

THESE TIMES

July 1, 1977

**IS ABORTION
TAKING LIFE INTO
YOUR OWN HANDS?** a
special
10-page
feature



(an actual photo of an 11-week-old fetus)



Karen, you're not pregnant, are you?

THESE TIMES readers respond to the dilemma
of a girl pregnant out of wedlock

IN THE APRIL ISSUE we presented the story of Karen, a seventeen-year-old girl, who found herself pregnant out of wedlock. In telling her story the editors in no way approved of the premarital sexual activity that led to her situation. As Christian editors we could never take such a position. Instead we presented this article in order to confront our readers with the growing world problem of abortion on demand and solicited their response.

In the story, Karen faced four alternatives for her problem: marriage to an unwilling partner, abortion, raising her child herself, or giving the baby up for adoption.

As Karen struggled with each of these alternatives, she encountered the key question and, in essence, the whole purpose for including the article: Is abortion an acceptable way out of such a crisis? What follows is a sampling of reader reaction to Karen's dilemma.

Marriage recommended. I think that since they are already married in the eyes of God (1 Corinthians 7:36), they should go ahead and make the marriage legal, with the agreement to divorce if either feels "trapped" later on.

I do not condone divorce, but it would be no worse than parting now, and divorce is much more desirable than abortion or illegitimacy. And adoption would be so very painful. Karen can always get an education, but she can never have this special child again.—Mrs. G. J. Lehman, Pine River, Wisconsin.

I am responding as looking at the situation through the eyes of a nineteen-year-old male Christian. I almost was faced with the same problem when I had a girl friend who along with me was living a worldly life. But praise God she wasn't pregnant. From my point of view I was going to marry her, as I feel Jim should marry Karen. If he took the responsibility of having sex, he should have been prepared to take on a family. I feel a child should grow up knowing a loving, protective, concerned father.—William Irion, Bushnell, Florida.

Letters regarding abortion. Seventeen is very young to have so much responsibility. A close friend of mine got pregnant at sixteen, quit high school, and had the child. She is twenty-four now and has never had the chance of "growing up" as a teenager. She feels cheated and has a lot of bitter feelings toward men, herself, and her child.

If you have an abortion, you will have another chance to start over again. You'll grow from this experience and think twice when you find another "Jim."—Janet L., Worcester, Massachusetts.

I do not feel that an abortion would be wrong, done at a reputable clinic under the care of a good doctor. I believe that life begins when the breath of life begins.—Mrs. James L. Parnell, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

I do not believe in abortion! The sixth commandment tells us, "Thou shalt not kill." As soon as conception

takes place, there is life, or the fetus would not grow and develop into a baby. Therefore, to me it is murder.—Mrs. Ruth E. Ripstra, Villa Park, Illinois.

By all means, have the abortion, as quietly as possible, then go back to school and get the rest of your education. If you have any misgivings about the baby, think of it as your penalty for what you did. You're not taking a life, when there is no life there. And the Supreme Court wouldn't have passed that law if there were life there.—Mrs. S. S. Barber, Springfield, Massachusetts.

I don't think raising a child by yourself is the best way, but when pregnancy happens, as it has happened for thousands of years, why snuff out the innocent child's life for some mistake its parents made? This child may be very intelligent, even a world leader some day, or have other great talents. "Thou shalt not kill." So please do not.—Mrs. Charles Mrkvicka, Plainfield, Wisconsin.

Based on nursing practice and personal experiences with spontaneous abortion and miscarriage, I cannot doubt that a pregnancy results, in truth, in a tiny person from the moment of conception and therefore deserves the rights which we accord any larger person. That includes the right to live.

Abortion is damaging to the mother, as well as to the child, in that many women, perhaps the majority, find that years later they are consumed with feelings of guilt and regret. To quote one such individual who is still suffering: "My daddy said it was just a routine medical procedure, like a hernia operation, and the baby didn't matter. Well, not as much as what was happening to me. I just wanted out and it didn't seem important. Now I can't forget it; I can't live with it. Now I know what they mean about tortures of the damned."

Mental health centers are just beginning to see the effects of abortion, and many professionals in this field fear it's the tip of the iceberg.

Adoption is a marvelous solution for

the natural mother, the child, and the new family. From the new family's standpoint, it is often life's most appreciated blessing. We have an adopted eight-year-old son, and I am lost for the words to tell you how grateful we are to his natural mother. She would be proud to know what a happy, well-adjusted boy he is, and I wish she could know how deeply we love him. She gave him, after all, the best of all gifts—life—and she gained her own chance at life in the process.—Mrs. Ronald W. Lauter, Middletown, Kentucky.

I was pregnant for three months and had a miscarriage in my home. I saw the baby. He was only ten or twelve inches long, but there were tiny fingers, hands, toes, feet, legs, arms, and even eyebrows. He was a person—once alive! Oh, if mothers could only see what they are expelling from their bodies.

If you feel certain that you cannot raise your child alone, and marriage isn't possible at the time, adoption into a good Christian home is another alternative. Again, keeping the baby's needs paramount, I mention the solution of adoption because of the security of growing up with two parents, though he may suffer in afteryears with feelings of "rejection." You, also, must brace yourself for much pain. A mother knows and deeply loves her baby after nine months of closeness.

I will pray that you make a wise decision. Remember to go to God with your problem. He knows the best answer.—Jo Mello, Lake Worth, Florida.

Adoption the best solution. If put up for adoption, the child will have a wonderful home. Most couples who adopt children want them desperately. Even though it might break her heart, she must do what is best for the child. She has no idea of the stress a tiny infant can put on two parents, much less one. I know—I am twenty years old and the mother of a lovely seven-month-old daughter. There is a lot of responsibility and commitment involved. Children are too great a joy not to be placed in the right setting and fully appreciated and loved.—Amy

Hayner, Ivor, Virginia.

Every baby desperately needs both a mother and a father. There are many emotional and spiritual problems these days arising from children who have come from inadequate homes. The ideal solution for the baby is to be adopted by another couple—if those people have been thoroughly screened by a professional source to know that they are good potential parents.

However, if Karen is totally unable to face the idea of presenting her baby for adoption, she should keep her baby.—Name withheld, Nebraska.

Adoption could make five people happy: (1) Karen, free to grow more, would be wiser; (2) Jim would possibly grow up; (3 and 4) the young couple who want and need a baby would be fulfilled; and most importantly, (5) the baby would be where he is loved and needed!

I know, because we have an adopted daughter who is the joy of our lives.—Mrs. T. A. Velazquez, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Karen said that she loves the baby too much to give it up. I think of the two women, both claiming the same child, who took him to King Solomon. Solomon told them that he would cut the baby in two and give half to each woman. Which woman was willing to give up the child? The one who loved the child—the real mother. There's more than one way, physically, to cut a child in two. True love opens her hands and lets go.

My children are adopted. I thank God for the strength, courage—and yes, love—that gave them up.—Pat Dorsey, Rock Hill, South Carolina.

Flee to Chicago or wherever. Have your baby. Your love for the child will give you the strength and courage to give him/her up to a Christian family. Raising a child alone and out of wedlock or raising it in what is almost sure to be an unhappy home is not a love act. Unselfish love will shoulder the responsibility and bear the anguish of giving up the baby to be raised by Christian parents who will give the child that special love a mother and father seem to have when they are unable to have their own children.

So easily mouthed but so difficult to

Readers' response statistics

NO OTHER article in the eighty-six-year history of THESE TIMES has attracted the volume of reader response that "Karen, You're Not Pregnant, Are You?" evoked. We wish we could include more than the small sample printed here, but space forbids it. We thank the more than three hundred and fifty who took the time to tell us their reaction.

Unwed pregnant women:

abortion	0%
marriage	4%
keep the baby	61%
adopt it out	35%

Parents of pregnant girls:

abortion	0%
marriage	8%
keep the baby	84%
adopt it out	8%

Other people:

abortion	9%
marriage	11%
keep the baby	49%
adopt it out	31%

Total of all three groups:

abortion	8%
marriage	10%
keep the baby	51%
adopt it out	31%

These statistics reflect the thinking of the more than a half million readers of THESE TIMES throughout the United States. However, these figures should not be interpreted as a sampling of the nation as a whole.

do. But whoever said courage comes easily? God bless you, dear. Try to remember that your life is not over—it is just beginning!—Ginger Hainer, Loma Linda, California.

Karen stated she loved the baby too much to give it up, but does she love it *enough* to give it up? She should think seriously about what would be best for the child and sacrifice her own desire to keep the child, no matter what. Every child coming into the world deserves two loving parents, and Jim certainly would not be ready to assume the commitment of being a loving parent. He already wants to get rid of it, and the child hasn't been born yet. Karen, please take your father's advice.—Mrs. Charles Leonard, Jackson, Michigan.

I sincerely believe that a mother who can give up a child, even when she loves him so much, must truly love him immensely to want only the best in this world and the next for him.—Becky Pruette, Midwest City, Oklahoma.

As a nurse who has worked in the labor and delivery rooms and seen the miracle and beauty of birth and as one

who has also worked in the operating room and seen the perfectly formed aborted babies who are people, I say, please do not have the abortion.

As a mother of two sons whom I adopted at birth from two different mothers, let me urge you, Do not be afraid of adoption. When one of my sons asks me why his mother gave him away—Was it because she did not love him?—I tell him, "No, she loved you enough to give you up because she could not take care of you." We had prayed for a baby, and I firmly believe this was a part of God's plan.—Name withheld, Georgia.

From unwed mothers. Regarding the article entitled "Karen, You're Not Pregnant, Are You?" I too at age seventeen became pregnant.

It's easy to follow established traditions of society, like having an abortion, getting married, giving up her education, having the child, giving it up for adoption, or just keeping the baby. But let me tell you, I speak from experience.

I myself was very lucky. I had a mother and stepdad who wanted the child as their own. Today I have a beautiful nine-year-old daughter who is loved and cared for by my mother.

I'm not saying that Karen has this opportunity, and I'm quick to say for Karen to give it up for adoption. But then again, I remember in my fourth month the movement of life within me was so beautiful—truly God's gift to me—that I didn't care who pointed a finger at me—I was happy.—Name withheld, San Francisco, California.

I was once in the same situation as Karen, only I was three years older and a sophomore in college, but still not mature enough to make a lifetime decision. The boy and I married, and the baby was born seven months later. I kept house and looked after the baby totally by myself while my husband finished college and worked fourteen hours a day. The hours were long and lonely.

Today, six years later, our son is five years old, and we are still married. Unfortunately the only reason we still are married is because of our son.—Unsigned, Georgia.

I understand your dilemma. Many years ago I was a very scared eighteen-year-old faced with the same decisions you are now facing. My choice was not an easy one to make, and it was one that I faced alone, for I did not tell my family at all. I had my baby and placed it for adoption. And every year on that child's birthday I cry for my own loss. But I have never regretted the decision I made to give that child a life I couldn't possibly have provided for it at that age.

I watched the delivery, and seeing her made it somehow easier to give her up than giving up someone I had carried with me for nine months but never seen or held. I loved my child then, and I love her still. Because of that love, I gave her to people who would love and care for her as I could not. I wanted her to grow up with people who were equipped emotionally and financially to handle the responsibilities of a small child. And important, too, was the fact that she would grow up with no social stigma attached to being illegitimate, which is still important, no matter what Liv Ullman or Catherine Deneuve do.—Name withheld, Houston, Texas.

My reaction to this article is one of understanding. I am eighteen, and a year ago I was afraid that I was preg-



nant. I found out that good Christian girls can make mistakes. I praise the Lord that I wasn't pregnant! The couple weeks I thought I might be pregnant, all I could think about was, "What should I do? My parents will be so disappointed in me." Luckily my parents never had to find out that I had been foolish.

I knew my only choice would have been to give the child to a Christian adoption agency. But I wouldn't have been able to give it away—not after giving birth to it. If I weren't a Christian, and found myself in Karen's position, I think I'd commit suicide, the easy way out. That way I wouldn't have to face my family. But being a Christian and hoping the father loved me and the baby enough to marry me after he finished his education, I would keep the baby. I wouldn't have been so foolish if I weren't deeply in love with him.

Thankfully all I have to deal with today is a guilty conscience.—Name withheld.

Karen could have the baby and still finish school. There are baby-sitting services on most campuses with reliable sitters. The government is always willing to give a reasonable amount of financial aid to unwed mothers with the desire to further their education. She could support her baby and herself with this help and her scholarship. I know. I'm doing it myself.—V. LeCount, Michigan City, Indiana.

From parents of pregnant girls. My advice goes not to Karen but to her parents. First, let Karen come to her own decision, then back her up in every way, even if it means an abortion. However, if she has had the proper Christian training, this will not

be the route she will go.

Karen needs to know that although she has failed you (and this will be a strong feeling), you still love and care for her.

There is one other alternative. Take the child as your own and bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. The blessings of this way are immeasurable. I know! I've been there, and I can truly say, God can give you a "song in the darkest night."—Name withheld, Michigan.

In response to Karen's story, we can say from our own experience that: (1) Karen was right to tell her parents. (2) Her mother was right to say to marry the boy. (3) It should be immediately, but go on through the school year.

After our shock was over, and all avenues explored, we decided to stand by the children and have them marry and struggle for education. We would help where we could—take care of the baby so the girl could work, for one thing.

Today our precious (and favorite of twelve grandchildren) grandchild (the baby) is in the mission field with a partner and two lovely children. The parents have had thirty happy, happy years and are still very much in love. All is well that ends well.

Good luck, Karen. Keep it, love it, and never be ashamed of it.—Name withheld, Virginia.

As a mother (now a grandmother and great-grandmother) of a troubled daughter years ago, I would love to have you beside me to tell you to pray much, ask for forgiveness and for strength to carry on, and keep your baby. It might be the only one you could have. Love it much; teach it the straight and narrow road of life; and above all things, both of you dedicate your lives to Christ. You will have much comfort in knowing you did the best you knew how in the situation.—Name withheld, Pennsylvania.

Keep it and raise it yourself. After reading your good article about Karen and her pregnancy, it made me realize just how often this very thing is occurring with girls everywhere—even in our small communities.

By all means, Karen, have the baby and take the responsibility for it. Then face the consequences, find a job or

some means of support, love that baby, and never, never blame it for your situation in life.

It's not the end of life for Karen. She can find forgiveness from God. Then she must forgive herself and go on from there.—Mrs. Sondra Schaub, Ithaca, Michigan.

