

Signs

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Background: Growing as a Fashioner



happiness
in
MARRIAGE
-how to find it

By BRUCE Johnston

THE TIMELESS cadence of the organ fills the air, and in a moment, over a blessed hush, we hear the words, "To have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part."

A deep sense of solemnity sweeps over the congregation at this impressive moment when two lives are being united in the bonds of marriage. How can one account for these feelings that unconsciously grip us while witnessing a wedding? Is the answer not found in the **sacred** character of marriage itself? It was in the mind of God that this most beautiful and meaningful of all human relationships was conceived. Love was the precious gift He gave to man and woman at their creation.

In one of the greatest love stories ever recorded we learn the sacred nature of marriage and catch a better glimpse of our Father's love:

"And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there He put the man whom He had formed." "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Genesis 2: 8, 18, 21-24.

From this Bible passage and Jesus' inspired commentary on it (see Matthew 19: 3-9), we see that God interprets Christian marriage to be the union of one Christian man to one Christian woman for life. There is nothing experimental or tentative about it. There is not the slightest hint that it may be entered upon with the reservation that it may be terminated if things do not work out as hoped.

The wedding vows form a solemn and binding commitment. Lovers do not repeat, "To love and to cherish for the **time being**"; nor "To have and to hold from this day until the honeymoon is over . . . until we tire of one another." The vows explicitly promise lifelong fidelity—"till death us do part."

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OUR COVER PICTURE. Russell Gibbs of Sydney submitted the transparency from which our cover picture was made. We liked it because it seemed to convey the questing uncertainty of modern youth.

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A Solid Foundation

"This is a high ideal," you exclaim; "how can we make it so?" The Bible has the answer: "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3: 11. This is a solid foundation and the only secure undergirding for a truly happy marriage.

Many rush headlong into marriage with little or no thought of its sacred character and surely no sense of responsibility to make of it what it is intended to be. When Jesus Christ has been by-passed in marriage plans, there is no source of help when things go wrong.

The strong "homing" instinct in man and woman has a tendency toward a mild—and sometimes not-so-mild hypnosis. A serious, mature facing up to responsibilities is often lost in the romantic dreams of marriage as a cure for all problems and a place of escape from all that has marred happiness in the past. Such people's formula for instant happiness is: Take a man; add a woman; mix in marriage. The outcome: eternal bliss!

When the Dream Fades

This dreamer's formula is a symptom of what could well be called a spoiled-child syndrome. When marriage doesn't turn into this infantile fairyland, literally thousands turn their backs on each other and call it quits.

I do not have statistics before me, but it is true on the basis of the past year that nearly 2,000,000 American couples will marry this year. Of these, approximately 500,000 won't make it! Before you shrug and take these figures for granted, stop for a moment and consider the magnitude of what we are talking about. How many people live in your town or community? Whether it be large or small, I think you can begin to see that this tremendous number of broken homes and hearts has an exceedingly serious effect on society as a whole, to say nothing of the many personal tragedies involved. God has made the home the basic unit of society. When the home breaks down, the future of the nation is indeed in jeopardy.

In the 1920s, Russian Communism depreciated this basic unit of society. Divorce was easy, free love encouraged. Women were "emancipated" from their womanly roles, and children became charges of the state. Communist leaders saw this as the true pattern of love for an atheistic society that had come of age. But chaos was the inevitable result of this costly experiment. Russia has completely reversed this policy. A divorce is now difficult to secure, and infidelity is severely criticized. What Russia discovered, but will not admit, is that marriage and the home are not an evolutionary society's temporary adjustment at a particular moment in history but are divinely ordained institutions that are absolutely essential to the well-being of mankind on this planet.



"Divorced" Children

Beyond the tragedy of separation of a man and wife is the greater tragedy of "divorced" children. One out of every four children today is affected by the torture of a torn home. Psychologists and psychiatrists tell us that it is impossible to divide the loyalties of the children between the separated parents. **They are the ones who more than others carry the scar of this misfortune. As a result, they themselves become more susceptible to contracting unhappy marriages, thus continuing a vicious vortex of bitterness and shattered hopes.**

In no way are we attempting to fix blame. What this all adds up to is that we need the counsel of God in seeking happy homes.

Jesus said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10: 10.

The twentieth century materialistic turn of mind is so absorbed in making a living that it has missed the making of a life—the renewed and fulfilled life that Christ alone can give, the life that alone can make a home truly complete and happy. It is at this level and on this basis that deep home problems are solved. The human heart is selfish. It wants its own way and

proposes to have it. When its desires are thwarted or denied, it is miserable. This is the root of marital trouble. Its only cure is found in Jesus Christ, who can give a new heart of love. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezekiel 36: 26, 27.

This is the essential solution, and without this the suggestions that follow will be only superficial at best.

The "Fifty-fifty Complex"

A simple principle for happiness is found in Romans 12: 10: "Be kindly affectioned one to another; . . . in honour preferring one another." A mistaken concept is cleared up in this simple counsel. Many enter marriage with a fifty-fifty complex: "I will meet him half-way if he will just meet me half-way." Couples often cannot understand why this arrangement fails. **They have missed the point that marriage is a giving, a sharing, a most solemn commitment to each other.** It cannot succeed if an arbitrary line is drawn with the reservation, "This far and no farther." Happy are the couples who go all out for each other.

The Bible has this to say to husbands: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Ephesians 5: 25.

This is the measure of love a husband is to bring to marriage. This is the secret of happiness. If followed, by the grace of God, it would lift the shadows in a million homes.

Ephesians 5: 23 states clearly the Biblical principle that the husband is the head of the home. This is not welcome counsel in our modern age, but many marital problems stem from disregard of this Biblically constituted order. Many are the blessings when it is taken seriously. The husband's authority is not arbitrary or absolute. The kingdom of the home is to be a united kingdom, and miserable has the lot of woman been when man has abused the authority that resides in him as the head of the house. Unhappy also is the home where authority and control are assumed by the wife. Women are the first to agree that a home is not truly happy when the wife dominates and controls.

Children Need Security

Children who come to grace the home are quick to sense any evidence of parental discontent or unhappiness. This is quickly reflected in their behaviour patterns. Unless there is a conscious effort on the part of parents to direct the minds of their children along right paths, there cannot be complete harmony in the home, in a marriage. Parents have heavy responsibilities in this regard. Children cannot be expected to grow into first-class citizens with a second-class home background. While children are one of the great factors in promoting the happiness of the home, they may, when uncontrolled or given too much licence, be the cause of much unhappiness that affects the whole atmosphere of the living environment.

Attention is directed to parental responsibility in Deuteronomy 6: 5-9; "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt

talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."

Elton and Pauline Trueblood have put it well when they say, "One of the greatest blessings which can come to any normal child is the existence of two parents."

The first need of the infant is the warm, physical, cuddling love at mother's breast. This is the beginning of security—the first step toward sound character-building and eventual maturity. The mother's first responsibility is in the home with the children. It is true that some brave mothers, facing life alone, must earn for their children, but many have no need to do so. Alan Walker raises a voice of protest to those who short-sheet the home for merely materialistic considerations:

"In primitive societies child sacrifice was an appalling practice. Today, on the altar of the dollar or at the base of a television set or a new car, a little child has been sacrificed! There are homes where the love and warmth and security which a mother alone can give have been lost in the search for a higher level of mere material comfort."—"A New Mind for a New Age," pages 46, 47.

A Crisis in the Family

It may sound strange to say that the man's place is also in the home. As breadwinner, it will, of course, be necessary for him to be away from the home; **but as much time as possible should be devoted to his family.**

Not the least consideration in having happy children is a father who keeps their mother happy. **One of the greatest secrets of a happy home is a father and mother in love with each other.** "Your baby," says Dr. David Goodman, a discerning authority on the emotional needs of children, "will smile at you and later at the world if you two will never cease to smile at each other."—"A Parent's Guide to the Emotional Needs of Children," page 29.

There is today a crisis in the breakdown of family life. It will undermine and one day destroy the nation if we do not rise to meet its challenge. Obviously it is something bigger than we are individually, yet revival and renewal of family life is possible, and it begins in our own home first. It begins in solemn commitment to the Lord. During a severe crisis in Israel long ago, the prophet Elijah was sent to bring about reformation. The first act on the road to renewal was to repair "the altar of the Lord that was broken down." 1 Kings 18: 30. This is our need at this present time—Jesus, the head of the home; husbands and wives kneeling with their children to acknowledge Him as Lord of all. These are not pious platitudes. Nothing in all the world is more important than this. Jesus Christ made marriage; He ordained the family as the basic unit of society. He knows what makes it happy; He knows what makes it work. He, and He alone, can supply the love for happy homes.

★★

EARLY in August I was sitting in the living-room of Guiding Eyes for the Blind, waiting to learn the name of my new guide dog. Around me I could hear the nervous conversation of eleven others, waiting as anxiously as I. Some were grieving for a dog just departed, others were here for the first time. All of us had come on a most important mission to tiny and, I'm told, beautiful Yorktown Heights in Westchester County, New York.

After what seemed an endless wait, I was finally called in to meet John. He was the man who had trained the dog I was to receive, and who would teach the two of us to walk together.

"His name is Rally," John said. "He's a Bouvier des Flandres, from a breed originally used in Belgium to herd cattle. Male. Twenty-seven inches tall. Weighs one hundred and eighty-seven pounds. Salt and pepper colouring." John, I was to discover, didn't like to waste words.

The following afternoon I sat alone in the middle of a room, waiting for my introduction. The piece of meat in my hands I would offer to the dog as his first and only bribe. I heard the shuffling of John's feet and Rally's paws on the wooden stairs outside and stirred uneasily. It was a critical moment.

John opened the door and said from across the room, "OK, Joe, relax. Let him have the meat and let him explore you, smell you. I'll hand you the leash. Take him to your room, pet him, but don't rush him. If he wants to be petted, he'll stay there next to you. If he doesn't, he'll lie on the floor at your feet. Don't force yourself on him."

The trainer approached me slowly and I could hear Rally sniffing the air. As they reached my side, I put out the hand containing meat. Rally checked it, took it and chewed it. Finished, he smelled my ankle, then went up my leg on another sniffing expedition. John handed me the leash. "Here you are. Take it easy."

I moved carefully toward the doorway, remembering there was one step down to negotiate. It would be awful to trip the very first time I was with my new dog. Stepping off boldly, I paced down the hallway, counting the open doors with my extra sense. How much I had depended on the inner antenna of my precious sixth sense since losing my sight nearly nine years before! Now, walking beside me was a four-legged fellow who, if all went well, would be much more than a mere antenna.

**A happy-sad
account of the relationship
between a young man
and his dog.**

By Joseph Tolve, Jr.

My Eyes With a Waggin' Tail



In my room I petted Rally for a moment, but he tired of it quickly and lay down at my feet.

Four o'clock. A knock sounded and I heard John say, "Rally's dish is to the left of the door, Joe. Feed him, and give him water in the basin under the bathroom sink."

Hooking Rally's collar to the bed chain, I crossed the room to get his food. As I put it in front of him I felt a tingle of excitement at his eagerness. That he wanted to eat was a sign things were going well. Pressing both feet to the sides of the pan, I tried to hold his dinner in place as he ate, but his tongue was stabbing so hard at the light aluminium, it was impossible to keep the container in one spot. Finally the eating sounds stopped and I checked the pan. Finished, and so quickly! Glowing with the certainty that he felt comfortable with me, I put his leash on and took him into the bathroom for his water. He gulped nearly the whole pan, another good sign.

The First Night

That evening, Rally and I went to the dining-room, where I was to keep him under the table and prone at my side. The dogs had been trained together and very much wanted to have a reunion, so it was a busy meal. After dinner, I went to my room with Rally at heel, put him on his bed chain, undressed and got into bed. But not to sleep.

I was hardly under the covers when the dog began to cry. No ordinary crier, this one had been orchestrated, and he put it all together for my first night's entertainment. His cry became a screech and the screech became a howl, and when I snapped, "No! No, Rally!" nothing changed.

There was an emergency button over my bed, and after repeated efforts only raised his decibel level, I rang. The trainer was at the door almost instantly. "John," I started, "he's been crying very . . ."

"I know; heard him upstairs." By his voice I knew he was standing near Rally and I felt the dog tugging furiously at the bed post, trying to get John to take him from my room.

"No! Down!" John stamped his foot and turned to me. "If he starts this again, sound off so he knows who's boss, and he'll lie down."

A minute after the trainer left the room, Rally was at it again, and again I couldn't quieten him. When I had to call for help a third time, it was in desperation. I was being rejected.

"Now, here's Rally's leash, Joe," John's words were gentle. "If he starts to cry like that once more, hit it against your bed as hard as you can and yell, NO!"

