it represents precisely the same position as that taken by the Roman Catholic Church. It was not surprising therefore to read a comment on this section of the report in the Roman Catholic *Tablet* which stated: "This is in essence a restatement of the traditional Catholic view, that the Bible cannot be separated from the church, or taken away and used against the church."

Not for one moment would we wish to argue with the statement that "Jesus Christ lives in His church through the Holy Spirit," for we believe this to be true, but we do take serious issue with the inference which is drawn from this, that the church therefore becomes the only interpreter of the Bible. In a very real sense, the Holy Spirit is a personal gift to the individuals who yield their lives to Christ's control. To His immediate circle of followers, and through them to all who would heed His call, Christ promised: "Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come." John 16: 13.

We believe that God's church on earth is the supreme object of His regard, but we feel that due caution should be exercised not to disparage the primacy of the individual in his personal relationship with his God. We cannot forget prophetic statements made in the closing book of the Bible which reveal the power which will work through a unified church in the last days of earth's history. For this and other reasons we believe that Christians should carefully study God's Word for themselves, looking to the Holy Spirit for the illumination of mind they need, rather than looking to the church to interpret the Scriptures.

R. C. P.

Spiritual Atrophy

GARDEN lovers delight in exchanging cuttings of their special roses or shrubs. Always there is the critical period between planting and the time when the cutting has really begun its independent growth. Often, if cuttings have been taken in the winter, there will be the swelling buds and opening leaves in

spring; but all too often, these will lack strength and colour, and after a few days or weeks, will wilt and die.

Even if it puts out flowers, and appears to be quite established, maybe the cutting is living only on the sap that was in the branch. It is not rooted and grounded, drawing for itself the moisture and nourishment of the soil, and manufacturing the elements of life in the life-giving sunlight. Even if it seems to be living and growing, unless there is a vital connection with the soil, the cutting will wither and die in the sunlight that is life itself to healthy, rooted plants.

Today I looked at the bed where in August I had hopefully planted cuttings of two glorious single roses, Mermaid and Nancy Hayward. In September the buds swelled and burst, and tiny leaves appeared. In October every one of the eight cuttings looked as if it was really living; but towards the end of the month, three of the cuttings began to look unhealthy; the leaves yellowed and failed, the cuttings turned yellow, then brown, and today I pulled up these three. There was not the vestige of a root. The other five cuttings are making their second burst of growth, and all look healthy. Though I didn't pull them up to look, I feel confident that each of these cuttings is now rooted, and will become a well-established plant.

Looking at these cuttings, some living, some dead or dying, I thought of John G. McKenzie's column in the *British Weekly*, and his discussion of spiritual atrophy as being the cause of the evils of society today.

"That our modern world is suffering from some kind of disease all social consultants are agreed. The symptoms are multiple—increased crime, in divorce, in delinquency among the young, violence, and alcoholism. Mental disturbance is widespread. . . . Our consciences have been blunted, so that our moral responsibilities weigh less heavily upon us than upon our fathers and grandfathers. Honesty is not now considered the best policy. . . ."

"All these are symptoms, not the disease."

Professor McKenzie then quotes a doctor who said that "the commonest human disease today is spiritual atrophy." The dictionary definition of "atrophy" is: "Wasting away through imperfect nourishment."

Professor McKenzie continues: "The vital spiritual processes through which we discern and appreciate the spiritual values of truth, beauty, and goodness, and seek to realize them; the moral consciousness in whose clear light we see the moral idea; the will by which we seek to follow it; the spiritual intuition in virtue of which we see God, are unable to function."

We are living on the spiritual capital of our fathers, and when it is used up we shall suffer shipwreck. Flowers bloom for a while after they have been severed from the rooted plant. By various devices they may be kept alive for a longer

(Concluded on page 6)

The Sec

HOW AM



In its search for happiness this British family had migrated to Australia where five children were born, to Malaya where two were born, the eighth child being born in Britain. They are here pictured arriving in South Africa in another attempt to find happiness.

done under the sun." Eccl. 1:13, 14. Did he succeed in his quest? Let us see.