This could have been the story of my own daughter. She was also seventeen at the time. If Karen has the courage to keep her baby, she should go to all her family and friends and tell them the facts. You'll be surprised at how kind and understanding most people are, and with God on her side, the rest won't matter. Our little four-year-old granddaughter has brought joy to our home.—Name withheld, Florida.

I am only seventeen, and if I were in Karen's situation I wouldn't force my boyfriend to marry me. Like Karen, I love him too much. But by faith in God and lots of love I would keep and raise my baby. A part of her is in that child—a part that she'll never be able to regain if she should kill it or give it away.—Kimberly Miller, Owen, Wisconsin.

I believe Karen and Jim's problem was a mistake, of course. But Karen's parents are reacting in a selfish and uncaring way. Everyone makes mistakes, and God forgives. We are supposed to help people see their mistakes and learn from them, not to cover them up. I believe Karen's responsibility is to raise her child and not trap Jim or herself into a marriage that neither one is ready for. A child's environment should be happy, not tense with fighting and discussing money problems all the time. I also believe Karen's parents have a responsibility to Karen and her baby. They should help her raise the child and help her to support herself and her baby.—Elonne Longest, Terre Haute, Indiana.

My younger sister had her daughter out of wedlock thirty years ago and reared her with the help of her family, who all adored the child. This young lady is today the beautiful wife of a young minister and the greatest joy in her mother's life.

I boarded girls for a year who were planning to give their babies up for adoption when they were born. I really concluded from this experience that

one never really forgets giving her child up. Some of these girls were having a second baby because of their hunger and hurt at being separated from the first—L. Odom, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

If she can fully accept being without the baby, then the answer is adoption. But if she has one thread of doubt that it would be hard not knowing the baby in the future years, she should keep her baby.

Of course it will be hard, but time never backs up, therefore one can't have tomorrow what's gone today. I know; I've been there. At times my heart is very heavy. If I were Karen's parents, I would stand behind her decision completely. It will give her the strength and leadership she needs.

May her parents hold their heads up—not down—because of what's happened to Karen. May they love her more now, for it is now that their love is most important.—Name withheld, New York.

Have the baby. It belongs to God too. He only loans babies to mothers for a short time. When the child is born, if the grandparents-to-be want to hide the skeleton in the closet, make arrangements with some Christian foster parents to keep the child for you, with the understanding that you may visit the child whenever you wish or take it to raise at your discretion. If you wish to be with your child full time, check with your nearest Social Service office and see what help they can give you.—D. Steele, Arpin, Wisconsin.

My daughter's best friend, who became pregnant, put her baby up for adoption. Based on her experience, I would never recommend this action for Karen. Only an exceptionally nonemotional woman could cope with this decision and not have deep mental repercussions later in life, regardless of any future children she may have. The heart never quite heals concerning the baby that was given away.

My advice to Karen would be to tell her parents she would like to keep the baby, even without marriage, asking for their help and understanding. Naturally Karen will not have the carefree life originally planned, and she'll be giving up part of her youth; but it seems with her character that this

would be the best solution for future happiness and peace.—June A. Wetzel, Finleyville, Pennsylvania.

There is no force on this earth that could ever talk me into giving up my baby. I would fight, scrub floors, even give my life for my children. These feelings are "right" and "natural." Think of the cold hands your baby will pass through before it finds a home if you give it up, and then think of all the love you could give it and the joy it would be to you. Face life more boldly—forget what others think.—Mrs. Pat Kaufmann, Apopka, Florida.

Comments from a woman doctor. As a woman doctor I have personally seen many young women in the dilemma of pregnancy, and the situation does not cease to distress me.

One solution seems clearly the worst, since it involves another reluctant person—marriage to Jim. I'd rule that out as the least desirable solution. The second worst, judging by Karen's reaction, is keeping the baby to raise herself. From a practical standpoint, this is usually an undesirable choice, though occasionally it's feasible for a highly motivated mother-to-be who has a lot of other encouragement and advantages (which Karen doesn't seem to have).

This leaves abortion versus adoption after delivery. Karen should quickly get full information about both from organizations such as Birthright, Planned Parenthood, and such. Her negative reaction to Jim's idea suggests that she is unhappy about abortion. If she chooses this option, she *must* explore her own feelings about it and be reasonably sure that her remorse afterward would not destroy her. My personal feeling is that abortion is a very serious thing, to be undertaken only when there seems to be no other way out, and only with great solemnity and sadness. In most cases, resorting to abortion is probably a sin, though in some cases it may be a lesser sin than another alternative. The one who sows to his fleshly nature will reap corruption and decay from the fleshly nature (see Galatians 6:8).

Difficult as it may be, Karen's best choice is probably to bear the child and allow its adoption.—Shirley L. Barron, MD, Richmond, Kentucky.

EDITORIALS

Response of editors to Karen's dilemma

OBVIOUSLY Karen faces a grave decision indeed. As an unmarried pregnant teenager, she holds in her hands the future of at least two human beings: herself and that of the child within her body (see the April, 1977, issue for details).

She cannot go back in time and erase the moral wrong already committed. All she can possibly do is ask God's forgiveness and then make the best of a very difficult situation.

At the outset we question whether her marriage to such an immature and unwilling partner would benefit any of the persons involved: the boy, the girl, or the baby-to-be.

As Christian editors we would also rule out abortion. Even during the first trimester (the first three months of pregnancy) we see too much evidence that the creature growing within her is a living human being, not merely a mass of cells or protoplasm.

An eight-to-ten-week-old fetus has arms, legs, hands, fingers, toes, fingerprints, face, mouth, tongue, eyes, ears, sex organs, and all other body organs including heart and brain. He can clutch things with his hands, make tiny fists, suck his thumb, get hiccups, have periods of waking and sleeping. Doctors can detect electrical impulses from his brain and the regular beating of his heart. By all intents and purposes he is alive.

To those who would challenge us, we recommend a careful examination of the eleven-week-old fetus in our cover photo. Dr. Landrum B. Shettles, chief of obstetrics and gynecology at the Gifford Memorial Hospital, Randolph, Vermont, describes his photo: "The picture shows the human fetus at approximately eleven weeks of development in the intact amniotic sac, held in my left hand. The patient had just lost the conceptus (fetus) through an incompetent cervix uteri (weak cervix)."

Because of physical, psychological, and moral reasons we could not recommend abortion as a solution acceptable to a Christian young woman in Karen's situation—unless the growing being within her actually jeopardized her own life. Such cases, however, are rare indeed and fully outside the realm of this discussion.

Thus Karen has two options remaining: keeping the baby or giving it up for adoption. Between these two, only Karen herself has the right to choose. She and she alone must decide—prayerfully and seriously—whether or not she wishes to keep the baby and then either rear it herself or let her parents or a close relative rear it

as part of the family.

If she says no, then she should plan on giving the baby up for adoption the moment it is born. She needs to talk with her family doctor and contact a qualified agency. (We are including some phone numbers below which may provide such a person with the help she needs.)

If she says yes, then she should talk with her parents and relatives and solicit their support.

In either case only Karen can and should make the ultimate decision, which she must live with the rest of her life. And whatever she decides, we all should support her action with love and concern.



Where to turn for help

If you are in trouble and, like Karen, wonder what to do or where to turn, rest assured that others *do* care and want to help.

One of the largest organizations which help unwed mothers is Alternatives to Abortion International, headquartered in Toledo, Ohio. In addition to emotional support and counseling, they also provide housing, clothing, employment, job training, education, and financial help for legal and medical services. For those desiring adoption, they will also recommend agencies which will place the babies in qualified homes.

Although space prohibits an extensive list of their 2,000 phone numbers, the editors are including the phone numbers of AAI in the larger cities in America. These AAI offices will place you in touch with the branch closest to your home.

Atlanta (404) 688-4496; **Baltimore** (301) 323-7444; **Boston** (617) 782-5151; **Chicago** (312) 233-0305; **Cincinnati** (513) 241-5433; **Cleveland** (216) 381-6500; **Dallas** (214) 691-8881; **Denver** (303) 321-3780; **Detroit** (313) 882-1000; **Los Angeles** (213) 380-8750; **Miami** (305) 643-2800; **Milwaukee** (414) 272-5860; **Minneapolis** (612) 338-2353; **Newark** (201) 361-6665; **New York** (212) 260-2700; **Philadelphia** (215) 877-7070; **Pittsburgh** (412) 731-2420; **Portland (OR)** (503) 221-0598; **St. Louis** (314) 962-5300; **San Francisco** (415) 863-0800; **Seattle** (206) 325-0337; **Washington, D.C.** (202) 526-3333

*This fetus was not aborted. The doctor was preparing to do a purse-string type stitch around the cervix in order to strengthen it and save the child's life—an operation which he has performed successfully fifteen times—when the fetus spontaneously exited the womb.

Five myths commonly held about

ABORTION

Most people who condone abortion do so as a result of one or more of the following myths— by Daniel Augsburger

MANY ISSUES face modern man in the late 1970's that previous generations never even anticipated. Abortion is one of these issues, and merely to ignore it won't cause it to go away. In order to be able to discuss this issue meaningfully, many of the confused notions that are accepted practically as legal tender in our society today must be clarified. Among these are the following:

1 The 1973 Supreme Court decision has solved the moral issue of abortion.

Shortly after that famous decision a radio announcer began his broadcast by saying, "Now that the Supreme Court has solved the moral issue of abortion, what will be the next big moral issue?" Obviously he was confusing a legal solution with a moral one. There are many things that are legal which ministers refuse to do because of moral principles. In many places prostitution and gambling are legalized, but such laws do not soften the Christian opposition to these acts. It is legal to kill in war, but Christians sometimes ask to be excused from bearing arms.

The state must make laws on pragmatic grounds, often as a compromise between an ideal and the stark realities of life in a society which is not governed by moral ideals. The distinction between *legal* and *moral* becomes greater and greater as countries that once claimed to be Christian surrender their religious inheritance. We cannot accept a court decision as a moral absolute.

2 A woman should be free to do what she wants with her own body.

This seems to clinch the decision for many people. A woman should have the right to control the use of her body as she wishes. She should not be forced to have sexual intercourse with people

who are repugnant to her. That is why rape is such a heinous crime. A woman should not be forced to conceive merely to gratify a husband's virile ego, as is the case in many parts of the world. A woman's body should not be an object that can be handled, mutilated, purchased, or used as if it were a possession of someone who is stronger than she. This point will be readily granted by Christians, but the real issue with abortion is whether the fetus is the woman's body or not.

If it can be proved that the fetus is merely a bit of the woman's flesh, the problem can be solved rather readily. But it is very difficult to admit that a fetus is "the woman's body" in the same way that we say the head or the arms are "the woman's body." The fetus is implanted in a woman's uterus, but it has its own genes, its own DNA; it cannot remain a part of its mother's body. In fact, to survive in the uterus the fetus has to induce important physiological changes without which it would be rejected as a foreign body.

3 Abortion should be granted on demand in order to be fair to the poor.

This argument is used extensively. It is well known that where abortion is illegal rich women can have abortions under safe conditions while women with low economic resources must face butcherlike, unsafe procedures. Where abortion is a crime, there is no recourse for the patient who has not received proper care. Thus, for the sake of economic justice at least, many will argue abortion should remain legalized. We are obviously talking of legal considerations here rather than moral principles.

Besides, there is an amount of sophistry in playing up so much the plight of poor people when calling for abortion on demand, for abortion statistics show that abortion clinics do much of their business with well-to-do or middle-class women.

Actually, liberalization of abortion has done little to cut down the number of births among the poor.

Daniel Augsburger is professor of religion, department of church history, at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Ignorance must be taken into consideration, of course, but we must also recognize that family bonds among the poor are just as significant as among the rich, perhaps even greater. Beyond this, there are, of course, other ways to control the size of the family that are far less questionable.

4 Unwanted children will be unloved children.

This argument also touches a responsive chord in Christian hearts. We hear more and more about brutal child abuse in America and feel like supporting anything that might stop or at least lessen that social horror. It is, however, a fallacy to generalize and assert that "unwanted" children will be unloved children. All of us know cases of "unwanted" children who have been dearly loved. I know of a charming minister's wife, mother of five children, who has added much radiance to her husband's ministry. But she was an "unwanted" child if ever there was one. Her mother had been advised not to have any more children and had to stay in bed for the entire time of the pregnancy. On several occasions that mother's life seemed to be in peril, but no baby could have been loved more than the baby girl was when she was born. I know, because she is my own sister.

5 A fetus is a subhuman form of life.

Consciously or unconsciously this idea is held by all proponents of abortion on demand. Obviously the fetus cannot live independently from its mother for many months, but does that make it a subhuman being anymore than the person who must rely upon a pacemaker or a kidney machine? Can self-sufficiency become the criterion of human dignity? Besides, fetologists have learned that the fetus is a very remarkable being. A recognized New Zealand fetologist writes:

"Biologically, at no stage can we subscribe to the view that the foetus is a mere appendage of the mother. Genetically, mother and baby are separate individuals from conception. Physiologically, we must accept that the conceptus is, in very large measure, in charge of the pregnancy, in command of his own environment and destiny with a tenacious purpose. . . .

"Most of our studies of foetal behavior have been made later in pregnancy, partly because we lack techniques for investigation earlier and partly because it is only the exigencies of late pregnancy which provide us with opportunities to invade the privacy of the foetus. We know that he moves with a delightful easy grace in his buoyant world, that foetal comfort determines foetal position. He is responsive to pain and touch and cold and sound and light. He drinks his amniotic fluid, more if it is artificially sweetened and

less if it is given an unpleasant taste. He gets hiccups and sucks his thumb. He wakes and sleeps. He gets bored with repetitive signals but can be taught to be alerted by a first signal for a second different one. . . .

"This then is the foetus we know and indeed each once was. This is the foetus we look after in modern obstetrics, the same baby we are caring for before and after birth, who before birth can be ill and need diagnosis and treatment just like any other patient. This is also the foetus whose existence and identity must be so callously ignored or energetically denied by advocates of abortion."

The Bible teaches clearly that a person has significance for God before he is born. The Lord told Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you for my own; before you were born I consecrated you, I appointed you a prophet to the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5, NEB*). The author of Psalm 139 states clearly: "Thou knowest me through and through: my body is no mystery to thee, how I was secretly kneaded into shape and patterned in the depths of the earth. Thou didst see my limbs unformed in the womb, and in thy book they are all recorded" (Psalm 139:15, 16, NEB). The deep mystery of human destiny, which can never be foretold with any accuracy on the basis of heredity or environment, is probably one of the major reasons why a Christian finds it so difficult to countenance abortion on demand. Some of the greatest men of history came out of the worst circumstances, which might well have justified abortions.