For angry hours I lay listening to the off-key whimpering of my one-man band. I had had to use the leash on the bed five or six times just to get his crying down to that level. Now, cheek pressed against the pillow, I began to smoulder. It wasn't fair that I should get this Bouvier-something-or-other with hair so long it covered his eyes. He was shabby all over, and I was jealous of the others getting handsome, smooth golden retrievers. What had they told me this breed used to do in Belgium? Herd cattle? That's where he belonged!

"No! Stop it!" I wildly flailed the leash at my bedsheet and this time the whimpering stopped. My

nose burned, and tears wet my pillow-case. I was sure it was I who had failed to make our relationship a success.

In the morning we were taken by bus to Peekskill where we would do most of our training, since Yorktown Heights has no footpaths. Neither Rally nor I had much to say to each other after such a miserable night, and I took a back seat in the bus. I wanted the others to go first, fearing what might happen when it finally came my turn to disembark.

The First Try-out

"We're going to walk a one-block area today," John told us. "We will make only right turns. When your dog stops at the kerb, move your right foot back, extend your right hand and motion to the right, saying the name of your dog and 'Right!'"

The air through the open windows was August warm, and my collar was already wet with perspiration. Nervous, I lectured myself for my fears.

"OK, Joe," came the trainer's call. It was Rally's and my turn, but I moved slowly down the aisle of the bus. I could hear the excitement outside; the others praising their dogs for their performance. What if I blundered just getting off the bus? My heart pounded furiously.

"Rally, come!"

He executed perfectly, and it was almost impossible to contain the emotion welling in my throat when I stopped and he moved promptly to the heel position at my left. Only time for a quick pat and a breathless, "Good boy."

"Put the leash over your left wrist now." John's tone was reassuring. He must understand. "Have the two straps flat on the palm of your hand so you can take his harness and still have the leash ready, if Rally makes a mistake. We're not going to worry the dog about side bushes or overhead obstacles today. We're only asking him for right turns. All right, take his harness and give him the command, 'Forward!'"

I dropped my hand to Rally's harness and felt the power under it. As I gave the command I stepped out and was immediately glad I had, for he charged ahead with a great surge of power. I found myself flying down the footpath, walking faster than I had ever walked since losing my sight, and I was a fast cane-walker.

We got to the first kerb and Rally put on the brakes. Stopped on a ten-cent piece! Fortunately, I had been keeping my full attention on the movement of the harness. No time for discipline, even if he had nearly sent me into orbit. It didn't matter, Rally was beginning to like me.

"Rally, right!"

Again he obeyed the command with such enthusiastic precision that his one hundred and fifty-plus pounds nearly took me off my feet as he cut across my front from the left.

"Keep up with him, Joel!" shouted John from behind, and Rally stopped abruptly to turn toward John. He had to see his trainer, his real friend and the man he had come to love during seven months of training.

I could hear John's slow approach, and now Rally was tugging to meet him. "No!" The crack of leather in John's hand shattered the rapport, and Rally got the message. My heart went out to both of them.

**"All of a sudden there
was a squawk that
sounded like a human
cry of consternation,
and I heard a
huge splash behind
me."**

How hard it must be, I thought, for these men to make the dogs they have trained and loved, actually dislike them. But it was necessary if this shaggy-coated, happy-go-lucky bundle of power was to become my eyes.

"Stay with him, Joel!" John's voice was tense as I moved out again. "He's a fast mover; keep with him. Don't hold back against that harness, move with him!"

I found myself running down the footpath, the wind whistling past my ears. Fears were forgotten. I was free. Free at last! I had a dog who wanted to walk fast, as I did, a dog who wanted to move out and explore the world.

Into the World

That night we two huddled together in my room and talked about our day. I fondled his pointed ears and felt his short tail slowly, almost sadly. I knew I was starting to love Rally. He was such a loyal type. Why had I been surprised that he hated to give up John? Such a confused fellow he must be tonight! I stroked the hair that grew over his eyes. Even that seemed suddenly beautiful.

Two weeks later, we were released to go home. That afternoon the two of us had passed our subway test in Manhattan, and were pronounced fit and ready for anything in the world. We'd found our way through the crowds to the change-making booth, passed through the turnstile and waited calmly through the clatter and shriek of the arriving subway train. Without a hitch we'd made our trip and brought ourselves back again and, to tell the truth, we were really quite smug about it.

We became so close in the years that followed. Could it really only have been two? There was something so grand, so beautiful about my dog, and perhaps the grandest, most beautiful thing about him was the way he made himself an extension of me. Rally's eyes were my eyes. My moods and needs became his moods and needs. If I was downcast, his tail dragged and his taut muscles seemed limp. If I was exhilarated, there was no restraining his own joy. We were ready together now to make a productive contribution to life.

Our first real effort must have been especially rugged for Rally; I took a job as masseur in the YMCA in Port Chester, next to my home town. It called for long hours, and every day Rally was with me at the side of the massage table in the men's locker room. Not far from my work area was a sauna, and one can imagine the temperature in our low-ceilinged room. I

thought of poor Rally in all that heat. He was trim now and didn't have that long coat, but still. . . . He was great. Greater than I had ever imagined a dog could be! Patient beyond human endurance, he lay in harness all day long without a single complaint.

One day when business was slack, I took Rally with me to the pool area to wait while I took a dip. I marched him past the lifeguard and the people talking at the side of the pool and left him at the end where there was no chance of his being underfoot. With only the usual "Stay!" I walked to the edge, dived in and started swimming to the opposite end fifty yards away.

All of a sudden there was a squawk that sounded like a human cry of consternation, and I heard a huge splash behind me. A roar of delight went up on all sides, and I knew immediately who had followed me into the pool—a dog who loved me so much that even though he didn't know what swimming was all about, he wanted to be sure I was all right. My heart swelled with the joy I felt to have such a friend.

Accident on a Tandem

He must have thought "I told you so" the time I deserted him for the tandem bicycle. A metal drain grille in a parking lot gave way, and two cyclists went flying. During the ride in the ambulance poor Rally sat beside the stretcher, his nose wet and warm with worry as it pressed against my arm. Without a word, he was saying everything that could be said.

My father brought me a message three days later. "Rally's not eating, Joe. He's not going outside. He just sits in your room all day at the foot of your bed." Somehow arrangements were made to have Rally allowed in a private hospital. He began eating again, and was happy we could be together all day.

Five weeks later I was in physical therapy, training to walk with a brace that went from hip to heel. After I had been walking, leaning on a nurse's arm, for a few days, Rally's harness was brought and I was ready to make a test run with my buddy. I was amazed at his wisdom, for though he had always been such a fast walker, he now moved slowly and gently, pacing himself exactly to my step.

In the year that followed with that brace, Rally and I were out almost every day, walking to strengthen my leg. During the winter I saw a most remarkable demonstration of my dog's intelligence whenever I started to slip on ice or snow. If I was going forward, he would back-pedal with incredible speed to keep me upright. If I started to fall backward, he would jerk forward on his harness just enough to keep me on my feet. He had a phenomenal batting average of success.

It was a great opportunity when I got the chance to take training as an X-ray developer. For four weeks we commuted to New Rochelle, and I loved the work. My teachers were so patient in showing me how to

process the film. The only one with more patience was Rally. Day after day he lay between two tanks of smelly developing fluid in a niche barely big enough for his body. It was impossible for him to keep his paws beneath him constantly, and time after time I stepped on them. No yelping complaint; he would simply stand and accept my apology, lick my hand and lie down again.

That wonderful morning finally came. "Joe," said Miss Lee when she finished checking the X-rays I had just developed, "you're a good technician. Now you're ready to get a job."

Before the day was over I had followed her lead to the hospital in Port Chester. They needed me . . . I could begin the next day!

"The Car Tyres Squealed"

There was no way to hold down the excitement I felt, so after tea, Rally and I headed outside for a romp. It was a great moment for us both. We were on our way to a new independence, earning our own way, really helping people. And this big shaggy bundle, bouncing and leaping at my side, had a lot to do with it all. I grabbed at the mop of hair that still seemed to nearly hide his eyes. "How come you think you can see for me, boy? You can't even see for yourself! Fetch it, Rally, fetch!"

He dashed from my side in an exuberant charge after the play block. I heard him panting as he pounced on the target, and then the paws were scurrying again. His victory dance. A wide circle to impress me with his conquest before bringing the block back. The street. Never in the street, Rally!

The car's tyres squealed as they swept around the corner. I felt . . . even before the impact, I knew with that awful sense of impending disaster that Rally was going to be struck. I wanted to scream, but nothing would come. And then there was that terrible sound as the car hit him, the sound of metal against bone and the horrible cry from Rally.

"Oh, no! NO!" I ran into the street where he lay whimpering. When I touched him, he raised his head, squirmed and tried to get up, but couldn't. I cried helplessly as I held his head in my lap.

She stood by my side; I could sense her there. "I'm sorry," she said. "I didn't see him." Then I heard the sound of her heels hurrying away. She was leaving us. Leaving Rally hurt so badly in the middle of the road! The car door opened. "I'm sorry," I heard her say again, and the car raced away.

That night I lay awake in my bedroom, alone, without my dog. I thought about the next day, my first on the job at United Hospital. How could I make it without Rally? I'd pleaded to be allowed to stay with him overnight, but it wasn't possible. I remembered the way his legs were stiffening under the blanket toward the last. I was sure he was dying. Somehow that long night ended.

"The car tyres squealed as they swept around the corner. . . . I knew with that awful sense of impending disaster Rally was going to be struck."

"Rally made it through the night," reported the veterinarian's wife when I called. "We were surprised, but he did."

I was elated almost beyond self-control. "He's alive!" I wanted the whole wide world to know the good news. Dad was waiting in the car to take me to work, and now I was ready. So what if I was cane-walking again for the first time in a long, long time? Rally was holding on!

It was 4.30 p.m. when my father picked me up again and we drove directly to the veterinarian's. There was a sudden, frightening chill as the doctor led us into his office and asked me to sit down. "Joe, Rally died at four this morning. I stayed with him through the night, but there was nothing I could do. His back was broken in two places."

"No!" I couldn't believe it. "He can't be! Your wife, she said . . ."

"She couldn't tell you when you called. I'm sorry, it may have been the wrong thing, but she was afraid. We knew you were just starting your new work today and didn't want to hurt you there." His voice broke. "I'm sorry, Joe."

I left his office, locked in grief, unable even to thank him for staying up with Rally, doing his best. I felt drained and the tears wouldn't stop. Clenched tightly in a fist that I ground against my chest to try to hold back the pain, was Rally's choker collar. Nothing, I knew, could ever be the same again.

For days I was numb to everything, even cruel to those most dear to me, who waited and watched . . . and understood. And then it happened. The agony quieted and the grief eased. I could only remember the many things Rally had done for me, the wonderful walks, the way he would tug to keep me upright when I slipped, the funny things . . . like the time Mother made me a sandwich and put it on the table while I was washing. When she turned to pour a glass of milk, Rally carried both the dish and the sandwich to the living-room and casually devoured my lunch.

Another time I attended a social function, looping Rally's leash around the leg of the table at which I was sitting. My date and I had scarcely joined the other couples out on the floor when we heard a strange scraping sound. Here came Rally to join us, unconcernedly pulling the table behind him.

I'll remember these things and ever so much more. He was so great, my wonderful Rally. He was my eyes with a waggin' tail. ★★

THREE POEMS BY A YOUNG MAN

memory

the palms of Jerusalem are free and common
and the people wave them with effortless enthusiasm.
but soon the Roman sandals
will crush dead palm branches
into the soil in their haste to distort Calvary;
and the people will not come out of hiding
and they will not remember that today
they have discovered their real King.

where are the voices of the sons of Jerusalem!
where are the sounds of their laughter,
and their bustlings, and their dirty feet in the dust,
and their undernourished Israelite pet dogs?
and where are their complaints and mockery—
their criticism and scorn!

*they have turned from Me and filled themselves
with relentless indifference, and the ears of the pagans
welcome Me with their hatred
compared with Jerusalem's mighty apathy.*



Lowell Tarling was a teenager when he wrote these poems. He has a distinctive style and a strong sense of word-usage. Since writing these poems he has qualified as a teacher and is teaching in a New South Wales high school.

the fishing boats

the fishing days under the Galilean sun
are consumed inside the belly of disaster
and time has accused the disciples of change.
with calloused fear
and resurrected fervour they watch
as the world still turns with patient terror
while they attempt to inject it with the cure.

eleven lonely men
praying in the rain,
and walking together, on the sand
into the sunset.

but there is no more harbour,
no more seashore—
just a huge black shadow,
stretching from Golgotha's mountain
down to the empty, idle, fishing boats.

faces

when mankind wrote the crucifixion
into the pages of history,
God threw ink in their faces
in the form of darkness;
and there, in the night-time
of the afternoon
when each individual stood alone
at the foot of his dying Lord
separated from everyone else by
darkness, they each thought:
"This man is innocent.
so why has His body been beaten into
this old Roman cross,
and why has this man
been pinned up against the Galilean sky
ingloriously, and called King?"

when God permitted the sun
to limp back into its former position
it revealed the faces of many different answers.