There was no science that was known anywhere in the world that he did not understand. He studied the laws of all nations and became the foremost lawyer in the world. He gathered together the priceless works of literature and enjoyed their inspiration and beauty. He studied the creeds of all nations and peoples. He acquired all the wisdom and knowledge of the whole world, but in it he did not find happiness. So he kelt down before God and asked for divine wisdom, and God gave him that. Solomon stood at the peak of wisdom. Kings marvelled at his knowledge. The Queen of Sheba journeyed to his courts to hear his wisdom.

But, Solomon, did all this mighty wisdom and knowledge bring you happiness? He answers: "In much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." "Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit." Eccl. 1:18, 14.

To the question put to Thomas A. Edison on his eightieth birthday, "What is your secret of a happy life?" he replied, "I have never known a happy man." The road to happiness is not the pathway of learning and wisdom.

Does Wealth Bring Happiness?

Then Solomon searched for happiness through wealth. He became the world's most wealthy man. He was much richer than the richest man who lives today.

Solomon, did riches bring you happiness? "He that trusteth in his riches shall fall." "Riches profit not in the day of wrath." "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold." Prov. 11:28, 4; 22:1. "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity," he says.

He lived in a sumptuous palace with golden chairs and beds. The walls were adorned with silks and tapestries from the East. The floors were covered with beautiful rugs. Jewels were glistening in every room. There were ivory thrones and gem-studded crowns. Didn't a beautiful place in which to live make you happy, Solomon? He built the temple, six hundred feet long, four hundred feet wide, and three stories high. It was finished with cedar overlaid with pure gold.

THE greatest desire of the human heart is for happiness. It helps a deal to make life worth while. If anyone were convinced that he could never be happy, he would not want to live. The pursuit of happiness is the impelling force that drives people to the greatest extremes to acquire it.

At the canvas, the artist sits with his brush to create in colour and figure his dream of happiness; but he finds, to his dismay, that it cannot be portrayed on canvas. The musician's fingers wander over the strings of the harp until a chord is struck that seems to unlock the melody of happiness; but, as the strains die away, the perfect theme is ended.

The rich man hoards his wealth with uncanny skill. As he lays his head upon his pillow of luxury and ease, he dreams of beauty, peace, life, and happiness; but when he awakes in the morning, his gold has tarnished, and the day is dark. Millions rush madly to the white lights of the pleasure marts and view the land of make-believe. There they find laughter and song as a tinsel that covers broken hearts and jaded souls. The light flickers and fades into the darkest of nights, and the song dies away with a sob.

Happiness—the world in a great procession marches on, ever seeking, but seldom finding it. To many seekers the end of the trail is despair. Most people go through life seeking for happiness like the boy who chases the rainbow. When the lad sees the crescent of colour upon the hill, he runs to bathe himself in its gorgeous hues, only to find that it has moved to the next hill. So, rushing madly on through life, pursuing happiness, people finally find their hair turning white, their shoulders stooping, the wrinkles stealing across their faces, and their steps faltering. At last there is a stumble, a moan, an outstretched arm, an open hand; they have come to the end of the trail with happiness just beyond.

Does Wisdom Give Happiness?

Yet some have found the coveted prize, and I want to tell you where you may find it.

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, set himself to search for happiness. "I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things that are done under heaven," he says in Ecclesiastes: "I have seen all the works that are

Secret of Happiness

WHERE IT MAY BE FOUND

JOHN FORD

Every room was a golden room. He built many other beautiful buildings. He made parks, with lakes, fountains, and zoological and botanical gardens.

Surely, Solomon, you found happiness and contentment in this wonderful work? "Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun." Eccl. 2: 11.

He dined at golden tables and drank from golden goblets. He had the choicest food that could be obtained anywhere in the world, and it was prepared by the world's finest cooks and bakers. He could eat whenever he wished and whatever he wanted, but all he got out of it was a royal nightmare.