The basic issue. Any denial that the fetus is a real life evades the basic issue, which is this: Are there certain circumstances in which a human life should be terminated?

An editorial in the journal of the California Medical Association stated: "The process of eroding the old ethic and substituting the new has already begun. It may be seen most clearly in changing attitudes toward human abortion. In defiance of the long-held Western ethic of intrinsic and equal value for every human life regardless of its stage, condition, or status, abortion is becoming accepted by society as moral, right, and even necessary. It is worth noting that this shift in public attitude has affected the churches, the laws, and public policy rather than the reverse.

"Since the old ethic has not yet been fully displaced, it has been necessary to separate the idea of abortion from the idea of killing, which continues to be socially abhorrent. The result has been a curious avoidance of the scientific fact, which everyone really knows, that human life begins at conception and is continuous whether intra- or extra-uterine until death.

"The very considerable semantic gymnastics which

A Christian view of abortion

THE BIBLE does not seem to give any direct guidance on the matter of abortion. The Word of God, however, does place a high value upon human life. The cross continues to stress over and over again the great love of God for even one lost person (John 3:16). The parables of Christ underscore the same concern. The shepherd leaves the flock to find *one* lost sheep; a woman hunts through her house for *one* small coin; there is great joy in the home over the return of *one* lost boy (Luke 15).

This Christian value on human life has influenced the public conscience of so-called Christian nations. We see it when government ships or planes are sent out to find and rescue persons from a boat or plane lost at sea. Sometimes

tremendous efforts are made to rescue a couple of stranded mountain climbers, a wandering child, or a group of buried miners. When we think of all the possibilities of an individual's existence both here in this present life and in eternity, we need not wonder about Christian reluctance to endorse abortion on demand. It smacks too much of pagan infanticide, the only difference being that the pagan destroyed the infant after birth, while the refinements of civilization permit a "safe" destruction before birth!

The decision to abort a child may sound simple and easy to make, but the effects of that decision can prove disastrous to the personalities and home of the couple. Down deep in the human

heart there is often this Christian conviction regarding the value of human life. The baby is a part—flesh and blood—of the mother and father. And because of this, thoughts and convictions of guilt may arise to distract and trouble their minds and may embitter and poison their relationship should they blame each other for their action.

I would encourage couples either to keep their baby and willingly enlarge the family circle or else give the child up for adoption. Many very fine and useful people have thus been preserved, and only eternity will be able to account for the blessed influence of their lives. —Frank B. Holbrook.

are required to rationalize abortion as anything but taking a human life would be ludicrous if they were not often put forth under socially impeccable auspices. It is suggested that this schizophrenic sort of subterfuge is necessary because while a new ethic is being accepted the old one has not yet been rejected." The editorial concludes with the prophecy that death selection and death control by the individual or society will inevitably follow.

The destruction of human life. This understanding that abortion is the destruction of a real life will, I believe, eliminate for Christians "convenience abortions" when lives are terminated because they interfere with plans for travel, education, business, or material desires. To destroy a human life because it causes inconvenience is sinful selfishness.

Neither, of course, can there be justification for abortions to terminate "blackmail pregnancies," pregnancies started to spite parents or try to trap a suitor into marriage. (Statistics from New York show that these grounds for requesting abortions are far more common than generally known.)

One who realizes that abortion is the termination of life will have serious questions concerning abortions in cases of premarital pregnancies. Sexual activities involve the assumption of responsibilities that cannot be declined on demand. They call for the acceptance of a duty that is very close to the attitude of him who swears to his own hurt and does not change (Psalm 15:4).

In some cases, however, no "oath" has been given consciously or unconsciously; for instance, in cases of pregnancies due to rape. In God's plan conception should be the concrete expression of the total oneness of a man and a woman united by deep love and a strong

sense of fidelity. When these conditions are totally absent and the presence of the fetus can only remind of violence and fear, one may justifiably hesitate to force a woman to bear and raise a child conceived under conditions so contrary to the will of God. In such cases society tends to place the burden of responsibility for the termination of life upon the woman, which is completely unfair.

In a case of forcible rape, the man will have to face God's judgment for the life that was destroyed. We cannot say, as situationists do, that in this situation abortion is "right," but we must place the burden of guilt upon him who brought a life into existence for which he had no intention to show the least concern.

Seek guidance from God. Finally, there are some circumstances where human wisdom seems too small to pronounce a general principle and where one must seek personal guidance from the Lord; also forgiveness if a mistake is made. This would apply, for instance, to babies which because of drugs or disease will be born with severe handicaps. While one can justly admire the moral strength of the family willing to bestow their love upon a deformed child who will require so much extra care, one may hesitate to urge parents to accept a yoke which will be so much heavier than normal. At all times one should apply this counsel: "In matters of conscience the soul must be left untrammelled. No one is to control another's mind, to judge for another, or to prescribe his duty. God gives to every soul freedom to think, and to follow his own convictions" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 550).

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Why man seeks life in space

Why Scientists Continue Looking for Some Form of Life on Mars

The failure of scientists to conclude from two Viking probes of a lifeless Mars and for practical purposes a lifeless universe, according to columnist William Rusher, points directly at man's loneliness, insignificance, and vulnerability amid cosmic immensities. Writing in *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, November 19, 1976, he argues the Mars probes "clearly end the dogged hope that it [life] might exist elsewhere in the solar system."

But scientists still look. Why? Rusher quotes Ernest van den Haag, psychologist at NYU, for an answer: "Many people . . . need to feel that somewhere else in the universe living beings are happier than we are—and have solved [our] problems . . ."

"As long as religious belief remained strong, this need was met with the concept of Paradise: a Paradise mankind had lost, but might under certain circumstances regain.

"With decline of religious faith, many people have lost the comfort afforded by this conviction. So it was only natural, as astronomy revealed to us the true size and shape of our universe, that the hope would be reborn: not the hope of a better life hereafter, but the hope that we could find a sort of science-fiction paradise existing, right now, somewhere else in the infinitude of space."

Rusher concludes: "There is something rather touching about the idea of scientists 'unquittingly' probing the heavens for some hint of the vanished Eden they have so rigorously excluded from their secular vision of the world. But it is not only their heads that are mistaken but their hearts; their intuition simply proclaims their inescapable humanity.

"Mankind is fated to believe in God and to look for Him, in many guises, everywhere. Gently we were cautioned that His kingdom is not of this world, but in our eagerness and impatience we forget. We will not find that kingdom on Mars either, or circling Sirius. We will find it in our hearts, or not at all."

Editors Name Top Spiritual Leaders

Who are America's "greatest spiritual leaders"? Editors of seven Christian publications have agreed on four possibilities.

The "four more for Rushmore" are eighteenth-century theologian and preacher Jonathan Edwards, nineteenth-century Roman Catholic Cardinal James Gibbons, and two twentieth-century figures: theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, who died in 1971, and civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., assassinated in 1968.

Mt. Rushmore, in South Dakota, is a monument to four U.S. Presidents.

Cooperating in the selection were editors of the *Lutheran*, magazine of the Lutheran Church in America; *A.D.*, United Presbyterian Church and United Church of Christ; the *Disciple*, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); the *Episcopalian*, *Presbyterian Survey*, Presbyterian Church in the United States; *Church Herald*, Reformed Church in America; and *U.S. Catholic*, Claretian Fathers.

An article in the seven publications says the quartet was chosen "not as great Americans but as great Christians whose dedication to the love and justice of God shows that what it takes to make America great is Americans willing to serve others."

"The Pilgrim's Progress" on Tape

A best-selling book for 300 years, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, by John Bunyan, has now been put on tape by Roderick B. Manson.

The album has six long-play records offering six hours of reading designed especially for shut-ins, blind persons, and the elderly.

Southern Baptists to Assign 2,700 to Evangelistic Work

The Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention has announced the involvement of more than twenty-seven hundred pastors and lay people in at least thirty-eight different evangelistic emphases in twenty-one countries in 1977 and 1978. Most are from U.S. Southern Baptist congregations and

will pay their own transportation to and from the field, working alongside missionaries and native Baptists for one to four weeks.

The emphases are part of the SBC Total Mission Thrust goal—giving everyone the chance to hear the gospel by the end of the century. "Major city evangelism will be a driving force for the next twenty-five years in Southern Baptist foreign missions work," said James Cecil, Southern Baptist missionary associate.

Congress Decries Soviet Christian Persecution

The United States Congress has gone on record for the first time against reported persecution of Christians in the Soviet Union. A "sense of Congress" resolution asks the Soviet government to honor its commitments for religious freedom and human rights. It calls on the Soviet Union to free dissident Baptist minister Georgi Vins, who is serving a five-year sentence at hard labor for his religious activities. The Baptist minister heads an illegal group of a hundred thousand Soviet Baptists.

Poor Better Prepared to Accept Death

Dr. Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, noted specialist on death and dying, told a Dallas conference on life and death issues that poor people are better prepared to accept death than are those in the upper middle class.

In a major address at the three-day conference, which was sponsored by the Texas Conference of Churches, Dr. Ross commented that "upper middle-class white suburbia is the real deprived area, because a comfortable life does not prepare one for the realities of death and dying."

In contrast, she said, "people raised on a farm see death as a natural part of life, as do poor people who have had a life of tragedy and deprivation."

According to Dr. Ross, "what you consider the most painful experiences in your life are usually the most valuable in teaching you how to approach death."



Do you have an ivory-tower religion?

by Jerry A. Gladson

What happens to an ivory-tower religion when the facts of reality begin chipping away at its foundation?

I GUESS you might say I'm protesting—protesting an ivory-tower

Jerry Gladson, assistant professor of religion at Southern Missionary College, Collegedale, Tennessee, has a deep interest in combining a high level of theological study with evangelism. This article sprang from an interest in the great wisdom books of the Old Testament and their message for modern man.

religion that resides in the clouds and does not come down to grapple with the earthiness of tragedy; protesting a faith that always makes things turn out like they are supposed to; protesting a belief, which in its sterile environment, rejects the idea that its answers do not always work nor even come close to the truth.

Take for example the illness of Margaret. I can still hear the screams of

pain as I sat by her bedside. The Bible passages I read found themselves punctuated by her agony. The shrieks stopped all communication and found relief only when her mother gently touched her forehead with a cold cloth.

Margaret, dying of cancer, had come to the city where I lived. Then she found God—and at the same time, a new desire to live. Together with a group from our church I prayed for her healing, as we are counseled to do in James 5:13-16. Margaret expected that healing. Her faith refused to accept a denial. She believed it to the end. But the same week that we took her into membership in the church we stood at her grave. Our sadness turned on itself in the realization that God had answered in a way that we had not chosen.

Many people who have tried religion turn away when they find it going sour. Life seems to turn on them the moment they enter the church doors. Glib assurances and polite pep talks taste like sugarcoated pills when stacked up against the cancer of their souls. They believe, just as Margaret did, but find blackness instead of light.

In case it sounds like I'm bitter, I'm not. I just think there are some illusions religious people "swear by" which block any kind of meaningful reality toward God and suffering.

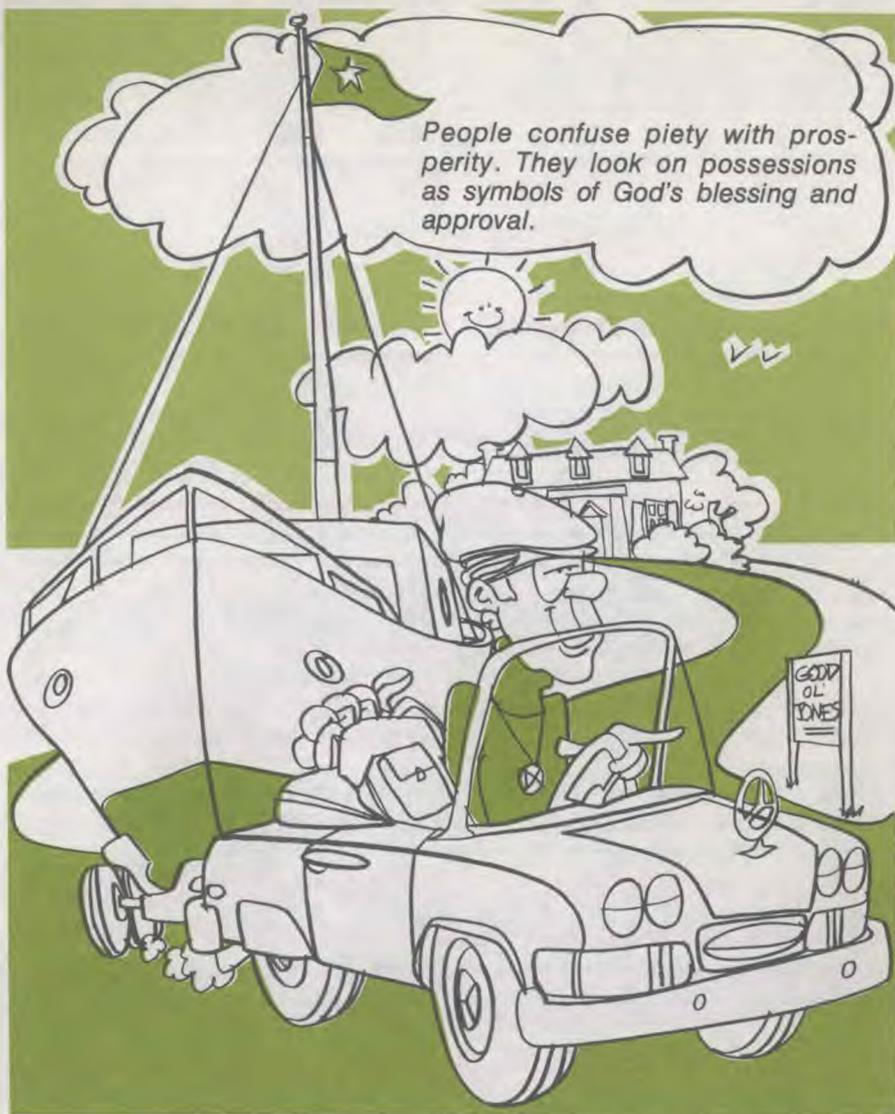
A first mistake often made is the confusion of piety with prosperity. The author of Job sets up this illusion quite cleverly. He tells of a man who lived in the "land of Uz," who was "blameless and upright, one who feared God, and

turned away from evil" (Job 1:1*). It is no accident that the Hebrew words used here to describe Job's uprightness are for the most part technical expressions for moral rectitude in the Old Testament (see Psalms 25:21; 37:37). This Job stands at the peak of morality. And because of this—in line with the ancient concept—he basks in abundant riches. These are next depicted: seven sons, three daughters, seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen (Job 1:2, 3). Such wealth could only be the result of consistent piety.