CONFRONTATION

I HAD JUST finished speaking to the sociology class of a local college on "Marriage and the Family." In the discussion period that followed, the students showered me with questions concerning our personal family life. I had mentioned that, as parents, we ask a lot of our teenagers. A bearded young man requested that I elaborate. Just what **did** we ask of our teenagers, beyond the norm?

"Well, for starters, we ask that they refrain from smoking, drinking, dancing, theatre attendance," I said.

"Anything more?" Eyebrows raised.

"We ask our girls to wear little, if any, make-up, and to watch their hemlines. These are actually superficial matters—negative issues. We ask much more of them in terms of positive moral living." I could have said more, but time was running out.

A courteous black student raised his hand. "How do your children fit into the school system? Are they comfortable with their peers who practise a less strict code of living?"

"I will answer your last question first. "Yes, they do have friends who are less concerned about these matters. They share common interests in cars, minibikes, snowmobiles and sports. As to the school system, they attend private Christian schools where other types of entertainment are available and emphasis is placed upon Biblical principles."

The bearded youth again. Not hostile, just curious. "I get a feeling of isolation," he said. "We are taught here to expose ourselves to a variety of ideas, activities, cultures, people. Aren't you hiding your kids from life?"

It was a good question, well put. A murmur of assent went around the room. I hesitated. Was it possible, in the few moments before the bell, to present Christ to these intelligent young people? Could I hope to share with them the idea beyond all ideas—the dream of dreams?

I liked them. I responded to their openness. I would try. "First let me say, I hope we, too, have taught our children to explore ideas and cultures other than their own. If I didn't personally respond to people, even those unlike myself in age and philosophy, I would not be here today. Yet it is true we do practise a measure of isolationism, I suppose."

I thought a moment and they were still, waiting for me to continue. "Picture a corps of youth," I went on, "who are captured by a dream. These youth have caught whispers of the secret which lies at the very

core of life. They are trapped, if you will, by Jesus Christ. By His magnetism, His love, His life-style. In contrast, the bright lights and bawdy music of planet Earth are so much tinsel and din. If they are isolated, it is not by force, but by choice. They long to be isolated with Him. This does not happen overnight. The hunger for Him builds slowly, but accelerates as the youth eliminate anything tawdry which might distract from the relationship.

"It is not my sons and daughters alone who seek this closeness with Jesus Christ. His elite corps can be found in every church and every land, but they aren't plentiful. Christ has said, 'Ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with **all** your heart.' [Jeremiah 29:13.] Not many are willing to commit **all** to that search."

The Challenge

The bell rang and class was dismissed. A few students stopped by to say they had enjoyed the discussion. Had they glimpsed, any of them, the wonder of which I spoke? Were there some who already walked ahead of me in the search, but chose to remain silent?

I thought about them, these serious, questing youth, long after I returned home. My calendar held further engagements for speaking to students. Would the same questions arise again? Would I find new words to portray the young man of Nazareth? For somehow we have to make Him real, not for the old Roman-patrolled populace of Jerusalem, but for this computer age in which we live. Is there room in such a society for such a dream? On a planet which pivots about scientific research and discovery, can we hope to challenge man with a thing so nebulous as faith—faith in an earth-loving Christ, a cross-willing Christ, a grave-shattering Christ, a coming-back-for-His-own Christ?

It is youth who should grasp this vision most clearly, for youth is geared to dreams (too often, resignation, even disillusionment, sets in after forty). I was nineteen when Jesus Christ fell into focus for me. I had read an outstanding book called "The Desire of Ages," and when I finished, I knew I never again needed a theatre or the latest rock record to fill my empty life. I had lived in the false, fake world of fiction and drama. Now I saw a **real** world, but I also understood there were two invisible factions operating on this planet, both interested in my future and the fates of all my fellow-human beings. They were beings with power far beyond mine. They had titles, these two contenders for my fate. Christ and Satan. They had armies also, invisible, but very real. For the first time, I recognized that without help I was completely at the mercy of Satan. Even more frightening, I was so accustomed to his way of life that in some areas I wasn't even sure I wanted rescuing.

But upon the pages of my newly discovered book, I caught a picture of that Other One. There was a

By June Strong

This article was written by Mrs. Strong specifically for this edition of this magazine. Mrs. Strong writes a regular column in one of the most widely-read family magazines in America, and has had several books published. She and her husband have six children, four of them adopted, with each of the four having Asian background and ancestry. The Strong family live in New York state.

simplicity, an honesty about Him that evoked a response within me. There was a sweetness about His relationships with men that was both comforting and refreshing. I got out my Bible and began to explore His character through the eyes of those who had known Him personally. I found the same transparent beauty. No sham. No ego trip. No thirst for power. No amassing of material goods.

"It Takes a Lifetime"

He said some exciting things, like, "If the Son . . . shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John 8:36. I wanted that freedom. I wanted it overnight. I longed to wake up absolutely selfless in the morning. There is a statement from one of my favourite books which says that our lives should be as transparent as sunlight. That's the way I wanted to be, for I sensed that's how He was—that you could follow Him around for a year and never find Him indulging in anything sneaky or out-of-line.

Slowly, very slowly, for it's a disappointment at first, He helped me understand that it's not an overnight deal; that it takes a lifetime to untie all the knots Satan has been cleverly tying while he amuses one with the special tools of his trade. If I could have foreseen all the struggles ahead, I perhaps would never have had the courage to start out. So one at a time He's been helping me with the knots. He's shown me that even though this work appears to be endless, I stand before God just as clean as if I were at the end of the journey instead of stumbling around en route, for He drapes His lovely life over my shoddy one and we travel like that.

Before I joined the club, I thought Christians were a sober, deprived lot, having to forgo all the fun in life. Perhaps non-Christians have always thought this about the followers of Christ. I suppose to the

game-crazed throngs in the Roman arenas 2,000 years ago, the Christians looked like a pretty narrow, straight-laced community, too (especially when they became titbits for the lions). It's pretty difficult to communicate what fills the void when one takes hold of His hand and forsakes the bright lights of this world. Whatever it is, it grows and sings within. Everything becomes sharper, clearer. When I go alone to an isolated spot to pray, it seems the very trees worship with me. I see the earth, the sky, the simplest things with new eyes. I feel differently about people, responding to their struggles with an intense awareness of my own imperfections.

Once I eliminated the pseudo-worlds of fiction, movies, pop music and TV, my mind seemed keener, less blurred, more able to communicate with Him. Even more able to cope with the ordinaries of life like paying bills, raising children and reading the newspaper.

The days all sparkle. Not because they're problem-free—I should say not—but because He walks with me. If it still doesn't sound as exciting as dancing the night away, it's because human vocabulary won't cover such an experience. It's like Him to give us something too big for words. His gifts always carry a touch of magic, yet they are practical, too.

If I'm not getting through to you, don't cross it all off. I may be limited by humanity, but He isn't. He will find a way into your heart if you want Him there. There'll be an irresistible loneliness fingering away at you, sometimes at the oddest moments when you're surrounded with noise and friends and shouldn't be lonely at all. Then all you have to do is reach out for His hand and ask Him to teach you the meaning of Joy—His kind. He may have been waiting for you a terribly long time. ★★

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QUESTION BOX

Young People's
Questions Answered
by GORDON BOX

God's Problems

I sometimes read your column and others like it and wonder if you really believe that there is a simple solution, or even a complicated solution to every problem. In other words, can we really be free from perplexity and problems? And further, does God have problems He can't solve? Your ideas on the subject if you please.

Here's an honest attempt to answer what surely must be an honest question, or collection of questions. One at a time—all right?

A simple solution to life's problems? Very rarely, from a practical point of view. Theoretically maybe—in practice, not so. For example, the solution to a marriage breakdown may be simply more patience and respect for both partners. Simple in theory; not so simple in practice.

Can we ALWAYS find the answer to a given human problem? Not always, I fear. There are some problems we may have to struggle with all our lives. Not everyone has this kind of handicap, but it seems that some do, for varying reasons. In a way there is a solution to these chronic brutes. It is to admit that they are there, and then refuse to let them control everything we do. We live with them and learn to extract meaning and purpose from our circumstances in spite of the bug that is eating at us. We cultivate a never-say-die spirit which frequently becomes in itself a sort of solution. But it isn't a miracle problem-cleanser (lemon-charged) which you can buy at your favourite shop-and-save-supermarket. It is the plant from which real heroes grow.

Does God have problems He can't solve? To say Yes is to limit

God, so it looks as though there is only a "NO" reply left. To say less is to deny the sovereign power of the Almighty.

Can we venture into an area of possible controversy here by suggesting that God is not always pleased with what happens in the universe? This whole question revolves around the concept of "free will."

If God entrusts the power of choice to His creatures, then there must automatically be a possibility that one of His creatures will choose against His will. It is foolish to say **you choose** to lie down when it is impossible to do otherwise. If you like then, this concept opens up a host of situations where God may be said to have problems. The whole question at this point becomes far too vexed for my simple brain.

Natural Doubter

How can I be convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of mankind? I would like to believe, but even Paul's experience does not persuade me fully. I must be honest with myself, but I think I must be a natural doubter.

Presumably you believe in God, but find the idea that Jesus is God the difficulty. Well, the way to settle the matter is to gather the available evidence, weigh it up and examine it well, then make a decision on the basis of the facts in the same way you decide other things. It is a fact that we believe most things on authority. By this we mean that we haven't actually proved something for ourselves, but the evidence is so convincing that we accept it as fact. Few would deny that characters named Napoleon and Julius Caesar lived and said certain things. You can't

prove it from personal experience but you'd have to be a hard-core professional doubter to deny the evidence.

Now apply this sort of attitude to the life of Jesus, and you'll probably be convinced of His existence about two thousand years ago. (A couple of helpful books in this regard are "Run-away World" by Green, and "The New Testament Documents" by F. F. Bruce. No doubt there are others available that you could get if these are not available in your area.) If you are convinced that Jesus is a historical figure, then it is time to consider the claims He made, and the things He said as recorded by His followers in the New Testament. were these men frauds? You must answer these questions to your satisfaction. The problem you are faced with if you say Yes is that of the same men urging others to be honest, and even dying for the lies they were supposed to be spreading. Remember that not a few were martyred for the things they said they had experienced and seen.

So far so good. At this point you must not fall into the trap of putting off your decision in regard to the evidence you have considered. Sooner or later you must make up your mind one way or the other, and may I remind you that the issues are vital. An issue of life and death, in fact. If the New Testament is a load of rubbish, then you can forget Jesus, and the works, but if it is true, then nothing is as important as coming to grips with the questions and issues that are raised by the whole subject.

When a young chap comes along to a girl and asks her to marry him, she has a right to ask some questions of him. She would be rather silly if she didn't. But sooner or later she must stop asking questions and make up her mind in the light of the answers he gives and the evidence she has concerning the said young gentleman. If she doesn't stop asking questions and do something, eventually, she will die an old maid. This may not be a serious matter, depending on the girl. But in the matter we are discussing it is quite different. If Christianity is true, then it is a matter of—would you believe?—life and death.

The Man Who Took It With Him

HERE IS a very well-known story which I first had told to me when I was a child. If you've heard it somewhere before, I hope you'll agree that it's worth the retelling—and if it's new to you . . . well, like a lot of other "old" things, it's as fresh as it ever was.

In that timeless time when so many of these things seemed to have happened, and in a far country which, somehow, isn't all **that** far away, there was once a man who had lived a long and happy life. True, he had lived through all the usual sad days and dark nights, had suffered pain and heartaches, known poverty and hunger, seen the death of those he loved . . . but, come wind, come weather, come laughter, come tears, he remained a happy man.

"How can you possibly be happy?" the people who didn't understand the source of his happiness would ask. "The world is in a dreadful state, and gets worse every week, and you have had a very hard life—so what on earth have you got to be happy about?"

And he would smile, and try to tell them. . . .

But, somehow, they never seemed to have the time to listen. . . .

"Excuse us," they would say, "but, er, we have this, er, **rather** important appointment . . . so, er, why don't you tell us some other time? It'll be much more convenient then."

And so he would smile, and go on living his long and happy life.