He rushed madly into pleasure to find happiness. He hired orchestras and bands to play for him. He sent for the world's greatest entertainers. In beautiful buildings with mellow lights and soft music, and at banquets where wine flowed in copious quantities, he searched for happiness. "I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, . . . till I might see what was that good for the sons of

men, which they should do under heaven all the days of their life." Verse 3.

Did wine bring you happiness, Solomon? "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." Prov. 20: 1. "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? . . . They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." Prov. 23: 29, 30.

The whole world, in search for happiness, has been vainly following in the footsteps of Solomon. In this pathway the world has lost its morality, judgment, and conscience until corruption, with its bony fingers, has gripped state, church, and home.

The Obedient Are Happy

Is there something, Solomon, that, in your rush for happiness, really brought to you that coveted trophy? Yes, there is something that I gleaned from life which is worth while and brings happiness, he says. What is it, Solomon? "He that keepeth the law, happy is he." Prov. 29: 18.

When Solomon came to the eventide of his life, after vainly spending years in his search for happiness, he sat down and wrote out a statement to serve as a guide to those who would follow in his footsteps. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Eccl. 12: 13, 14. The only one who can know real happiness is the one who has assurance of a future life in heaven, where there are no tears, sorrow, or death. Only those who keep His commandments have that assurance. "Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22: 14.

Paul, the greatest man of the New Testament, agreed upon the important thing in life. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing: obedience to God's commandments is everything." 1 Cor. 7: 19, Weymouth.

When we were passing through the dark days of World War I, Woodrow Wilson tried to bring cheer and hope to the boys in the American army by a special message to them. He wrote, "Strength and happiness and success are all summed up in the exhortation, 'Fear God, and keep His commandments.'"

The Recipe for Contentment

What the world needs today is a return to the keeping of the command-

ments. If the Ten Commandments were kept in both spirit and letter, war, stealing, adultery, and crime of all sorts would be abolished. Obedience to God's commandments would transform civilization and bring the world back from the brink of chaos and despair to hope and happiness.

Not so long ago, people believed in the Ten Commandments. Copies of the law of God adorned the walls of every church. But now, because of the teaching that the commandments have been abolished, God's law has come down from the church walls and out of the hearts of men.

Some say that the Ten Commandments are out of date and that we need a new law from God now. *It is impossible to get a new law from God, for the commandments are an expression of God's character.*

God is love, and so are the commandments. 1 John 4: 8; Matt. 22: 37-40.

God is truth, and so are the commandments. John 14: 6; Ps. 119: 142.

God is righteous, and so are all His commandments. 1 Cor. 1: 30; Ps. 119: 172.

God is perfect, and so are all the commandments. Matt. 5: 48; Ps. 19: 7.

God is holy, and so is the law. Isa. 6: 3; Rom. 7: 12.

The only way you could get a new law would be to get a new God. No people will throw away the commandments of God who truly believe in God. The world today has turned to strange gods of money and pleasure. These deities have no moral requirements, and they offer no lasting rewards.

Jesus was a strong believer in the Ten Commandments. "Do not suppose that I have come to do away with the law or the prophets. I have not come to do away with them but to enforce them. For I tell you, as long as heaven and earth endure, not one dotting of an *i* or crossing of a *t* will be dropped from the law until it is all observed. Anyone, therefore, who weakens one of the slightest of these commands, and teaches others to do so, will be ranked lowest in the kingdom of heaven; but anyone who observes them and teaches others to do so will be ranked high in the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 5: 17-19, Goodspeed.

If anybody tells you that it is not necessary to keep God's commandments, remember that Jesus kept them. "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." John 15: 10.

One day a man came to Him for instruction as to how he might enter into life and happiness. Jesus told him, "If thou wilt enter into life, *keep the commandments.*" Matt. 19: 17. The commandments, if lived out in a human life, would make a life that looks like the life of Jesus. Christ was the only one who ever kept the commandments perfectly. The closer one follows His perfect example, the closer he will come to living an ideal life and to enjoying the perfect happiness for which our hearts all yearn.