We are not ready for what comes next. The scene shifts to the heavenly court where God and Satan were engaged in dialogue. God singled out Job as an example of piety: "Did you notice my servant Job? . . . There is no one on earth as faithful and good as he is. He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil."

"'Would Job worship you if he got nothing out of it?'" Satan's return stung back. Oh, no! "You have

People confuse piety with prosperity. They look on possessions as symbols of God's blessing and approval.



always protected him and his family and everything he owns. . . . But now suppose you take away everything he has—he will curse you to your face!" (verses 8-11†). Satan had driven a hard bargain and made his point. Now the rest was up to him. Suddenly the prosperity—so-called badge of true piety—turned rancid. In successive blows Job watched his flocks and herds disappear, his servants meet their doom by the hand of marauding invaders, and finally his children decimated by an unexpected, violent windstorm (verses 13-19). Though desperate and confused, Job clung to his faith; "in all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong" (verse 22).

Again Satan impugned God: "A man will give up everything in order to stay alive. But now suppose you hurt his body—he will curse you to your face" (2:4, 5, TEV). Satan now asked for everything Job had except the ultimate—his life. Before long Job sat on a heap of ashes afflicted with ulcerous sores, listening to the nagging

of his wife to defy God and die. It was almost too much!

For Joe Martin it was too much. I met him in my first pastorate not long after I finished college. He had responded eagerly to the gospel. His character blossomed before my very eyes in a wholesome transformation. Then came the supreme test. Unfortunately Joe's vocation placed him at odds with the claims of Christ, forcing him to quit his job. He wasn't too worried. His skills were pretty much in demand in that area. He soon had another. But that job went the way of the first. Then the next and the next. Incredibly he secured and lost twenty jobs on account of his Christian convictions!

He helplessly watched his new automobile, his plush furniture, and finally his suburban home go back to the creditors. His fellow Christians were stunned. Paralyzed from the shock of it all, they came to the rescue only when Joe and his family faced bare cupboards.

Joe was finished. He had had enough. He turned his back on the Christ who had apparently deserted him.

The Book of Job warns against putting stock in opulence as an evidence that God is with us. Assuring people that things are always going to turn out right tempts them to trust an illusion. We simply don't know how our lives will unfold. Tragedy and trouble come to saint and sinner alike, in the same heavy doses, with the same randomness. Job makes us face this fact seriously.

For the record, Job himself seemed quite able to recognize the illusion of prosperity (see Job 1:21; 2:10), but a more powerful misconception betrayed even him: the illusion of religious clichés. Laid out in the form of an extended dialogue, the bulk of the Book of Job (chapters 3-37) iterates and reiterates the popular notion of the day that the good prosper and the wicked suffer. Job's friends—Eliphaz, Bildad, Zophar, and Elihu—are the spokesmen for this point of view. Each speaks, in

turn, and Job replies by defending his integrity and calling upon God to vindicate him (29:1-25; 31:29-37).

Eliphaz opened round one by underscoring a simple proposition: "Think now, who that was innocent ever perished? Or where were the upright cut off? As I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same" (4:7, 8). The irony of this observation is too blatant to be missed: If Job were innocent, none of his misfortune would have come upon him.

As if to make a skeptical Job take notice, Eliphaz intrepidly claimed an ecstatic vision as the source of his observation (verses 12-17). "I have seen the fool taking root," he contended, looking Job straight in the eye, "but suddenly I cursed his

dwelling. His sons are far from safety, they are crushed in the gate, and there is no one to deliver them" (5:3, 4). The logic is unmistakable: Only the good thrive; fools may do so for a time, but soon destruction overtakes them. Unable to avoid a direct appeal, Eliphaz challenged Job: "'Behold, happy is the man whom God reproves; therefore despise not the chastening of the Almighty'" (5:17).

Job's friends insisted that the old platitudes, the old traditions, could answer the great questions of purpose and destiny. They were "too smug in their orthodoxy," remarks Bernard Anderson in his book *Understanding the Old Testament*, "too sure of the answers to life's enigmas, too confident that God was bound by their logic. In the face of opposition, they

Like Job of the Old Testament, modern man finds it difficult to escape the entanglements of religious clichés.



could answer only with clichés" (p. 492).

In consternation Job could do nothing but protest his innocence. "I put on righteousness, and it clothed me" . . . he insisted; "I was eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame. I was father to the poor" (29:14, 15). "What more could you ask? I did everything I knew how!" Caught between circumstances, God, and his friends, Job felt himself pushed toward the ultimate precipice: "O . . . that it would please God to crush me, that he would let loose his hand and cut me off" (6:8, 9). With the frustration of a caged lion, he lashed out at God, "Oh, that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat!" "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him" (23:3, 8).

Finally when the repartee between Job and his friends degenerated into open quarreling, Job persisted in his stubborn cry of honesty. He was quite convinced that if he could present his case directly to God, he would be vindicated.

Religious clichés ineffective. Like Job and his friends, we moderns find it hard to escape the snarled entanglement of religious clichés. Christians sometimes promise a prospective convert anything to get him into the church, or, at the very least, subtly imply that happiness and prosperity will follow if he will say yes to Jesus. God only knows how many have gone out the back door of the church because these implied promises fell through. "Do not think I have come to bring peace on earth," our Master cautioned; "I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34).

Why serve God if there is no reward? *There are rewards.* Make no mistake about that. And some of them come in this life. But if we serve God because of what we get out of it, we have not yet escaped the clutches that gripped Job and his friends. Ralph Sockman put it succinctly: "Our love



"Our love for God is tested by the question of whether we seek Him or His gifts."

for God is tested by the question of whether we seek Him or His gifts."

From His self-imposed silence in the face of tons of verbiage, God finally answered, "Who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge?" (Job 38:2). The thunder and lightning, symbolic of God's presence, made Job quiver in fear. But God's reply, set in the form of a series of questions, sounds like no answer at all but only a careful evasion of the issue. "Have you entered into the springs of the sea, or walked in the recesses of the deep? Have the gates of death been revealed to you?" (verses 16, 17). Of course not! But why ask? Job didn't know the answers. Nor do any of us. If Job were sitting for a final examination, he couldn't avoid failure.

The chagrined stillness into which Job was forced elicited the precise response God wanted. He was saying, in effect, "Job, look at the world which I have created. Observe its intricacies, its mysteries, few of which you can understand. You trust Me to run the world. Why can't you trust Me to run your life?"

It is amazing that God didn't avail Himself of the perfect out: He could

have pointed to Satan and said, "Job, don't blame Me! Look at Satan; he's the culprit!" But He did not. Instead, He pointed to a deeper truth. He invited Job to come up above a relationship based on mere promises or words or clichés to a relationship that trusts God because He is God and loves Him because He is God, not because one gets prizes for loving God.

In other words, if suffering be confronted by realization that it belongs to the mystery of divine ways and at the same time by the rock-hard assurance that God is always present, *even in the pain*, it becomes bearable. Though the reason for suffering may be hidden in divine mystery, it is nonetheless meaningful. Compared to the assurance of God's fellowship, heartache "pales into insignificance," as Georg Fohrer states in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*.

Only when Job thus could stand in his misery and praise God did he find God. And that was all that mattered. 📖

*All Scripture quotations, except where otherwise indicated, are from the Revised Standard Version.

†From *The Bible in Today's English Version*. Copyright, American Bible Society, 1976.

JUNE STRONG

Can emotions affect your baby?

"I WANT my child to have a perfect start," she said, this beautiful young woman seated beside me at a banquet. She was tanned, dark haired, and very pregnant.

"How do you propose to do this?" I asked.

Her answer came shyly. She hardly knew me, but enthusiasm for her subject overcame her timidity. "I pray every morning that God will help me to be patient and kind that day, to exercise no angry emotions."

"Well, that's a rare philosophy in today's world," I responded, thinking that the simple white gown she wore was very appropriate. "It's not uncommon to watch one's diet carefully during pregnancy, but why are you concerned about your emotions?"

"Oh, I'm very careful about my diet, too, but I have been reading *Happiness Homemade*." She raised questioning eyes. Was I familiar with it?

I nodded.

"You know then that the author has interesting counsel about prenatal influence?"

"Yes, I know, but you are the first woman I've met who's taken it so seriously."

"It makes sense to me." The girl's dark eyes were sober. "Surely when one loses control of his emotions, either in fear or in anger, it must have an effect upon the unborn child."

"What does your husband think of all this?"

"He understands the importance of peace in the home, especially now, and treats me like a queen. When some difference arises between us, he just grins and says, 'I concede, for little Joe's sake,' and



we both laugh. It has made us very aware of all the foolish arguments we used to have but can do quite nicely without. . . . You've raised a lot of children," she spoke carefully in deference to the generation gap yawning between us. "Did you practice these teachings during your pregnancies?"

I chuckled. "Four of our six were adopted, so I didn't have much to say about the prenatal influence in their lives. I wish I could tell you that the two to whom I gave birth were given every advantage in this respect, but the truth is that the circumstances of my life were such during one pregnancy that I was depressed, discouraged, and often reduced to tears of utter despair. I attempted to control my emotions during those stormy months but fear I often failed. The other child was born during a period of serenity, and it didn't require much effort on my part to be a gentle soul."

"I guess one cannot help the outward circumstances. I've known only happiness," she said.

"It's true an expectant mother cannot always control her environment," I agreed, "but I know now I could have controlled my reaction to

negative circumstances by committing my life completely to Christ and letting Him do the worrying.

Suddenly, looking at her sitting there so sincere and young, so concerned about the welfare of her child, I realized how unique she really was. It occurred to me that if God were looking today for a woman to bear a special child, such as John the Baptist, Jeremiah, or even Jesus, that this young woman might just meet the requirements.

Later that night, in the lamplight of our living room, I opened *Happiness Homemade* and reread from page 89, "If before the birth of her child, she [the mother] is self-indulgent, if she is selfish, impatient, and exacting, these traits will be reflected in the disposition of the child. Thus many children have received as a birthright almost unconquerable tendencies to evil.

"But if the mother unswervingly adheres to right principles, if she is temperate and self-denying, if she is kind, gentle, and unselfish, she may give her child these same precious traits of character."

I closed the volume, contemplating lost opportunities, and slipped the bookmark of regret between its pages. ●



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DICK JEWETT

'm a rotten mother

THE PROBLEM: "Hi, Dick! I just wonder if anybody feels as I do? Don't get me wrong. I'm not into child abuse—or even close to that. But I'm not what you could call the all-American mother either. There are times—lots of times—when I actually resent my own kids. My two preschoolers are very demanding. Somebody is screaming all the time at our house—either I or one of the kids. I feel so guilty about being a rotten mother."

Candid comments: "Stop feeling guilty! That is easier said than done, and it took several sessions with a therapist before I stopped. I have several kids and used to yell a lot, thinking I was the only one in the state who did it. I had plenty of guilt and resentment too. Just looking at my older child walk through a room would make me resent her. But I discovered these very important things. First, the kids know you feel guilty, and they help it along by pushing the right panic button to make you yell.

"You aren't a bad mother, but maybe you are too much of a full-time mother. Get out by yourself for at least four hours a week—either split it up or take it all at one hunk, but do it. It's worth every cent of a baby-sitter's fee.

"Then there is the matter of self-image. When that improves, your yelling and feelings of resentment and guilt will decrease a great deal. How to get a better self-image? A good library will have any number of books on the subject, and they are worth reading. And remember, those little ones aren't going to be around forever. Nor are they going to be preschoolers for long. Enjoy

as much of the time with them now as you possibly can because when they become teenagers you will have a whole new set of problems to cope with. Be prepared." P.L.

"Dear Rotten Mother, Cheer up! There is a cure for rotten, guilty feelings. A change in attitude toward your children will come when you realize that children are a heritage of the Lord—only lent to us to train for Him. I resented my two little preschool boys to the point that I left them with a baby-sitter whom I paid a hundred dollars a month while I cleared only sixty-eight dollars a month teaching other people's kids. Those boys are grown now, and my bitter regrets still gnaw at my conscience. We have our children for such a short time, every moment should be cherished and properly used to build their characters.

"Children are such imitators. They will be what we parents make of them. If you train yourself to whisper or speak in low, gentle tones, your children will respond to you likewise. Plan to get away from your children, alone with just your husband at least once every two months for a weekend. Refreshed and rested when you return, you will welcome those little arms around your neck. Resentment will be gone. Children get bored sometimes and become demanding—not knowing why. Relax and sit down and read them a story or two or play a game with them. Yes, our children are what we make them—little reflectors of their environment, and Mother is the very most important factor of their environment!" Grandmother Sue.

My turn: Who says you are a rotten mother? Haven't there been times when you resented your husband? Did that make you a rotten wife? Resentment is temporary. Rotten is permanent. How can a rotten apple become unrotten? But you can get rid of your feelings of resentment! It is human nature to overreact to a specific by drawing a false conclusion that is a generality. Did that make any sense to you?

In the second letter above we find

quite a bit of guilt reflected. Guilt is responsible for a lot of well-meaning advice. But the fact remains that when she was faced with the same problem you are now facing, she wasn't able to practice the good advice she is preaching now. Later in her letter she mentioned that her boys turned out fine and she is proud of them.

I do not believe the family should totally revolve around the children. In some homes there is invested in the children too much time and money. That may sound strange to some of you because we have heard so much about the opposite extreme: homes where too little attention is paid to the children. But either extreme is dangerous. In some homes the children dominate all the waking hours of the adults. Children can become tyrants, you know—especially if they are catered to.

Children are supposed to learn to submit to the wishes of the parents, not the other way around. Think about it! Too often it is the other way around. How are the kids going to appreciate the importance of submitting to God if they do not learn how to submit to you? And how are you going to make them think it is going to be fun to grow up and become an adult if you don't ever seem to have any fun? I say you owe it to your kids to go out and have some fun—without them—to give them something to look forward to.

The question is how to arrive at and maintain the balance between too much attention and too little. The answer is to keep Christ in the center ring of your little three-ring circus of life. That is not a pat answer to a typical question. It is a dynamic living arrangement that will solve more problems than you have had time to come to yet. The first lady above had a point: If you think you have problems now, wait till they get to be teenagers. Maybe you have to become a grandparent to develop the proper perspective.