Not that **he** ever had any important engagements anywhere. In fact **some** people would say that he led an extremely dull existence, never did or said anything worth mentioning . . . a bit of gardening, a bit of shopping, a smile here, a few words there, an act of kindness somewhere else . . .

No, there was nothing special about **that** sort of life, **was** there?

Well, one fine and tender day of Spring, with the buds bursting for joy and the birds singing for the sheer pleasure of it all, the Angel of Death came to visit the man . . . and found him working out in the garden.

"In one way I'm sorry," said the Angel, "but the time has now come for you to take your rest and sleep until the resurrection."



The man looked up from his digging, and sighed a not very sad sigh: "**Such** a pity," he said. "I've got this patch almost finished, the seeds are ready—and, to tell you the truth, I've already promised vegetables to **so** many people that I'm afraid I'll be letting them down if I die just now. 'You, er, wouldn't mind waiting until a bit later on, would you?'"

And the Angel of Death looked at him, and smiled, and went the length and breadth of the garden with the man.

"I notice that you haven't pruned the fruit-trees yet," said the Angel. "What sort of a crop do you expect if you don't prune at the proper time?"

"Ah!" he said, "in **this** part of the country it's usually best to wait until the end of the month—but if you think I ought to get on with it now, I'll do what I can to make a start this afternoon."

"Not at all," said the Angel. "You obviously know the climate of this part of the country better than I do—so I think I'd best leave you to choose your own time."

"Thank you," said the man. "But I've got **so** many people depending on that fruit that it's just **got** to be a good crop this year."

And, after quite a long conversation about this and that, the Angel of Death departed, and the man went on living his happy life.

Then, one clear and glorious day of Summer, with the flowers scented for splendour and the children skipping for the sheer delight of it all, the Angel of Death came to visit the man again . . . and found him doing some shopping in the market.

"As before," said the Angel, "in one way I'm sorry, but the time has now most certainly arrived for you to take your rest and sleep until the resurrection. Other hands can harvest those vegetables, other fingers pick that fruit."

The man looked round from his shopping, and sighed a not very sad sigh: "Such a pity," he said. "I promised old Mrs. Richards that I'd bring her back a few things, and . . ."

"Is that the lady who lives a few doors along from you?" said the Angel. "The one who can't get about much?"

"It's her legs," said the man. "She's not so young as she used to be, and, with prices being what they are, it's cheaper to buy here in the market—and the poor old soul just can't seem to manage the steps up and down to the square."

"Have you noticed how cheap those eggs are?" said the Angel. "They look like a real bargain to me."

"Thank you," said the man. "She could do with some new-laid eggs."

"Incidentally," said the Angel before departing, "I must congratulate you on that pruning—it'll be a splendid crop."

But the man was too pleased and embarrassed to answer . . . so he smiled, and went on doing his shopping, and living his happy life.

And then, one rich and glowing day of Autumn, with the fruit ripe for eating and the birds and the children singing for the sheer magnificence of it all, the Angel of Death came to visit the man for the third time . . . and found him in one of the wards of the local hospital doing a little bit of visiting on his own account.

"I really am sorry," said the Angel, "but we just can't go on like this, now **can** we? You're not getting any younger, and the time has now most certainly arrived for you to take your rest and sleep until the morning of resurrection. You've harvested those vegetables, but other fingers can pick that fruit."

The man looked round from the person he was visiting in the ward, and sighed a sigh which was even less sad than usual: "Such a pity," he said, "When I'd finished talking to old Mr. Johnson here I was hoping to see young Mary Collins before I went, and . . ."

"Is that the girl who was run over last week?" said the Angel. "Got two little children?"

"That's her," said the man. "Tom, he's her husband—well, he can't get in to see her until the evenings, so I was, er, hoping that, er . . ."

"Who **else** were you hoping to see before you went?" said the Angel.

But the man was too embarrassed to answer . . .

Though of course, Angels being what they are, the Angel of Death already knew and had no **real** need to ask.

"Be quick, then," said the Angel after a little pause. "I mean, we just **can't** go on like this, now **can** we?"

"Thank you," said the man. "I'll do my best—though there **are** two or three **other** things I ought to see to before I . . ."

But the Angel of Death had departed, and there wasn't anybody there to listen to **that** sort of conversation . . . so he went on talking to the person he was visiting in the ward, and then went to see young Mary Collins, and the old lady in the next bed, and then told a story to the children in the children's ward, and went on living his happy life.

But, that night, very late . . .

(Well, he **had** looked after the two children while Tom Collins visited Mary in the hospital, and then stayed talking to Tom afterwards—all the usual little troubles of young married life . . . quite forgot the time, though Tom seemed so grateful to talk to **somebody** . . .)

Anyway, that night, when the man got to bed he started thinking about how he had kept putting off the Angel of Death with excuses . . . and, for some reason or other, he felt much more tired than usual. In fact, he suddenly felt rather old . . .

"Yes," he said to himself, "it **would** be rather pleasant to take my rest and sleep until the . . ."

And then, quietly, serenely, in the little bedroom, **there** was the Angel of Death, looking down at him and smiling . . .

"I'm sorry to bother you," said the man, "especially at **this** hour of the night . . ."

"No bother," said the Angel, smiling even more serenely . . .

"But," said the man, "you **did** mention something about rest and sleep, and, to tell you the truth, I must admit that I **am** feeling rather tired."

"No regrets?" said the Angel . . .

"Well," said the man, "now that you remind me, there **are** three or four things I wish I had time to do before I, er . . ."

"Yes!" said the Angel, laughing, "I **thought** there might be!"

"Tell me," said the man, who was really feeling too tired to laugh as much as he usually would have done, "but, er, what will it be like, er—you know, **afterwards**? What will we **do** for all eternity?"

"What you have always done," said the Angel of Death.

And the man went to sleep happier than he had ever been. ★★

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE . . .

We shall resume Dr. L. H. Turner's series on the Psychology of Salvation (omitted this month, owing to this being a special Youth Issue). The title of next month's instalment is "The Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart."

Those with a scientific bent will appreciate Albert Watson's most informative article, "A Very Mad Method." Not all scientists have followed the "scientific method" when it has come to major discoveries.

A recent visitor to Australia was Mrs. Mary Whitehouse. She campaigns—mainly in Britain—for decency and non-violence in TV programmes and such. Regular correspondent Ron Thomas was there when she lectured in Melbourne, and captured his impressions (and pictures) of the lady for us.

And Alfred Jorgensen writes informatively on "The Jews Are in the News." This is the first of a three-part series on an important topic.



SARAH TWISTYRIBS?

By Gillian Ford

Gillian Ford is the wife of Dr. Desmond Ford, whose column, "Bible Questions Answered" (omitted this month only for this special Youth edition), appears regularly on pages 30 and 31. Mrs. Ford's by-line has appeared in our pages before under her maiden name, Gillian Wastell. In addition to writing the article, she also drew the illustration.

YOU WON'T believe this story. I often pinch myself to make sure I didn't dream it. I still can't believe she could have fooled me for so long. To this day I live in fear and trembling that she might return and deceive me again.

You will think me the weakest of creatures for not ordering her out of the house years ago, but she was a friend of the family. Her father was a bosom pal of my father. How could I get rid of her? It would have been like putting an heirloom in the dustbin, or breaking up the Commonwealth.

"Twisty," as we affectionately called her, had always been there. We couldn't push her out, even though, for myself, I grew to despise her. She was what you'd call a casual acquaintance for many years, although I can't remember our first meeting, it was so far back. I didn't like her even then, but she didn't bother me too much, so I put up with her and just made excuses for her whenever she made her presence felt.

Although she was, and still is, an out-and-out heathen, she took great interest in me when I became a Christian. Not the first few months, when I was so elated she couldn't have stood such positive company, but when the warmth of my initial experience wore off she was there—right on the doorstep. I'd better describe her to you, or you'll wonder what was so bad about her. She was moody. She was such a thick, swamping morass of depression as you have never met. Bad-tempered? She bit like a starved rattlesnake at every speck of dust around her. Critical? I have yet to hear her utter a single kind word about anybody. Have you ever met the sort of people who, avoiding all the fine points that they could mention about a body, purposely stick their finger into the grim cauldron of past weaknesses and failures and stir around till all the dirt comes to the surface? She was resentful and jealous, against any and everybody who crossed her will, utterly selfish. And what a liar!

Sarah Twistyribs, whom I thought was a friend, was the greatest curse of my life. The family said you only had to look at my face to know that she was

around. The house became cold and miserable, like the inside of a refrigerated truck. All warmth in the atmosphere seemed to freeze up when she arrived.

The big deception was that she tried to convince me that I was like her—that it was inevitable that the big ideas I had about being a Christian would fall flat. "Yes, you may have your ups, my dear," she'd smile unctuously, "but . . . with a temperament like yours . . . being so changeable and all that—you'll **never** keep it up, dear."

On several occasions I tried to interject feebly, "It doesn't matter **what** I'm like. I **can't** save myself. Jesus is my righteousness and nothing I ever do of myself can earn me salvation." But she passed it off and said, "Yes, but **if** you accept Him, your life will change. You won't be dominated by me any more. But you are, aren't you, darling? I only have to make a suggestion and you perform like a circus bear. So you can't have really accepted Him, can you, dear?" Her theology wasn't sound, but her persuasion seemed so logical, and what with being emotional about it all, I fell, hook, line and sinker every time.

How I hated her calling me "dear"! How I hated her nasty insinuations! How I hated her smugness! Nevertheless, hate her or not, she held a fatal fascination for me. She was like a drug, only worse. I couldn't seem to throw her. Even when she stayed away for a while, she'd haunt me with fear. I never knew when she'd return. Much of what she said seemed so true. I failed so often in certain areas which I knew to be wrong. I didn't want to fail, but I couldn't seem to help it. She'd become an obsession, and being centred on her somehow made me worse. I had tried many times to practise God's presence, but she always managed to pop in when He wasn't there. I began to live in constant dread of Sarah—went from nervous to neurotic. Funnily enough, this seemed to please her. I told you she was a queer friend!

Over the space of years, things gradually grew to a climax. I knew if something didn't happen I was

heading for utter ruin. Somehow I **had** to get rid of her. I tried persuasion. She laughed. I tried to ignore her. She still laughed. I tried praying that Christ would kill her—let fate drop a brick on her head (or mine!) or dramatically destroy her by fire. But He didn't. He was curiously silent at that time. In such moments she would raise her ugly, fat head and chortle, "You can't get rid of me. I'm your ruler. You'd go through life only half there."

I told you you wouldn't believe this story—you'd think I'd gone off my head. When I tell you that I experienced such tremendous heartache as a result of the havoc and shipwreck she caused in my life that I fancied I knew a little about being crucified—you'll say for sure I'm mad. But I did suffer. I'm glad now, although I wasn't then. I had known I'd have to suffer like Christ, but I didn't expect it to be like that.

But Who Did Kill Her?

Well, I know you're just dying to know who killed her? Christ? He wouldn't. No, He couldn't. He said that was the one thing He couldn't do. It wasn't my family. They can't stand the sight of blood, though I'm positive they'd have been willing to destroy her. I think they hated her more than I did. But they couldn't do it either. That was in the rules, they said.

Shame, really! I never thought it would be left to me. I was the only one who could do the job, apparently. I should have known that; I'd been told it often enough. So one day when she walked into the house I picked up the tomahawk my boy had been playing with and dealt her a mighty blow on the head. She reeled and fell limply to the floor. The wound was ghastly. I couldn't look directly at it. I'd never have thought one could feel so elated after committing such a brutal murder, but I did. That is, until I knelt and felt her pulse. My blood turned to ice as the realization dawned that she was still alive. She opened one eye and laughed horribly. "Can't kill me that way, my dear." Five minutes later, she was up and about, hale and hearty as ever.

Never have I felt so panic-stricken. The thought came to me that death would be a pleasant release, rather than live in such hellish company. I suppressed the swelling feeling that God was unfair for letting this happen to me and asked for an interview with Jesus. I could hardly face Him, I felt so low and wretched. "Jesus, what can I do? I feel at the end of my tether. If I have another day like this, You'll be visiting me in an insane asylum."

This is what He replied: "Gillian, Gillian, behold, Sarah Twistyribs hath desired to have you, that she may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." He smiled pityingly at me and continued. "You are carrying the heaviest load a mortal can lift. That is—self, unsanctified and unsubdued. But there is hope for you. The only way to overcome is to practise positive self-control. You must do My will, however crucifying to your nature."

Then He quoted from His Word, in the same version He'd used before. "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto Sarah Twistyribs, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not

Sarah Twistyribs therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey her in the lusts thereof." He told me many things I'd never realized: that getting rid of Sarah Twistyribs is a process: that my biggest problem was that I had not been taught to govern my feelings when I was young. He said that when I became His servant I'd had no idea what a terrible battle it was going to be to do what He said was the right thing rather than act according to what I **felt** was right.