THE OLD SIMPLICITIES

GRACE NOLL CROWELL

The heart with its ancient hunger seeks today

Among the fields for sustenance, and finds

*No grain to glean along the barren way,
No corn left in the husks, no mill that grinds.*

*The substitutes for food are poor, indeed,
To meet the spirit's and the body's need.*

*We are hungry for the old simplicities:
For the friendliness on which our parents fed,*

For the long unhurried hours of quiet peace,

For neighbourliness that was their daily bread,

For sympathy welling up at some heart's brink,

And for wayside pools of love at which to drink.

God, let us find among the husks, somewhere,

The old simplicities that should be there.



When the Kaffirs Attacked

P. E. WILLMORE

AWAY back in the early days of the settling of the white man in South Africa, there were many wars between the settlers and the native peoples. Naturally, the Africans did not wish to give up to these white people who came from overseas the land they had owned for centuries; and frequently, as the white men and women built their homes and planted their fields, the Africans would swoop over the hills, kill the settlers, take away their cattle and sheep, and leave their homes in smouldering ruins. It was so also with the white traders who went deep into the country to establish trading stations for bartering with the Africans. Their lives were often in peril.

Many of these old-time settlers and traders were deeply religious, and placed their trust in the Lord when dangers beset them; and many were saved from death in miraculous ways. One such was my grandmother.

About the year 1832 my grandmother Jane, then a girl of thirteen, went with her mother and stepfather to live near one of the mission stations of the Glasgow Missionary Society, not far from Kingwilliamstown. Her stepfather was a trader. There were three children in the family, Jane, Tommy, and their small half brother, Charlie. They were all very happy, for at the mission station they could enjoy the pleasant company of other Christians.

Then came another war, in December, 1834.

"Oh, I don't like to think back to that dreadful day," grandmother told us, when she was eighty years of age. "The Kaffirs—that's what we called the Africans living in that place—came and began to ransack my stepfather's store. They knocked him down and killed him on the spot. We were sure they were going to kill us, too, but the hand of the Lord held them back. They came to our home, and ordered mother to leave. 'We are going to burn the place,' they told her.

"Tommy and I were nearly frightened to death, as you can well imagine, for those Kaffirs looked fierce indeed, with their faces painted and their heads decked out with feathers. And the clubs and spears they carried certainly looked like business. But mother was brave through it all, and told us not to be afraid. God would care for us and protect us, she said.

"She tied my little half brother Charlie, on her back, and took what

things she could in her hands. I also carried what I could, including a little volume of Bunyan's *'Pilgrim's Progress,'* which I treasured, and afterward kept for many years.

"We set out in the direction of a place named Fort Peddie, where soldiers were stationed to protect the settlers. We were sure our troubles were over, and were already thanking God for delivering us. But actually, danger was following hard on our heels, and we did not know it! Suddenly we were overtaken by an African girl who had been a nurse to Charlie. 'Don't go this way,' she panted. 'The Kaffirs will probably follow this trail, and when they find you, they will kill you. Come with me and I will show you where the white people are.'

"How glad we were that we had always been kind to that girl, so that she would come and help us now! We turned around and followed her until it grew quite late. Then she said, 'Go not toward the rising of the sun, nor toward the setting of the sun. Keep straight between the two.' And as quickly as she had come, she left us.

"We slept by some bushes that night, and the next morning trudged on again. Tommy was very small, but he was a manly little chap, and kept up. Sometimes I held his hand to encourage him. Later in the day, to our relief, some soldiers found us and took us to another mission station. We thought again of God's promise, 'He will give His angels charge over thee,' and thanked Him for fulfilling it in our behalf. And I felt that since God had spared my life, I should use it for Him."