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How to reduce with fruit

Few foods pack as many vitamins and minerals into one serving as do fruits—and mostly they're low in calories too. by Shirley M. Dever

SUGAR, bread, milk—Lori was checking off the final items on her grocery list when she noticed Wendy coming into the market. "Wendy looks so trim," she thought to herself; "her figure has certainly improved."

Wendy caught Lori's puzzled look. "You're wondering how I ever lost so much weight, aren't you?" she blurted out. "I can't blame you—everybody does. But if I tell you how I did it, you probably won't believe me!"

"I'll believe you," Lori replied.

"It's easy, after you get the hang of it," Wendy said. "Let's go over to the canned fruit counter, and I'll show you my method."

"Canned fruit?" Lori asked, frowning. "You've got to be kidding. Haven't you noticed the high prices on those cans?"

"Sure. But give me a chance to explain how I reduce with fruit."

Lori watched Wendy take different cans of fruit from the shelves.

"The trick is not only to look at the price, but also the content of these cans," Wendy explained. "To do this,

though, you have to know something about nutrition. I still carry this table of food composition

around with me. I'll be glad to lend it to you, if you like."

Wendy said that she bought more canned apricots than any other kind of fruits, even though they were more expensive. But she showed Lori, on the chart, that in vitamin A content alone, she was getting the most for her money. Apricots contain 4,500 units of vitamin A per cup. Compare this with peaches at 1,100; fruit cocktail, 360; pears, none; crushed pineapple, 210; grapefruit sections, 20; and plums, 260.

Actually, a good multiple vitamin tablet contains 5,000 units of vitamin A. By adding a few more apricots to a bowl, one can easily get this most important minimum daily requirement in this fruit at one meal. Of course, there are 220 calories in a cup of apricots, but the other fruits run about as high.

However, you can substantially reduce the calories in canned fruit by purchasing brands which pack the fruit in its own juice, or which use medium and light syrup rather than heavy. Or you can rinse the fruit off with water before serving without affecting the flavor significantly.

"Not only was I 50 pounds overweight, but I usually had a cold all winter long," Wendy reminded the other girl. "I knew I needed more vitamin C to ward off these colds. Guess where I found it?"

"In fruits?"

"Right. That same cup of apricots has 10 milligrams of vitamin C—that's one seventh of an adult's daily requirement. In the summer I eat a lot of cantaloupe which is low in calories (a half has only 40 calories!), and it has 65 milligrams of vitamin C, most of what I need for one day. And it has 6,000 units of vitamin A, which is even better than apricots."

"My mother's on a low-salt diet," Lori said. "She needs a lot of potassium."

"Actually, I'm on low salt too. I re-

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Chart for fresh fruit

	Calories	A	B ₁	B ₂	Niacin	C	Calcium	Iron
(Minimum daily adult requirement)		5,000 IU	1.2 mg	1.7 mg	18 mg	70 mg	500 mg	10 mg
Apple, 1 average whole	96	150	.05	.03	.2	12	12	.5
Apricots, 3 average	55	2,890	.03	.04	.6	11	18	.5
Avocado, ½ an average	188	330	.12	.23	1.8	16	11	.7
Banana, 1 average whole	101	230	.06	.07	.8	12	10	.8
Blackberries, 1 cup	84	290	.04	.06	.6	30	46	1.3
Blueberries, 1 cup	90	150	.04	.09	.7	20	22	1.5
Cantaloupe, ½ an average	82	9,240	.11	.08	1.6	90	38	1.1
Cherries, sweet, 1 cup	82	130	.06	.07	.5	12	26	.5
Grapefruit, ½ medium	40	80	.04	.02	.2	37	16	.4
Grapes, 10 small	34	50	.03	.02	.2	2	6	.2
Honeydew melon, ¼ an average	124	150	.15	.11	2.2	86	52	1.5
Orange, 1 average	64	400	.16	.08	.8	113	112	1.3
Peach, 1 average	58	2,030	.03	.08	1.5	11	14	.8
Pear, 1 average	100	30	.03	.07	.2	7	13	.5
Pineapple, 1 cup diced pieces	81	320	.4	.14	.9	77	77	2.3
Plums, 10 average	66	300	.08	.03	.5	—	18	.5
Raspberries, 1 cup	70	160	.04	.11	1.1	31	27	1.1
Strawberries, 1 cup	55	90	.04	.10	.9	88	31	1.5
Watermelon, 1 cup diced pieces	42	940	.05	.05	.3	11	11	.8

tain too much water in my body and need to watch my salt intake. That's another reason I eat so much fruit."

Checking the potassium column on the chart, Lori saw that canned apricots contain 600 milligrams of potassium; cantaloupe, 910; canned peaches, 310; canned plums, 213. Those watermelon wedges she ate in the summer had 600 milligrams. Nearly all fruits have ample amounts of this important mineral in them.

"Fruits even have calcium in them!" Lori exclaimed. "I eat a lot of fresh strawberries in season. One cup contains 31 milligrams of calcium." She laughed. "I see your favorite, apricots, have 28 milligrams, and one half of a cantaloupe has 38 milligrams. No wonder you're convinced you can reduce with fruit and be healthy at the same time!"

"You know me, Lori. I've always had such a sweet tooth. Now that I eat fruit instead of rich pastries, my craving for sweets is satisfied, and I can bypass the bakery and ice-cream counter."

Wendy noted the average 200 calories contained in a cup of canned fruit as compared to 420 calories for a piece of chocolate cake with fudge frosting. A more healthful dessert like bread pudding with raisins contains 374 calories a cup. Another pudding she loved—tapioca—has 355 calories a cup.

Lori smiled. "Remember how we used to have a hot lunch at school? Then we'd stop after school and have a

milkshake, sundae, or soda. But we were so active in those days that we worked some of those calories off. Neither of us was fat, but sometimes we got kind of plump."

"Today I have either cheddar cheese or cottage cheese with some kind of fruit for lunch," Wendy said with a smile. "I eat canned or frozen fruits when fresh fruits aren't available. I can easily pay for them with the money I save at the bakery or at the ice cream and candy counters. Then, too, I've learned to avoid foodless foods!"

"What are they?" Lori asked.

"I used to call them goodies," Wendy laughed. "Now I consider them a waste of money. They have little nutrition in them and just made me fat. The ones I used to go for were all kinds of soft drinks, candy, cookies, cakes, cream pies, jams, jellies, pickles, most salad dressings, and ice-cream toppings. Then I ate potato chips, corn chips, and that sort of thing."

"Those things are pretty expensive, aren't they?" Lori asked. She picked up some soda pop at an adjoining counter and cringed at the price. Later she observed the prices on the other foodless foods and noted that they don't come cheap either.

"I used to hate to go camping because lugging along so much food was such a drag," Wendy suggested. "Now my family settles for fruit and cheese for lunch, since we all have weight problems.

With this kind of lunch, we can easily pack it upstream and spend a full day fishing. Before, we always had to come back to the campsite for lunch."

"Maybe I'll get hung up on this fruit idea too," said Lori. "About the only thing we've been having is orange juice. I see it has 500 units of vitamin A and 500 milligrams of potassium though. And it sure is loaded with vitamin C—120 milligrams per 8-ounce glass!"

"All citrus fruits are high in vitamin C," Wendy affirmed. "Fresh oranges are high in A, C, and potassium too—and low in calories. We drink a lot of fruit juices all winter long and have very few colds or viruses!"

Wendy has the right idea. Fruit is good for anyone who needs to watch his weight. And fruit has many bonuses as well. The sugar content provides quick energy and takes away the craving for fattening sweets. It's hard to beat fruit for a delicious food rich in vitamins A and C, and the important mineral potassium. Since many diets are low in salt, this extra potassium is a must!

Most fruits also have good portions of iron, calcium, and phosphorus in them. Women need more iron than men. Fruits like apricots and prunes are high in iron and an excellent way to get this most desirable daily requirement.

Reduce with fruit, and you'll not only become thinner but healthier at the same time!

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God's special gift to man



by Hans K. LaRondelle

*God gave man a special gift—
a worship day—so His people could
commune with their Creator.*

ATTENDANCE at church has long been regarded as a key indication of one's spiritual condition. Yet many fail to understand the reason why God gave man a special weekly day of worship and how this day applies to one's spiritual life.

In order to comprehend the importance of God's Sabbath day of worship we need first to consider its origin and its Author. Historical scholarship has concluded that it can find no tangible evidence of a seventh-day Sabbath in any ancient nation except *Israel*. Neither Assyria nor Babylon nor any other people knew of a seventh-day Sabbath. Only the people of *Israel*, later known as the Jews, celebrated a Sabbath-day rest every week.

So we have to ask the Jews for the origin and meaning of the Sabbath. For their answer they turn to their Holy Scriptures, written by prophets

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driven by the Spirit of God. To *Israel* were committed "the oracles of God," says the apostle Paul (Romans 3:2; Hebrews 1:1).

Moses and the prophets indeed provide an answer to our question, "Why a seventh-day Sabbath, and where does it come from?"

The Hebrew Scriptures not only give an answer, but they give an *authoritative and authentic answer*. They testify unanimously that the seventh-day Sabbath, together with the week, has been instituted at the very beginning of the human race by its Maker as a divine gift that heaven and earth might be united in an everlasting covenant.

The Sabbath was made by God as part of His creation, as the very crown and memorial of His perfect creative work (Genesis 1:31 to 2:3). The origin of both the Sabbath and man is God Himself. Both came perfect out of the hand of God. The Sovereign Creator also gave a divine purpose and meaning to man and the Sabbath. Scripture reveals that the Sabbath was made as an *ordinance of creation*, and thus was a part of the original creation designed for man in his perfect, sinless state (Genesis 1:26, 31; 2:1-4; Exodus 20:11; 31:17). The Sabbath, therefore, was not

made after the Fall, as a consequence of sin; not as a Jewish Sabbath or ceremonial shadow for sinners. The Sabbath was made by the Creator in the beginning for a perfect and holy human race, for sinless children of a heavenly Father, to establish an everlasting fellowship.

The truth of this depends completely on faith in the divine inspiration and reliability of Genesis 1 and 2 as an oracle of God. Scripture says that God Himself celebrated the first Sabbath, resting in commemoration of His finished work (Genesis 2:2, 3). Into this rest and joy man was lovingly invited by God's example.

God did not need to command Adam to celebrate His Sabbath, because God's example has an authoritative power. Adam and Eve were created "in the image of God" (Genesis 1:26, 27)—in other words, as a son and daughter of God (compare Genesis 5:3; Luke 3:38). To be created in the image of God implies to be called to follow God, as a good son will follow his good father (Ephesians 5:1).

Christ acknowledged the trustworthiness of the Genesis 1 and 2 account when He confirmed how it was in the beginning: "The sabbath was *made for man*, not man for the sabbath" (Mark

2:27*). Here Christ declares that the Sabbath is indeed a creation ordinance, which was made for all of mankind! He came therefore not to abrogate it but to redeem it for man from its bondage to the senseless restrictions of the rabbis.

A gift from God to man. When God made the Sabbath, He pronounced it sacred and blessed (Genesis 2:2, 3). It was given as God's blessed gift, not to make man holy and just, for man was already created in a perfect relationship to God on the sixth day of creation week. The Sabbath was ordained as a sacrament for a perfect man, that he might enter and abide in the refreshing joy and sustaining rest of God Himself. This would give ultimate meaning to his life and work. Man was not made to be self-dependent or self-contained.

Neither man nor the Sabbath have an automatic, self-adhering goodness, joy, or holiness. Only their living connection with God makes them sacred, happy, and blessed. This fellowship with God cannot be made or created by man, because *no flesh will be justified by his own works*. Man is justified only by faith in God's works. So man's first Sabbath was celebrated as the sacred bond of the Creator's love and commitment to man.

However, Adam lost the joy of his sonship and the dignity of his manhood when he disobeyed God's sovereign will. His act of disobedience was a declaration of independence from God, in principle a deification of his own will, an act of self-government.

The Sabbath could never save man. It was created as the memorial of God's creative work and ordained as the sacred space in time for the refreshing encounter with God and worshipful praise of God's own works. The gospel proclaims that God continued to offer the same Sabbath and divine fellowship and rest to man after his fall (Hebrews 4:1-10). Of course, since the Fall the Sabbath took on the added meaning of mercy and redeeming

**Six days shalt
thou labour, and do
all thy work: but the
seventh day is the
sabbath of the Lord
thy God."**

grace which God Himself exercised toward fallen man.

Man could no longer stay in Paradise with the tree of life, because of God's justice. But God showed His merciful love by joining man—outside of Paradise—on his way through history until its ultimate restoration (Revelation 21 and 22).

If perfect man already needed the Sabbath, how much more does *sinful* man need the Sabbath of God, the sacrament of forgiving and restoring fellowship with his Maker!

The Hebrew Scriptures declare that God gave His holy Sabbath in a solemn way to Israel after He had delivered them from Egypt, the house of bondage (Exodus 16 and 31; Nehemiah 9:14). Some scholars have rightly interpreted this fact as a *reinstitution* of the Sabbath, because the world and even the Israelites in Egypt had lost sight of the holiness of this creation ordinance. The same counts for the Ten Commandments. They were in principle in force long before Moses, yet were *re-published* by God on tables of stone within the framework of His covenant of atoning grace with Israel.

It is often overlooked, however, that God explicitly chose Israel to be a priestly (mediating) nation for the world, a light for the Gentiles, so that Israel might extend its saving knowledge of the Creator-Redeemer to the

ends of the earth (Exodus 19:5, 6; Isaiah 42:6; 49:6). Israel was called, not for its own sake, but to be the missionary nation to teach the whole world what God's character of mercy and holiness is and how God should be praised and worshiped in truth and spirit (Isaiah 2:1-4).

Sabbath given for the world, not just Jews. Thus when God again gave Israel the knowledge of His holy Sabbath day, He intended this Sabbath to be His gracious gift to all the Gentiles, to all men who were enslaved to their labors in their hopeless nonstop struggle for life. In the seventh-day Sabbath all men could acknowledge again who was the Creator of the world and therefore to whom they owe their final allegiance and worship.

Not only would the Sabbath be the sign or memorial of a perfect and Almighty Creator, but it had for Israel the added meaning of the sign of the redemptive and sanctifying power of God. Moses, Israel's leader into liberation and independence, interpreted the Sabbath commandment as the memorial of Israel's deliverance from the house of bondage: "You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day" (Deuteronomy 5:15).