I was worse off in some ways than some others He knew, because I hadn't been educated in practising self-control. Not many were, these days. He added sadly. I would always have a harder battle than some others because I was weakened in the years when I didn't know any better, and Sarah knew it and took full advantage in pressing home my weaknesses. "Not only will you have harder battles, but they will also be more frequent, and you'll find," He said, "that others who don't have them will think it rather strange, and most likely will not understand. All this fighting and overcoming business is essential," He went on. It was "proof of the pudding" as it were—but it was a result of salvation coming to my house. Never did it merit salvation of itself.

Then He turned and put His arm around my shoulder. "I know you're afraid of failing again and again. I know you're weak, nerveless and spiritless because of your tangles with Sarah. I have provided for all that. This had to happen to you. You thought you were so strong. But fear not, I was there all the time. I am always there whether you feel My presence or not."

He gave me a page of some old book. It looked ancient. To be more precise, it looked ageless. I went to read it, but He lifted up my chin and gazed levelly into my eyes. "I have a Friend who is part of Me. He must help you to understand it. When you feel scales dropping from your eyes, you will know He is present. That is His work." Remember most of all that I am your strength. Just stay with Me, and never give up!"

With a twinkle in His eye, He added, "Twistyribs is dead. She died when I died. The thing that visits you is only a spectre wriggling in its death throes. Count her dead." So He **had** killed her—legally, at the Cross. By faith I was to reckon her dead.

Rules to Live By

Then He gave me this counsel:

1. Give Me the key to your heart. Never open the door to anyone else but Me.
2. If she gets in the window while your back is turned, push her straightway out. Flee from temptation.
3. Make your mind a treasure-house of My promises. Make My Word your food, your water, your breath, your clothing.
4. Speak with Me continually, both on your knees and off. Live in My presence. Give Me the chance to reply. Seek the answers in My Word, and in the indications of My Providence.
5. Always act from principle, never from impulse. Distrust your feelings. Don't be ruled by your old emotional habits. Wrong emotions cause wrong thoughts, cause wrong words, cause wrong actions.

Let love, peace, joy—not resentment, jealousy, hate—reign in your life. (My flock has more to learn here than most of them realize.)

6. Constantly guard your soul by locking the gate of your thoughts. Resist melancholy, discontented thoughts and feelings. Your only security is in right thinking.

7. Set a guard on your senses. What you see, what you hear, colours your imagination, and the imagination always conquers the will.

8. Set a guard on your lips. Never speak one word unadvisedly. Don't let **her** trick you into speaking words of doubt or discouragement.

9. Set a guard on your actions. Exercise the will in doing what is right. Right-doing brings a good conscience, which in turn brings the blessing of peace in the mind. Put into practice every new aspect of truth that is revealed.

10. Preserve your body in good health, that it may aid you in self-control. Keep its laws. They are My laws as much as those that keep the universe in motion. You cannot break them. You only break yourself on them.

11. Educate yourself to be positive and cheerful. Avoid criticism. Cultivate praise.

12. Feed My sheep. Lose yourself in willing service.

As I heard those words, and felt the scales drop from my eyes, it was as though I had stepped into a new world and eternity had begun. I suddenly **saw**. The great jigsaw pieces, before so incomplete and puzzling, fell into an orderly pattern. Many were still missing, but I could see the meaning clearer than I ever had before.

I was ready for old Sarah's next intrusion. That's an apt word. She was an **intruder!** Friend? I told you I must have been mad. Next time she came I said right away, "Get out! I don't believe all your lies and I'm finished with you." Before she could open her mouth, I had hustled her out and slammed the door. I leant against it hard. There was nothing exciting about it. I'm afraid I don't trust myself enough to set the cup of elation to my lips. It somehow weakens my determination.

I'd like to say that I never see Sarah Twistyribs² these days, but it just wouldn't be true. She's there, just waiting like a vulture for a gap in the door to put her horny beak inside. If I let Christ out for a minute, she's got her claws in the door. But I've taken His advice—learned it all off by heart. And poor old Sarah looks rather desperate these days. Although life still has its multifarious problems, at least now the civil war in my heart has subsided, and the casualty rate has dropped to almost zero. Home is peaceful these days.

Life is so different when Christ is your Commander-in-Chief and not merely your valet. If you have a friend like Sarah—and the Good Book says that everybody has—you just take my advice and don't be duped by her any longer. It's madness! ★★

REFERENCES:

¹ See Romans 7: 22, 23.

² Luke 22: 31, 32.

³ Romans 6: 11, 12.

⁴ 1 Corinthians 2: 9-14.

⁵ The Trinity of Evil—Satan, sin and the old nature.

HERE'S A PROMISE FOR YOU

W. A. TOWNEND



THESE DAYS IT SEEMS to be part of mental superiority to doubt. In the present chilly, doubting climate we might all do well to recall that the Christian's life has ever been one of faith. It is what the Christian believes that keeps him going.

Belief is positive. Doubt—that is, to doubt chronically—is to live negatively. Such a life is not for the Christian. Far from it. Paul knew this.

Our promise for today is in words Paul expressed, using the translation of Dr. William Barclay: "The only way to get into right relationship with God is through faith in Christ Jesus." Galatians 2: 16. Some promise, that! Theory? Yes. **And more.** Paul further says in the same verse, "So we took the decision to become believers in Christ Jesus in order to get into right relationship with God through faith in God." This is what D. L. Moody, America's Billy Graham of the last century, did and taught.

See young Moody in the storeroom of a boot-shop in Boston being invited by his Sunday school teacher to surrender his life to God. See the application of the young lad's faith (itself a gift from God). Yes, see the promise working in yet another life.

Little wonder that as a great preacher Moody was for ever urging people to decide to come to Jesus; to believe in Him and to test their belief by surrendering their lives to Him.

Some of Moody's most telling little stories were on this subject. For instance, when a man said to him, "Moody, the doctrine you preach is most absurd; you preach that men have to **believe** to change the whole course of their life. A man will not change his course by simply believing."

Moody replied: "I think I can make you believe what I have been saying, and I can do it in less than two minutes." Then he went on with, "Suppose a man should put his head in at that door and say this place was on fire; what would you do?"

"Oh," responded the now-convinced man.

Telling of this incident, Moody used to add that, "Belief is the foundation of all society, of commerce, and of everything else."

Believe we must. And we do. Of course, for it is "the only way to get into right relationship with God." What a promise!

"Courage, brother, do not stumble,
Though thy path be dark as night;
There's a star to guide the humble;
Trust in God, and do the right."

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How Free Is Free?

DEMOCRACIES that have a couple of centuries behind them are apt to take their freedoms for granted. So it is rather a curious thing that there should have been such a to-do about freedom in recent times. After all, no country has been more blasé about its liberties than ours. We have lived for a long time now under a system in which we are free to express ourselves in so many ways on any subject that interests us, travel anywhere in the country without question, worship if we please and how we please, live wherever and however our means permit, behave as we wish so long as we do not infringe on the rights of others, form any kind of federation or promote any cause so long as it is not inimical to the state. One might well wonder what kind of new freedom could be desired.

But young people have been moved to indignation over restraints that were formerly recognized as inescapable in any society. They don't want to put up with any kind of restraint. They dream of a world cleansed of the concept of authoritarianism. They seem to be able to get as excited over the threat of paternalism as their great-grandfathers did over the slave trade. They would like to have the concept of immaturity abolished. They want to be free from the awareness of disapproval. In short, they want to be free to "do their own thing." And they want to be regarded as normal whatever that "thing" may be.

The Concept of Right and Wrong

Of course, they are not always consistent in maintaining what seems to be their basic criterion, namely the axiom that every single individual should "do his own thing" while everyone else minds his own business. As a matter of fact, they have been quite vociferous in deploring the attitudes and practices of their parents' generation, and, at the same time, they have been quite industrious in pushing their own ideas on society. Apparently the sight of an older generation doing its own thing nauseates them. For the more extreme who walk in the vanguard of this new crusade of evangelism, individual freedom should supersede established conventions.

It should be strong enough to frown down the concept of right and wrong. They would have right and wrong be a purely individual matter. It is a matter of logic for them that if a person should wish to live as a practising homosexual, he should not be persecuted by any hint of abnormality. Society should learn to think of it as the obverse of the coin, and surely one side of a coin is as worthy as the other.

There is something dreadfully sad about all this. It is sad because these freedoms so ardently desired, don't turn out to be freedoms at all. Many of them are fundamentally unattainable, and those that are attainable don't bring freedom of spirit. That is the ultimate freedom, without which any externally arranged freedom is a bitter mockery. Throughout the centuries, men like the Apostle Paul have scarcely felt their bonds because their spirits exulted in this greatest freedom of all. On the contrary, others have escaped from locked cells only to find that it hasn't really helped. An unrelieved darkness surrounded their souls.

It is fairly certain that Jesus was thinking about this first type of freedom when He said, "If the Son of man shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." Part of that freedom is freedom from the desire for many of the freedoms demanded so belligerently by the militants of today.

Two Views of Life

It is a desperately sad thing to see young people who are convinced that they are engaged in a crusade that is noble, but who are actually demanding the freedom to become enslaved. Jesus saw this very clearly. He saw that the essence of the problem of living lies in the attitude of the self to the society in which it is placed. We can take either of two attitudes. We can regard our fellows as potential prey, and seek to plunder society of its spoils. Or we can do the reverse. We can look out over society as Jesus looked down from the mount on Jerusalem and see beneath all the movement and all the glitter, a people in need. To pour out the riches of the self in such a cause as He did is to discover a special miracle like the miracle of the widow's cruse, for in such work the self is not impoverished; it is enriched.

For reasons known best to the One who created us, it turns out that the first of these two attitudes is decidedly unhealthy. It creates hungers that cannot be satisfied, and develops a monstrous nature that is sterile and unproductive except for weeds of futility and frustration and incurable unhappiness.

Most of us choose a life-style that lies somewhere between these two attitudes. And though we know too much failure and bitterness, we also know some of the deeper satisfactions. But the point that no one should miss is this: The more freedom we demand to indulge ourselves, the more completely we yield to a new and more inveterate and unforgiving slavery. We become the serfs of our organic selves.



The experience of the drug addict illustrates this process in its more primitive and naked form. For his indulgence leads to a bodily condition not yet fully understood. Sinister, alien changes take place in the cell structure, particularly in the nervous system, under the influence of the chemicals that compose the drugs. The body becomes aware of the changes, and strange sensations are recorded in the consciousness. At the same time, the body is working to restore the normal condition of the cells. But when enough of the poison has been imbibed, the body is unequal to the task of restoring the normal condition of the cells. And now the whole organism protests in symptoms that are well nigh unbearable. An awful hunger tears at the very soul of the individual. It longs for the return of that part of the cycle during which the disorientation was so great that consciousness was shut off from the pain. Thus his most fundamental organic self has captured the citadel of the soul and he is committed to a process of increasing self-destruction. His will is no longer free. He is immured in the most terrible prison of all.

The Slavery of Habit

Alcohol and tobacco can make serfs of us in precisely the same way. But every kind of self-indulgence works in the same way to bind us to them. We may observe, for instance, that the habit of eating for pleasure brings the handicap of overweight and ill-health, but already there is a pattern of desire and indulgence which asserts itself automatically.

In similar fashion, all kinds of desires, even desires of the mind that have no commerce with organic hun-

gers, involve patterns of need and satisfaction of the need, and over a period, the responses begin to follow a pattern effortlessly. Take, for example, the rather morbid need that bothers so many of us, to belittle people who, by their superior gifts, tend to menace our self-respect. Someone voices a word of praise, evoking in us the stab of jealousy and the immediate retaliatory effort to belittle. The whole incident will probably leave a nasty taste in our mouth, but the preoccupation with self has led to the hunger for esteem, and habit has done the rest. In this way, our past exerts a pressure upon us that is stronger than our desire to live above this kind of thing. We are not free. We are not free at all.

The fact of the matter is that the more we seek for our own private concept of individual freedom, the further we are from real freedom. The more we concern ourselves with self-indulgence, the more firmly we become serfs to our organic nature. And this serfdom brings the most devastating restlessness and unhappiness. We feel that the best of life has passed us by before we have done anything to justify our existence, and all our tomorrows stare sullenly at us with neither hope nor meaning in their eyes.