Throughout her long life, grandmother never wavered in her faith. When she heard of the Sabbath, of the second coming of Jesus, and of other points of truth, she accepted them all, grateful that the One who knows the end from the beginning had spared her as a child and had led her through her many years.



Tribute to Mother

MY mother was one of the greatest exemplars of the quality of grace I ever knew. She left me one day to do a piece of work, and she and my father went off for the day. As soon as they were out of sight, the boys of the village came and told me how fine the fishing was. I went with them, intending to return and be hard at work before mother got back. But I miscalculated; when I returned, mother was standing in the door. She took me by the hand and started for my room. I knew what was just, and I knew what I was likely to get, but then came the miracle. Mother got down on her knees, put her hands on me, and told God all about me and what she expected me to become. She interpreted my life to God; then she bent over me and kissed me, and went out and left me. What would you think of a boy who would go back on that kind of mother? If she had taken a switch and applied it with vigour, it would not have made the least difference to me. I should have done the same thing again, but I never could after that. That turned my life. That is grace—the second mile.—*Rufus Jones.*

Life is quality, not quantity; content, not duration; quest, not arrival; personality, not position; truth, not conformity; character, not things; love, not rules; service, not indulgence; joy, not sadness; neighbourliness, not aloofness; chalice to fill, not cup to drain; spirit, not flesh; what we are, not what we have.

—*Frank Milton Sheldon.*

SPIRITUAL ATROPHY

(Concluded from page 3)

period; but eventually flowers cut off from their root must die.

So many people today give no thought to their spiritual life. Through lack of nourishment, it is either dead or dying. What manifestation of life there is, is simply the evidence that the spiritual capital of their fathers is not yet exhausted. They are like cuttings separated from the living root, but which continue to show for a time a weak and diseased life before they die.

But where the spiritual life is healthy and robust, there are no symptoms of weakness and disease, but vigorous growth that finds expression in flowers of beauty and fulfilment in fruits of service and love.

No lasting good can result from treating the symptoms of death and decay that result from a separation from God. Nothing short of a revival of spiritual life, a return to God, can restore wholeness and health. "In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

M. M. H.

NEWS in brief

► SENSITIVE instruments that measure the radioactivity of the human body reveal that each minute 200,000 atoms of potassium explode from each person.

► DOGS in the Animal Rescue League Home, Boston, Massachusetts, have air-conditioning, electric-eye doors, and continuous music over a public-address system.

► OF the nearly five tons of diamonds mined annually, most go into industrial use. Diamonds cut steel, saw stone, shape bowling balls, polish dental fillings, and play much of the world's recorded music.

► IN a report on the possibly enormous hazards from atomic fallout radiation, the United Nations Scientific Committee points out that it is not certain that the radiation will produce additional cases of leukemia or bone cancer, but it indicates that an important number of additional cases might result from man-made radiation.

► A NEW tubeless aeroplane tyre, which is filled with air by inserting an inflation needle through a rubber sidewall valve, is now being tested. The sidewall inflation method, a procedure familiar to every youngster with a football, signals the end for the cumbersome rim valve, a design and service problem in the aviation industry for many years.

► IN parts of central Alaska, summer and winter temperatures may have a range of 170 degrees Fahrenheit.

► YEARS ago in Wales, a musical instrument was the most important possession of a gentleman. Serfs were not permitted to touch the family harp, and even if the law confiscated the property of a gentleman, the harp could not be taken, since removing it would degrade the position of the owner.

► TWICE a day the world's highest tides funnel into Nova Scotia's Minas Basin, the eastern branch of the Bay of Fundy. The waters may rise 53 feet. Neighbouring creeks are swollen by the flow into broad rivers. When the tide runs out, the channels become fingers of red mud.

► A DISCREPANCY exists in radio comparison of British and American atomic clocks. These clocks, whose operation is based on the unvarying vibrations of the cesium atom, are accepted as the most accurate measurement standard available and in terms of time have an accuracy of one second per 300 years. An effort is being made to solve the difference in the clocks of the two nations.