This is not in conflict or competition with God's own words in the fourth commandment of Exodus 20:11, that the Sabbath is the memorial of creation. Moses only reveals the deepened dimension of God's works and character: the Creator has now revealed Himself also as the Redeemer of Israel. It is one and the same God! Israel's Saviour is the Almighty Creator of the earth, who therefore claims the same worship and praise from all peoples and tongues and tribes and nations in the whole world. Jerusalem, with its sacred Temple and saving knowledge of the Redeemer-God, was to become the metropolis of the earth, the center of all true worship and wisdom.

Man does not worship God on the Sabbath in order to be saved. He does so out of love for his Creator and Saviour.

The Sabbath was the holy time ordained for the religion that came from God. The Sabbath therefore stands not merely as an external sign for true worship but also as the effective sacrament through which God actually has sanctifying fellowship with His children.

God explicitly reminded Israel of this grace characteristic of the Sabbath: "You shall keep my sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you" (Exodus 31:13; compare verse 17; Ezekiel 20:12, 20).

To profane the Sabbath day would accordingly mean to reject the Creator and the Redeemer in worship. The Sabbath combined both God's law (the fourth commandment) and the gospel of redemption, thus representing God's whole covenant with Israel in one sacrament. The prophet Isaiah, consequently, uses *Sabbath* and *covenant* as synonymous terms, offering both to all men—not only to Israel but also to the Gentiles: "For thus says the Lord: 'To the eunuchs [emasculated Gentiles] who keep *my sabbaths*, who choose the things that please me and hold fast *my covenant*, I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off. And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord, to minister to him, to love the name of the Lord, and to be his servants, every one who keeps the sabbath, and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples'" (Isaiah 56:4-7).

Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel teach that the divine curse of Israel's captivity was due to their unrepentant profanation of the Sabbath of their Creator-Redeemer (Jeremiah 17:19-27; Ezekiel 20:10-21). Isaiah, however, predicted (around 700 BC) that God would provide for a

restoration of the Sabbath "as a delight in the Lord" when Israel would be delivered from the Assyrian-Babylonian exile. He announced that this deliverance would be for Israel the "second" exodus (Isaiah 11:11)—the first having been the exodus from Egypt (Isaiah 11:16). When this second exodus of Israel out of Babylon actually took place in 536 BC under Prince Zerubbabel, and later in 457 BC under Ezra and Nehemiah, the Sabbath was again revived and sanctified among the faithful remnant of the returning exiles (Nehemiah 9:14; 13:19-22).

However, in the centuries after the exile Judaism developed such a rigid, cheerless, formalistic Sabbath observance that the Sabbath became an unbearable yoke instead of the intended delight in the Lord. Many rabbis lost sight of the blessed purpose of the Sabbath sacrament and began to trust in the sign itself by making the external Sabbath observance a meritorious work to earn credit from God. They added thirty-nine extra regulations to the law of God in order to prevent any possibility of transgressing the fourth commandment.

They hedged in the Sabbath commandment of the Scriptures by many unreasonable restrictions, the so-called traditions of the fathers. By these a Jew was not allowed on the Sabbath to hold a tool in his hand, to kindle a

fire, even to light a candle, to write two letters, or to walk more than 2,000 steps (see Tract Sabbath of the Mishna).

The sect of the Pharisees fully endorsed all the rabbinical traditions which were claimed to be revealed also to Moses on Mount Sinai and therefore possessed the same authority as the Ten Commandments (see Moore, *Judaism*, Vol. I, pp. 66f., 251-262). The Sabbath laws of the Essenes, the Qumrān sect, were even more extreme and less humanitarian. Still, the pharisaic casuistry of Sabbathkeeping meant an intolerable burden to the human conscience. In the light of this legalistic traditionalism the future became a despairing outlook. Salvation would not dawn unless Israel would perfectly keep two Sabbaths as prescribed in the traditions!

Christ the True Interpreter of the Sabbath. Jesus, the Messiah of prophecy, came not to set aside but to fulfill and redeem all that the prophets of Israel had written (Matthew 5:17-19). Coming from the bosom of the heavenly Father, He came to teach the true character of God in grace and truth, the true way of salvation and life (John 1:14, 18; 14:6). He came not to do or speak anything on His own authority, but only what the Father had shown Him to do and to say (John 12:48-50; 14:31).

He was one with the Father in nature, will, and purpose on behalf of man and the Sabbath. Christ had been the Co-Creator, together with the Father and the Holy Spirit (John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:2; Colossians 1:16). Christ had been the very Maker of man and the Sabbath. Consequently He came not to destroy but to redeem them from bondage and sin. He came to restore all things of creation.

Jesus therefore provoked the issue of true Sabbath celebration by His deliberate miracles of healing on the Sabbath. The gospels record how Jesus performed seven conspicuous acts of healing on the Sabbath (Mark 1:21-28; 1:29-31; John 5:1-9; 9:1-38; Matthew 12:9-14; Luke 13:10-17; 14:1-6), which enraged the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus not only healed the worst paralytic on the Sabbath day, but purposely even ordered him to carry his pallet as well (John 5:8)! In the opinion of the Jewish leaders Jesus had broken the Sabbath and committed blasphemy. In reality Jesus was guilty of neither one. He claimed to have kept all the commandments of the Father (John 15:10). Jesus had only sharply distinguished between Holy Scripture and man-made Jewish traditions, between God's Word and mere ecclesiastical word (see Matthew 15:3). He never broke the Sabbath of the Lord, only the senseless Sabbath restrictions of the scribes and Pharisees.

Jesus honored the Sabbath and its lawfulness by extending mercy to the sick, forgiveness to the broken sinners, and deliverance from the bondage of error and legalism. He refused to plead guilty or to be catechized by the Sanhedrin, but rather He declared to be their Judge in the final judgment (John 5:22)! Christ came to abrogate wrong and distorted Sabbathkeeping, while restoring the genuine freedom and joy of the Sabbath again, as Moses and the prophets had revealed. By rejecting Christ as the Lord of the Sabbath, the Jews only revealed that they had rejected Moses and his writings (John 5:45-47).

Where do we stand today? Do we realize that we also will have to meet Christ as our Judge in the last day? Are we ready to meet Him, if we, like the scribes and the Pharisees, maintain that Jesus broke and abolished the Sabbath? It is vain for any person to profess to believe in Christ Jesus as Saviour if he rejects Him as the Lord and Master who set an example of true Sabbath celebration.

For Jesus this was evidently a matter of crucial importance, for the priests and rabbis were determined to take His life because of it (John 5:18). The truth of the Sabbath brought Jesus directly into the shadow of the cross. It concerns the vital issue of whom we worship, a matter of life and death, of blessing or curse, in God's eyes. Christ and the

Few people realize that the redeemed will be observing God's Sabbath in the new earth.

Sabbath stand or fall together, since He is the Lord of the Sabbath, its Maker and Redeemer as the Son of God, on behalf of man. Christ is the heart and substance of the Sabbath. The Sabbath is the sacrament of Christ's creative and saving power.

Sabbath worship continued in Paradise. The question of whether or not there will be a Sabbath in the new earth is valid. If the Sabbath is accepted as an ordinance of creation for worship by perfect people, and if Jesus Christ honored the Sabbath by healing or recreating sinners in order to be free for the praise of God, how else can it be but that the Sabbath will be restored to its original splendor in the *regeneration* of the world (Matthew 19:28)? The apostles of Christ proclaimed to the world the good news that Christ at His second coming will restore all things, as God had spoken from of old through His prophets (Acts 3:21). The prophet Isaiah has a remarkable prophecy with regard to the Sabbath and the new earth: "For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before me, says the Lord; so shall your descendants and your name remain. From new moon to new moon, and from sabbath to sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, says the Lord" (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

This prophecy, in connection with chapter 65:17-25, should certainly be

understood first in terms of its local setting as a conditional promise for a faithful national Israel after the Babylonian exile. But the New Testament teaches in its last book that Isaiah's promises will find their ultimate fulfillment in the redeemed saints from all nations on the earth made new. They will all worship God as their Creator, singing in adoration: "Worthy art thou, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for thou didst create all things, and by thy will they existed and were created" (Revelation 4:11).

The multitude of saints will ascribe their salvation to God as Creator and to the Lamb while they serve God in His temple "day and night" (Revelation 7:9-15). A restored creation, a redeemed race in "a new earth in which righteousness dwells" (2 Peter 3:13), will worship God as Creator, Redeemer, Restorer, in a new Jerusalem! Paradise restored, including the tree of life and its streams (Revelation 22:1-14; Genesis 2:9)! Then the creation Sabbath also will be restored as the day of celebrating God's works of creation and re-creation. But more than that, the children of God of all dispensations will enter the apocalyptic Sabbath rest which has always remained as a promise for them (Hebrews 4:9)! God's everlasting covenant with the human race in Paradise will ultimately be fulfilled when the children of God follow their Father forever as His festive partners in celebrating His works from Sabbath to Sabbath and from month to month throughout eternity in Paradise restored (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

To those who refrain from trampling on the Sabbath and doing business on the Lord's holy day in this present life the Lord assures the apocalyptic consummation of the abiding covenant promise: "then you shall take delight in the Lord, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth" (Isaiah 58:14).

*All Scripture quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

FRANK ANSWERS

Can a Christian ever be lost?

Can a Christian fall away from the Lord and be lost?

Christians naturally desire assurance of their salvation. All true confidence is rooted by *faith* in Jesus Christ. Trusting in His promises, we have the assurance we are accepted by God, for Christ is our Substitute and Surety. "He freely bestowed [his glorious grace] on us in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1:6, RSV).

However, we must remember that just as a penitent sinner *chooses* to come to God by Christ (Matthew 11:28), so can he choose to leave and repudiate Him. Judas chose to follow Christ, and he chose to repudiate Him. The apostle Paul recognized that even he could—if he turned to follow his carnal nature—"be a castaway" (1 Corinthians 9:27). He cautioned his fellow Christians to beware lest an "evil heart of unbelief" develop in them "in departing from the living God." He warned lest they "be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin," because, said he, "we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end" (Hebrews 3:12-14). Paul underscored his admonition a few chapters later by stating that a Christian can turn away from God's grace and resist it to the point of committing the unpardonable sin (see Hebrews 6:4-6).

The apostle Peter likewise counseled Christians, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (2 Peter 3:17). That such a fall can be fatal and not simply a temporary backslidden condition is clearly seen in Jesus' parable on the four

soils (Matthew 13:1-8, 18-23).

The seed of truth fell on four kinds of soils or lives. In three soils the seed sprouted and grew up, which means three classes of penitent sinners experience a new birth under the Holy Spirit and become Christians. Birds ate the seed that had fallen on the hard, trodden-down ground. And the plants died out in the stony ground because they never got sufficient root. Trial and persecution withered them. The cares, riches, and pleasures of this world (Luke 8:14) choked out the spiritual life of another group. Only one group grew to full maturity. The point and warning of the parable is evident: Christian life can die out, persons who once rejoiced in the Lord can be lost unless through the grace of God they remove the stones which threaten their Christian life.

Does God know what we are going to look like before we are born?

The Scriptures describe God as omniscient, that is, all-knowing. David speaks of God's knowledge of each human being in his embryonic state: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth [a figurative allusion to the womb]. Thine eyes did see my substance [literally, "Thine eyes did see my embryo"], yet being imperfect" (Psalm 139:15, 16). If God is intimately acquainted with our embryonic development, we may be assured that He knows what our features will be. On one occasion Jesus said, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:30).

While it is true that God has foreknowledge of each person, his future as well as his features, it does not follow that He is the immediate cause of a person's physical appearance, regular or deformed. God's foreknowledge in no way changes or offsets the natural processes or interferes with the effects and consequences of sin and its degenerating effects on the race. Physical degeneracy, disease, drugs, impoverished diets, environmental factors, all have their part in affecting the oncoming generations in every aspect of

their physical being.

Does Jesus' statement (Matthew 28:19) constitute a definite baptismal formula? Since we anoint the sick and cast out devils in the name of Jesus, why would it not be proper to baptize in the name of Jesus only?

Historically, Christians have understood Christ's statement as a baptismal formula. A candidate is baptized "in [literally, "into"] the *name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Notice that the rite is not performed in the "names" but into the *name*, that is, into the Trinity. The statement thus views baptism as the doorway into fellowship and communion with the Godhead.

There is consequently a distinct difference between the perspective of the baptismal formula and that of intercession for someone in the name of Jesus. Intercession recognizes the separation sin has made and our need of the Mediator. Through His incarnation, sinless life, atoning death, and resurrection, Christ has become our Representative Head, as it were, at the court of heaven. When we pray for the sick, or the devil-possessed, or whatever, we pray "in the name of Jesus." The meaning is, "Heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, grant us our petition." All our blessings—both physical and spiritual, the granting of every petition—come to us through our Great Mediator who, because of His merits, has linked heaven again with earth like Jacob's mystic ladder (see Genesis 28:12; John 1:51).

Since our salvation has been made possible through the merits of Jesus Christ, it is only natural to have statements made in the Book of Acts like Peter's appeal: "Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). Such references need not be construed as contradicting Christ's words. One cannot come into union with the Godhead except through the merits of the Redeemer. But in the actual rite of baptism, the formula would publicly proclaim the believer's new bond of union with the Godhead. ●



In this column Pastor Frank B. Holbrook answers questions about spiritual truth, ethical behavior, and Biblical understanding. Write to him clo

THESE TIMES, Box 59, Nashville, Tennessee 37202. Names are confidential. If a personal answer is desired, please send an addressed envelope. Only questions of general interest are published.



The care & feeding of your child

How to put psychology—and plain old common sense—to work for you in rearing your child

by Norma G. Norriss

IN MY clinical work of dealing with troubled families, I face crisis situations daily that seemingly have suddenly, swiftly, erupted and reached frightening proportions beyond parental control, at which point professional help is sought. Unfortunately almost every case has had identifiable problems incubating over many months or years.

Undoubtedly the families could have been helped more readily—even more effectively—and certainly spared some of the scarring experiences had the parents only been perceptively alert to the warning signals and courageously dealt with what at first was merely lack of accord before it developed into antagonistic discord.

I am frequently asked if there are any techniques that will absolutely guarantee successful child rearing while avoiding harrowing pitfalls. Of course there are no universal absolutes, but it does continually puzzle me why so many families continue to cling to methods that have failed them over and over again.