One Man's Method

It is not hard to see why Jesus was so confident that He could give us real freedom. His programme was essentially simple. He ignored the kinds of freedom that young people of today are protesting for. And He certainly had no plans to grasp the spoils of a society that He might well have mastered. Indeed, He had no possessions of His own and no plans to acquire any. He was not looking for a good time. On the contrary, He had tremendous plans to spend Himself for His fellows. "It is a happier thing to give than to receive," was the startling message He had for His followers. And He set about providing them with a programme of activity that would help them to achieve the orientation which alone could give them freedom of spirit.

He started them off quite early in their training on a practice run. He sent out a group of seventy to involve themselves with the lives of all the unfortunates with whom they met. He told them to proclaim, as they went, the good news of the kingdom, and to heal the sick and cast out devils. He knew that with this preoccupation with the needs of others they were bound to find themselves, and, at the same time, escape all the soul-destroying bonds of self-indulgence. No doubt they found, perhaps to their surprise, that their moods of depression and unhappiness were banished, and that these were replaced by a healthy conviction of growth and contentment.

It is a tragedy that so many young people today have relegated all that Jesus said and did to the dusty shelves with all the books that have importance only as historical documents. In a space age, it seems to them, His ideas are quaint, and have a pleasing Eastern ring, but they have no application in a sophisticated society like ours. And now they are destined to find their own particular brand of bitterness as they fight their way towards all the freedoms that they have put their trust in. For as He knew so well and taught so clearly, they are not freedoms at all. ★★



OGG'S
VIEW
OF...

STRIKES

NO ONE can predict what strikes will occur during 1974. Such a prediction is impossible. In recent years there has been a growing unrest among workers, resulting in an increase in the total man-hours lost through strikes. Trends indicate that this year we can expect more industrial trouble than in the immediate past.

This opinion has been expressed by competent industrial relations observers. Since the mid-1960s the number of working days lost through industrial disputes has increased in Australia every year except 1972. In that year, labour unions were pre-occupied with the task of placing the Federal Labour Government in office. Man-hours lost during the first quarter of 1971 were 402,900, compared to the first quarter of 1973 which totalled 559,800. For several years there has been a gradual increase in strike activity. The exceptional rise in inflation during 1973, which weakened the buying power of the wage-earner, is expected to cause the labour unions to increase their demands for a larger pay packet during 1974.

Industrial strife between workers and employers, between labour and capital, is one of the world-wide Biblical "signs" of the return of Christ. So wise Bible students must be alert observers of industrial conflicts, knowing that our Lord desires that His people live in expectation of His return. Increasing strikes are evidence that the second coming is not far away.

Leadership of the trade unions has often fallen to the lot of Communists. Communist labour leaders have held a far higher proportion of union jobs than their numbers warrant. Is it because the rank-and-file workers electing them believe in the revolution of the masses? Not necessarily. Some have claimed that the atheistic communistic trade unionist works twice as hard at the job as other officials. How difficult it is for the Christian, whose first loyalty is to his Saviour, to have another master, an unbeliever at that, directing him against his conscience to war against his employer.

Australia has 2,523,700 trade union members in 305 unions. Organized labour has improved conditions for most workers. As a nation, Australia ranks as one of the most highly unionized countries in the world. Fifty-three per cent of the work force were union members as at December, 1972, which was a rise of 3 per cent over the previous two years. Drives



for 100 per cent unionization will surely increase the strength of the unions. As they become stronger numerically, they will certainly use that increased power to make larger demands. More negotiated settlements may prevail in some quarters, but the ultimate weapon—the strike, with violence used against men and plant, as seen in recent disputes—is expected to increase.

Strikes can disrupt society on a grand scale. Nations can be brought to their knees. Governments can be overthrown. Social anarchy can prevail. Shortages of oil and electricity affect us all. Trade unions are the power base for Labour politics. Yet industrial unrest occurs whichever government is in power. A change of government does not change the heart of man. He still grasps for more.

During 1945-1949 when Labour governments were in power, police and troops were used as strike breakers in both the Federal and State spheres. The major issue in the confrontation between the unions and the government was a continuing wage freeze. This sensitive political issue could confront the nation afresh. Prevailing circumstances make this a real possibility.

Continuing upheavals in the struggle between the rich and the poor are to be seen. James' prophecy of the "last days" depicts society in tragic chaos. He wrote, "And now, you plutocrats, is the time for you to weep and moan because of the miseries in store for you! Your richest goods are ruined, your hoard of clothes is moth-eaten, your gold and silver is tarnished. Yes, their very tarnish will be the evidence of your wicked hoarding and you will shrink from them as if they were red-hot. You have made a fine pile in these last days, haven't you? But look, here is the pay of the reaper you hired and whom you cheated, and it is shouting out against you! And the cries of the other labourers you swindled are heard by the Lord of Hosts Himself. Yes, you have had a magnificent time on this earth, and have indulged yourselves to the full. You have picked out just what you wanted like soldiers looting after battle. You have condemned and ruined innocent men in your career, and they have been powerless to stop you. But be patient, my brothers, as you wait for the Lord to come." James 5: 1-7, Phillips translation.

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ARCH HEFREN TALKS TO YOUNG PEOPLE

STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER

What is Christianity?

LAST MONTH we saw that some of the perversions which pass muster for Christianity are in fact completely unchristian. It matters not whether church or church member claiming to be Christian practises any or all of them; the same judgment comes: "I know ye not."

What then is Christianity? The answer can be given in one sentence. Christ died FOR us, lives IN us, preparing us to live WITH Him. Please notice that it all stems from Christ. I, in fact, have only one responsibility—to choose to allow Him to do this work.

Christ died for us that we might be released from the awful consequences of sin. No man is naturally without guilt. None need remain guilty. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." 1 John 1:9. No other death than Christ's could release us from the penalty of sinning; no other life could be of comparable value. He took my sins, not symbolically, but in terrible reality. Peter stresses that fact when he makes the personal element so emphatic in his epistle: "Who HIS OWN SELF bare OUR sins in HIS OWN BODY on the tree." 1 Peter 2:24. The apostle almost labours the point lest we should miss it. Forgiveness, then, that stems from Christ's death, is the first element in Christianity.

Having cleansed us, Christ now proposes to live within us, to purify us as His soul temple. The promise of Revelation 3:20 is sure. "If any man . . . open the door, I will come in." Moreover, He comes in not as an occasional guest or as a temporary visitor. He comes to stay in the presence of His Holy Spirit, "That He may abide with you for ever." John 14:16. "Hereby we know that He abideth in us, by the Spirit which He hath given us." 1 John 3:24. But notice again that the work is of Christ. That is why it is Christian. This transformation begins with the new birth, and who can give life but Christ!

Having begun the work, Christ proposes to carry it through to completion. It is just here that so many depart from Christianity. At this point they decide that the work of salvation now becomes theirs and they must earn their way to heaven by using their new-found deliverance to walk by the strength of human resolution. "Having BEGUN in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the FLESH?" Galatians 3:3. Rejoice

rather in the promise: "And so I am sure of this: that God, who began this good work in you, will carry it on until it is finished in the Day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6, Good News for Modern Man. Sanctification is not OUR attainment, but the transformation of our lives by the power of the indwelling Christ.

As that process continues, our Lord has ever before Him the final goal. His plan calls for men and women to be made into beings no longer either marred by sin in act or thought or tainted by sin in nature. He plans not only for deliverance from the guilt of sin but from its very effect on our minds and natures. Nothing but the restoration of Edenic perfection will satisfy the vision that our Lord has for us for heaven, and nothing but our failure to LET Him accomplish it in us can cause that vision to be unrealized.

The most important verb in the Christian's vocabulary is CHOOSE. We must choose God's way every time we are faced with temptation. Then God fills us with all the power of His Spirit, and repulses the enemy. Then we can say with all assurance: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory." 1 Corinthians 15:57.

Part of the process of sanctification is the experience of trial. Christ tells us that this might come to us so that the dross may be purged away from our lives. In a vivid image He pictures Himself as one carefully refining silver to the point of absolute purity. (Malachi 3:3, and again in Zechariah 13:9.) Notice, however, the beauty of the purpose: "I will say, It is My people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." That is why Peter can tell us, in his epistle, to rejoice in trial and to glorify God—not because of the tribulation we experience but because of the loving purpose behind it. (1 Peter 4:13, 16.) Christ, in all His love, is there in the darkest hours.

Christ for us, Christ in us, Christ with us, is the sum total of Christianity, and when we are tempted to fear that we cannot be safe or saved, the Lord gives us this assurance: "Remain in union with Me, and I will remain in union with you." John 15:4, Good News for Modern Man. Be not deceived by any other message, for none other is the way of salvation. None other is Christianity. ★★

J. Wayne McFarland, M.D.

HOW TO STOP SMOKING

The 5-Day Plan to Stop Smoking which has received world-wide acclaim, is a group therapy programme involving film screenings, lectures, and other aids to combat the smoking habit. Co-developer, Dr. McFarland, in this feature shares some of the suggestions which are a part of the 5-Day Plan, and may help some who are not able to attend the group therapy clinics.

No matter how convincing all the facts against smoking may be, it is not mere facts and statistics that you need, but rather a programme to help you quit smoking.

The desire to stop smoking is good, as far as it goes; but many people make the mistake of confusing mere desire with willpower. Along with the desire to stop smoking you will want to mobilize your willpower into positive, forceful action.

We feel that the best way to quit smoking is to stop all at once, none of this tapering-off business. The reason: it is better to have a few rough days and be through with it than to drag it out for weeks and months. Slow torture is no fun. You can make a clean sweep of this thing and do it easier than you think. It is our purpose to help you get over the craving as rapidly as possible—in fact, in five days' time.

After quitting, the hardest part comes in the first three days, but by the end of five days the majority of individuals find the craving definitely less or gone. Stay with it for ten days and you will make it. Say to yourself, "I choose not to smoke." Keep repeating your decision throughout the day from morning eye-opening through to that final yawn at night. As you repeat it, be sure to mean it! In repeating the decision, "I choose not to smoke," many people discover within themselves a positive, growing resistance to the physical craving for tobacco.

Right now is the time for you to accept fully the fact that how you think, how you use your willpower, has an actual effect, an immediate effect, on your body's craving for tobacco. By all means remember this basic relationship between mind and body, because you can utilize this principle in breaking the smoking habit. Each day, as you decide in a more forceful way, "I CHOOSE not to smoke," remember that this strong, positive decision exerts an immediate



effect on your physical craving to smoke, to the extent that in many people it at once perceptibly weakens the urge. Through a correct use of your will, you not only weaken a craving, but better still, you gradually help to bring your habits under the control of reason.

During a period of strong craving to smoke, look at your watch. Observe the second hand as it sweeps around the dial. Regardless of how strong the urge, you can certainly keep from smoking for a mere sixty seconds. With one minute already gone, you can hold out for one more minute. Of course you can. But notice something else. When the third minute elapses you will usually discover that the sharpest craving has reached a peak and begun to weaken. You are going to need all the willpower you have, but each additional hour and each day will add to your determination and willpower. We suggest some rules to follow faithfully, to help you over peak urges and on toward a new way of living.

1. Water on the Outside

This is the time to really enjoy luxury. Take a warm bath two or three times a day for fifteen to twenty minutes. Just relax. If you feel you cannot stand it any longer not to smoke, hop right back into the tub or shower. It's pretty hard to smoke in a shower.



In addition, try another relaxing procedure—the cold mitten friction. Known in the field of medical rehabilitation as a vascular gymnastic, it will help jangled nerves

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step up circulation, and make you feel like a million! Here is the procedure. First, get up in the morning a few minutes earlier than usual. Second, in a warm bathroom fill the washbasin with tepid or cool water. Third, immerse a washcloth in the water, then wring it out thoroughly, with no dripping ends. Fourth, firmly rub an arm until the skin begins to glow.

Keep rubbing until the desired pink colour appears, denoting an increased peripheral blood circulation. Some people discover it requires considerable rubbing before the skin turns pink, which fact often indicates the peripheral or surface blood vessels are somewhat sluggish in dilating. However, the same mitten friction applied the next morning will usually cause the surface vessels to dilate much sooner.

Use progressively cooler water each morning in order to obtain a greater tonic effect. Do not attempt, however, to cover the entire body with the cold mitten friction on the first morning. On the second morning the second arm can be covered in addition to the first. On the third morning the sequence can run as follows: left arm, right arm, and chest. On the fourth morning the legs may be covered, in addition to arms and chest, so that the entire body will have been covered by the cold mitten friction. Some spartan souls eventually find themselves tossing a tray of ice cubes into the morning wash-basin. A cold vigorous mitten friction will make you feel more wide-awake and stimulated without triggering the craving for another smoke.

2. Water on the Inside

Drink six to eight glasses of water between meals. Keep a record if necessary. The more liquids you can down, the quicker the nicotine leaches out of your body. Take no alcoholic beverages —no beer, no wine.