► ABOUT 80,000 birds a year die on Britain's shores from oil contact. A bird landing on oil-topped water is very likely to stay there since the oil has a tendency to mat the feathers and prevent flight. Often the birds starve. Treatment of these birds is a problem, for washing the bird in detergents or soapsuds removes all the excess oil but also washes away all of the natural oils. A bird so treated cannot swim and if exposed to the air usually contracts pneumonia and dies. Recently fuller's earth or prepared chalk has been used successfully to absorb the excess oil but leave natural oil.

Signs of the Times

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THIS is an age of insecurity. It is evident in national relationships, business relationships, in the social world and in family life. The whole structure of our present-day economy seems to be breaking up. People are swept along and buffeted by the tide of events and there seems to be nothing solid upon which to stand. Everything is being drawn into the whirlpool of greed and selfishness. There seems to be no escape, no way out. Various solutions are offered from time to time, but the security measures of today will prove inadequate for tomorrow. The world's cries for help cannot be heard above the explosions of atomic experiments. As far as we can see, the new year has nothing better to offer than the old one. Is there no refuge from the gathering storm?

There is, but we must look for it outside this world. All the efforts of men to make the world a safe place have failed. It was never less safe. Security does not lie in the inventions of scientists, or in a stronger police force, or in plans for a more comprehensive educational system, or in any other scheme. There is only one way to safety and that is the way to God. We read in His Word: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Deut. 33: 27. "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." Ps. 46: 1. "In God is my salvation and my glory; the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God. Trust in Him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before Him: God is a refuge for us." Ps. 62: 7, 8.

How can we know these statements are true? Because since the beginning of the world God has never failed anyone who trusted Him. Of His dealings with the Children of Israel it is said: "There failed not aught of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the House of Israel; all came to pass." Joshua 21: 45.

God has not changed and will care for us in these difficult days in the same way as He cared for His people of old. Of Himself He says: "I am the Lord, I change not." Mal. 3: 16. The Apostle James said that with God there "is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." James 1: 17. It is not because God has turned from us that the



SECURITY

world is in such a terrible condition. It is because we have turned from Him.

As the prophet Jeremiah thought upon the compassion and longsuffering of God he was led to exclaim, "Great is Thy faithfulness." This is not only an age of insecurity, it is also an age of faithlessness. Many people today do not keep faith with one another. A man's word is seldom his bond. No reliance can be placed on what he says. Members of families and friends prove unfaithful to one another. But faithfulness is one of the attributes of the character of God. We can always rely upon His word.

Paul wrote, "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it." 1 Thess. 5: 24. God's faithfulness is not for certain individuals only, but is exercised towards everyone. David said, "Thy faithfulness is unto all generations." Ps. 119: 90.

From the foundation of the world provision was made to meet any emergency. Then after man sinned God did not cast him off, but outlined the plan of salvation and followed it up by counsel and instruction. We have a record of these in the Bible. In Isa. 25: 1 we read that God's "counsels of old are faithfulness and truth." The world today is in need of such counsel. It does not need a new doctrine. The counsels of

God have always been with us and their value has been demonstrated from the beginning of time. If down through the ages people had always heeded the instruction of the Lord and followed His counsels, the trouble and perplexity that now confront us would never have existed.

For six thousand years we have had a demonstration of the results of Satan's rule, and yet men continue to pay him homage. God has been longsuffering and compassionate, but the time is not far distant when the bounds of mercy will be passed. Fortunately the day of probation still lingers and there is yet time to turn to Him and escape the trouble that lies ahead. The wonder of it all is that we are so reluctant to do so.

While the nations continue in their headlong rush to destruction, the Lord will be a shelter in the time of storm to His people. He has promised: "Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee and thou shalt glorify Me." Ps. 50: 15. Despite the uncertain future, this coming year may be the best and happiest in our individual experience if we will but make God our refuge.

Myrtle O'Hara