Advance planning needed. Most of us pursue our various hobbies with diligent enthusiasm and confidently rely on current technology, procedures, products, and expert opinion to whatever degree they are available, whether the activity is gardening, canning, cooking, sewing, mountain climbing, furniture building, or whatever. We wouldn't contemplate approaching the task haphazardly without planning and forethought, of using out-of-date techniques that are unreliable, more laborious, and time-consuming, when effective and efficient means are conveniently accessible.

How curious it is, then, in the all-important area of parenting that we rarely plan in advance, either philosophically or practically, how to handle the ever-varying complexities of childhood development and the guaranteed expectation of unexpected problems. Too frequently we emotionally place greater reliance on the techniques employed by our own parents and resurrected from our

childhood memories than in surveying the situation objectively and selecting the most practical, most strategic, approach available to ensure success.

It is vitally important to keep assessing and reassessing what goals you, as parents, have in mind and whether your particular approach is helping to achieve them, or whether it defeats your purpose or has you merely treading water aimlessly. I am firmly convinced that if values and attitudes are consistently upheld, if techniques are flexibly employed and modified where and when necessary, if children's feelings can be freely expressed (although not always agreed with), if children are enjoyed for who and what they are rather than what they do or don't do, and if they are frequently lavished with praise for their efforts, you will be fostering a strong sense of mutual confidence and respect between you and your child that can withstand almost any situational onslaught. These, then, are the foundations for positive parenting and practical, preventive psychology.

Accept the feelings of your children

Parents need to accept the feelings of their children while they continue to control the behaviors. So very often, unfortunately, parents become as angered by what their children say and feel in response to punishment as they were at the initial behavior. Then they unwisely impose additional penalties to the original disposition.

Do not allow yourself to be angered by a child's reaction to discipline and permit the argument to range away from its originally intended target.

Norma Norriss is director of the Child Psychology Services and associate clinical professor of psychiatry at the Loma Linda University Medical Center, Loma Linda, California.

Punishment should teach and not be an outlet for expressing parental anger. It should convey authority but not an insult to the person of the child. Very little corrective learning is possible under such circumstances, and both parent and child retreat in a state of exhausted, frustrated impasse with rising reservoirs of mounting resentment.

Mrs. G was exasperated by her four-year-old daughter Jill's constant teasing of her infant sister. After several ignored warnings she scolded her and revoked her privilege of playing with a favorite playmate for that afternoon. When Jill became furious (a perfectly expected reaction for her age and situation) and went into a temper tantrum, saying that she

hated her mother as well as her sister and called her names, Mrs. G also lost control. Forgetting the point of the disciplinary action, she spanked Jill severely for talking to her in this way and summarily sent her to her room to reflect upon her sins.

Mrs. G originally wanted to emphasize the undesirability of Jill's behavior toward her infant sister. I can confidently predict that the sequence that followed will not successfully alter that particular behavioral pattern on a permanent basis, although Jill may learn to refrain from teasing baby sister while Mother is physically present. Jill may retire to her room and accept the burden that she is, indeed, a "bad girl" and feel guilty about expressing any angry feelings she may

have in the future. Or she may instead feel furious at her mother's supposed unfairness and thus conveniently avoid reviewing her own behavior which precipitated the ruckus in the first place. Neither alternative is conducive to changing behavior

without also incurring undesirable side effects.

It would be far better for Mrs. G to accept Jill's frustrated rage as normal and predictable for her age, to tell her she understands how upset Jill must be at being deprived of her pleasures but

that Jill's behavior with her sister simply wasn't acceptable and required change. A child's feelings must be taken seriously. She should be given comfort and understanding even when not in agreement with her parent's position.

Responsibility or unhesitating obedience?

Although many parents insist they want their children to acquire responsibility and self-discipline, they actually direct much of their efforts toward eliciting unquestioned obedience. In no way are these the same, and we ought not to profess allegiance to one and practice commitment to the other.

When chores have to be done, we unrealistically expect that our children ought to match our own vested interest and voluntarily prefer to perform required duties prior to engaging in self-indulgent activities. When this doesn't happen, our disappointments are heightened and we resort to curt reminders and demands of immediate fulfillment.

Too many parents complain that even when their children did perform their assignments, they did so grudgingly. These parents contend it is the children's home as much as theirs, and their children ought to enjoy participating in whatever needs to be done as a labor of love. They angrily resent the lack of enthusiasm and reluctance to become involved in household projects. They speak of ingratitude and selfishness with bewildered disappointment and outraged pain.

Here, again, we have a number of issues that need to be clarified and require distinction between conflicting motivations. It does not seem relevant, in terms of character building, that children verify their parents' authority by having to profess pleasure in doing

chores they may well thoroughly dislike. I think it quite sufficient they learn that some unpleasantness in life must be accepted.

You may have to choose between having the child perform the task regardless of his feelings or indulging his preferences—which is to say he is never required to perform duties he dislikes. Under these conditions, few of us would or should cater to a child's mercurial inclinations to this extent. Therefore it should even be permissible for him to grouse about the task and perhaps even feel unfairly treated for the moment while he is about it.

If you want him to have pleasurable feelings about his work in addition to performing it, you cannot simply mandate that he ought to feel a particular way. You will have to pair the task with something that is pleasurable rewarding to him upon completion and praise him for his endeavors rather than take them for granted. It is another instance of determining which objective is more important to you and finding approaches that enable you to achieve your pinpointed goals.

True democracy impossible. In all objectivity, the family unit is not typically run as a democracy. Children rarely have influential power or pivotal votes in determining how any household is organized and regulated, much less veto powers to combat issues they strongly disagree with.

Neither are human beings born with an innate capacity for exerting self-discipline. We acquire these learned traits continually in small increments along the winding road from infancy to adulthood, but only as appropriate conditions prevail.

Children's pleasures are vastly different from our own, and all along the way we insistently require that they relinquish their own pursuits to reflect our own values and attitudes. This is a process of cultural socialization inherited from one generation to another, and it requires as much sacrifice of his own pleasure preferences on the part of the child as it taxes parental tolerance and patience.

If a child experiences a sense of personal pleasure and an end-of-task reinforcement while performing chores, inevitably the task becomes linked to the pleasure component, and he actively seeks it out for the gratification it provides. If a child joylessly submits to arbitrary orders, you are merely molding passive compliance. While he may learn unthinking obedience, he will not acquire self-motivated responsibility.

If you want your child of ten or fifteen to assume responsibilities or have the capacity to make decisive judgments, the time to prepare for this is years in advance while providing minisituations which allow him to acquire these traits gradually just as he does any other trained skill.

Three ways to improve parent-child relationships

HERE ARE three principles of fundamental importance which can be easily implemented by parents and adapted to situations regardless of the child's age:

1. Accept the child's feelings but control the behaviors.
2. Determine your long-range goals and continually create situations in which the child is guided along the developmental paths you designate and learns from both failures as well as successes but without humiliation and angry recriminations.
3. Examine the communication between you and your children and listen carefully for distortions, misunderstandings, and misinterpretations on both parts. It is far more important to preventively correct errors than to dispense punishment later with moral indignation.

Provide responsibility gradually. If your toddler complains about his breakfast menu, give him the choice of two dishes selected by you. Allow your first grader a choice of two selected

outfits to wear to school so he will learn the process of weighing pros and cons and living with his decision. Give him the opportunity to spend his allowance on a foolish item he

impulsively and insistently covets, even when you are certain he will regret it later on, so that he experiences the consequences of lamentable self-indulgence.

All these small surface compromises in no way encroach upon your authority to make final determinations or define the overall limits within which there is freedom of choice. By providing situations within which a child makes choices, you will, however, be nurturing a sense of importance and autonomy which will gradually produce self-assurance, self-reliance, and assumed responsibility while reducing the friction in the seemingly endless struggle for intrafamily power. In all successful relationships, one gives a little to receive even more, and parent-child relationships are no exception.

Problems due to bad communication

Communication difficulties between family members often create additional problems, compounding specific conflicts. An all too commonly heard complaint is, "He won't communicate with me" or "There's simply no communication between us." By this the implication is that the designated individual is not verbally sharing his thoughts and feelings with the complainer.

After all, withholding words is not an absence of communication. A whole host of thoughts, attitudes, and feelings are meaningfully conveyed by one's unwillingness to verbally share innermost thoughts and feelings. One strongly experiences and reacts to the very negative message of such un verbalized communications, and these distancing, angry, distrustful messages must be properly interpreted and accurately decoded before harmony can be restored and positive

communications, verbal and otherwise, be reestablished.

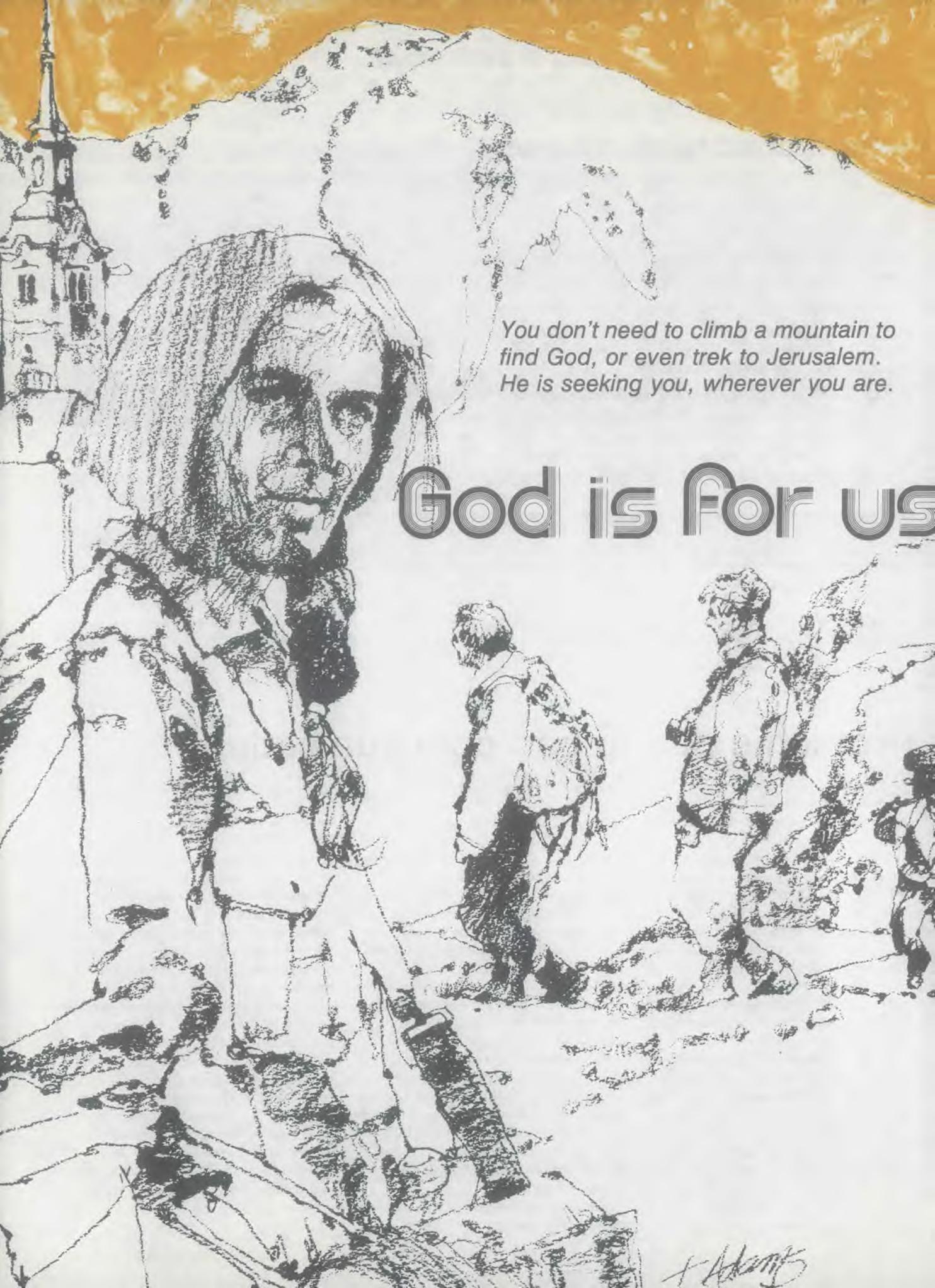
Young children typically want to be understood without having to disclose fully what they are experiencing. They may not even be able to put their inner experiences into appropriate language. You may be reading him on one level when, indeed, he meant to convey something else again.

There are many subtle ways we can undermine a child's fragile, emerging picture of himself. Harsh criticisms should be employed cautiously to avoid detrimental results. Remember that when we do criticize a child, we should deal with the event in question and not with his personality. It is quite a different matter to rebuke a child and inform him that you didn't like his behavior than to angrily tell him, "You're a bad boy."

Behavior is relatively simple for any of us to change, given effective

motivation. However, if the child begins to see himself as bad and unworthy in the mirror reflection of parental opinion, it may seem hopeless to him to harbor any hope of success in countering this apparent negative parental perception, and he begins to behave routinely as he believes himself labeled and fixated.

Family relationships are constantly fluctuating and demonstrating sensitive reactions to whatever climate prevails at the moment. Change is possible and within your power to determine. Also it occurs on all levels with or without your conscious participation. The practice of positive parenting is a way whereby you can successfully channel the direction of growth and degree of change as you determine it, and it provides the skills and techniques to accomplish those creative goals. 



*You don't need to climb a mountain to
find God, or even trek to Jerusalem.
He is seeking you, wherever you are.*

God is for us

F Adams

by William G. Johnsson

ONE BRIGHT May day, high in the fastnesses of the Himalayas, I came upon a strange sight. A group of people—five or six—were making their way on foot up the trail. They had sticks in hand, possessions bundled on back, and the colored streaks of the religious devotee on forehead and wrists. Their clothes were dusty, their feet heavy. A band of pilgrims wending their way to a mountain shrine! Perhaps hundreds of weary miles lay behind them; the lofty peaks loomed ahead.

We greeted each other and passed on. But the good word that I wanted to leave with them, if the communication curtain could have been torn aside, was, *God is for us! My friends, why all this hard labor? Don't you know that God is on your side? You don't need to climb the mountain to find Him; He is seeking you, wherever you are!*

God is for us! This to my mind is the greatest teaching of the Bible. It is the word of hope that all men in every age and in each land of earth are longing to hear.

Not a self-evident truth. Much of the data of existence that daily confront us would seem to deny it. We have seen in these times cruel and bitter wars; we have read in the papers and now witness on our TV screens acts of brutality and bestiality. Our generation is wise but weak; we have put our inventive skills to destroying one another more efficiently, to lavishing

ourselves with the comforts of life.