The average person may not realize the importance of sufficient water for the proper function of the human body. The brain, for example, is approximately 75 per cent water. The nervous system cannot function properly without adequate fluids. Water is vital not only to help you get rid of nicotine from the system, but also to keep your nerves running smoothly.

For the next few days, then, here's a suggested water schedule. Upon rising in the morning, try to drink a glass or two of warm water. At first you may be forced to start with a proverbial thimbleful until your stomach becomes used to it. But start forming the habit of drinking water the first thing upon rising. Then drink two glasses of water between breakfast and noontime, plus another two some time during the afternoon. That will total six glasses in all.

Those six glasses of water in addition to fresh fruit juice may cause your kidneys to think that Christmas and New Year have both arrived on the same day. In fact, you may even slosh a bit when you walk. But by substantially increasing your fluid intake during the first twenty-four hours, you may find yourself rounding the corner on craving much sooner. After twenty-four hours you can cut down on the water, but keep fresh fruit and fruit juices high.



3. Importance of Regularity

Get adequate rest during these five days, have regular times for meals, a set time to go to bed (eight hours of sleep won't hurt you.) No nightclubbing these five days. You are going all out to conserve your nervous energy.

So plan to retire a bit earlier than usual tonight.

Give those nerves a good rest. Fatigue in its many forms is an enemy of willpower. Because they habitually stay up till the national anthem is played at the close of the late, late show, thus robbing their bodies of needed rest, many people stumble groggily out of bed in the morning with eyes looking like two burnt holes in a blanket. With jangled nerves already screaming for a cigarette, how can a chronically fatigued person possibly wage a strong-willed campaign against anything, let alone tobacco? Whether your fatigue arises from a lack of adequate rest or from simple overwork, we suggest that during these five days you make definite plans to obtain an adequate amount of rest each night.

4. No Sitting Around After Meals

After meals, get outside, walk and breathe deeply for fifteen to thirty minutes. Do not sit after eating. This is the time you will want most of all to smoke. Get outside.

Until now you've been in the habit of eating a substantial dinner, only to collapse feet up in your favourite easy chair with a smoke, a newspaper, and television. At this moment your favourite easy chair has become a dual booby trap, all saturated with the aroma from a thousand previous smokes, and part of an established pattern. There you sit, encircled by the permeating aroma from sofa, curtains, rug. No wonder your craving to smoke comes to life with a vengeance.

Get up and go for your favourite workshop hobby or outside for a walk. You might even go so far as to help your wife with the dishes. But whatever you do, just don't sit down after you eat. After every meal, a walk is the rule for you.

Here is another reason: It is estimated that brain cells require some five times the amount of oxygen required by any other part of the body. It must naturally follow, then, that by reducing the amount of oxygen available to the brain we could impair certain mental functions. May we not logically assume that impaired mental functions due to insufficient oxygen would likewise hinder the exercise of strong willpower, so vital in resisting the urge to smoke?

Further, medical research indicates the frontal areas of the brain, usually the first to be affected by an insufficient oxygen supply, to be closely associated with functions of willpower, reason and judgment. Therefore, during the next few days when strong willpower and calm nerves are so vital, decide to take time out for extra amounts of oxygen, and particularly after meals.



"I Choose Not to Smoke"

5. Be Careful What You Drink

Do not drink alcohol, tea, coffee, or cola beverages. Try to avoid all sedatives and stimulants in order to build up your nervous reserves as quickly as possible. Milk or buttermilk is the beverage now. For a hot beverage, use a cereal drink.

Many smokers, while trying to kick the tobacco habit, double their daily coffee intake, not realizing its ability to trigger an explosive craving for the very tobacco they are trying to quit. But there is more to the story. In addition to the established habit pattern linking a cup of coffee with a cigarette, caffeine in the coffee stimulates nerves. You need no extra nervous tension now. Keeping calm is the watchword.

Another prominent enemy of willpower is alcohol. In any form, it strikes directly at your vital brain centres of reason, willpower and judgment. For this reason confer upon it, during these next few days, the dubious honour of being labelled Personal Enemy Number One.

In almost every group of people trying to break the smoking habit we discover a sizeable number who make excellent progress until the fateful afternoon they drop in at a cocktail party. They fully intend to nurse a glass of ginger ale throughout the affair—until some old friend entices them into "just one tiny one for old times' sake." A half pack of cigarettes later they're still trying to figure out what made a shambles of their willpower.

6. No Eating at This Table

Often we can tell when a man is smoking heavily, for all his food is highly spiced. Also he eats heavily of meats, gravies, fried foods, and rich foods, making it well-nigh impossible for him to stop smoking.

The reason the average smoker uses strong condiments is that tobacco deadens his taste buds. He often requires liberal doses of strong-flavoured condiments to punch through this deadened sense of taste. When he suddenly stops smoking, his taste buds begin to awaken from their many-a-year anaesthetic, to proclaim a wonderful improvement in the flavour of his wife's cooking, calling for yet another display of willpower; namely, "I choose not to overeat." So by all means during these five days, give yourself every chance by leaving off such condiments as hot sauce, mustard, black pepper, chili, and horseradish. Remember, if it's hot when it's cold, you'd better not use it.

During these five days omit rare steaks, rich and/or greasy fried foods from your diet. Give your body the best possible chance to recuperate through the use of plain, simple food prepared in as natural a manner as possible. Some people discover that a well-seasoned rare steak is in itself sufficient to stimulate a strong craving to smoke. The craving may possibly be stimulated from purine substances in the meat and by an increase in blood ammonia absorbed from the breakdown of the high protein of the meat, since high ammonia levels may stimulate the central nervous system. The rarer the steak, the greater the amount



of ammonia formed. Substitute fish for other meat; it will also help keep cholesterol low.

While we are discussing certain foods at this point, we also suggest that you abstain from rich, sugar-heavy desserts.

In white refined sugar, there is neither calcium, phosphorus, iron, nor vitamin B₁. Even more important, your body requires vitamin B₁ in order to burn blood sugar.

"I Choose Not to Overeat"

Therefore, whenever you eat an excessive amount of sugar, your supply of vitamin B₁—which should be strengthening your nerves—is being constantly drawn off to burn up the excessive sugar being eaten. No wonder, then, that nerves so often become jumpy and irritable.

Therefore, during these five days, when you're breaking the cigarette habit, dispense with rich pastries and desserts containing liberal amounts of sugar. This will help to give your nerves the best possible chance of weathering the present storm.

7. Instead, Eat Here

For meals, eat all you want of fruit, grains, vegetables, and nuts. Eat abundantly of fresh fruit (this is your opportunity to go on a fruit jag.) It is best to eat fruit and vegetables at separate meals—nothing between meals. And only sugarless gum, if you insist.

One reason individuals give for not stopping smoking is that they'll put on weight and look like a balloon. They ask, "Which is worse, to be overweight or risk the bad results of smoking?" Don't worry about the problem of overweight during the first few days. You will be drinking extra amounts of water, so you may put on a few pounds; but this water is essential to help you get rid of the nicotine in your system.

However, this problem of overweight is indeed important. But you will have made more progress in handling it during these five days than most of you probably realize. Your willpower has been steadily strengthened. It has kept you from eating and drinking certain things that would be harmful. It can now be a valuable weapon in your battle against overweight. Most people can control their weight a lot easier than they can control the smoking habit. So just take courage; we are ready to discuss some valuable hints on how to keep your weight normal.

Here is a simple plan to aid you in losing weight. It is sound, and it will work.

The object is to lose one pound a week. This is a good average. Of course, you lose weight more slowly than on a "crash programme," but you also avoid looking like a scarecrow or a dried prune. Nutritional deficiencies are much rarer. The stress on the human body is less.

This programme starts with a good breakfast. Right here is where many people fail. They skip breakfast, and then they continually try to catch up on nutrients the rest of the day. They may even nibble between meals, but snacking is disastrous to any weight-control programme. You cannot eat between meals and control your weight.

Folk sometimes eat only two meals a day, but the wrong two. They have a meal at noon, and then really feast at



night. Make your lightest meal the one at night. Reduce your fluids to four glasses, and use salt only in preparing the food, none at the table. Reduce all your servings by one third. Cut down or reduce to zero fried foods, rich gravies, and desserts. Use sugarless mints and sugarless gum. Snack only on carrot sticks or celery sticks.

8. Extra Vitamins Help

For extra amounts of vitamins, particularly of B complex, which is the vitamin to help your nerves as you deprive them of nicotine, take at each meal one or two tablespoons of wheat germ. As a substitute for wheat germ one or two tablespoons daily of dried brewer's yeast is another good source of B complex and also of excellent protein.

One way to take brewer's yeast, is to stir a tablespoon of dried yeast into a glass of tomato juice, hold your nose, and drink it down. This is for the folks who feel that they have been cheated unless there is some nasty-tasting medicine to take. Others wanting added amounts of vitamin B, can check with the family physician for such vitamin B₁ capsules or tablets as he might wish to recommend during this particular period.



9. Panaceas May Disappoint

Special tablets or other aids to stop smoking may help you. Some individuals swear by them, while others seem to receive no benefit. You may wish to try some of them. If those nerves of yours begin complaining too loudly about this whole process of giving up tobacco, feel free to contact your own doctor who may suggest a mild tranquilizer for a day or so. For any type of medication it is always wise to consult your family physician.



10. Divine Help Doesn't Disappoint

The most important part of this whole programme is to ask God to help you. If you have never prayed before, this is the time to learn. Heaven will help any man or woman who is really serious about stopping the use of

tobacco. Place your will on the side of God and you are invincible. You can never fail with God as your partner.

The greatest Book ever written says, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Here we have not only God's promise but also assurance of His power to aid us in overcoming any defiling habit. Don't hesitate for a moment to ask for strength. But as you ask, simply believe that you will receive strength,

and you will. A basic natural law is, "Strength is acquired through effort." This law holds true in muscles, in willpower, and in faith. Just try it and see.

For that irresistible urge that may strike you during the first few days of stopping, pause right where you are and say to yourself, "I choose not to smoke." Then get a drink of water, start deep breathing, and ask for divine aid. You will note that the craving begins to lessen in a few minutes and that you have made it through a real crisis. These periods of extreme craving will gradually lessen. You can make it.

Follow the outlined schedule each day, and you will feel better and have a sense of well-being unknown to you for a long time. Furthermore, you can look the world straight in the face because YOU are the one, not the cigarette, who is running your life. When you feel the lowest, you may very well be a great deal nearer to a major breakthrough than you realize.

Recently, a heavy-smoking business executive declared, "I am amazed at how many beneficial side effects there are in this plan to stop smoking." Whereupon he listed a number of benefits experienced through more exercise, deep breathing, and the stronger willpower to regularize personal habits. For him the plan had already paid off in an improved sense of well-being. He concluded by saying, "And all these benefits have come to me within the framework of giving up tobacco." We believe this is as it should be. In ceasing to smoke, you are certainly not the victim of some negative decision that deprives you of a cherished habit. Instead, in the process of quitting you can open other doors leading to new avenues of better living.

Now for a word of definite warning. If you allow your willpower to drift into gradual inactivity, thus becoming careless in habits of eating, drinking, working, and sleeping, your guard will be imperceptibly but steadily lowered. Don't forget that just beneath the surface lies a once well-established neuro-muscular, psychological addiction, ready without warning to unleash a savage craving to smoke.

Keep your guard up. Your job now is to establish the habit of not smoking just as firmly as before you had established the habit of smoking. Remember, this will take time, but you can make it. ■

"The desire to stop smoking is good, as far as it goes; but many people make the mistake of confusing a mere desire with willpower. Along with the desire to stop smoking you will want to mobilize your willpower into positive forceful action."

EDITORIAL COMMENT



"YOUNG PEOPLE AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE"

WHEN anyone says that, it brands them straight away as being over the hill and far away from the modern trends of youth. Unfortunately, it has become a badge of those who have attained a certain maturity of years, to look upon the youth of today as some kind of inferior set of beings, and, at the same time, remember only the good that they themselves did when they were in their hot-blooded youth.

The facts are that, in whatever generation you count yourself, there were some very, very bad young people and some very, very good young people, with the great majority of young people swirling around in the middle, somewhat vaguely trying to find their feet. It may be that, in these rather pressure-packed days of the sex-ridden seventies, young people are under stresses that those of previous generations knew little about, and consequently, when snap judgments and sweeping generalizations are made (such as that which adorns the heading of this editorial) they are all damned because of the extreme behaviour of a notorious handful.

Do not mistake the meaning of that last sentence. It is no attempt to white-wash the up-and-coming generation; it is no effort to make the youth of today feel that they are any better than they should be. Indeed, viewed from where we sit, the young generation is in imminent danger of having much that is solid and significant in life swept away from it because of what is euphemistically termed "modern permissiveness."