And we confront—inevitably—the stark reality of tragedy. Senseless disease or blind accident cuts off close friends and colleagues at the high noon of life and usefulness. The young, the brave, and the beautiful fall before the mad scythe of the grim reaper.

Nor does human nature reveal this truth. Is there any man who does not have his price, who cannot be bought or sold? We have experienced the loss of confidence in leaders, known the sickening awareness when corruption has overtaken the highest offices of the land.

No, it is not self-evident. Not from nature, the stars, history, society, psychology, or the newspapers would one conclude that God is good, for us, and on our side. Well might we decide from the evidence of our senses or reason that God is dead or inept or simply has lost interest in this planet in rebellion.

God viewed as the Heavenly Policeman. Even religious institutions might not help us to grasp this great truth. History reveals that religions, which supposedly are concerned with helping man to find God, frequently end up making God remote. They portray Him as the Heavenly Policeman, waiting to catch us out in our sins and to wreak vengeance upon us. God comes across as demanding, as punitive. To some He seems more intent upon keeping people *out* of His paradise than in getting them in, because He hedges the way about with rule upon rule, regulation upon regulation, burden upon burden.

Hence the pilgrims. And all religions have them, Christianity not excepted. In these United States how many people are spiritual pilgrims, struggling up the way of self-torture in an endeavor to find or please a demanding deity! How many young people,

born and bred in the Christian fold, look upon their religion as an irksome requirement, a set of "no-nos" submitted to for the sake of perhaps winning entry into a grudgingly opened heaven! How many feel hopeless as they face the fact of their moral frailty and sense how far they are from the goal of perfection held out before them!

A God who cares. But—God is for us! No wonder it comes as good news, the best news. God is trying to get people into His eternal home, not keep them out. He is a God who takes "no pleasure in the death of the wicked." A God who weeps over the lost. A God who lifts the burdens from the weary ones. A God who cares. A God who is on our side, not against us. A God who comes to us even before we move toward Him. A God who has sought us with eager longing all the days of our lives—and who yet seeks.

But, you say, how do you *know* this is true? The evidence of life often points in the opposite direction; so why say God is for us?

The answer comes, not from logic, not from experiment, but from a person—Jesus Christ. The message shouted by His teachings and life is just this: God is for us.

Strangely—but, as we saw above, in keeping with the way of religious institutions—the people of Jesus' day felt remote from God. Matthew quotes the Book of Isaiah to describe them: They "sat in darkness . . . in the region and shadow of death" (Matthew 4:16). They were burdened with diseases, weighed down with guilt. The theology of the day, as so often, catered to the unsick, the unpoor, and the (apparently) un sinful. A person who suffered sickness or calamity was under the curse of God; hence a man born blind was reaping the consequences of his parents' or his own

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prenatal sin (John 9:1-3), and the Galileans who were slain by Pilate were worse sinners than others (Luke 13:1-4).

The God of the Old Testament cared about men. He had made the world and pronounced it good (Genesis 1:31); He had shaped mankind in His own image and sought them out when they disobeyed (Genesis 3:9); He had come to deliver His own at the time of the Deluge (Genesis 6:7, 8); supremely, He had led out the tribes from Egypt, raising up a leader in the person of Moses and constituting them a nation for Himself by entering into covenant with them (Exodus 6:4-8).

Over and over He had intervened in their history to deliver them. He was the One to whom they had turned for forgiveness (e.g., Psalm 51), who had led them, wept over them, guided them as a father his child (Hosea 11:1-4). He was the God who had given assurance: "As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him" (Psalm 103:13*); "I, I am He who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and I will not remember your sins" (Isaiah 43:25).

But the good news had been lost. It is quickly lost, in any place and age, because it is so *different*. The idea that God is for us always seems too good to be true. This is how a Christian writer describes the people of Jesus' day:

"The Son of God, looking upon the world, beheld suffering and misery. With pity He saw how men had become victims of satanic cruelty. He looked with compassion upon those who were being corrupted, murdered, and lost. They had chosen a ruler who chained them to his car as captives. Bewildered and deceived, they were moving on in gloomy procession toward eternal ruin—to death in which is no hope of life, toward night to which comes no morning. Satanic agencies were incorporated with men. The bodies of human beings, made for the dwelling

place of God, had become the habitation of demons. The senses, the nerves, the passions, the organs of men, were worked by supernatural agencies in the indulgence of the vilest lust. The very stamp of demons was impressed upon the countenances of men. Human faces reflected the expression of the legions of evil with which they were possessed. Such was the prospect upon which the world's Redeemer looked. What a spectacle for Infinite Purity to behold!" (Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 36).

Into such a scene stepped Jesus of Nazareth. In the inaugural sermon to His ministry, preached in the synagogue of His hometown, He proclaimed His mission: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4:18, 19). His entire life was devoted to the pattern laid down that day: "He went about doing good," says Luke elsewhere (Acts 10:38).

In His teaching, both public and private, Jesus spoke much about the character of God. He took over the Old Testament term *Father* and gave it a place of preeminence, teaching people to address God by this name and pointing out the tender care and compassion of the Father toward each person. The God proclaimed by Jesus was one who cared for the birds of the air and the grass of the field—hence how much more for His people

(Matthew 6:25-33)! He was one who eagerly waited to answer the requests of His children, who was all and more than the earthly model of fatherhood indicated (Luke 11:5-13). He cared for the world—cared supremely. Although Jesus did not use the expression, the essence of His teaching was this: God is for us, not against us.

How could Jesus be so sure? Perhaps He too was wrong. No, He spoke with authority on the subject. He said, "He who has seen me has seen the Father." "I and the Father are one" (John 14:9; 10:30).

Christ's presence among mankind itself verified God's concern for us. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). And instead of merely drawing the people to Him to hear the Good News, Jesus went out to the people, bringing it to them. He came bearing salvation, salvation in Himself. The entire thrust of His life was, God is for us!

This is why the story of Jesus can never lose its power. Without it, life is a bewildering game where no one wins, a sadistic mockery, an empty jingle. But Jesus brings hope and meaning to existence as He assures us again and yet again, God is for us.

This is the saving word that transforms the concrete jungle. This is the comforting word that soothes the aches of grief. This is the promising word that bids us look up and pierce by faith the grossest darkness. 

*All Bible quotations are from the Revised Standard Version.

Coming next month

In addition to articles on how to put enthusiasm into your marriage and about tension—what it is and what it does, the August issue of *THESE TIMES* contains the first in a series of pullout articles on twelve key teachings found in the Holy Scriptures. Each center-spread article contains four pages and can be removed from the magazine and placed in a standard three-ring notebook for future reference. Plan now to collect all twelve in this special series.



THIS TIME

The following letter speaks for itself (see pages 2-10). We honor the writer's wish to withhold her name and address.

In response to "Karen, You're Not Pregnant, Are You?" (April issue) I don't have to put myself in Karen's shoes, because thirteen years ago I was in exactly her position; so I feel I can speak with some authority on the subject.

Like Karen, I was seventeen and had just graduated from high school. My suspicions were confirmed on my eighteenth birthday. I was definitely pregnant.

Like Karen, I was a Christian girl and never dreamed this could happen to me, a "nice girl." I told my parents the news, and they got together with his parents and together they decided what they thought we should do.

I was confused, scared, and ashamed, yet awed with the fact that there was a new life inside of me. I resented its presence, yet at the same time loved it very much. I never at any time considered abortion, even if it had been legal at that time. To me it is murder, and I could have never handled that.

Like Karen, I was pressured by all sides, and I prayed I would make the right decision and at the same time I asked for forgiveness for my sin.

My boyfriend would have married me, but like Jim, he wasn't really ready for the responsibility, and felt trapped. He was seventeen. This eventually caused us to drift apart, and I went it alone.

The day arrived, and I had my baby. I gave my baby up for adoption, but I know from thirteen years of heartache that it was the wrong decision. I have since married and had three beautiful children, but they have only made me realize all the more what joy I gave away. It may have been the right decision for some, but not for me. Even the great healer, time, has not closed the wound. The emptiness I feel on that one child's birthday cannot be filled even by my children's smiles and love.

My advice to Karen would be, Have your baby, keep it, love it. Hold your head high, and pray you will be a good mother. You can always finish an education, find a husband who is ready for marriage, or do anything else you want to do, but a human life is a miracle.

I pray that none of the Karens of this world will make the terrible mistake I did. I always wonder what my child looks like and if she'll ever know I love her very much.—Name withheld.

Kenneth J. Holland

Presenting Jesus Christ
in all His fullness to all the world.

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to be the authoritative Word of God,
Satan to be our great adversary,
Jesus to be our all-sufficient Saviour,
and the coming Christ to be our only hope
as the world nears its cataclysmic end.

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The declaration of dependence

We often forget that in declaring independence from an earthly power, our forefathers also made a declaration of dependence upon our heavenly Father. by Donald Crawford

ON JULY 4th, 1776, there was signed in the City of Philadelphia one of America's historic documents: The Declaration of Independence. It marked the Birth of this Nation which, under God, was destined for world leadership.

But what we often forget is that, in declaring independence from an earthly power, our forefathers made a forthright declaration of *dependence* upon Almighty God. The closing words of this historic document solemnly declare:

"With a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

It is important that we recall this very basic *Declaration of Dependence*, for in her prosperity and power, and in her unique position of world leadership, America today is showing signs of forgetting the God of our Fathers, the God who gave this nation its birth and its present greatness.

We need to be reminded of a solemn warning that God gave to another great nation which had just been declared independent. This warning is found in the Bible and, although written over 3,000 years ago, it might well refer to modern America today.

"For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, . . . a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness. . . . [And] when thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which He hath given thee. Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God: . . . lest when thou hast eaten and art full,

and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; . . . and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied; and all that thou hast is multiplied; then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God" (Deuteronomy 8:7-14).

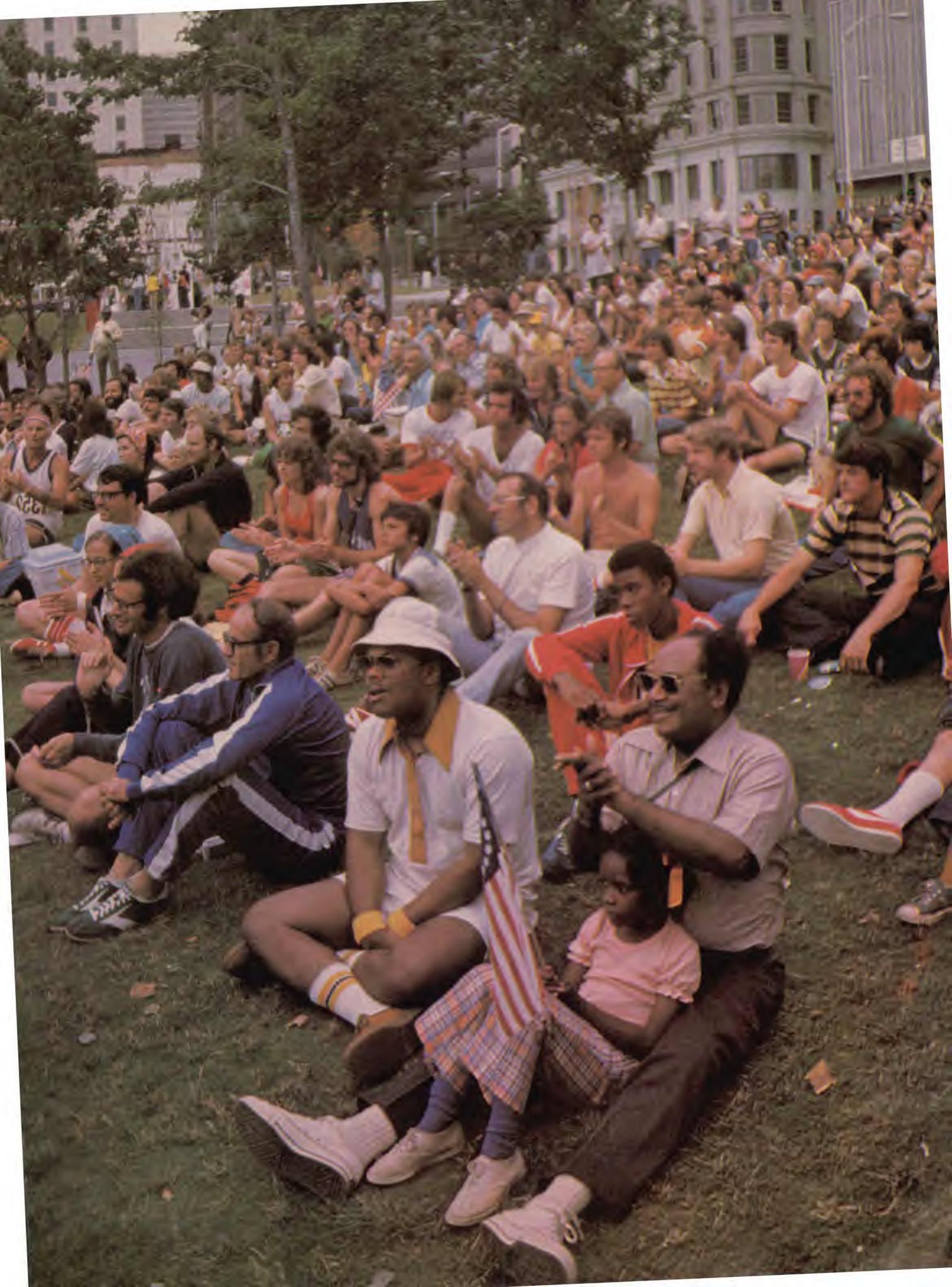
Indeed, history has made it abundantly clear not only in the lives of nations, but also of individuals, that those who by their lives and actions declare their *independence* from God, soon become slavishly dependent upon the circumstances of life. On the other hand, those who have humbly declared their *dependence* upon God have been remarkably free and independent of life's changing circumstances.

So, as we think again of the Birth of our great Nation, may we pray that our beloved country might have a new birth of freedom; not a freedom *from* God, which always leads to license and ultimate slavery, but rather a freedom built *upon* God and His commandments, apart from which any nation will eventually perish.

Also, may each one of us, as individuals, reaffirm our dependence upon God so that, "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith," we might experience the freedom He gives not only from worry, doubt and fear, but also from all those sins which do "so easily beset us" (Hebrews 12:1).

Then, as did the founding Fathers of our beloved country, we will find in Him our life, liberty, and true happiness.

Reprints of this article may be obtained from American Tract Society, Oradell, New Jersey 07649.



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