We are aware of what this permissiveness is doing to young people, even those who call themselves Christians. We are saddened by some of the liberal views that many take of morality, and we are not unaware of the colossal blunders that they are making in their lives, simply because of that devilish phrase, "what's wrong with it anyway?" or that equally devastating philosophy, "everybody's doing it these days."

We have, however, been greatly encouraged to learn that there are young people who have a care for high standards and who recognize that they owe something to their fellow men. Maybe you have never heard of the city of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It is called home by 1,300,000 people, and hence is more than a whistle-stop in the Brazilian scheme of things. Indeed, it is the third largest city of that populous country.

Recently, the city played host to a congress of youth for six days. Those young people—1974 vintage, remember—certainly left their mark upon the citizens of Belo Horizonte, and the memory lingers on—pleasantly.

During the period of the congress—less than a week, mark you—they:

★ Erected, with the permission of the authorities, a ten-foot-high marble monument displaying the Law of God; this will remain a public feature in a city plaza.

★ Donated blood for poor patients in charity hospitals in the city.

★ Built a house for a poor widow (in the six-day congress period!).

★ Gave social assistance where and as required to those who were in need.

★ Marched for peace and health, in an orderly demonstration against intoxicants and drugs, and proclaimed their temperance principles, with the support of the political head of the city, in a city plaza.

★ Carried on an uninterrupted public reading of the Bible.

★ Distributed 3,000 roses with messages of health and peace to hospital patients.

★ Donated to the city a system called Telepas (telephone of peace) to assist those in distress and despair. (Already between 600 and 800 calls are being received daily, and many potential suicides have been prevented from carrying out their purposes.)

They did all this in six days! All of these things and many more! Young people—members of what many think of as the "beat generation."

As important, almost, as the things they did, were the things they did not do. They did not get high on pot; they did not indulge in wild drinking sprees or uninhibited sex orgies; they did not roar around the city in their motor-cars, terrorizing the populace; they did not molest the local girls; they did not scream their cacophonous "music" through souped-up loud-speakers; they did not leave in their wake a litter of beer cans and cigarette packets that took the city's cleaning service three days to clean up. No one was arrested for violence or illegal practices; and no one was thrown out of the city because the local people couldn't stand the behaviour of these interlopers any longer. On the contrary, the city fathers are loud in their praise of the whole congress, and as one reporter has said, residents of Belo Horizonte will remember these young people "for their usefulness, service, and love."

Who were these young people? Portuguese-speaking angels? Olive-skinned cherubs? Not a bit of it! They were ordinary young people with the same drives and urges that possess youth of every country and clime. They came from every stratum of Brazilian society, yet they had one thing in common. They were committed Christians.

Did they have fun? Cartloads of it! Did they laugh? As happily as any young people anywhere! Did they crack jokes and engage in harmless banter? You can be assured of it! But they did it without drugs, without alcohol, without smutty stories, without free sex, without bottle parties, without "setting the

town alight." They proved that real happiness is a warm experience with God and man.

The younger generation? Yessir! There are some gems among them! In every land there are still good solid youth who have not bowed to modern pressures and sold out to sin. But we could do with a whole lot more of them!

Robert H. Parr

A MAN OF HIS TIME

ON January 20, 1973, Amilcar Cabral was assassinated. In the turbulent politics of some African states the only remarkable thing about this event could be that it did not take place much sooner, given the fact that Amilcar Cabral founded and led the Anti-colonialist Movement in the Portuguese territories of Africa. Renowned as a thinker, he had a flair for organization, and physical courage far above the ordinary. This man, who qualified as a specialist in agronomy, renounced all the privileges he could have had, to devote his energies to the struggle for freedom.

Revolutionaries come and go rather quickly, but the aura of romance and idealism often surrounds their names long after they have left the scene, especially among those who hold radical beliefs in our society. The title of this editorial is therefore a salute and a tribute to a brave man who, disavowing any claim to greatness, declared: "I am just an ordinary African who wants to repay his debts to his people and to be a man of his time."—"Unesco Courier," November, 1973.

Subversive though it may sound to quote the words of a freedom fighter, our interest is primarily with his stated ideals rather than in championing the cause for which he gave his life. Can his words be adapted to our own life situation? Should young people who revere the memories of such men as Che Guevarra and Ho Chi Minh make due allowance for circumstances, instead of slavishly asserting that revolution, with bloodshed if necessary, is the remedy for our times? Surely the words of Amilcar Cabral imply that we owe our fellow men and women something more than the violent overthrow of their existence. Surely his excellent expression, "a man of his time," suggests that we should each develop an insight into what the times demand of us!

It has become fashionable to use the expression, "a debt to society," exclusively in the context of a criminal who has wronged his fellows and must pay the penalty demanded by law. Yet here is an idealist speaking of repaying a debt to his people, in an emerging country in which the average person would be hard-pressed to see that a debt existed. Only a

man dedicated to his people and the well-being of his brothers would feel that he owed his talents and his very life to improving their lot. In that sense he was indeed a man of his time.

But in another vital sense it would seem that here is a case of misapplied zeal. Any realistic appraisal of our times must take note of the fact that this depleted earth is growing old (as a garment, Isaiah 51: 6). The debt that he owed his people, and the debt that all Christians owe to their neighbours in the world around them is to direct their attention to the world that is to come. Revolution aimed at creating a better world for this generation and generations yet unborn, is doomed to failure. Preparation for divine intervention shows a better understanding of the times.

"And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Romans 13: 11. Apostolic times and modern times alike call us away from a fatal indifference to eternal things. We are indeed called to be fighters, clad in "the armour of light." We are not directed to engage in urban or rural guerilla warfare in order to renounce the works of darkness that are all too evident in the violent times in which we live. Our battle is no less real because it is against an unseen enemy. The real message demands that we see the urgency of our situation, and realize that triumph and deliverance are close at hand.

As men and women of our time, our commission is clear. We are to enlist in the cause of Christ's second coming, to be sure of our own salvation and work untiringly for others, with an awareness that time is all too short. In human terms the fight is difficult, if not impossible. But this battle is not contested in human weakness. The sustaining promise is: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." Isaiah 59: 19.

We have seen the overwhelming power of the enemy flood through defences once thought to be invulnerable. On every hand there is evidence that the flood is sweeping people to eternal destruction. To those who understand the times, the standard raised by the Spirit of the Lord is also visible. Ultimately it will put the enemy to flight. Our task is to identify the real enemy in our midst and to rally to uphold the standard that has been raised. As we do this we can be truly said to be people of our time, and, by the grace of God, we shall be His people for all time, even when time shall cease to be.

James H. Rabe

A Father's Letter to His Son

Dear Son,

I listened very carefully to your words; perhaps in them I heard a plea for help, although we both know you are not the sort to ask for something unless you can make a direct exchange.

You said, "It's the fault of your generation . . ." and by this you meant that my generation was the cause of all the troubles that beset the "modern" young world. Yet as I see it, there has never been a time when youngsters had so much "say," so much freedom, so much money, so much leisure and were given so many hand-outs by their fathers and mothers, and where fault was acknowledged and directed so precisely.

Freedom, my son, is to each person just what he or she chooses to make it. It has been examined, analysed, pulled apart and put together by the world's leading experts, but no one has yet been able to define it satisfactorily. Each person has a reason for living or dying, and we make our own principles by which we live. All the good things will not make us enjoy life, nor will they give us contentment, peace or happiness; it's life and how we live it that makes us enjoy the good things and get the rewards worth while. The standard, my son: we keep only what we share.

I have heard about "women's liberation." I think I am a reasonably intelligent man, but I can't for the life of me see what they want to be liberated from. Your sister seems to want the benefits of being a woman with none of the drudgery of having children, of watching them grow up, of being proud of their achievements, of helping to direct them, of washing their skinned knees and comforting

their tears. Your sister will never know delight in the feel of a cold, small body worming its way into bed for warmth, or a spontaneous hug or kiss, neither will she hold hands with her grown children and look back over years of sweet memories of shared happiness. Your memories, and hers, will be of the time you "broke the bank," of your successes with bat or ball, of your triumph over your fellows; your memories will be personal to you and will leave you with a sigh of regret. Already your children come to me, when they should go to you; already they are losing their way because you have no time to give them.

When I analyse your days and hours I find that you use only approximately one-third of your waking hours in obtaining the necessary material things and in the cleanliness of self and home. The other two-thirds you spend sitting in front of a box, entertaining or being entertained, communicating, talking, going out. Yes, my son, two-thirds of your life (apart from sleep) is spare time, and of course your generation is asking for more of this commodity.

Then you complain of the Generation Gap and the impossibility of inter-communication. I know, and so does every honest person, that never before has there been such a large gap between generations. We cannot deny this. I believe that there are four main reasons for this: The speed of modern-day life; the tremendous advance in technology; tensions in the home, kept on the boil by the mass media; and inadequate parents.

And yet we, your parents, tried to guide you. We taught you about God, about the moral code; we even tried to communicate to you the feeling that follows a job well done, or that comes from helping someone in trouble. But you said, "God is dead; why do something for nothing? They are only taking you for a sucker."

We couldn't communicate with you, but our language has the same base. True, in my

day we said "a nice bit of homework," and you say "a superior post-prandial curriculum extension"; and you talk about "hyper-self-orientated progenitors" and we say "selfish parents." To me, a regional opportunity area is still a classroom, and bi-lateral progenito-pedagogical recipro-consultation is just a meeting where problems can be discussed. But, you see, you stick to your language and I stick to mine, and we can't really get together because it takes so long for me to understand your grandiose terminology, and I can't get you to accept simplicity, and so we don't talk the same language.

I know I'm right, and you can prove you are, but this must be wrong; one of us is all or partly wrong, or perhaps both of us. I was wrong in giving you or allowing you to get power without proper direction; now I know that immaturity and power aren't a good combination; but how could I have avoided this?

You are wrong in blaming me for all the ills that beset you. For example, you say that I caused pollution, yet it seems to me that you are the largest user of the principal cause, the combustion engine. But, my son, you have found your scapegoat. It's not you; it can't be your children (for then you would be blaming yourself); so it has to be your parents, because you know there is no Satan.

And so, my son, we reach the impasse. Without God there is no devil to blame. Without God there is no desire to do right; merely a compliance. Without God there is no peace of mind, no trust, no faith built on hope, no life, just living in the rat race of speed, grab, dishonesty and self-sought righteousness.

In failing you, my son, I feel like a migrant in a strange world. You say the solution is gradual redeployment of area community socio-instructional facilities on homogeno-rationalistic lines. I don't think I know what that means. I only wish we could talk on the same wave-length, that we could communicate, that we could exchange ideas on a

mutually-acceptable level. Then I feel that we would be somewhere near to solving our differences. After all, we don't actually live in different worlds; it only seems like it.

With all my love,
Your failure,

DAD.

Signs

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Escape

From Remorse

THERE ARE so many times when we humans say, "I wish I hadn't done such-and-such," or "I wish I had done this-and-that." How wonderful it would be to live so well that we could avoid regret! Regret—the horror to be feared more than any physical pain. True, regrets may be to an extent unavoidable. But there is much remorse we could have avoided, for what usually causes it is our own action or lack of action. The inevitable we can learn to accept stoically. And it is easier to forgive others their wrongs than to forgive ourselves. Oh, we justify every little thing we do, we spend much time in telling others our reasons for doing what we do, lest they look down on us. Yet we find so often deep within us, a lurking sense of failure, a shadowy knowledge of shortcomings that self-justification cannot wipe away.

I have often thought the greatest regret would be that of the man who, lying on his deathbed, had to face the facts that he had never loved fully and therefore never lived fully. For at that moment it is too late. A few words torn from the throat by miserable realization, and then that slipping away into the beyond . . . with those behind left to think their thoughts unguided by the departed's justifications. Never able to take up one's own defence! Our failures will some day stand mute and unadorned by words.

How can such tragic moments be avoided? How can I be assured that I will not someday sit in a hushed congregation looking at a casket holding the body of one I should have loved better, one I should have treated with more compassion, more patience, more understanding? There is a way. It is the only way I know of to avoid regret almost completely.

The answer is surrender to Jesus Christ. Only with that surrender can we reach the maturity that will save us from selfish acts which haunt us later. Only with our yielding to Christ can we be filled with the spirit of love which will whisper warm ideas to us and gently lead us into thoughtfulness and goodness. How glorious a thing to have Christ looming large in our minds every second! How reassuring in times of parting! What a perfect way to know that we are justified—without need of excuses and twisted explanations!

Come and stay in my heart, oh, sweet Spirit. Amen.

—Jim Pruitt.

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